



POLSKI INSTYTUT SPRAW
MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH

Confronting the Holocaust

Documents

on the Polish Government-in-Exile's Policy
Concerning Jews 1939–1945



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EDITOR

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PREFACE

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

This volume is the first attempt to demonstrate the conditions and mechanisms of actions implemented by the Polish Government-in-Exile towards the Jewish population during World War II. The documents presented, most of which have not been previously published, show the systemic and large-scale nature of efforts made by the Polish diplomatic and consular service to aid and rescue Jews during all stages of the war. They bring together the activities of the President, the Prime Minister, as well as individual ministries and offices, but above all reflect the constant work of the Polish diplomatic and consular posts and the relief agencies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Polish Red Cross.

The archival materials included illustrate the entire spectrum of actions undertaken: documenting information (about the situation of the Jews in occupied Poland), propaganda (aimed at mobilising the international community to stop the Holocaust) and legal activities (to file criminal charges against the perpetrators). At the same time, they point out that the extensive aid effort was not incidental but systematic and constituted one of the most important policies of the Polish Government-in-Exile. The actions documented in this volume allow us to put forward a thesis that Polish officials and diplomats organised one of the largest relief actions to help Jews, carried out by the state diplomatic services during World War II.

The exceptional situation in which the Polish Government-in-Exile found itself is also reflected in the documents. Of all the European countries, it was in Poland that the largest group of people of Jewish identity lived: more than three million. Only the Soviet Union, a state which was much larger and more populous than Poland, had a comparable number of Jews. As a result, it was the Polish authorities and diplomatic posts that were asked for assistance by the largest group of people at risk, and therefore the activities of the Polish offices were incomparably more intense than those of the representations of other Allied and neutral countries.

The published collection shows a less-known aspect of Polish-Jewish relations, which allows readers to look at this aspect of the history of World War II from a new perspective. It therefore facilitates new interpretations and in-depth assessments of the relief activities of the Polish Government-in-Exile. The volume also casts new

light on the efforts of a whole number of Polish diplomatic and consular officers, heretofore not widely known. This publication should also provide a stimulus for further research and increase the availability of the demonstrated source base.

THE BAGGAGE OF THE PAST¹ POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The end of World War I and the simultaneous collapse of the three partitioning powers allowed for the (re)construction of the Polish state. After regaining independence and completing the process of establishing its borders, Poland became a multi-confessional and multi-ethnic state. According to the general census of 1921, Poles represented less than 70% of the country's population, while the Jewish minority comprised more than 2.8 million people, representing about 10.5% of the population. It is estimated that just before the war broke out, the number of Jews living in Poland amounted to around 3.4 million people.²

This situation has made Poland a unique country, compared to other European countries in terms of the number of citizens of Jewish origin. Before the war, in Warsaw alone there were more Jews living in the city than in the whole of France, and several Polish cities or towns had a larger Jewish population than some Western European countries.

An additional specificity of the Jewish minority in Poland was the much lower tendency to assimilate into and blend in with the general population than in Western European countries. Around 90 per cent of the Jewish population lived according to their own cultural and religious models, somehow alongside the Polish society, and most Polish Jews did not speak or know Polish at all. The Jewish population in Poland could be clearly distinguished from people of Jewish descent in the countries of Western Europe, who were much more likely to undergo the assimilation process. As a result, during the German occupation, it was much more difficult for Polish Jews to avoid the German apparatus of repression by merging into Polish society, and the lack both of assimilation and strong links with the 'non-Jewish' part of society made it difficult to obtain and provide assistance. An additional trait of the Jewish population in Poland was its intrinsic ideological and political diversity, resulting in a whole spectrum of attitudes of the Jewish

¹ For a quick outline of the thousand-year history of Jews in Poland, see, among others, R. Szczuchta, *1000 lat historii Żydów polskich. Podróż przez wieki*, Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich Polin, Warszawa 2015.

² See, among others: J. Tomaszewski, *Żydzi w II Rzeczypospolitej*, A. Markowski, S. Rudnicki (eds), IH UW, Wydawnictwo Neriton, Warszawa 2016, p. 13 and following.

population towards the Polish state and actions of the Polish authorities (from combatting Polish statehood or ignoring its existence to cooperating with the Polish state and even abandoning the relationship with the Jewish religion and culture for the sake of a complete assimilation with Polish culture and language).

From the very beginning of the Second Polish Republic, Jewish matters have been an important part of the Polish diplomatic and consular service. In 1919, Poland was forced to sign the so-called Little Treaty of Versailles, guaranteed by the League of Nations, which, in addition to regulating certain economic matters, also imposed on Poland an obligation to protect the rights of minorities. Forcing this solution on Poland was linked to the anti-Jewish pogroms that took place in Polish lands in 1918 and 1919. These incidents were investigated by a US-British mission, led by Henry Morgenthau, established on 30 June 1919, at the request of Prime Minister Ignacy Paderewski. In the final report, dated 3 October 1919, the members of the mission stated that eight antisemitic pogroms took place between November 1918 and September 1919, in which some 200–300 Jews were killed; therefore it proved that the information provided in the Western press on the number of victims was significantly overstated.³ The report also stated that the Polish authorities tried to prevent such crimes and did not take responsibility for them.⁴ In 1919, there was also a British mission in Poland, led by Stuart Samuel; in his report, he confirmed the pogroms and made a number of recommendations on the situation of the Jewish population in Poland (including a twelve-point proposal guaranteeing the rights of the Jewish minority).⁵

The unequal treatment of the participants in the Paris Peace Conference and the imposition of minority obligations on some countries (including Poland), without imposing such obligations on other countries (e.g. Germany), led to critical assessments of the so-called Little Treaty of Versailles in Polish society and the dissatisfaction of the Polish authorities. In 1934, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Józef Beck, made a declaration in Geneva to suspend the implementation of some of its provisions, denying the League of Nations the right to control

³ See: W. Borodziej (ed.), *Prasa zagraniczna o Polsce. Listopad 1918 – Luty 1919*, PISM, Warszawa 2018.

⁴ See: S. Dębski, P. Długolecki (ed.), *Polish Documents on Foreign Policy 11 November 1918 – 28 June 1919*, PISM, Warszawa 2017. In his memoirs, Hugh Gibson, the first US Envoy in Warsaw, paid a lot of attention to the situation of the Jewish minority in Poland, see: V. Reed, M.B.B. Biskupski, J.R. Potocki (ed.), *An American in Warsaw: Selected Writings of Hugh S. Gibson, US Minister to Poland, 1919–1924*, Rochester 2018.

⁵ See: S. Dębski (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1919 czerwiec-grudzień*, PISM, Warszawa 2019. The Samuel's committee was not unanimous in its assessment of the situation in Poland. One of its members, captain Peter Wright, drew up his own report, more critical of Poland.

minority issues in Poland and at the same time declaring that ‘the real situation of minorities will not be changed.’⁶

The constitution of the Republic of Poland, adopted in March 1921, guaranteed the rights of ethnic minorities in Articles 109 and 110, while subsequent articles provided for the freedom of conscience, religious beliefs and religious worship. The so-called *March Constitution* also referred to the treaty on minorities and introduced the freedom of research and of the organisation of education.⁷

Another legal act regulating the rights of the Jewish minority was the so-called Polish-Jewish settlement of 1925 concluded by the government of Władysław Grabski (supported by the National Democracy) with the Jewish Parliamentary Group.⁸ Together with earlier language laws and regulations on education—the so-called *Lex Grabski*—it increased, temporarily and in a limited way, the rights of ethnic minorities in the Second Polish Republic.⁹

A fundamental change took place in 1926, when Józef Piłsudski took power in the country by a coup d’état. The seizure of power by the Piłsudskiite camp was welcomed by most of the Jewish community, and the new authorities took some steps to meet the specific demands of the Jewish minority.¹⁰

The exacerbation of Polish-Jewish relations, which included economic rivalry, occurred as a result of the global crisis of the years 1929–1933. However, the country’s recovery was not possible without a fundamental reconstruction of its economic structure. The Polish state was thus unable to solve problems such as rural overpopulation and huge unemployment, which contributed the deterioration of relations between individual ethnic groups and resulted in mutual accusations. Nor did the Polish state create a comprehensive programme devoted to the issue of ethnic minorities, including the Jewish one. The attempt to overcome the crisis and improve the situation was seen in the continued support of emigration demands and search for areas that would accept emigrants from Poland, including those of Jewish descent.¹¹ As a result, the Polish Government supported (and partly

⁶ See: S. Żerko (ed.), P. Długolecki (assist.) *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1934*, PISM, Warszawa, 2014, doc. 247.

⁷ See more in: J. Ogonowski, *Sytuacja prawna Żydów w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918-1939. Prawa cywilne i polityczne*, Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, Warszawa 2012.

⁸ See: J. Tomaszewski, “Polskie dokumenty o ‘ugodzie’ polsko-żydowskiej w 1925 roku”, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, no. 1 (193), 2000.

⁹ J. Tomaszewski, “Władysław Grabski wobec kwestii żydowskiej”, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, no. 1 (161), 1992.

¹⁰ S. Rudnicki, “Szacunek z wzajemnością. Piłsudski a Żydzi”, *Więź*, no. 5/6 (53), 2010.

¹¹ As an example, see: the circular (instruction for Polish diplomatic and consular posts) of the Press Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1936, devoted to population issues and discussing general economic issues, published in: S. Żerko (ed.),

financed) the activities of Zionist groups, with a particular focus on the activity of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, who called for the creation of a Jewish state and mass emigration of Jews from Poland to Palestine.¹² The illegal emigration of Jews to Palestine was also backed by the Polish intelligence, which trained the combatants of the Jewish Irgun, an underground military organisation founded on Jabotinsky's initiative to fight for the Jewish state in Palestine.¹³

Despite the deterioration of Polish-Jewish relations in the second half of the 1930s and the rise of nationalist and antisemitic sentiments throughout the world, no antisemitic legislation was in principle introduced in Poland. The exception was the law introduced in 1938 by the Polish authorities on the revocation of citizenship of persons who, during their stay abroad, were acting to the detriment of the Polish state, lost contact with the Polish state (after more than five years of staying abroad) or did not return to the country at the request of the authorities. The genesis of this law was the deteriorating situation in the Third Reich and the return to Poland of the Polish Jews who had emigrated to Germany years earlier. The Polish authorities—which, as already mentioned, supported emigration—introduced the new act in fear of the mass re-emigration of Jews from Germany. The German authorities responded by carrying out the so-called *Polenaktion*—an attempt to implement the decision on the mass expulsion of all Polish Jews from Germany.¹⁴ After the war broke out, the act of 1938 was cancelled by the Polish authorities in exile.

One should also mention the interwar activities of Polish nationalist youth organisations, which sought to introduce legal regulations making it possible to limit (*numerus clausus*) or eliminate entirely (*numerus nullus*) Jewish students from Polish institutions of higher learning, as was done in some other countries. Clashes, riots and attacks on Jewish students took place at Polish universities. In 1937, the authorities of most Polish institutions of higher learning introduced (with the accord of the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education) the so-called 'ghetto benches', i.e., separate benches in lecture halls set aside for Jewish students.

P. Długolecki (assist.) *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1936*, PISM, Warszawa, 2011, doc. 338.

¹² As an example of Jabotinsky's talks with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, see: M. Kornat (ed.), P. Długolecki, M. Konopka-Wichrowska, M. Przyłuska (assist.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1938*, PISM, Warszawa, 2007, doc. 173.

¹³ A. Patek, "Nielegalna emigracja żydowska z II Rzeczypospolitej do Palestyny", *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne*, vol. 136, 2019.

¹⁴ J. Tomaszewski, *Preludium Zagłady. Wygnanie Żydów polskich z Niemiec w 1938 roku*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1998.

All these events made the situation of the Jewish community in interwar Poland complex. On the one hand, Poland was the centre of the social, religious, cultural, political and educational life of the Jewish population in Europe. On the other hand, however, there was often a lack of willingness on all sides regarding Polish-Jewish cooperation, and conflicts and anti-Jewish attitudes were not uncommon.

The picture of Polish-Jewish relations should also be assessed in the international context and in comparison to the situation in other countries. The aforementioned size of the Jewish population and its low level of assimilation and identification with the state were specific to Poland. Another specific feature was the relatively liberal legal situation in Poland, which guaranteed freedom to members of ethnic minorities (not just the Jewish one), especially as compared to their rights in other countries.

The extermination of Jews by the Germans during World War II completely changed this situation and, as assessed by the representatives of B'nai B'rith in talks with Polish communist authorities many years after the war, 'Poland as a traditional and historic Jewish centre ceased to exist'.¹⁵

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND IN EXILE TOWARDS JEWS¹⁶

CIRCUMSTANCES

When describing the activity of the Polish Government-in-Exile towards Jews, one should pay attention to several aspects of the phenomenon. The most important factor was the external conditions, namely the policies of the German and Soviet occupation authorities, which changed in tandem with the war. For example, during the initial period of war (until October 1940), it was possible for Jewish people to emigrate from the part of Poland occupied by the Germans (if, of course, they held an entry visa to another country). During this period, the Polish

¹⁵ P. M. Majewski, *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1973*, PISM, Warszawa 2006, doc.144.

¹⁶ In the preface, two articles published by the Polish Institute of International Affairs as a kind of announcement of this volume were used: P. Długołęcki, "Praca wielu placówek polskich polega głównie na opiece nad Żydami" – rząd RP na uchodźstwie wobec Holocaustu", *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, no. 1 (80), 2020, p. 141–151 and "A więc dlaczego Żydzi uciekali?" – notatka Juliana Hochfelda z 1944 roku o dezercjach z Wojska Polskiego", *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, no. 4 (83), 2020, p. 150–165.

authorities sought to obtain residence or transit visas for people who managed to escape from the occupiers. The representatives of the Polish Government tried to acquire consent for emigration in basically all the unoccupied countries, while also attempting to overcome the reluctance of local authorities to accept more refugees. Symptomatic in this respect is the correspondence of the Polish Consulate General in Bogotá, Columbia, from May 1940, in which the following reports were made on the possibilities of emigrating to Colombia: ‘The authorities estimate that no less than 250,000 Jews wander around Europe, keenly seeking an opportunity to emigrate to America. That is why maintaining an “open door” policy could prove overly risky for Colombia’ (doc. 42). Appeals to the British authorities to increase the quota of persons allowed into Palestine were also a constant task at the time (see, *inter alia*, doc. 24). It is, moreover, worth recalling an excerpt of the report by Minister August Zaleski from April 1941: ‘My ministry has recently held a series of talks with the British authorities about our refugees, asking the British Government for help in placing them in the British Empire. In those talks, all territories were considered, that is—the Iberian Peninsula, the Balkan countries, the Far East, as well as the evacuation of the Polish population from the Wilno region within the current possibilities’ (doc. 105).

This period is characterised on the one hand by the reluctance of the countries accommodating refugees and the introduction of various restrictions, and on the other by attempts to place a few groups or even individual families to any possible location, sometimes quite a distant one (e.g. Jamaica). The Polish authorities pointed out the difficulties in obtaining aid (‘The United States have not yet adjusted their legislation to the current exceptional circumstances’) as well as to the moral dilemmas faced by refugees. This was the case when, for example, obtaining asylum in Canada became possible only for children and rescuing the youngest required the decision to separate them from their parents (doc. 57).

The reluctant attitude of the Western countries to receive Jews was already evident during the pre-war period, the most obvious example of which is the lack of concrete results of the Évian Conference held in 1938. A similar restraint, resulting in the inability to adopt solutions to provide real aid, can also be observed during the Bermuda Conference of 1943, which brought nothing more than general appeals to have the neutral countries shelter Jews.

Archival sources, including documents published in this volume, also point to an asymmetry between the Polish Government, representing the state occupied by the Third Reich and the Soviet Union, and its allies: Great Britain, France (until June 1940) and other states to which it directed appeals for aid for Polish Jews. The Polish Government was often placed in the position of a petitioner in wartime conditions, demanding the involvement of administrative resources, time and attention of other countries. Its humanitarian arguments were most often

considered impossible to implement due to costs and prioritisation of the war effort.

The years 1941–1943, the period of mass extermination of Jews, were, in turn, a time of increased information dissemination, publicising the German crimes, and calling for the Holocaust to be stopped and the guilty to be punished. This period includes the publication of the report of 24 November and the note of 9/10 December 1942, the first official documents informing about the Holocaust (doc. 285 and 296), as well as the appeals by the National Council and the Government (doc. 286 and 287). At that time (following the re-establishment of the Polish-Soviet diplomatic relations after the German aggression against the Soviet Union), a Polish welfare system in the USSR was put in place for several months, which made it possible to aid tens of thousands of people in need. At the same time, there was also a Polish-Soviet dispute regarding the so-called ‘passportisation’—the forced granting of Soviet citizenship to Polish citizens mostly of Jewish, Ukrainian and Belarusian nationality—as well as the issue of recruitment of Jewish soldiers to the Polish Army in the USSR. At the same time, the Polish authorities undertook a wide-ranging action to rescue Jewish refugees in France from being deported to the Auschwitz-Birkenau and Sobibór camps.

In the final years of the war, 1944–1945, the efforts of the Polish Government were mainly focused on aiding refugees scattered in many countries around the world. It is also the time of the appeals to stop the extermination of the Hungarian Jews and of the suggestions being made by the Polish side for retaliatory actions. The Polish Government proposed to the British authorities, among others, to threaten the Germans with the execution of German POWs held in British captivity if the crimes of the Holocaust were continued. The Polish Government hoped that making—and carrying out, such threats—would in effect temper Germany’s policy of extermination. The Polish authorities also suggested the intensification of retaliatory bombing and the destruction of access roads to the extermination camps (see, among others, docs. 484, 520, and 521). At the time, the involvement of the Polish Government-in-Exile in the efforts to punish war criminals increased, and there was also a certain rivalry with the puppet communist Polish Government (created by the USSR as the so-called Polish Committee of National Liberation) in terms of participation in the work of the Inter-Allied Commission for War Crimes (doc. 511) and in the aid activities (doc. 512). A circular symptomatic of the Government-in-Exile losing international importance after the Yalta conference, at which it was decided to include Poland within the Soviet sphere of influence, comes from this period. It includes an order to influence the Jewish community so that its representatives, through protests and appeals, ‘would condemn the Crimean provisions, demand justice for Poland and declare their loyalty to the Mr President and the Government’ (doc. 544).

Another aspect that had a fundamental impact on the actions of the Polish Government (also depending on the current war situation) was the 'refugee geography'. The issue of migration and changing possibilities of obtaining refuge has been understudied, unlike the well-known and repeatedly described chronology of the Holocaust. The report by the Ministry of National Defence from 1943, which comprehensively outlined the situation in this area since the beginning of the war ('At the moment the country was occupied by the enemy, thousands of waves of refugees headed for neighbouring countries, Romania, Hungary and Lithuania', doc. 343), is extremely interesting in this respect.

'Refugee geography' was also affected by changes taking place in the network of Polish posts (described later in the preface). The closure of Polish posts in Bucharest and Budapest significantly hampered the care for Polish citizens, while the evacuations of the Embassy in Rome and the Legations in Belgrade and Athens significantly inhibited the use of refugee routes through Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece. The German attack on France and the gradual liquidation of the Polish posts there forced a further exodus of refugees (to Spain, Portugal or Morocco) and made it much more difficult to help those that remained in France.

Another factor that influenced the Polish Government's actions were the various survival strategies adopted by the Jewish population that managed to escape from occupied areas. The most desirable scenario for them was to leave Europe and the most desirable directions of travel included the United States, Palestine and South American countries. The activities of the refugees were to some extent contingent upon, for example, whether they had a family in the country of destination or sufficient financial resources, as well as on whether they had or were able to obtain citizenship of a given country. All this also affected the work of the Polish diplomatic and consular service, which tried to make use of the capabilities of specific individuals. This resulted in a community of interests of officials and refugees: exceeding the standard duties, the former tried to distribute the groups of Polish citizens, while the latter wanted to leave Europe as soon as possible.

An important factor which also influenced the actions of the Polish authorities towards Jews was the service of people of Jewish descent in Polish armed forces. On 30 August 1939, the Polish authorities announced a general mobilisation, imposing obligatory military service on all men of military age. This obligation was binding on all Polish citizens, irrespective of nationality, and evading it was subject to criminal sanction. It also applied to service in Polish military units formed during the war beyond occupied Polish territory.

Poles typically pointed out that Jewish soldiers avoided fighting, which, in their opinion, resulted in collective desertions. The dual attitude of Jews to military service was also emphasised. The unwillingness of people who were already in safe places (not threatened by the Germans) to enlist was pointed out; at the same time,

it was revealed that the Jews joining the Polish Army in the USSR were motivated by the need to improve their situation, especially where it was tantamount to being released from camps and saving one's life. Jews were said to have joined the army not to fight, but to be evacuated to a safe place. Representatives of Jewish communities emphasised the valour of Jewish soldiers and their loyal attitude towards Poland. Jewish organisations accused the Polish authorities of using discriminatory methods during recruitment to the army and accused them of improperly treating Jewish soldiers, which, as they stressed, was said to be the reason for desertions. This issue remains the subject of dispute and conflicting interpretations still today. However, this does not alter the fact that the attitude of the Jewish population towards service in the Polish Army and the attitude of the Polish military to Jewish soldiers both influenced the conduct of the diplomatic and consular service.

Obviously, the nuances in the Polish Government's activities towards Jews in the occupied country were also due to the different treatment of the Jewish population by the German and Soviet authorities. In 1939, after the German and Soviet aggression against Poland, the Polish territory was divided between the occupiers (the USSR took a slightly larger part than Germany). This situation lasted until June 1941, when, as a result of the German aggression against the USSR, Polish lands occupied so far by the Soviet Union came under German occupation. In consequence, between September 1939 and June 1941, the fate of the population in Poland varied significantly, as the policy of the occupying authorities differed. In the case of Jews, the territories occupied by the USSR were far more secure, which does not, of course, mean that the people of Jewish origin were excluded from Soviet repressions. Jewish Poles were, for example, among the victims of the Katyń massacre, or among the Polish citizens deported from the eastern part of Poland deep into the Soviet Union.

THE TYPES OF ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

When it comes to the activities of the Polish Government-in-Exile, several types can be identified, primarily aid, information and propaganda, as well as legal activities. More specific sorts of assistance, such as forgery or obtaining the necessary documentation, require further explanation.

In the sphere of aid initiatives, a distinction should be drawn between actions addressed to the population in the occupied country—which included parcels to ghettos and cooperation with the Central Welfare Council, a Polish social assistance organisation established with the consent of the Germans in 1940—and measures taken to help refugees. In the latter case, it is also necessary to differentiate between the situation of the refugees in hostile or neutral countries from their position

in allied countries. Obviously, it was one thing to help Jewish refugees in Cuba and another to try to rescue Jews in Hungary.

There were various ways to provide aid, which included sending parcels containing medicines, food, and clothing, as well as attempts to transfer money or deliver necessary (genuine and forged) documents. A separate issue was the evacuation of endangered people: trying to obtain visas or the consent of neutral countries to accept the refugees. It is also worth noting that Polish officials sometimes faced the need to make ethically difficult decisions. When it was not possible to assist all those in need, it was necessary to choose who would be helped in each situation. Such decisions sometimes depended on Polish officials and sometimes also on the policies of other countries, especially with regard to issuing an entry visa or giving consent to host the refugees. The Polish side noted that in some situations 'the momentous endeavour of evacuating our compatriots can only be resolved by individualising the respective groups. Troops, technicians, engineers, clerks, etc., can be summoned to England by name, and the same shall be the case for the families of the servicemen on active duty in England. For the remaining people, the opportunity has not yet arisen to be evacuated because of the inability of refugees to stay at the expense of the Treasury for an incalculable period of time, and finally because of the transfer policy of the British Government' (doc. 57).

People of Jewish descent who were representatives of sought-after professions, those who could count on being provided for by their relatives, or those who were wealthy (as was the case with the so-called 'diamond traders for whom attempts could be made to obtain British visas', doc. 142) had better prospects of receiving the most valuable aid, i.e. the permission for the evacuation. The vast majority of Jewish refugees could not count on complete assistance during evacuation, and as the Polish authorities noted: 'The efforts made by the Polish Government in various countries to obtain entry permits for Polish refugees indicate that the Jewish element among the refugees generally cannot expect any sort of loosening of immigration restrictions regarding collective visas for them' (doc. 58).

Another area of Government action included the dissemination of information and propaganda, which was undertaken primarily by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Information and Documentation. The representatives of the Polish Government sent a number of notes and appeals addressed directly to the authorities of the Allied States and conducted numerous discussions with their counterparts from other countries. Public speeches, radio and press interviews, inspired publications, as well as the editing of document collections, relations, photographs and brochures also comprised this set of activities. These included the bulletins issued by the Polish diplomatic and consular posts and reports published by the institutions established for this purpose, such as the Polish Information Center in the United States.

The activities of the well-known courier Jan Karski should also be mentioned here. He held a number of talks and meetings in Great Britain and the United States, reporting on the situation in the occupied country and discussing the issue of the Holocaust.

The Government's information activities also included the continued campaign against antisemitism accusations concerning both the population in occupied Poland and Polish authorities in exile, relief agencies, military authorities, and soldiers.

An important part of the information policy was the gathering by the posts of any information on the Holocaust obtained from eyewitnesses who managed to escape from occupied areas. These reports were—in addition to the messages sent by the Underground Home Army and the Government Delegation for Poland—the basis for Government information activities, although there is still a dispute among historians about the time the Western powers were notified about Operation Reinhardt, among others. There is an ongoing debate as to whether the Government in London publicised information about the Holocaust immediately upon receiving it.

In the legal sphere, in the initial phase of the war, the most important decision was the repealing of the aforementioned Act of 1938 on the revocation of Polish citizenship. On 2 October 1939, two days after being appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, August Zaleski instructed the Polish consulates to suspend its execution (doc. 6). Interestingly, Zaleski had no power to revoke laws; however, he considered, either for humanitarian reasons or perhaps for image-related ones, that it was necessary to block the operation of this type of regulation. The act was formally repealed in November 1941 (doc. 145).

An initiative was also taken to legally regulate the status of the Jewish minority in post-war Poland. This was a permanent feature of statements by representatives of Jewish communities and in the demands formulated by foreign politicians, which in turn forced the Polish authorities to take a position. Documents drawn up throughout the war illustrate the entire spectrum of Polish thinking with regard to the post-war position of the Jewish minority.

Legal activities were also linked to the already mentioned case of punishing war criminals. This purpose was served, among others, by gathering appropriate evidence.

It is important to stress that the legal obligation of each consular service is to assist the citizens of its state. In the case of the actions of the Polish consular service, there are examples of this obligation being fulfilled and aid given also to people of Jewish descent who never held Polish citizenship.

One special form of activity—which, in some respects, went far beyond the standard diplomatic and consular activities—was falsifying or obtaining the necessary documentation for rescuing Jews. Three main areas should be distinguished in this respect. The first is obtaining genuine documents issued by the diplomatic posts of the neutral states; the second is issuing Polish passports to people who were not Polish citizens; the third type of action undertaken includes the manufacturing of documents (e.g. baptism certificates), with the main purpose to hide the Jewish descent of refugees.

As far as documents from neutral countries are concerned, we are talking primarily about passports of South American countries obtained by the Polish Legation in Bern and the RELICO group. Aleksander Ładoś, Konstanty Rokicki, Stefan Ryniewicz and Juliusz Kühl participated in this project on behalf of the Polish post, while the most famous representatives of the RELICO committee included Adolf (Abraham) Silberschein and Chaim Eiss. Obtaining South American passports is sometimes described as falsification, but in fact the documents themselves were genuine, although the people for whom they were issued had nothing to do with the country of their new citizenship.

The action was initially carried out by the Polish Legation in Bern, which did not notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London. The Deputy Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gustaw Potworowski, addressed Aleksander Ładoś as late as 19 May 1943: ‘The Ministry has recently been informed by Jewish organisations about the alleged possibility of rescuing individual Jews from being murdered by Germans on the basis of passports of South American countries’. Although the Ministry had no knowledge of the measures taken, it fully supported the initiative, and Potworowski stressed: ‘Moments of strictly humanitarian nature induce us to act to the broadest possible extent in these matters. The Ministry asks you for a cable message about the efforts undertaken by you, and their results’ (doc. 354).

When the German authorities became aware of this practice, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted a wide-ranging action in the South American countries, requesting the Polish diplomatic posts to take all possible measures to have the issued passports recognised by the local authorities. In the circular of 21 December 1943, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tadeusz Romer requested ‘to take immediate and swift action with all the Governments concerned, so that they send instructions for the legations representing their interests in Berlin that all these passports, which have been issued solely for humanitarian purposes to save people from certain death, and which do not impose any obligations on the governments in question after the war, are to be recognised as valid for the duration of the war’ (doc. 417). The Embassies in Washington and the Holy See also made efforts to obtain the support of the United States and the Vatican on this issue. In another

circular, Romer additionally requested Ambassador Jan Ciechanowski ‘to support this matter at the Department of State, so that instructions are sent to American envoys in Latin America,’ and Ambassador Kazimierz Papée ‘to intervene with the Secretariat of State, so that instructions are sent to the Nuncios in Latin America, so that they can carry out their interventions with the governments concerned on humanitarian grounds’ (doc. 459).

In June 1944, the actions carried out were summarised as follows: ‘The Ministry spares no effort to trigger an effective action that could protect Jews who were provided with courtesy Latin American passports from deportation to Poland and extermination. What makes it difficult is having only residual data on the number of people concerned and the number of passports of individual American republics. Already in March, the Ministry demanded the Jewish organisations in Switzerland to provide as complete data as possible, but it has not yet received it’ (doc. 486).¹⁷

It is also worth noting that these efforts to convince the authorities of South American countries also addressed the issue of Jews deported from France. In a circular sent to the Polish diplomatic posts in September 1942, Minister Edward Raczyński requested: ‘Following previous instructions regarding the anti-Jewish operation in France, I request that you ask the government to which you are accredited, to grant a certain quota of visas to Polish citizens in France, which may make it easier for us to persuade the French authorities into allowing them to leave and to providing temporary asylum in Switzerland and Portugal’ (doc. 246).

The second way of granting documents to refugees was to issue Polish passports to non-Polish citizens. This was particularly prevalent in France, where many Polish consulates, especially just before the collapse of France, passed on Polish passports to refugees in need. These passports made it easier for the refugees to travel, because, as noted in August 1940, ‘holders of those passports are privileged by the English, Spanish, and Portuguese authorities.’ As a result, the Polish authorities in London received information in 1940 ‘from people who have recently arrived from unoccupied France, that in France, Spain and Portugal, hundreds of people, mostly Jews who do not speak Polish, have foreign passports issued by the Polish Consulate in Toulouse’ (doc. 56).

¹⁷ Recent research indicates that between 4,000 to 5,000 such documents were issued thanks to the collaboration between the Bern embassy officials and the RELICO aid committee, and that the passport campaign involved approximately 10,000 people. For more, see J. Kumoch, M. Maniewska, J. Uszyński, B. Zygmunt, *Lista Ładosia. Spis osób, na których nazwiska w okresie II wojny światowej zostały wystawione paszporty latinoamerykańskie przez Poselstwo RP i organizacje żydowskie w Szwajcarii*, Instytut Pileckiego, Warszawa 2021.

These reports were confirmed by the Polish Envoy in Lisbon, Karol Dubicz-Penther, who in January 1941, describing the different types of documents held by Jewish refugees, noted: 'After 20 June 1940, the obtainment of passports by Jews of the alleged Polish decent in the consulates of the Republic of Poland in France was relatively simple, as to be granted a passport one only had to present a French or Belgian identification card, with an annotation stating that the holder is "of Polish nationality". All Jews who after 20 June 1940 passed through either Toulouse or Marseille hold such passports, which from a legal standpoint are legitimate and must be accepted, having been issued by the offices of the Republic of Poland operating abroad' (doc. 87). In one of his earlier reports, Dubicz stated in turn that 'these people usually speak no Polish' (doc. 84).

Some of the passports issued by Polish consulates and delegations in France to 'people who do not hold the right to them' were later cancelled by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but this was done after Jews fled from France, when these passports had already played their role and allowed them to evacuate (doc. 84).

Granting Polish citizenship to people who were not associated with Poland exacerbated the problem of service in the Polish Army. The men of military age who received Polish passports were automatically obliged by law to serve in the Polish Army, of which they were for obvious reasons not convinced. Their reluctant position naturally caused negative reactions on the Polish side.

The third method of providing Jews with life-saving documents stemmed from the reluctant position of neutral countries towards accepting Jewish refugees. While obtaining a visa for a Polish national was a difficult but feasible task, some restrictions were introduced in the case of people of Jewish descent that made it impossible. In this situation, the Polish posts tried to hide the true nationality of the refugees, and the easiest way to do so was to produce documents confirming the person's 'membership' in the Christian religion. This was the task of the Consul General in Istanbul, Wojciech Rychlewicz, who issued certificates even to people whose names clearly indicated their Jewish origin.¹⁸ Rychlewicz's aid was also a product of instructions sent by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In December 1940, Foreign Minister August Zaleski requested of Rychlewicz in a cable: 'We are making efforts to obtain entry visas to British territories for Jewish refugees. Barlas sent a telegram to Schwarzbart saying that Jewish refugees were not provided material support by the Consulate. In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare, I request that you provide material assistance for the Jewish refugees who do not have means of their own' (footnote 98 to doc. 79).

¹⁸ E. Beck, "The Angel from Istanbul", *Israel Hayom*, 11 December 2020.

The Turkish authorities apparently discovered the procedure and introduced certain restrictions. Rychlewicz's successor in Istanbul, Consul Aleksy Wdziękoński, informed in February 1942 about the instructions of the Turkish Ministry of Internal Affairs, which provided that 'only authoritative documents confirming the religion of foreigners are either birth or baptism certificates issued immediately after birth or a few years after birth, but also that they must be attached with a certificate from the parish register accompanied by the signature of a priest, the head of the Parish Office, confirming the authenticity of the certificate' (doc. 165).

The Polish Envoy in Lisbon used slightly subtler methods, trying to choose among the Jewish refugees those who were most likely to be recognised as Slavs. Initially, when seeking permission for emigration to Brazil, the Consulate prepared documents for both Polish and Jewish refugees. However, the way in which the Brazilian Consulate in Lisbon rejected the applications of Jewish refugees made it change the mode of operation. As a result, in the report of January 1941, Dubicz-Penther stated: 'In all the cases when the Polish Jews had the required data and appearances to pass for "Aryan-Slavs" of the Christian religion (Polish first and last name, a photograph not showing Semitic features, baptismal certificates), the Legation of the Republic of Poland prepared dossiers for the Brazilian Consulate, furnishing those persons with confidential certificates of their Aryan descent and Christian religion. That mainly concerned Polish-Jews coming from Poland, and already assimilated members of the intelligentsia. The Legation used that method wishing to facilitate the obtainment of Brazilian visas to the greatest number of Polish citizens' (doc. 85).

Ambassador Kazimierz Papée dealt similarly with the refugees in Italy. The Embassy to the Holy See was formally only operational in the Vatican, with the Ambassador unable to act in Italy outside its jurisdiction. However, Papée tried to bring about a situation in which the refugees, 'instead of an official certificate of their Aryan origin, present a certificate issued by the Church authorities, that is, by the Rector of the Polish Church in Rome, validated by the Vicariate of the City of Rome' (doc. 89).

The three kinds of efforts to obtain documents described above enabled thousands of Jewish refugees to emigrate, which would have been very difficult, if not impossible, without the support of Polish diplomatic posts. It is worth noting that the Polish authorities had already assisted in the illegal emigration of Jews to Palestine during the pre-war period. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Second Department of the General Staff were involved in facilitating all forms of emigration to the Middle East, formally presented as tourist or scientific trips. Extensive passport facilities were used, and the forging

of documents was supported or tolerated.¹⁹ Such pre-war experiences may have been useful in the continuation of similar activities after the outbreak of the war.

*THE MASS AND SYSTEMATIC NATURE
OF THE ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN*

It is worth emphasising the scale of actions undertaken by the Polish Government. From the beginning of the war, the refugee problem was an enormous one. Almost all posts were facing the challenge of helping tens of thousands of people who were trying to get out of endangered areas. Polish diplomatic posts had to meet this challenge by acting as a representation of the Government of a country occupied by aggressors, with no territory of its own in which it could place the refugees: they could only act as petitioners requesting other countries to provide the refugees with shelter. The tasks of the posts were all the more difficult as the enormous development of aid activities was not accompanied by a reinforcement of the staff. Budget constraints due to war difficulties were also a standard.

The mass nature of the actions was due both to the large number of refugees and to attempts undertaken by them to use all possible escape routes. Jews were fleeing from Europe by several routes. The first one led through Italy, France/Vichy, Spain, Portugal, and further to the United States, South America and North Africa. The second wound through Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, then towards Palestine and the Middle East, as well as to the countries of South America. Another route was going through the Wilno region, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the USSR and onward to Japan and the Far East. The northern route, which led through Sweden and further to the United States, was less efficient.

The multitude of routes used and the need to provide support to refugees already on the ground meant that in principle all Polish posts were involved in aid activities. In one of the reports of May 1944 it was even stated that: 'The work of many Polish posts mainly consists of caring for Jews. A common example of this would be our Legation in Cuba, set up, among other reasons, to provide care for Jews who arrived in Jamaica' (doc. 473). Polish officials were faced with the need to solve a huge problem and the constant reluctance of individual states to accept Jewish refugees. They tried at all costs to find destinations for the evacuees. This was all the more important given that the departure of some refugees, for example from Portugal to South America, allowed other refugees from the more endangered

¹⁹ See, inter alia: A. Patek, *Żydzi w drodze do Palestyny 1934–1944. Szkice z dziejów aliji bet – nielegalnej imigracji żydowskiej*, Wydawnictwo Avalon, Kraków 2009; see also: L. Weinbaum, *A Marriage of Convenience. The New Zionist Organization and the Polish Government 1936–1939*, New York 1993.

territories to be hosted in their place. This was expressed very clearly by the Polish Envoy in Lisbon who, referring to the allegations of stopping the evacuation of Jews, argued: ‘The claims of Polish-Jewish citizens—with regard to their alleged tendentious treatment by the Legation to facilitate their further emigration from Portugal—are not so much unfounded as completely ridiculous. After all, it is in the interest of the Legation to unburden Portugal as quickly as possible from our refugees, who—by the fact of staying here—hinder the further obtainment of even transit visas for our citizens attempting to leave France’ (doc. 84).

As already mentioned, it would probably not be an exaggeration to state that the Polish diplomatic and consular service took part in one of the largest assistance actions to help Jews carried out during World War II.

ACCUSATIONS OF ANTISEMITISM AND ABUSES

Throughout the war Polish aid actions were accompanied by accusations of antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination against the Jewish population. The allegations were made against both politicians and some ambassadors, envoys and consuls. Many of them concerned the situation in the Polish military units, in the Polish Army in France, the Polish Army in the USSR and in the Middle East, and in the Polish Armed Forces in the West. The complaints were formulated by individuals, Jewish organisations, Western politicians and, above all, by the media. The antisemitic speeches made by some members of the National Council or in publications by the emigré press were also the subject of protests.

Polish authorities rejected the accusations by trying to point out the groundlessness of some, by setting up military commissions for investigating antisemitic behaviour, and by issuing appropriate instructions and orders to counter the manifestations of antisemitism. Public speeches or appeals by key politicians, which sought to assure that there was no discrimination, were also not uncommon. It was pointed out that these types of accusations were inspired by Germany and the USSR, which wanted to discredit the Polish authorities.

When assessing this aspect of the Government’s actions, it should be noted that antisemitic behaviour indeed occurred (especially in the army), but its scale was much smaller than was often suggested in the press. Not without significance was the discrepancy between the expectations and needs of refugees and the real capabilities of the Polish state apparatus and the Government based in London, which was often dependent on the British Government in its actions. Any failure to help Jews, often due to objective difficulties, was often perceived as a form of discrimination.

The tensions in Polish-Jewish relations reached its peak in the spring of 1944, when the matter of the Jewish soldiers' desertions from the Polish Armed Forces and attendant accusations of antisemitism became the subject of debates in the House of Commons.²⁰ However, it should be borne in mind that the difficulties in mutual relations existed in principle since the beginning of the war. It is impossible to find at least one document from that period in which Poles would not criticise the behaviour of the Jewish population in the territories of the Republic of Poland taken over by the USSR in September 1939. These allegations are probably most clearly seen in the statement of the Polish Consulate in Chernivtsi, which described the situation under Soviet occupation in the following words: 'By their own deeds Jews managed to turn many philosemites into fierce antisemites' (doc. 14). The October 1941 conversation between General Władysław Anders, who was forming the Polish Army in the USSR, and the politicians of the Bund, Henryk Erlich and Wiktor Alter (both later murdered by the NKVD), was also symptomatic: Anders, recalling the behaviour of some Jews, judged that 'such things cannot remain without a trace', arguing with his interlocutors, who claimed that 'these were isolated events' (doc. 139). On the other hand, information on the discriminatory treatment of the Jewish minority by the pre-war Polish Government could equally often be found in archival documentation and scientific literature, which allegedly led to Polish Jews' low degree of identification with the Polish state. Many scholars also hold opinions that the positive attitude of the Jewish community to the Red Army in 1939 was due to the fear of German troops that occupied Poland being a much greater threat.²¹

Many emotions and accusations also stemmed from the formation of the Polish Army in the USSR and from the distribution of foreign aid. Complaints that Jews participated very little in the army being formed and that people of Jewish descent were discriminated against in the distribution of medicines, food and clothing were constant elements of bilateral Polish-Jewish relations. They were accompanied by the Polish assurances on the fair distribution of funds, which even mentioned the distribution as being weighted in favour of Jews. The large number of Jews in the Polish Army was also (especially initially) emphasised, which resulted in rude comments about the military consisting of 'sidelocked and bearded "Poles" from Równe and Pińsk' (doc. 155).

It is worth noting that the aid activities, carried out under extremely difficult conditions and sometimes by randomly selected staff of individual delegations,

²⁰ See also: T. Gąsowski, *Pod sztandarami Orła Białego: kwestia żydowska w Polskich Siłach Zbrojnych w czasie II wojny światowej*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2002.

²¹ For example, see: D. Engel, *In the Shadow of Auschwitz. The Polish Government-in-Exile and the Jews, 1939–1942*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, London 1987, p. 12 and following.

failed to avoid errors, dishonesty or simple waste, which were interpreted by the recipients as a continuation of pre-war discriminatory practices. As a result, the operation of the Polish aid apparatus in the USSR was the subject of a study by the Supreme Audit Office under the Polish authorities in exile.²² Irregularities occurred not only in the USSR: for example, Stanisław Zabiełło, when describing the situation in France, pointed out in October 1941 the consequences of ‘emergence for some time of gangs of forgers and providers of Polish documents’ (doc. 138). It was also pointed out that it was possible for the Jews to obtain Polish passports illegally, for a payment (‘the two Ehrenberg brothers, Zolna and others, claimed that they had paid for passports in the Consulate in Toulouse to make their journey easier’, doc. 56).

Further worth noting is that a number of actions initiated with the authorities and officials of the occupying or neutral countries were, by their very nature, illegal. Giving a bribe in exchange for documents, food, medicines, clothing or travel permission was an action without which it would not be possible to imagine helping. In such a reality, it is easy to blur the line between what is acceptable and necessary and what is unethical and reprehensible.

The evacuation of the Polish Army in the USSR (and its accompanying civilians) to Iran caused even more friction. The complaints of Jewish communities regarding the omission of Jews were once again accompanied by Polish assurances of non-discrimination and of complete inclusion of Jews. It is essential to pay attention to the position of the Soviet authorities, which from 1 December 1941 began to recognise the inhabitants of pre-war Poland of Jewish, Belarusian and Ukrainian origin as citizens of the USSR. This was the so-called ‘passportisation’ of people who stayed on the territories occupied by the USSR during the period 1939–1941 and were regarded as citizens of the Soviet Union. As a result, the Soviet authorities did not agree to the admission of Polish Jews to the army commanded by General Anders and even less so to their mass evacuation to the Middle East. The Polish Ambassador in Kuybyshev, Stanisław Kot, even stated that ‘The Soviets ... have now started to do astonishing things with the Jews, treating even those from Cracow and Warsaw as Soviet citizens; therefore, someone has to immediately shoulder the unofficial burden of information and propaganda related to that issue’ (footnote 48 to doc. 176). The information activities were all the more important given that Jewish communities seemed to fail to comprehend the policy of the Soviet authorities on citizenship, whose main purpose was to undermine Poland’s rights to the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic.

²² See more in: D. Boćkowski, “Działalność ambasady RP w Kujbyszewie oraz jej delegatur i placówek mężów zaufania w świetle raportów NIK Rządu RP w Londynie”, *Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, vol. 32, 1997, p. 203–222.

Despite the Soviet obstruction, Ambassador Kot pointed out that ‘a number of Jews were smuggled by the Polish authorities’ (doc. 204). Kot also mentioned this issue in his correspondence with Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski, to whom he suggested in anticipation of the planned meeting with Anders: ‘It is necessary for our military bodies in Russia to maintain a demeanour concerning Jewish affairs that is as appropriate as possible. Too often, antisemitism manifests itself in military bodies in relation to Jewish citizens. Regarding the issue of conscription and transportation of troops, the argument that these restrictions were imposed upon us by the Soviet Union against the [wishes of] Polish authorities has not been taken advantage of in contacts with Jews. Consequently, Jews share a common conviction that these limitations resulted from the instructions of the Polish Government’ (doc. 183).

Finally, it is worth emphasising that Polish-Jewish relations belonged to one of the most difficult spheres of activity of the Polish Government-in-Exile. They were subject to historical sentiments, with one of the most brutal crimes in the history of humanity taking place in the background. The smallest incident occurring in the shadow of the Holocaust aroused intense feelings and was seen as an unsolvable problem. Moreover, all actions were taken in the reality of a lack of reliable information, in the constant flood of rumours, gossip, or in contemporary language, fake news, released as part of the propaganda struggle. The refugees whose lives were threatened sometimes placed faith in even the unlikeliest of rumours, and the allegations made were sometimes extremely absurd. It is therefore not strange at all that mutual relations were accompanied by excessive emotions based on the stereotypes described above, and by a lack of understanding. Accusations were also made against Jewish aid organisations, which was raised by, among others, the Polish Consul General in Jerusalem: ‘It should be noted that the Orthodox Jews are treated unfairly for political reasons when aid resources are distributed by official Jewish authorities in Palestine’ (doc. 158).

It is also worth mentioning instances of the opposite situation playing out, i.e. a harmonious cooperation between Poles and Jews. The cooperation of the Polish Legation in Bern with the RELICO committee, described above, is an example of this phenomenon.

Lastly, one should bear in mind that during the war, work was carried out under extremely difficult conditions, including the risk to officials’ own lives, in the situation of a constant shortage of aid resources and in full awareness that it was impossible to rescue all of those who were in danger. In his well-known war novel, *The Night in Lisbon*, Erich Maria Remarque wrote about the fate of people trying to escape from Nazi Germany: ‘As usual in times of war, fear, and affliction, the individual human being had ceased to exist; only one thing counted:

a valid passport.²³ Any activity carried out in such circumstances on the one hand necessarily aroused extreme passions on the part of the person in need of rescue, and on the other hand created a fertile ground for various irregularities.

BUREAUCRATIC DIFFICULTIES

Another permanent feature of the work of the Polish diplomatic and consular service was the need to overcome various bureaucratic difficulties. In the first place, all necessary permits had to be obtained for sending parcels to the occupied country, and all the export formalities dealt with. One of the obstacles was, for example, the ban on the shipment of goods to lands occupied by Germany, the restriction on the export of food from individual neutral countries, as well as the provisions imposed by the USSR that ordered the quarantine of the clothing sent.

Another complication was the need to obtain confirmation that the aid provided was properly used. Donors often expected to be supplied with appropriate certificates that were extremely difficult to obtain, for example when sending parcels to a ghetto. Obtaining specific addresses for orphans, hospitals, monasteries and relief institutions was a true challenge. In this case, assistance to particular posts was sometimes provided by, among others, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which sent the appropriate lists ('The Ministry also encloses a list with names of people, Jews from the country, for the purpose of sending parcels to them', doc. 354). Other ministries also prepared lists for parcel delivery ('Food parcels from Sweden have been and continue to be sent to a "professor list" delivered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs', doc. 356).

Moreover, the transferred or purchased goods had to be controlled, as the companies offering sales of aid products tried to exploit the situation by providing outdated food or worn out, worthless clothing. The distribution of such donations to refugees resulted in another wave of allegations of unfair treatment of those in need. It was necessary to separate the real donors from the various types of intermediaries engaged in fraud and illegal undertakings.

It was crucial to balance the aid provided appropriately so that it could be used as efficiently as possible. It was necessary to know which products were most needed and to make an appropriate selection of the funds raised. Different medicines were needed in Siberia and in the refugee centres in Africa, just as different clothes had to go to soldiers in POW camps and still others to orphanages or children's hospitals.

²³ E.M. Remarque, *The Night in Lisbon*, translated by R. Manheim, Hutchinson Library Service, London 1972, p. 6.

In view of the shortage of staff, even the ordinary (under normal conditions) official activities such as the handling of correspondence, the issuing of certificates and other documents, as well as the keeping of records were all challenging. The lack of qualified typists or even typewriters meant that it was necessary to draw up handwritten lists, sometimes of thousands of names, together with address data and basic information. The shortage of writing paper and basic office supplies was also problematic.

Nor was the situation facilitated by the animosities inside the Polish civil service: the antagonism between the 'old' officials appointed before the war and the staff appointed by the Government-in-Exile often made it difficult to conduct aid activities.

THE ROLE OF THE POSTS

It is not possible to overestimate how the Polish Government's aid operations benefitted from the network of foreign posts. They had their own mailing addresses and bank accounts, used encrypted communications, could issue passports and other documents and formally intervene with the local state authorities. These obvious attributes of each representative office became crucial during the war. The possibility of sending information quickly sometimes saved lives, while the bank account of an embassy, legation or consulate was used to provide financial resources devoted to aid purposes. The activities of the most important politicians and supreme state authorities would necessarily have been more limited without the ability to exploit the potential of the Polish diplomatic and consular service and the work of many civilian officials.

GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE: THE ORGANISATION OF THE MFA AND ITS POSTS

The aggression of Germany and the USSR against Poland and the subsequent evacuation and internment of the Polish authorities in Romania made it necessary to set up a new centre of authority to enable actions outside the reach of the aggressor states. As a result, the offices of President and Prime Minister together with the Council of Ministers were recreated, and a National Council was set up as a quasi-parliamentary body on the territory of allied France. After the collapse of France in the war with Germany, the Polish authorities evacuated to London, where they were active until the end of the war.

During the war, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was headed in turn by August Zaleski, Edward Raczyński (initially in charge of the ministry and then as minister), Tadeusz Romer, and Adam Tarnowski. In the second most important ministry for this volume, the Ministry of Social Welfare, subsequently renamed to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the function of the minister was held for almost the entire period of the war by the politician of the Polish Socialist Party, Jan Stańczyk, who developed a network of assistance agencies, most often operating at Polish diplomatic and consular posts. Stańczyk did not form part of the cabinet that Tomasz Arciszewski set up at the end of November 1944, when the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was headed by the Prime Minister himself.

It is worth mentioning here the Ministry of Information and Documentation (acting until September 1940 as the Centre for Information and Documentation), which dealt with Jewish affairs in the domain of information and propaganda. It was headed by Minister Stanisław Stroński, who was succeeded by Stanisław Kot, who later was replaced by Adam Pragier. The activity of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, led subsequently by Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski, Stanisław Kot, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, Władysław Banaczyk and Zygmunt Berezowski, is also important for this subject.²⁴

Other relevant questions included military structures, the evacuation of soldiers, the creation and evacuation of the Polish Armed Forces and the related issue of soldiers of Jewish descent. The activities of the National Council and its efforts concerning, among other, the situation of the population in occupied Poland were also significant.

Upon the outbreak of World War II, Poland had a relatively large network of foreign posts, consisting of 10 embassies, more than 20 legations (with the accreditation of envoys in 20 additional countries) and a broad consular network, composed of around 200 consulates general, consulates and vice-consulates, consular departments at embassies and legations as well as consular agencies and honorary consulates.²⁵

²⁴ See: M. Hułas, *Goście czy intruzi. Rząd polski na uchodźstwie wrzesień 1939 – lipiec 1943*, Instytut Historii PAN, Warszawa 1996.

²⁵ See, inter alia: W. Michowicz, "Organizacja polskiego aparatu dyplomatycznego w latach 1918–1939", in: P. Łossowski (ed.), *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, vol. IV, 1918–1939, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1995; K. Szczepanik, *Organizacja polskiej służby zagranicznej 1918–2010*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Askon, Warszawa 2012, P. Ceranka, K. Szczepanik (ed.), *Urzędy konsularne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918–1945. Informator Archiwalny*, NDAP, MSZ, Warszawa 2021 and S. Żerko (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1939 styczeń–sierpień*, PISM, Warszawa 2005.

After September 1939, the diplomatic and consular network began to shrink.²⁶ In the first place, the posts in Germany and the Soviet Union ceased to exist, as was the General Commissariat in the Free City of Danzig and the Legation in Bratislava, followed by the closing of the legations in the Baltic countries.²⁷

The German aggression against Denmark and Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg in the spring of 1940 meant the termination of Polish posts in those countries, with diplomatic relations (apart from Denmark) maintained by representatives to the respective governments-in-exile. The situation in France was somewhat different. After a temporary departure to Madrid, Feliks Frankowski returned to French territory to operate as Chargé d'Affaires at the Polish Embassy in Vichy. Starting in September 1940, after the Vichy Government broke diplomatic relations with Poland, Polish citizens in France were cared for by the Polish Bureaux. In turn, after their liquidation through conversion into the Bureaux of the Administration of Poles in France as part of the French administration, their General Director, Stanisław Zabięło, remained in Vichy as an unofficial representative of the Polish Government; in December 1942, he was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in a concentration camp. Diplomatic ties with France were formally restored in 1943 by the establishment of official relations with the French Committee of National Liberation.

The Embassies in Rome, Bucharest and Budapest were also closed under German pressure, and the Consulates in Kabul and in Harbin were liquidated for financial reasons.²⁸

In 1941, as a result of further German invasions, the Legations in Athens and Belgrade as well as the Consulate General in Zagreb were evacuated. The Bulgarian and Finnish authorities, on the other hand, requested the Polish Envoys in Sofia and Helsinki to leave their territories. The Japanese authorities made a similar

²⁶ See, inter alia: H. Batowski, *Polska dyplomacja na obczyźnie 1939–1941*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1991 and W. Michowicz, "Organizacja polskiej służby dyplomatycznej w okresie II wojny światowej", in: *idem* (ed.), *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, vol. V, 1939–1945, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1999.

²⁷ Documents illustrating the liquidation of the posts in Germany and the USSR and in the Baltic countries (as well as materials on repression against the Polish Consuls in Germany) were published in volume W. Rojek (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1939 wrzesień–grudzień* (hereinafter: PDD 1939 wrzesień–grudzień), PISM, Warszawa 2007, *passim*.

²⁸ See documents (including final reports of liquidated posts) published in M. Hułas (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1940* (hereinafter: PDD 1940), PISM, Warszawa 2010, *passim*. Final report of the Legation in Budapest (which was eventually closed in January 1941), see in J. Tebinka, *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1941* (hereinafter: PDD 1941), PISM, Warszawa 2013, doc. 17.

decision, withdrawing their recognition of the Polish Ambassador in Tokyo, who was forced to leave the capital of Japan and temporarily move to Shanghai, under occupation by Japanese troops at the time.²⁹

A watershed development for the Polish diplomatic network was the German aggression against the USSR and, as a consequence, the signing of the Sikorski–Maisy Agreement, which allowed the re-establishment of the Polish Embassy in Moscow (then transferred to Kuybyshev) and the appointment of delegations and hundreds of assistance institutions throughout the USSR. The USSR broke diplomatic relations with Poland in April 1943 (see doc. 344), although as early as December 1942 the Soviet authorities were, in practice, preventing the Polish aid institutions from carrying out their mission.³⁰

The Polish side also took steps to increase the number of posts, sometimes in distant countries, which included the setting up of the Legation in Ottawa and the Consulate in Pretoria, and it opened a number of delegations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Polish Red Cross around the world. The success of the Western allies in the later stages of the war allowed for the reappearance of representations in North Africa and in the countries of Western Europe: for example, the Allied takeover of Italy allowed for the temporary re-establishment of the Embassy and Consulate in Rome subordinate to the Polish Government-in-Exile based in London. The so-called Polish ‘settlements’ (refugee camps) were also created in British colonies in Africa and South American countries, as well as in New Zealand and India, where tens of thousands of Polish and Jewish refugees found asylum after being evacuated, mainly from the USSR.³¹

Many Polish posts operated (although not without difficulty) in allied and neutral countries. In the United States, apart from the Embassy in Washington, an important role was played by the Consulate General in New York. There were legations and consulates in South American countries, as well as consulates in Africa and the Middle East, where the most important Polish posts undoubtedly included the Consulates General in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, not to mention the Legation in Tehran. The Consulate General in Bombay, which played a role in the evacuation activities, also deserves mention.

²⁹ See: PDD 1941, *passim*.

³⁰ B. Szubtarska, *Ambasada polska w ZSRR w latach 1941–1943*, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2005; see also: M. Hułas, *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1942* (hereinafter: PDD 1942), PISM, Warszawa (in preparation) and R. Habielski (ed.), *Stosunki polsko-sowieckie od września 1939 r. do kwietnia 1943 r. Zbiór dokumentów*, MSZ, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warszawa 2021.

³¹ See, inter alia: J. Wróbel, *Uchodźcy polscy ze Związku Sowieckiego 1942–1950*, IPN, Łódź 2003.

Among Poland's European posts that were continuously operational throughout the war, the most important were the Legations in Bern, Madrid and Lisbon, as well as the Embassy and Consulates General in London and Dublin. The Embassies to the Holy See and in Ankara, as well as the Consulate General in Istanbul, were equally important. The Legation in Stockholm, after the Swedish authorities declared Gustaw Potworowski a *persona non grata*, operated under the direction of Henryk Sokolnicki, acting as the Chargé d'Affaires.³²

Regarding the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, separate attention must be directed to the Refugee Section set up in 1940, which was headed for almost the entire war period (until 1944) by Józef Marlewski (later replaced by Maciej Zafęski). In 1943, a Jewish Section was also created, headed in turn by Karol Kraczkiewicz, Zdzisław Krzywkowski and Jan Wszelaki.³³

The Nationalities Department headed by Olgierd Górka—which initially operated within the framework of the Ministry of Information and Documentation but was later transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs—was to a large extent engaged in relief projects concerning Jews (doc. 553). Another institution to keep in mind is the Council for Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland (doc. 461).

The Government's central offices (President, Prime Minister, Presidium of the Council of Ministers, National Council, Army, individual departments), the service apparatus as well as a whole array of foreign representations completed the institutional image of the Polish state. This rather extensive (if wartime conditions are considered) and constantly changing structure devoted much attention to providing assistance to refugees dispersed around the world, as well as those in occupied Poland.

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF DOCUMENTS AND RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The time frame of this collection corresponds to the years of World War II. The opening document is the circular, on the German invasion of Poland, by Józef Beck, Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 1 September 1939. Adopting

³² See: PDD 1942, *passim*; see also: J. Tebinka (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1943*, PISM, Warszawa (in preparation). See also: E. Kołodziej, "Rola polskich placówek dyplomatycznych i konsularnych w latach 1939–1945", in: Z. Błazyński (ed.), *Władze RP na obczyźnie podczas II wojny światowej. 1939–1945*, Polskie Towarzystwo Naukowe na Obczyźnie, Londyn 1994 and H. Batowski, *Polska dyplomacja na obczyźnie...*, *op. cit.*

³³ See: P. Ceranka (ed.), *Urząd Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1939-1945*, MSZ, NDAP, Warszawa 2021.

such a starting point and including documents concerning the aggression of the Soviet Union and the evacuation of the Polish authorities is not entirely consistent with the title of the work, which refers to the activities of the Polish Government-in-Exile. However, we decided that starting a volume devoted to World War II with documents from 17 or 30 September 1939 would be an artificial operation, disruptive to the narrative.

The volume ends with the note by Ambassador Edward Raczyński of 6 July 1945, addressed to the British authorities, protesting their recognition of the communist-dominated and Soviet-subordinate government in Warsaw. At the same time, Great Britain, France and the United States withdrew their recognition of the Polish Government-in-Exile as the legitimate one. As a result of the implementation of the decisions made at the Tehran and Yalta conferences, Poland lost more than half of its pre-war territory to Soviet Union, receiving some of Germany's eastern territories in return. It also lost its sovereignty by entering the Soviet sphere of influence. Raczyński's note, although not related to Jewish affairs, marks an end to the international diplomatic activities of the Second Polish Republic and an important period in the history of Poland. As such, this document also symbolises the end of the diplomatic efforts of the Government-in-Exile in Jewish matters.

The publication also includes several documents devoted to the most important and breakthrough events, such as the aforementioned German-Soviet aggression against Poland, Germany's attack on France, the outbreak of the German-Soviet war or the breaking of diplomatic relations with Poland by the USSR and the death of General Władysław Sikorski in the Gibraltar plane crash. Including these documents in the account places other records collected here in the relevant context and facilitates their interpretation.

Accounting for the entire period of World War II does not, of course, mean that every year of the war can be represented by the same amount of archival material. The volume contains 554 documents—in addition, several hundred others are cited in full or in part in footnotes—most of which come from the years 1941–1943, i.e. the period of the mass extermination of Jews. The earlier period, referred to in the historiography as that of ghettoisation, as well as the one that followed, which is referred to as the third phase of the Holocaust,³⁴ were documented by a smaller number of archival materials. Especially in 1939, the Polish authorities were preoccupied with the evacuation and reorganisation of state structures (in

³⁴ See, inter alia: D. Libionka, *Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*, Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, Lublin 2017.

exile), while in 1945 the war ended, and thereby the extermination of the Jewish population came to a stop.³⁵

The volume contains materials produced by the Polish authorities in exile, initially operating in France (Paris and Angers) and then in Great Britain. As already mentioned, the volume also includes (four) documents from September 1939, which were created before the formal establishment of the Government-in-Exile. However, not included are documents produced at the final stages of the war by the communist organisations formed in the USSR and competing with the Government-in-Exile based in London, such as the Union of Polish Patriots, the Polish Committee of National Liberation, the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland or the Provisional Government of National Unity, which was formed with the participation of some emigrant politicians.

As a rule, excluded are multilateral documents such as the declaration of allied powers and governments (including the Polish Government) of 17 December 1942, issued in reaction to some of the demands contained in the Polish note of 9/10 December 1942 (referred to as Raczyński's Note). Being a multilateral document, the declaration did not qualify for the publication, but Raczyński's Note and other documents that accompanied its issuance and distribution did.

In selecting the documents, the principle of publishing only materials produced by the Polish side was adopted, which is the general practice in the Polish Diplomatic Documents (PDD) series. This means that British, American, French or Russian archival materials were not included in the volume. Documents produced by Jewish communities and organisations—which often sent various letters, complaints, notes or memoranda to the Polish authorities or the Polish diplomatic and consular posts—had therefore to be excluded, too. However, this does not mean that Jewish voices are not present in this volume. A wide selection of them is included, for example, in the cables from posts providing information on Jewish appeals or in documents showing how to respond to such requests. The cables of the Polish posts used to transmit information received from the Jewish organisations were also illustrative, as such types of cables consisted only of the content of the letter, without any comments or changes made by Polish officials.

In addition, and as an exception, a small number of documents produced by Jewish organisations and groups, both in the country and abroad, were included in this volume. These include, for example, a letter from the Bund of April 1942 describing the Holocaust of Jews in occupied Poland (doc. 181) and a report

³⁵ The subsequent years have been illustrated by the following number of documents: 1939 – 18 documents, 1940 – 65, 1941 – 69, 1942 – 155, 1943 – 112, 1944 – 116 and 1945 – 19.

of November 1942 from the Jewish Agency on the evacuation of people of Jewish descent from the USSR (doc. 273).

Nor does the volume include the documents drawn up by Oneg Shabbat, a conspiracy archive run by Emanuel Ringelblum, which collected documentation on the situation of Jews during the occupation. Due to the inclusion of the letter from the Bund, it was decided not to publish the report entitled 'Second stage' prepared by Oneg Shabbat (also in April 1942).³⁶

The documents written by Polish politicians, officials, diplomats and soldiers of Jewish descent should be mentioned. The volume includes, among others, materials prepared by members of the Polish National Council, for example, Ignacy Schwarzbart, Szmul Zygielbojm, and Emanuel Szerer. The cables from the Polish Consul General in Tel Aviv, Henryk Rosmarin, or the note written by Julian Hochfeld, a soldier of the Polish Army in the East, should also be noted.

Despite the inclusions mentioned above, the main purpose of this collection is to demonstrate, in a holistic manner, the actions taken by the Government-in-Exile towards Jews, by both central departments and diplomatic or consular posts, as well as by various types of missions, delegations, representations and special emissaries. Although most documents relate to the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its subordinate posts, the activities of other ministries are illustrated, too, notably the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare as well as the Ministry of Information and Documentation. The work of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare should be particularly emphasised, as during the war it performed enormous humanitarian efforts through a constantly expanding network of aid agencies. In addition, attempts were made to highlight the activities of the Prime Minister and the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, as well as the efforts of the National Council. Another question was the documentation of Polish citizens of Jewish descent serving in the Polish Army, with particular emphasis on the Polish Army in the USSR and the issue of its evacuation to the Middle East. Polish-Jewish relations in the army, as well as recruitment, desertions, incidents and attempts to combat antisemitic attitudes, are all well-illustrated in this collection.

The attempt to show the actions taken by the Polish Government and its representative offices towards Jews has also resulted in the publication of many consular documents, which generally generate less interest among historians of international relations. Still, political events, visits and discussions are present in this volume only insofar as they concern Jewish affairs.

³⁶ A. Bańkowska, T. Epsztein (eds.), *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 11, *Ludzie i prace "Oneg Szabat"*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2013, doc. 66.

The adoption of such guidelines and the desire to show primarily the activities of diplomatic and consular posts resulted in the less frequent use of domestically produced materials. The activities of underground groups, such as the Union of Armed Struggle, the Home Army or the Government Delegation for Poland, are not of interest here. The focus was rather on showing the Government's steps to make international use of the information obtained from the occupied country. Documents from occupied Poland were therefore published only incidentally. The reality of the occupied country is shown through testimonies of refugees coming from occupied areas, who reached Polish posts and described the terror reigning in Poland. An example of this type of material is the testimony of the Jewish student about the situation in occupied Poland, submitted to the Polish Embassy to the Holy See³⁷ (doc. 345) or the report by the Polish Envoy in Madrid, which contains testimonies of witnesses of the liquidation of the ghettos in the General Government (doc. 366).

While giving aid, Polish officials needed to draw up all sorts of lists, records, summaries and registers of refugees or beneficiaries of the aid. Such lists appear several times (also as illustrations of the phenomenon). However, due to the already considerable size of this volume, most registers, sometimes of thousands of names, were not included. For example, the lists of Jewish refugees in Mozambique (doc. 298) or Honduras (doc. 523) are included in the volume, but the list of Jews with passports issued by South American countries (doc. 524) is not published.³⁸

It was decided to include several documents showing the fates of particular individuals to illustrate broader aid measures. These documents sometimes narrate the stories of well-known figures, for example Julian Tuwim, a Polish poet of Jewish descent (doc. 51), as well as those of 'ordinary' refugees who needed support or sought assistance for family members (doc. 271, among others).

In summary, the criterion applied was the selection of materials showing the activities of the Polish Government-in-Exile towards Jews located in occupied Poland and in many countries around the world. The focus was on the history of diplomatic and consular activities rather than on the history of the Holocaust itself. The aim of this volume is above all to show the activities of the diplomatic and consular service, not the attitudes of Polish society or the situation of the Jews in occupied Poland. Documents issued in occupied Poland, which demonstrated

³⁷ See also: D. Libionka, "Głową w mur. Interwencje Kazimierza Papée, polskiego ambasadora przy Stolicy Apostolskiej, w sprawie zbrodni niemieckich w Polsce, listopad 1942 – styczeń 1943", *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, no. 2, 2006.

³⁸ See: documents gathered in AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 41. See also: J. Kumoch, M. Maniewska, J. Uszyński, B. Zygmunt, *Lista Ładosia...*, *op. cit.*

the nature of daily life under occupation, were provided as illustrations of the phenomena or in the context of their further use by the authorities in exile.

Most of the documents in this volume have not been known to the public. However, this does not, of course, mean that the subject matter was presented in all of its dimensions here. Instead, it is hoped that this publication will be an impulse for further research and contributions to the topic.

Nonetheless, one of the research proposals, whose implementation would broaden the current state of knowledge, is the preparation of a publication showing the activities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, with particular attention paid to documenting the assistance rendered to refugees scattered around the world. Another topic worth publication is the work of the Polish Red Cross. The PRC delegations operated in the years 1939–1945 in several dozen countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, providing all kinds of support. The most important was the medical assistance in clinics and outpatient centres, as well as food aid carried out, among others, through cheap kitchens or canteens.

Another publication could be devoted to the Ministry of Treasury and the methods it used to obtain, transfer and use financial resources. This would be a significant addition to the research on the activities of the Polish Government in the face of the Holocaust.

Still another highly valuable project would be to create a collective portrait of Polish politicians and officials involved in aid activities. Such a biographical dictionary would be a reminder and narrate the lives of these people, highlighting their activities during the war but also showing their pre-war background as well as their post-war fates.

It would also be worth considering publishing a set of documents which, due to their extensiveness or a large number, could not be included in this volume, for example the documents illustrating the general aid measures taken in relation to the Jewish population in the USSR (doc. 381 and 382). These materials, included here only in part, certainly deserve a separate publication of critical and comprehensive nature. Moreover, the cables exchanged between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic or consular posts warrant a separate publication as well. These wartime dispatches have been preserved in a relatively good condition and are stored at the Hoover Institution, with the correspondence of particular posts arranged chronologically; they are also available online at www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl.³⁹ A broad edited selection of such documents would show, on the one hand, the systemic nature of actions undertaken by the

³⁹ Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 208–281.

Polish Government towards the Jewish population and, on the other, the mass use of Polish encrypted communications by Jewish organisations or representatives of Jewish communities.

It is also worth considering reissuing some information materials published by the Polish Government during the war. For example, at the beginning of 1942, the Ministry of Information and Documentation in London issued the so-called second 'black book' entitled *The German New Order in Poland*. It consisted of almost 600 pages of reports, testimonies and relations, as well as almost 200 photographs showing German crimes in occupied Poland. A new, critical edition, with particular emphasis on Chapter III entitled *The Persecution of the Jews, and the Ghettoes*, combined with the reissuing of publications such as the brochure titled *The Mass Extermination of Jews in German Occupied Poland*, would increase the availability of publications which are partially forgotten today. It would also be useful to publish a critical edition of the reports conveyed or written by Jan Karski, in which the modifications made to them would be highlighted and the misunderstandings that have surrounded them explained.

Another idea would be to prepare a press volume, i.e. a publication of press articles devoted to Jewish issues, e.g. news, reports, speeches by Polish politicians. This could bring together both the articles of the underground press published in occupied Poland and the materials published in the emigré press.

Another interesting research project would be to publish only those source materials that illustrate the position of Jewish organisations towards the Polish Government (including Polish diplomatic and consular posts). Such a publication could serve as complementary to the archival material presented in this volume. Equally interesting would be a source-based comparison of the actions of different governments-in-exile in relation to Jewish matters.⁴⁰ In such a project, however, it would be important to bear in mind the different situations and occupation realities of the compared countries. More Jewish residents were living in Poland before the war than in all the countries with governments-in-exile in London combined. This situation clearly impacted the actions taken by the different governments-in-exile.

Equally valuable is the idea of examining the memories of people of Jewish descent who survived the war, which are preserved by the Yad Vashem, among others. The information on the ways in which these people managed to avoid extermination could cast a new light on the activities of the Polish posts from the perspective of the beneficiaries.

However, the most important research project would be to confront documents produced by Polish posts with materials created in the countries in which they

⁴⁰ See: J. Láníček, J. Jordan (eds), *Governments-in-exile and the Jews during the Second World War*, Vallentine Mitchell, London 2013.

operated. This does not mean primarily the diplomatic documents produced by the foreign ministries of different countries, but rather the police and intelligence materials pointing to the attempts made to put the work of the Polish posts under surveillance. Such a project is particularly important for the documentation of illegal aid activities from the point of view of the country of residence. The Polish officials involved in creating false documents, issuing false certificates and bribing consular officers of other countries have, for obvious reasons, tried not to leave behind any evidence of their illegal activity. Officials manifested similar restraint in documenting their own activities when fabricating documentation allowing to obtain visas for endangered people (certificates attesting to their Catholicism) or when providing assistance to people illegally crossing the border. Such activities were obviously of interest to the host countries, which tried to counteract them, although they sometimes also unofficially tolerated them. As a result, paradoxically, the archives of other countries may contain more complete documentation than Polish archives, thus illustrating one of the most important and interesting manifestations of the Polish diplomatic and consular service during the war. The example of the activities run by the officials of the Polish Legation in Bern, described earlier, is a clear confirmation of this fact.

THE SOURCE BASE

The source base of this publication are documents selected from eleven Polish and foreign archives, including: The Archives of Modern Records (Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warsaw, Poland), The National Archives at College Park (Maryland, USA), The Hoover Institution (California, USA), The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America (New York, USA), The Józef Piłsudski Institute of America (New York, USA), The National Archives (London, United Kingdom), The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (London, UK), the Yad Vashem (Jerusalem, Israel), The Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Archiwum MSZ, Warsaw, Poland), The Pontifical Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies (Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Rome, Italy) and Archivum Helveto-Polonicum (Freiburg, Switzerland).

The research conducted in the Archives of Modern Records covered mainly diplomatic records, i.e. documents produced or received by embassies, legations and consulates (including honorary ones). The files of the foreign posts have been unevenly preserved, and their period of operation during the war varied as well. The most important collections of this sort are undoubtedly the records of the Embassies in Ankara, London and Washington, the Legations in Bern, Buenos Aires and Mexico City, as well as the Consulates in New York, Casablanca and Marseille.

In the Archives of Modern Records, the collection entitled Polish Government Delegation for Poland (*Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj*) was researched, which included, among others, the files of the Council to Aid Jews ‘Żegota’, as well as the collection Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*), which included the dispatches sent from occupied Poland to London.

At the Hoover Institution, the documents on the www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl website and the materials available only on-site in Palo Alto, California were examined. The records, which were passed in the form of microfilms to the Archives of Modern Records in the 1990s and made available on-line several years ago, were also researched. The collections which proved to be of special importance included the records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Information and Documentation as well as the papers of Władysław Anders and Stanisław Mikołajczyk. In turn, as part of the research conducted directly at the Hoover Institution, both documents produced by Polish offices or agencies and materials gathered in collections devoted to individuals were analysed. The largest number of documents qualified for publication come from the papers of Jan Karski, Tadeusz Romer, Michał Sokolnicki, and August Zaleski, as well as from institutional collections: Ministry of Congress Works, Ministry of Internal Affairs, National Council, Legations in Belgrade, Helsinki, Lisbon and Consulates in Cape Town, New York and Pretoria.

The papers of Roman Dębicki, Leon Orłowski and Michał Sokolnicki as well as the collection named ‘Poland. Situation in the Country’ (*Polska. Sytuacja w Kraju*), were identified as of the utmost importance during the research conducted at the Józef Piłsudski Institute. In turn, the inquiry at the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America included the files of Embassy in Washington and the Legation in Rio de Janeiro.

The research at The National Archives of the United States and The National Archives of the United Kingdom concentrated on records dedicated to the relations with Poland and was aimed at the search for original diplomatic notes submitted by the Polish authorities regarding the persecution of Jews. For example: one of the most important documents in this volume, namely Raczyński’s Note (doc. 296), has been preserved at The National Archives of the United Kingdom.

The research conducted at the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum in London was also crucial, as this institution holds the collections of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs operating in exile, files of diplomatic and consular posts as well as the records of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, the National Council and other ministries (including particularly relevant documents from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare).

The files of the Embassy to the Holy See and the papers of Kazimierz Papée are the two most important collections stored at the Pontifical Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies.

The research conducted at the Archivum Helveto-Polonicum was focused on documents that illustrate the fate of refugees in Switzerland and Brazil, including the papers of Tadeusz Skowroński, Polish Envoy in Rio de Janeiro who settled in Freiburg after the war.

The inquiry carried out at the Yad Vashem mainly focused on the papers of Ignacy Schwarzbart (either available in paper or on-line), which includes a number of documents on the persecution of the Jewish population in occupied Poland.

The research conducted at the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not yield any positive results. This institution stores documents created after 1945, but in recent years it has taken over a small collection of documents of the Jewish community who reached Morocco during the war, after escaping from France. During the post-war period, some of the people residing in that country contacted the Consulate of the Polish People's Republic to donate some documents, and the foreign ministry decided to store the documents they submitted. However, these materials are mainly related to passport and visa affairs and did not merit publication in this volume. Nor did the so-called Shanghai Book stored at the same archives, for similar reasons, as it contains a list of people to whom Ambassador Romer rendered visa assistance.

In addition, one of the documents—the protest by Zofia Kossak-Szczucka (doc. 226)—which was distributed in conspiracy during the war in the form of a poster and a leaflet was published on the basis of the original stored by the Polish National Library and available in an on-line database (www.polona.pl).

In the case of doc. 145 (President's decree) and 349 (Prime Minister's speech), the editing was based on the text published in the Journal of Laws at the time.

The publication also includes documents submitted by two reviewers of the Polish edition of the volume, Magdalena Hułas and Jacek Tebinka, which they found while conducting research for the purposes of the publication of the Polish Diplomatic Documents for 1942 and 1943. Katharina Friedla, apart from reviewing this publication, also contributed by providing selected materials on the activities of the Jewish communities. In turn, thanks to the support of reviewer Adam Puławski, it was possible to publish, among others, the document dated 24 November 1942.

The principle of documenting, first and foremost, the diplomatic and consular activities of the Government entailed that no inquiries were conducted at the Jewish Historical Institute (Żydowski Instytut Historyczny) and at the Polish

Underground Movement Study Trust in London (Studium Polski Podziemnej), which mostly store materials on the situation in occupied Poland.

As mentioned earlier, an extensive inquiry was carried out in eleven archives and covered several hundred archival collections, which corresponds to thousands of units and online records. Although the contents of some collections turned out to be disappointing, the scope of the research conducted has allowed for an attempt to present the Jewish issues in the policy of the Polish authorities in exile in a rather comprehensive manner. In addition, while files from the pre-war period were partially destroyed or lost,⁴¹ the documents of the Government-in-Exile have predominantly survived up to this day.⁴² In general, there are no formal or legal difficulties in accessing the documents; the only remaining problem is the dispersion of materials among different archives and institutions.

It is worth emphasising that an important feature of the sources are not only their availability and state of preservation, but also the limited possibility of their creation during the discussed period. The liquidation of some of the Polish posts, which was the result of the changing war situation, meant that the official, diplomatic or consular apparatus—which would normally produce a series of reports, dispatches or notes on the subject—ceased to function. The sources of the situation of Jews in the USSR are a clear example of such a gap. The period from 1941 to 1943, when the signing of the Sikorski-Maisky Agreement resulted in the opening of the Embassy and several delegations and assistance institutions in the Soviet Union, is characterised by a significant number of documents produced, a wide selection of which are included in this volume. In turn, the years 1939–1941 and the period after the USSR broke diplomatic relations with the Government-in-Exile—which resulted in the evacuation of the Embassy and the liquidation of the aid apparatus—was the time when, for obvious reasons, the creation of Polish documents illustrating development in the ‘inhuman land’ was very limited. As a result, we are dealing with a situation in which a relatively small group of Jewish refugees, for example in Portugal or Spain, are represented by a large number of documents issued by the Legations in Lisbon and Madrid, which were running virtually uninterrupted, while the fate of thousands of Jewish victims of deportation and refugees in the USSR is not so thoroughly documented.

⁴¹ See more in: E. Kołodziej (ed.), *Inwentarz akt Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych w Warszawie z lat 1918–1939*, NDAP, AAN, Warszawa 2000.

⁴² See, inter alia: W. Milewski, A. Suchcitz, A. Gorczycki (ed.), *Guide to the Archives of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum*, vol. 1, London 1985 oraz W. Stępnia, *Archiwalia polskie w zbiorach Instytutu Hoovera Uniwersytetu Stanforda*, NDAP, Warszawa 1997.

EDITING RULES

The volume is the translation of the Polish-language edition published earlier.⁴³ It contains all the documents that appeared in the original publication, including those cited in the footnotes. The differences between the Polish and English editions are in the introduction, modified for English-language readers, and in the editing guidelines, described below. In addition, the translation offers a greater number of editorial footnotes with additional information concerning issues with which readers from a country other than Poland might not be familiar.

During the editing process for this volume, the principles applied were, in general, those adopted by the Polish Institute of International Affairs (*Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych*) for earlier primary source publications of diplomatic documents translated into English. The documents are listed in chronological order, according to the creation date, not by the date of dispatch or receipt by the addressee. This is particularly important in the case of documents produced in occupied Poland and sent by couriers, as it often took them several weeks to reach the Government-in-Exile. The same is true of the reports sent between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs operating in London and the posts in distant countries. Difficulties were also encountered in encrypted communications, where the receipt of cables was subject to delay, while in the case of circulars sent from the MFA, it sometimes happened that recipients did not receive a given document on the same day. Nor was it uncommon that the cable was sent even a few days after it was created.

It was decided to refrain from publishing the so-called paraphrases of cables, i.e. documents containing the content of cables sent to the Prime Minister or to individual ministers or to other people indicated in the distribution list. Such documents differ in the date of formulation (sometimes by a few days) from the original cables, and the paraphrasing of the text made for security reasons (to ensure that the code was not compromised) could often lead to differences of interpretation.

In documents published with attachments, the date of the main document was accepted as the correct one, regardless of the date of the attached materials. In the case of doc. 237 (Report on the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto), sent to London together with attachments, it was decided to publish the two of them as separate documents (with a separate date). These include the report by the Home Army intelligence on the death camp in Bełżec (doc. 211) and the account of a policeman depicting the liquidation action in the Warsaw Ghetto (doc. 225). These documents

⁴³ P. Długolecki (ed.), *W obliczu Zagłady. Rząd RP na uchodźstwie wobec Żydów 1939–1945*, PISM, Warszawa 2021.

were produced much earlier (on 10 July and 11 August 1942, respectively) than the September report on the liquidation of the ghetto, hence they were placed in chronological order here. Including them as attachments would be arbitrary and reflective of the process of preparing correspondence sent to London, as opposed to the process of creating the documents themselves.

All the aforementioned factors mean that the publication according to the date of the creation of the document is the only possible criteria. Where it was not possible to fix a precise date, an approximate date was given. If only the month of the creation of a document was known, the document in question was placed at the end of the collection of documents from the given month. In addition, apart from the creation date, each document bears a serial number and a heading containing data on the issuer and the recipient as well as a brief indication of the content. In the case of cables sent from diplomatic posts to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the recipient is not included each time. Each document contains the name of the archives and collection, as well as the reference number, which enable the original version of a specific report, note, or cipher cable to be located. In the case of Polish or Polish diaspora archives, names (without translation) were used so as not to make it difficult to find the original document in the archive. The British or American archives, on the other hand, are described with their original English forms. English terms are also given for documents sourced from the Yad Vashem.

The documents written in Polish were created according to the rules of spelling and grammar used at the time, which are today considered archaic. However, to avoid old-fashioned usage, the translation used modern English wherever possible. Similarly, the original use of uppercase and lowercase letters was corrected. The authors of documents used uppercase and lowercase letters in a variety of ways, also in relation to nationality. As a result, the words Jew and Jewish—which, because of the subject matter, are the most frequently used terms describing identity and nationality—were written in Polish documents with both uppercase and lowercase lettering. It is worth recalling that in Polish, the word Jew should be written starting with an uppercase letter when it determines the nationality of a person, and with lowercase when it describes a person belonging to a religious group. It was not without significance that the authors of some documents were born and raised in the former Russian partition and oftentimes used the lower case when indicating nationality, according to the rules of the Russian orthography. However, the English translation uses the correct spelling with an uppercase letter at the beginning, in line with the rules of English orthography, regardless of the way the word is rendered in the Polish original.

Most of the documents were produced in Polish and translated into English. However, some of them were originally prepared by the Polish side in English, for example as a note to be submitted to the British and US counterparts. These

documents were published in their original form; however, it should be noted that their authors used English with varying degrees of proficiency. Yet, it was decided to preserve the original wording and phrasing as much as was possible, with the stylistic inaccuracies neither rectified nor removed, and the text corrected only for punctuation and obvious typographic errors. Information on the publication of a given document in the original English version from the years 1939–1945 is given in the metrics under each such document with the abbreviation ENG.

In addition, documents 301 and 495, as well as enclosures to doc. 32 and 509 had been originally prepared in French, and some Polish-language documents contain extracts and footnotes written in French, too. Such documents, enclosures and elements have also been translated into English, as well as most Russian words that might appear elsewhere. The same rule was applied to an excerpt from a Paraguayan note, originally in Spanish, from doc. 472. In contrast, original German names, terms and citations that appear in some documents, such as Obersturmbannführer or Vernichtungslager, have been left untranslated.

Some documents, and especially those that had been encrypted, reflect by their form and content the chaos and the difficulties faced by the Polish authorities during the war. Parts of the text are often missing, or the documents contain obvious mistakes. It should be borne in mind that such documents were written in the context of the ongoing propaganda war and the deliberate manipulation of facts. Another important aspect was the difficulty to find reliable information on the situation in occupied Poland. For this reason, the statistics given in published reports are often not an exact calculation but an expression of the ability of a given post to obtain information whose accuracy was often difficult to ascertain. In addition, it should also be noted that, for example, the death tolls of World War II or individual extermination camps were being verified for many decades after the war, and even today they are a subject of dispute among historians.

The spelling of the names of people appearing in documents was a major editorial challenge. The material presented includes the names of politicians, diplomats and officials as well as those of ‘ordinary people’—often victims of war, refugees or ordinary soldiers. During the editorial process, it was decided to provide a full record of the names, without making them anonymous, even if (often unverifiable) allegations were made in the documents, for example about their cooperation with the occupying authorities. As many years have passed since the described events, it was considered unnecessary to apply the customary protection of individual personal data. In the case of victims or refugees, it was decided that full names should be kept, in recognition of the numerous family searches and projects commemorating the often-unnamed victims of World War II.

The footnotes of this volume do not contain biographical or other information on individuals whose names are given in the index of personal names. In the

original, names were often recorded in a distorted fashion or were given in their Polonised form, for example Kuehl or Kuhl instead of Kühl. The names of well-known people were recorded in several versions (Ehrlich/Erlich or Schwarzbart/Schwarzbart/Schwarzbard). During the translation of documents into English, the spelling was corrected, and the proper forms were used. In the case of Jewish names, the Polish spelling was used, with an exception made for people whose names are commonly used in their English-language versions; e.g. Włodzimierz Żabotyński and Dawid Bengurion are written as Ze'ev Jabotinsky and David Ben-Gurion. In the case of names written in non-Latin alphabets, their form as transliterated into English was used; e.g. the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of USSR, Andriej J. Wyszynski is written as Andrey Y. Vyshinsky.

It also often happened that in the reports drawn up, particularly those concerning German war criminals, inaccuracies (sometimes significant) occurred in the spelling of names. In specific cases these mistakes were corrected in editorial footnotes; for example, the correct name of the commandant of the Auschwitz concentration camp, Rudolf Höß (Höss), was substituted for Göss.

The question of the spelling of geographical names is a separate issue requiring clarification. The translation retains some commonly used toponymic inaccuracies. For example, if the name England (in the sense of Great Britain) or Russia (in the sense of the Soviet Union) were used in documents, these inaccuracies were not corrected but translated according to the original. In turn, the names of Polish cities and regions that have their English versions have been translated (e.g. Warszawa—Warsaw), but in the case of smaller towns, the names of which do not have their English equivalents, they were usually left in their original form (e.g. Hancewicze, Szczerec, Czyżew or Brzeżany).

In contrast, for the names of Russian, Ukrainian or Belarusian localities, which were originally included in the documents in their transliteration into Polish, the transliteration into English was used in the translation.

The documents originally used a whole array of names describing the Polish and foreign functions and positions of individuals in many countries. The translation mostly uses the nomenclature that is well-established in the English-language literature of the subject. The functions of Ambassador Edward Raczyński in London also had to be clarified. After August Zaleski's resignation from the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Raczyński was entrusted with the supervision of the ministry, acting as the 'Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs'. In June 1942, the President of the Republic of Poland appointed him as minister (but not Minister of Foreign Affairs). However, the translation uses the term 'Minister of Foreign Affairs' to denote the actual role that was given to Raczyński.

The Polish term *gmina żydowska* is translated in capital letters as Jewish Community to refer to the Jewish Community of Warsaw as well as Communities in

other towns and cities in the religious context (which is treated as self-explanatory in the Polish documents).

The authors of Polish diplomatic documents often used abbreviations and acronyms, which, when translated into English, were mostly replaced with full words, with the assumption that creating an abbreviation from the English translation of a Polish term would be unintelligible to English-language readers. The abbreviations and acronyms that were left in the documents are included in the list of abbreviations and their expansion in editorial footnotes is not repeated.

The vast majority of the 554 documents were published in full. However, in many cases it was decided to publish only extracts. This was most often the case for large, multi-page documents where only a section was relevant to the situation regarding the Jewish population, for example reports showing the situation in occupied Poland as a whole, where only those fragments describing the persecution of Jews were qualified for publication. Another example is the note from Jan Karski's talk with the President of the United States, from which only a small part devoted to Jewish affairs was chosen for publication. The omitted fragments have been marked with a footnote to indicate the nature of their contents. At the same time the principle of informing about all omissions in each document in one summary footnote placed next to the first omitted fragment was applied.

Apart from the documents, the volume also contains more than 750 editorial footnotes, in which archival materials were frequently and extensively cited. This has, on the one hand, allowed the inclusion of more documents in the volume and, on the other hand, demonstrated the genesis or further sequence of a particular case. In addition, the editorial footnotes provide the necessary information on the events described while avoiding interpreting the documents and leaving assessments to the readers. The original footnotes in the documents are indicated by the letters x, xx, etc. and are inserted between editorial footnotes, which are marked with Arabic numerals.

Most of the documents are typescripts; manuscripts (including those cited in full or in fragments in footnotes) are marked with the letters MS after the unit number affixed to each document.

No registry description of the documents was given. Nor are there any copies of the stamps, signs for compliance, information on the number of copies or distribution lists. Information about the possible transmission of a document outside the MFA (or to other posts) is included in the editorial footnotes. Information on any other copies or duplicates of the published document that are stored in other units or archives was not provided, either. As a rule, the publication of covering letters was abandoned, although their content is referred to in footnotes. No indication is given whether the given document is an original or a copy.

The documents included in this book, also in the form of footnotes, have been published based on the originals stored in the archives.⁴⁴ Publishing documents only based on earlier editions was judged to be unacceptable, especially based on older publications that appeared in the Polish People's Republic, when censorship was applied, or based on publications that suffered from some editorial errors or mainly served as propaganda.

Most of the documents are published for the first time, but others have already been printed, even several times. These documents were generally published in collections that illustrate the overall political and diplomatic efforts of the Polish Government-in-Exile. The archival materials were also published in thematic collections devoted to Jewish affairs. Some of them were also shown individually as materials published in magazines or collections not related to the subject matter. Information about the previous edition of a document is given in the metric, next to the unit number. However, only major editions containing materials directly linked to wartime diplomacy and Jewish issues were taken into consideration. It was assumed that the use of all information on earlier publications, in disparate locations and often not easily available, would be of no significant use to the readers.

Full bibliographical information on earlier editions is included in the introduction to the Polish-language edition of this publication, in the metrics of the documents. In this English-language version of the volume, only information about the fact of earlier editing is given, without more detailed data. It was considered that for English-language readers, references to earlier Polish editions would be useless, whereas Polish-language readers would use the Polish-language version of the volume where full information was provided.⁴⁵

It is also necessary to explain the ways of dealing with the formal features of the documents, such as handwritten amendments, additional notes or comments and deletions, underlinings or selections in the margins. Given the imperfect encrypted communication in use at the time, we are often dealing with a document that is not fully legible or contains parts that are not fully understandable. Those parts of the original document that may raise doubts have been marked with the word *sic* in brackets. The illegible text, in turn, has been marked by an ellipsis and accompanied by an editorial note. The same method was adopted with respect to illegible handwritten signatures.

Comments, handwritten passages and signatures are put in italics, while the handwritten fragments of the text are reproduced in translation as crossed out text, with the use of the appropriate font.

⁴⁴ The exception are doc. 145 and 349, published on the basis of the Journal of Laws.

⁴⁵ P. Długołęcki (ed.), *W obliczu Zagłady... op. cit.*, p. XLIV–XLVII.

THE POLISH DIPLOMATIC SERVICE CONFRONTING THE HOLOCAUST:
RESEARCH INTERESTS AND ATTEMPTS AT DOCUMENTATION

Researchers describing the Holocaust of the Jewish population on occupied Polish soil usually focused on the fate of the victims or German genocidal plans and crimes. Others paid attention, especially in recent years, to the attitudes and reactions of the Polish population in Polish territory under German occupation. In principle, foreign research has often been dedicated to the study of the policy of individual states towards the Third Reich and their response to the Nazi policy of extermination.

So far, much less attention has been paid to the activities of the Polish Government-in-Exile and, in particular, to the diplomatic and consular posts subordinated to it. A review of the basic literature of the subject is included in the introduction to the Polish edition of the documents presented in this volume.⁴⁶ However, it is worth highlighting that we are encountering a certain dearth of publications that would comprehensively document the activities of the Polish diplomatic apparatus with respect to Jewish matters. The Polish Diplomatic Documents series, published since 2005 by the Polish Institute of International Affairs, illustrate only to a certain extent the assistance given by Polish diplomatic and consular posts to Polish citizens of Jewish descent. The series' task is to present Polish foreign policy in its entirety, and, for this reason, Jewish affairs can only be one of the several documented aspects.⁴⁷ It is worth mentioning that the

⁴⁶ P. Długolecki (ed.), *W obliczu Zagłady... op. cit.*, p. XLVII–LIII. Publications on subjects most closely related to the issues documented in this volume include, among others, the works of David Engel (D. Engel, *In the Shadow of Auschwitz... op. cit.* and *idem, Facing a Holocaust. The Polish Government-in-Exile and the Jews, 1943–1945*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, London, 1993) and of Adam Puławski (A. Puławski, *W obliczu zagłady. Rząd RP na uchodźstwie, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, ZWZ-AK wobec deportacji Żydów do obozów zagłady (1941–1942)*, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Oddział w Lublinie, Lublin 2009 and *Wobec „niespotykanego w dziejach mordu”. Rząd RP na uchodźstwie, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, AK a eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej od „wielkiej akcji” do powstania w getcie warszawskim*, Stowarzyszenie Rocznik Chełmski, Chełm 2018). Concerning the publications showing the activity of the occupying authorities from the perspective of particular persons, see, inter alia: D. Stola, *Nadzieja i zagłada. Ignacy Schwarzbart – żydowski przedstawiciel w Radzie Narodowej RP (1940–1945)*, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 1995 or A. Żbikowski, *Karski, Świat Książki*, Warszawa 2011.

⁴⁷ So far, three volumes covering the time of World War II have appeared in the Polish Diplomatic Documents series: PDD 1939 wrzesień–grudzień; PDD 1940, PDD 1941; works on the subsequent volumes covering respectively the years 1942 and 1943 are under way.

inspiration for this publication was, however, one of our Polish-language volume, *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1940* (*Polish Diplomatic Documents 1940*), the main task of which was to lay bare the full spectrum of foreign policy. At that time, the need to show primarily political and diplomatic sources did not allow for the inclusion of a number of consular documents that pointed to the aid rendered by the posts. The inability to include a more extensive selection of such documents in the series initiated the process that led to this publication.

Most publications so far have not focused on the rescue activities carried out by diplomatic and consular posts or some of the numerous assistance agencies. Although this volume contains documents that illustrate the activities of the emigrant authorities in London and the situation of Jews in occupied Poland, its main task is to present a record of the activities of Polish diplomatic and consular posts around the world. Therefore, it tries to illustrate this aspect of the wartime Polish-Jewish relationship, which has yet to receive adequate attention by historians. It should be emphasised once again that this volume does not show the history of the Holocaust or the attitude of the Polish population towards Jews during World War II; it illustrates mainly the activities of the Polish authorities in exile, with particular emphasis on the activities of diplomatic and consular officials.

The attempt to show this issue comprehensively is all the more difficult as the Polish Government itself did not, in due course, secure a comprehensive presentation of its own activities in this field. This is especially odd given that the Council of Ministers and respective departments made efforts, particularly after 1942, to document their wartime activities exhaustively. Extensive plans were also made for future post-war policies on border issues, ethnic issues, the nature of the regime after the war, or agricultural reforms.⁴⁸ Shortly after the war, a large, several-hundred page document devoted to the Katyń massacre was prepared, which was handed over to the Allies with the hope that it would be used during the Nuremberg trial.⁴⁹ However, as far as aid is concerned, only a few government documents attempted to describe this issue more comprehensively. Examples include the already mentioned Raczyński's Note of December 1942 or the document of May 1944 entitled *Polish Government's Care for Jews*, probably drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in response to allegations of antisemitism in

⁴⁸ As an example, see: Essays, bulletins, reports, and studies, relating to Poland's boundary disputes following World Wars I and II; events and conditions in Poland under German and Soviet occupations during World War II; Polish-Soviet relations; communism in Poland; and twentieth century Polish agriculture, economy, foreign relations, history, politics, and government, The Hoover Institution, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, boxes 1–13.

⁴⁹ Facts and Documents Concerning Polish Prisoners of War Captured by the U.S.S.R. During the 1939 Campaign, 1946, The National Archives, FO 371/56475.

the Polish Army (doc. 473). Attention is also drawn to the study on Jewish refugees-Polish citizens scattered around the world, released by the Ministry of National Defence in April 1943 (doc. 343) or the note by the Head of the Nationalities Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Olgierd Górka, on the policy of the Polish Government-in-Exile towards Jews, already drawn up after the war as an individual attempt to assess a complex issue (doc. 553).

Still, the most significant attempt of this type is probably the material from August 1943 prepared by the former Embassy in Kuybyshev, which illustrates the assistance given to Jews in the USSR between 1941 and 1943. This document, entitled 'Report on the relief accorded to Polish citizens by the Polish Embassy in the U.S.S.R. with special reference to Polish Citizens of Jewish Nationality', provides a solidly prepared—as much as was possible at the time of war—brochure that summarises all aid initiatives (doc. 382, extracts). It was prepared in an English-language version for information and propaganda purposes in connection with emerging accusations of favouritism shown to Poles at the expense of Jews in the assistance campaign and during the evacuation of the Polish Army in the USSR to the Middle East. It used a comprehensive report—over 160 pages of typescript—prepared in Tehran by Zygmunt Sroczyński, a former employee of the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev (doc. 381, extract). Also prepared in August 1943, Sroczyński's report was entitled *Aid and Care Rendered to the Jewish Population in the USSR* and comprehensively detailed Polish-Jewish relations in the USSR as well as the activities of the Polish delegations operating there. Both documents are dedicated to the situation in the Soviet Union and provide an important albeit partial view of the Polish actions on Jewish affairs. They do not pretend to illustrate the entire policy of the Polish authorities towards Jews.

It seems that the need to prepare such material was recognised by Tadeusz Romer, who, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, requested that all documentation relevant to Jewish affairs be collected. In his instructions to diplomatic posts describing the entire Polish policy, Romer also drew attention to Jewish issues. 'It is particularly necessary to exploit for propaganda purposes all the actions of the Government-in-Exile and of the Polish authorities attesting to their democratic attitude to Jewish problems, and the same goes for all signs of harmonious normal co-existence or cooperation between Poles and Jews, whether in exile, in the army or particularly in the country (aid granted to the Polish population by Poles, cooperation of underground organisations). Our information action in Jewish matters should have a positive character as far as possible and not be limited to rejecting accusations of antisemitism' (doc. 392).

In May 1944, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a circular to the Polish posts, requesting: 'In view of the frequent accusations made in the British press about the unequal treatment of Polish-Jewish citizens and the alleged antisemitism

of certain offices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks for a special report to be sent, stating the quantitative and percentage data regarding Polish-Jewish citizens present on the particular territory, as well as the review of the relations regarding the Polish-Jewish citizens. Notwithstanding the submission of this report, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should, as far as possible, be informed of any data that might present the source of this action, which is probably inspired by external parties' (doc. 476).

However, despite the instructions being sent, it appears that no substantial attempt was made to draw up a summary report which would show the issue in its entirety. The broad inquiry carried out for this volume did not result in finding a complete, professionally prepared report. Neither the aforementioned documents nor the reports with partial information sent in reply to Romer's recommendation can be treated as such a summary. It is also worth noting that although measures were taken to gather the accounts of former prisoners and deportees, the reports of Polish diplomatic and consular staff have not been collected (which, of course, does not mean any equality between the tragic experiences of the former and the activities of the latter).⁵⁰

The reading of relatively numerous memoirs or diaries written by Polish diplomats generates a similar impression of insufficiency. The issues of Polish-Jewish relations appear rarely and never form the leading theme of the published diplomatic memoirs. In this respect, the correspondence from 1961 between the Ambassador to the Holy See, Kazimierz Papée, and one of the former leaders of the Home Army, Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki, is also symptomatic. Iranek asked the Ambassador for information on the conduct of the Ambassador to the Holy See with regard to Jewish matters during the war, probably for the purpose of writing about it in a book.⁵¹ In his response Papée explained: 'This action was ... conducted consistently and permanently throughout the war. It was made up of a number of démarches submitted to the Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione and his closest collaborators Monsignors Tardini and Montini. The Embassy's interventions took all accepted forms, i.e. conversations, memorandums, memos, verbal notes, notes'. Then, Papée listed his most important interventions (see doc. 495) and concluded: 'I think that if I were a collector of gratitude and honour, I would have tried already a long time ago to make the activities of our local Embassy in defence of

⁵⁰ See, inter alia: M. Siekierski, F. Tych (ed.), *Widziałem anioła śmierci. Losy deportowanych Żydów polskich w ZSRR w latach II wojny światowej. Świadczenia zebrane przez Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji Rządu Polskiego na Uchodźstwie w latach 1942-1943*, Rosner & Wspólnicy, Warszawa 2006; see also the relations collected after the war by the Polish Source Institute in Lund, the Hoover Institution, Polski Instytut Źródłowy w Lund, 1.

⁵¹ K. Iranek-Osmecki, *Kto ratuje jedno życie... Polacy i Żydzi 1939-1945*, Studium Polski Podziemnej, ORBIS, London 1968.

Jews, conducted in accordance with the instructions or intentions of the Polish Government, come to the attention of the Government of Israel.⁵²

Without analysing the Ambassador's motivation, it is worth concluding that neither the Polish Government nor the Polish diplomats and officials were eager to draw up an appropriate report on their activities concerning Polish-Jewish relations. The purpose of this volume is to fill this gap at least in some part.

Piotr Długołęcki

⁵² Letter by Ambassador Kazimierz Papée to Colonel Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki, 25 September 1961, Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Spuścizna Kazimierza Papée, 8/67.

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*1 September 1939. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on Germany's assault on Poland*

Incoming cable of 1 Sept., 2.16 p.m.
received on 1 Sept., 10 p.m., decipher., Mr Dębicki¹

Today at dawn Germany launched a military aggression against Poland with a treacherous assault. We will fight till the end. Please inform the government there.

Beck

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1

2

*14 September 1939. Cable from the Ambassador in Rome
to the Envoy in Belgrade on the potential transit of refugees to France
through the territory of Italy*

Incoming cable of 14 Sept., 1.50 p.m.
received on 14 Sept., 5 p.m., decipher., Mr Dębicki and Mr Czerwiński

I hardly rule out an impending possibility of a transit through Italy to France of individual or collective groups of our military men.² In order for such a transfer to be organised, I need to be informed about: I. conditions of the formation of the Polish Army in France; II. access routes, and permits from the governments of Hungary, Yugoslavia, Italy, and France. I recommend Trieste as the point at which to cross the Italian border, where I would organise a transit area. To be able to do it, I need, besides the authorisation from the Italian Government, financial means that I do not possess. I request a telegraphic response as to whether I should commence taking appropriate steps with the Italian Government to avoid any undesirable

¹ The document published is based on a cable received by the Envoy in Belgrade, Roman Dębicki; the instruction was sent as a circular to all diplomatic and consular posts.

² Pursuant to the agreement of 9 September 1939 between Poland and France (and a subsequent arrangement of 4 January 1940), the Polish Army in France was formed, which at its peak comprised approx. 80 thousand soldiers.

confusion. Sent to: Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest, Paris—for the attention of General Bukacki.³

Wieniawa

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1

3

*18 September 1939. Circular by the Ambassador in London
with the instruction by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on the USSR's aggression against Poland*

London, 18 September 1939, 4.25 a.m.

Tokyo,⁴ 18 September 1939, 6.42 p.m.

No. 1 (circular)

On the recommendation of the Minister, I am asking you to immediately submit to the Japanese Government a note, the content of which I cite in a literal Polish translation: By order of my Government, I have the honour to communicate the following:

‘On 17 September, the USSR started an aggression against Poland. At dawn, a large number of Soviet troops crossed the Polish border at several points. They were confronted by the Polish Army. Overpowered by the Soviet forces, Polish troops are withdrawing, continuing the engagement. The Polish Government has protested to Moscow and instructed the Ambassador to request passports to be issued. The Polish Government expects the Government of Japan to declare a categorical protest against the aggression perpetrated by the USSR.’⁵

/-/ Raczyński

Hoover Institution, Tadeusz Romer Papers, 1

³ After the German aggression against Poland, General Stanisław Burhardt-Bukacki left for Paris (via London) with a mission to secure the allied support of France. He served as the chief of the Polish Military Mission in Paris.

⁴ A similar instruction was sent to other diplomatic posts.

⁵ In the cable of 18 September 1939, sent to the Ambassador in Tokyo (and as a circular also to other posts), the Ambassador in London, Edward Raczyński, added: ‘Furthermore, the note sent to our allies includes the following closing sentence: “We reserve the right to issue further demands on behalf of Poland, stemming from the existing agreements”’ Hoover Institution, Tadeusz Romer Papers, 1.

4

*19 September 1939. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Paris about the crossing of the Romanian border
and the French readiness to receive the Polish authorities*

CIPHER

Polmission

PARIS

LONDON

On the night of 17–18, under pressure from the Soviet troops heading with major forces towards the Romanian border and crossing the roads northward, the President of the Republic of Poland accompanied by the Government were forced to cross the Romanian border and demand from Romania the right of passage through the country, respecting Romania's neutrality.⁶

The emergent situation has introduced temporary impediments to the method of functioning of the highest authorities, who continue to exercise their legal powers.

Please dispatch the above information to diplomatic posts with the most extensive distribution list.⁷

BECK

19 Sept. 39

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 207

⁶ In the circular of 20 September 1939, the Ambassador in London communicated the following: 'The President, the Government, and Marshal Śmigły Rydz, as well as the Marshals of the Sejm and of the Senate crossed the Romanian border and for the time being are for all practical purposes interned in four different locations, that is, respectively: the President, the Marshal, the Prime Minister, and the other members of the Government. Romania is acting under extreme German pressure.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1.

⁷ In the circular communicating Minister Beck's information to Polish diplomatic posts, the Ambassador in Paris, Juliusz Łukasiewicz, added: 'The French Government provided the President of the Republic of Poland and the Polish Government with the possibility to install their offices within the French territory, maintaining the fullness of their sovereign prerogatives, and exterritorial exercise of power. Should the need arise, no efforts must be spared to ensure that the (local etc.) government should not challenge the principle that the highest authorities of Poland, analogous to those of Belgium in 1914, retain all the attributes of sovereignty. If necessary, the above may be used in diplomatic notes and public communications.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Finland), 3, MS.

5

*30 September 1939. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on taking up the office*

To all diplomatic posts

As of today, I have assumed the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁸ For further ordinances, please direct your correspondence, using the circular cipher, to the address of the Embassy in Paris.

Zaleski

dispatched on 1 Oct. 39.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 208 (previously published)

6

*2 October 1939. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on the Act on Revocation of Citizenship*

To all diplomatic posts

Please instruct the subordinate Polish consulates to arrest the execution of the Act on Revocation of Citizenship.⁹

ZALESKI

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 208

⁸ This is a reference to the formation of the Government of the Republic of Poland in Exile, under Władysław Sikorski. Initially, the Government was based in Paris, and subsequently in Angers; after the German invasion of France, it relocated to London. Władysław Raczkiewicz assumed the office of the President of the Republic of Poland in Exile. In the circular of 8 October 1939, Minister Zaleski conveyed: 'The Polish Government requests that the representatives formerly accredited to Warsaw be made to arrive in France in order to reestablish regular cooperation.' In the circular of 31 October 1939, he added: 'As of 15 November, the Polish Government will relocate to Angers, and it requests that the diplomatic representatives accredited thereto be obliged to arrive there from that date onward.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 208.

⁹ The Act of 31 March 1938 on Revocation of Citizenship was promulgated on 1 April 1938 and remained in force from the day of its publication. Article 1 of the Act states that: 'Any Polish citizen residing abroad may have their Polish citizenship revoked, providing that: a) while abroad they acted to the detriment of the Polish State, or b) during an uninterrupted stay abroad of no less than 5 years after the formation of

7

*2 October 1939. Cable from the Envoy in Belgrade
to the Embassy in Paris on the support for the refugees from Poland*

Outgoing cable, sent on 2 Oct.

Polmission Paris

Receptus cable No. 8

I am currently in talks with the Yugoslav Government regarding the number of refugees they could agree to temporarily relocate here. So far, some couple hundred people arrived here with transit visas, the majority of whom will stay on. I expect to be granted a contingent of several thousand people. I will inform you of the result of the negotiations.

The local society's attitude towards refugees is most favourable. An extensive humanitarian and supply operation (accommodation, clothing etc.) has been carried out by social institutions established on the initiative of the Legation. The Yugoslav Government justifies their restraint by the burden of 30,000 Russian emigrants.¹⁰ Only the refugees who have some means can be relocated to Yugoslavia, for the cost of living here is far greater than in Romania. I have still not received the transfer of zlotys from the clearing balance, the society is poor, so that they cannot help us, as was the case inter alia in Hungary, lastly—there are almost no prospects of employment. Jews are not accepted in Yugoslavia.¹¹

the Polish State, they have lost connection with the Polish statehood, or c) while staying abroad they did not return to Poland within the prescribed period on a request from a foreign post of the Republic of Poland.' The decision to revoke citizenship was to be made by the Minister of Internal Affairs upon request of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It required no justification and was given the order of immediate enforceability; it was subject to appeal in the Supreme Administrative Tribunal. Furthermore, the Act states: 'The revocation of citizenship of a Polish husband extends to the wife, whereas that of a father (an unwed mother)—to his (her) children under 18 years of age, providing that these people reside abroad and have not been exempt by decree from the revocation of citizenship'; Journal of Laws of 1938, No. 22, item 191. The people who had their citizenship revoked could remain in the territory of the Republic of Poland only temporarily, with the permission from the Minister of Internal Affairs. According to the estimates of the MFA of July 1939, pursuant to this Act a total of approx. 65 thousand people had lost the Polish citizenship, an overwhelming majority of those being of Jewish nationality (see doc. 21). The Act was repealed by the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland from 28 November 1941 (doc. 145).

¹⁰ This is a reference to the emigration after the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War in Russia.

¹¹ In the cable of 7 October 1939, the Envoy in Belgrade informed: 'The Yugoslav Government agreed to receive 1,000 refugees, excluding military men, politicians, and

I would like to inform you that I am trying to avoid another large wave of refugees leaving for France. Sent to: Paris, Bucharest, Budapest.

Dębicki

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1 (previously published)

8

29 October 1939. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on an appropriate performance of clerical duties

Incoming cable, 29 Oct., 0.00 a.m.
decipher., Min. Dębicki¹²

Please inform the subordinate Polish consulates that there will be severe consequences in any instances of clerical mistreatment of clients. Sent to all legations.

Zaleski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1 (previously published)

Jews. The performance of the undertaking was entrusted to a special Committee, with the participation of the Chairman of the Polish–Yugoslav League, and the representatives of the relevant ministries. The operation is soon to be commenced, and the Yugoslav Embassy in Bucharest will subsequently issue residence visas. The relocation will be carried out in stages. A small number of nonaffluent women and children are likely to find their way here; however, due to the poverty of the local society, and very meagre opportunities for employment, it is advisable that people without means should be prevented from moving to Yugoslavia. I am currently making efforts to ensure the arrival of 200 clerks of the Bank of Poland.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1.

¹² The document is published based on a dispatch received by the Legation in Belgrade; the instruction was sent as a circular to all diplomatic posts and consulates.

9

*10 November 1939. Note by the Envoy in Lisbon
on the refugees in Portugal*

10 November 1939

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Regarding Polish refugees in Portugal

In response to the undated letter No. 451 sent by the Ministry,¹³ concerning Polish refugees in Portugal, I want to inform that, resulting from an intervention with the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the refugees who as of the day of the intervention were staying at the border, were allowed to enter Lisbon.

To date, the only case of a Polish citizen having been detained of which the Legation has been informed is that of a Mr Penkal, who does not speak Polish, only French and German, and whose behaviour thus far (his unwillingness to enlist in the military, and his general disapproval of everything) does not advance the case of his being brought to Lisbon.

Among the arriving refugees, there is Dr Leopold Obierek with his wife and two underage children, who have been installed in Lisbon and taken care of by the Legation, as well as an architecture student from Italy, aged twenty-something—Rogozik, as well as a group of Jews, Polish citizens, who had not contacted the Legation at all after their arrival in Lisbon, and who had been attended to by the local Jewish Community.

The Legation requests to be authorised to assist the refugees who will stay in Portugal with the remaining means of the special fund, for they are left without means of sustenance, while their ignorance of the language and lack of training in any trade render their earning a living impossible. Besides, the local labour

¹³ In the letter no. 451, the Under-Secretary of State at the MFA, Zygmunt Graliński, communicated: 'The Ministry requests that the Legation should spare no efforts to ensure that Portuguese border authorities respect entry visas which the Polish refugees have been issued; moreover, the Ministry wishes to note that it is unable to intervene on the matter, as there is no Portuguese Envoy to the Government of the Republic of Poland ... Before settling the issue concerning the entry to France of the refugees detained on the Portuguese border, the Ministry requests a list of their names to be communicated immediately, as it would enable an intervention at the Quai d'Orsay. As regards the exchange of Polish zlotys owned by the refugees, the Ministry informs that the exchange action held at Polish consulates in France has already been closed, and hence it is impossible to perform exchange through these consulates.' Hoover Institution, Poland. *Poselstwo (Portugal)*, 36.

regulations for foreign workers are so strict that they rule out any possibility of employment in a paid job for non-professionals.

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Dubicz-Penther

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

10

*12 November 1939. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Envoy in Belgrade on facilitation
in crossing the Hungarian-Yugoslavian border*

Incoming cable of 12 Nov., 11 a.m.

Considering the potential for an increase in the number of refugees crossing the Hungarian-Yugoslavian border, I request you redouble your efforts to ensure that the Yugoslavian Consulate in Budapest grants transit visas to refugees without first demanding that they produce Hungarian entry visas, which they have so far been unable to obtain.

Zaleski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1

11

*16 November 1939. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
on the transfer of people in the Middle East*

Incoming coded letter from 25 Nov. 1939
Jerusalem, 16 Nov. 1939

I wish to inform that to date, besides numerous individuals, two larger contingents of Polish soldiers from Romania passed through Beirut on their way to join the Polish Army in France, one consisting of 721, the other of 80 people. Another transport of 1,300 people is expected to arrive soon. The French authorities in Syria take a favourable stance towards the matter, as they instantly transport

people free of charge, convoying them with warships all the way to France by sea. For that reason, the route is very convenient for transferring soldiers and may be used if required. This applies only to the soldiers and to the people wanting to join the Polish Army in France, who enlisted in Beirut. Please direct any correspondence on the matter to Jerusalem, for Beirut is subordinated thereto. Sent to: Bucharest, Budapest, Belgrade, Athens, Sofia, Ankara, Istanbul, Paris, London.

Hulanicki

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1

12

23 November 1939. Minutes of the Council of Ministers (extract)

...¹⁴

X. Under-Secretary of State Strasburger reported on his talks with the representatives of the Association of Polish Jews in France, held according to the resolution of the conference on Jewish matters convened on 16 November, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Stroński. The conversation regarded the issue of establishing a universal Council of Polish Jews, as well as a coordination committee, the questions of Jews' cooperation with the Polish Government, and of citizenship. Jews explained that what they had intended was not in the least to establish personal autonomy of sorts, but merely to organise a body that would cooperate with the Polish Government. Under-Secretary of State Strasburger informed the Jews that the Government of Poland cannot give its blessing to the project of establishing the Jewish Council, nor to a coordination committee. Should the National Council be formed, a representative of Polish Jews is highly likely to also be appointed thereto.¹⁵ They were apparently satisfied with that declaration. The Jews did not voice any objections against the manner of treating the issue of citizenship adopted during the conference of 17 November, nor did they insist on a general amnesty, nor on the issuance of a special decree. They only expressed their apprehension as to the

¹⁴ Passages unrelated to Jewish matters were omitted.

¹⁵ The National Council of the Republic of Poland, an equivalent of a parliament (an opinion-making and advisory body to the Polish Government and President in Exile), was established on 9 December 1939 by decree of President Władysław Raczkiewicz. Ignacy Schwarzbart and Szmul Zygielbojm (from 1942) served as the representatives of the Jewish minority. After Zygielbojm's suicide (see doc. 350), Emanuel Szerer was appointed in his place.

attitude to the issues of citizenship taken by consuls appointed by the previous government. Lastly, the representatives of the Association of Polish Jews offered their cooperation in propaganda, particularly in America, where their influence is very extensive. Under-Secretary of State Strasburger left with the impression that the Jews had been very pleased with the way the conversation developed, and that their concerns as to the new government's attitude towards Jewry had been dispelled.

The Prime Minister instructed Under-Secretary of State Strasburger to maintain contact with the Polish Jews. Minister Stańczyk pointed out that if the National Council is created, not only a Jewish representative, but also a Ukrainian one should be included.

...

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/7 (previously published)

13

*29 November 1939. Letter from the Envoy in Lisbon
to the Consulate General in New York
on the actions of the Portuguese authorities*

29 November 1939

To the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Regarding visas to Portugal

In response to the letter No. R.732 of 13 November from the Consulate General, the Legation wishes to inform that Portugal de facto stopped issuing visas for Polish passports with the aim of avoiding an influx of refugees who do not possess sufficient means of subsistence into Portugal; the same applies to Czech, Austrian, as well as Greek and Romanian passports.¹⁶

¹⁶ In the report of 27 October 1939, the Envoy in Lisbon, Karol Dubicz-Penther, informed: 'In recent days, there have been instances when Portuguese consulates would endorse passports of Polish refugees with visas to enter Portugal. Owners of such passports, endorsed to enter Portugal, receive the required transit visas, and—having spent large sums of money—are refused the entry to the country by the Portuguese police. Thus, an absurd situation occurs in the border railroad station of Vilar-Formoso, when a particular refugee, and recently even an entire family with children, are suspended as

Portuguese consular laws and regulations do not differentiate between residence, transit, and other visas. The only visas issued are tourist visas, which authorise a 30-day stay in Portugal (the period may be further extended to a maximum of 60 days), as well as regular visas. Generally, regular visas also authorise the owners of endorsed passports to stay for 30 days; however, these can then be extended three times by police authorities for the same period; only afterwards is one granted the right to a six months' stay, and ultimately the right of permanent residence.

Portugal does not recognise the difference between regular and service passports.

Diplomatic passports are endorsed with visas without any difficulties.

The Legation does not consider it advisable to intervene with the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs to abolish these restrictions, as the visas issued by Portuguese consulates have recently not been honoured by the Portuguese international police, an autonomous institution with special instruction from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. As a result, it led to the detainment of people, misled by having obtained a Portuguese visa, in an impossible situation on the border, for they were unable to either enter Portugal, or return to any other country.

Such a state of affairs resulted in constant interventions, in each respective case, and forced the Legation to guarantee subsistence for those, on whose behalf it had intervened that they be allowed into Portugal.

Given that the Legation does not have any funds for allowances, nor to support refugees here, their arrival in Portugal was inadvisable, particularly with regard to the closure of the labour market for foreigners.

Since the matter of visa issuance is of fundamental importance, where it is difficult to tell apart a tourist from a refugee, the decision not to grant visas for Polish passports proved rather beneficial for the interests of Polish citizens. For in any case worth consideration, it is possible to obtain a visa after a prior arrangement with the interested parties and the authorities; meanwhile it helped to avoid an influx of people without means of subsistence, considering the lack of

if in the air, unable to either enter Portugal, or return, as they are no longer in possession of a valid transit visa or any entry visas. To make matters worse, the refugees tend to only have Polish zlotys, which cannot be exchanged in Portugal. I made some efforts in the local MFA to radically alter this state of affairs, for I cannot accept a situation in which individual refugees incur exorbitant costs in vain, only because they were misled by the Portuguese visa, in fact not honoured at the border ... My obtainment of entry visas to France for the detained refugees has been impeded by general regulations, which make it impossible for French consulates to issue entry visas without each time obtaining a permission from the central authorities.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36.

possibility for them to be supported by Polish consular posts, or the Legation in Lisbon.

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Dubicz-Penther

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

14

*6 December 1939. Report by the Consulate in Chernivtsi
for the Embassy in Bucharest
about the situation in the territories occupied by the USSR (extract)*

Secret

TO THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
in Bucharest

Report by the Consulate in Chernivtsi of 6 Dec. 1939

...¹⁷

Situation in Lwów and Eastern Lesser Poland

J E W S

When the Bolsheviks had entered, Jews ran amok with delight.¹⁸ They all rejoiced at the fact that Eastern Lesser Poland had not been invaded by the Germans. Communist Jews, flocks of whom emerged from their hideouts, were pleased about the political system and the liberty, allegedly brought on the bayonets of the Red Army soldiers. Hence, there were moments, for instance in Lwów, at which Jewish women threw themselves at Soviet tanks, and kissed them, claiming that they had been waiting for twenty years to be liberated from Polish oppression, and that at last the day of their liberation had come. With great energy, Jews started to cooperate with the Bolshevik soldiers, who were initially rather timid and well-behaved. The Militia in the cities tends to be comprised of Jews, and they are the ones in command.

¹⁷ A passage unrelated to Jewish matters was omitted.

¹⁸ In September 1939, pursuant to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (signed on 23 August 1939) German and Soviet troops invaded Poland and began to occupy the territory of the Republic of Poland. Subsequently, on 28 September 1939, they signed another agreement (the Boundary and Friendship Treaty), which stipulated, among other things, the division of Polish territory between the two countries.

The Militia together with the NKVD, which used to be called GPU, deals with arresting Poles and sending them to prisons, or deep into Russia. The crossing of the border would not be that difficult were it not for the militia men who watch it, aided by their paid informers. All the high-level posts and positions of responsibility were filled with Jews in numbers even greater than with Ukrainians.

In the District Revolutionary Committee in Podhajce, eight out of ten members are Jewish. During the meetings and demonstrations one can predominantly see Jews. They ridicule Poland in their speeches. When waiting in queues, altercations between Jews and Polish women are easily sparked, as the former always want to be served first. The women do not let them enter the lines, pushing them away instead, to which the Jews reply: 'your time has come to an end, we are in charge now.' Polish men and women working in offices have been replaced with unqualified Jews. Public school pupils are taught by Jewish women, who have themselves only completed seven grades at such institutions. Jewish women are even working as tram conductors now. The conduct of Jews led not only Poles, but even Ukrainians, to such hatred that it may all end in a blood bath for them. There are Jews who are not involved in anything, calmly awaiting further developments. The Jews whose property has been requisitioned are hostile towards Bolsheviks. To grasp the reason for Poles hate the Jews, one must personally experience life under Bolshevik occupation. By their own deeds Jews managed to turn many philosemites into fierce antisemites.

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.73/2

15

*15 December 1939. Cable from the Consulate General in Jerusalem
on filling the position of Consul General*

Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 15 DEC. 1939
RECEIVED ON 16 DEC. 1939

No. 4.

We have learnt from Jewish sources that the candidacy of Mr Rosmarin, a member of the Sejm,¹⁹ has been put forth for the office of Consul General

¹⁹ The lower house of the Polish Parliament.

in Jerusalem.²⁰ Let us call your attention to the fact that due to the character of Jerusalem as a holy site for Christianity, and the representative status of the position related to it, the appointment of a non-Christian even as honorary consul in this city would make an extremely bad impression locally, particularly among the influential Church circles. We also fear that it might be used in German propaganda in Poland towards undesirable ends. The above does not apply to Tel Aviv.

Weber Piszczkowski

Hoover Institution, August Zaleski Papers, 1

16

*15 December 1939. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on the Polish prisoners of war in the USSR*

Polmission London, Washington, Ankara

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 15 DEC. 1939
RECEIVED ON 15 DEC. 1939

London	No. 6
Washington	No. 7
Ankara	No. 7

In view of the very difficult situation of the Polish prisoners of war in the Soviet Union, I would like to use all possible ways to exert an appropriate influence on the USSR to regulate their fate, improve their lives, and obtain the release of at least some of the categories [of prisoners], among them—civilians. I have heard, for instance, that Generals Stanisław Haller and Żukowski, as well as Colonels Szwarcenberg-Czerny, Bendowski, and Hodała are being held in Szepietówka, reportedly in inhumane conditions.

I ask you to address the government to which you are accredited and request assistance in the matter, invoking humanitarian reasons. The clarification of the situation of the prisoners of war in Szepietówka could facilitate a more general account of the living conditions of the Polish prisoners of war, as well as the

²⁰ Henryk Rosmarin was appointed as Consul General in Tel Aviv on 1 January 1940.

demands for the release of some, and an alleviation, at least, of the hardships suffered by others.

(Only for London): Please treat this request as a matter of urgency, far from being resolved by Cadogan's letter from 7 November.

(Only for Washington and Ankara): Please notify us by telegraph whether the government to which you are accredited would consider making such a démarche.

Sent to: London, Washington, Paris, Ankara.

Zaleski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 208

17

20 December 1939. Unsigned letter on German activity in the occupied territories (extract)

...²¹

Most terrible everywhere is the terror applied to the Jews, who are forced to do heavy physical labour, are continually beaten and ill-treated, are often starving, are expropriated en masse from everything, and are even shot (such slaughters have taken place in Błonie and other localities). But in Warsaw they have ransomed themselves by the payment of eight million zlotys as a contribution to the Gestapo, which as a result did not proceed with the creation of a ghetto. The Jews count chiefly on being liberated by the Soviets.

...

TNA, FO 371 23137 (previously published; ENG)

²¹ Information unrelated to persons of Jewish origin was omitted. An anonymous letter (most likely written by a Polish politician) was used by the Polish authorities to draw up an official protest against German activity in occupied Poland.

18

*[Before 30 December 1939]. Note by the Consulate in Trieste:
a Warsaw journalist's accounts on the situation
in the territories occupied by Germany*

An account provided by a Warsaw-based Jewish journalist, attached to a letter from the Consul of the Republic of Poland in Trieste from 30 Dec. 1939

The cases of women being raped by Germans who are on active duty in Poland are increasing day by day. The following three instances, absolutely deplorable, can serve as a testament to the degree of their bestiality:

Degenerate Gestapo agents brought in several dozen young Jewish women, married and unmarried, who lived on Świętojerska Street in Warsaw, to the luxurious apartments owned by the former president of the Jewish Community in Warsaw, Eliaz Mazur, on Mokotowska Street. The detained women were commanded to remove paintings from the walls, wrap up carpets, and box the most valuable items—all the possessions of President Mazur. The said objects were then taken away by the Germans. When the terrorised Jewish women had completed those tasks, they were forced to clean the apartment and polish the floor. Having performed these chores, the youngest females had been told by the Gestapo men to gather in the bedroom. There, they were horrendously raped. Several hours later, the wretched women found themselves in offices of specialised doctors...

Mass instances of the rape of Jewish women have become the order of the day in Łódź. Under the pretence of rounding them up for slave labour, these women are abducted to unknown destinations. They return after several hours: disgraced, broken, tortured, and unable to carry on living.

During a night-time raid of an apartment at Hoża St. in Warsaw, owned by a Jew, degenerate Gestapo agents ordered a young married couple to perform an act under the lit chandeliers and in front of young girls, sisters of the lady of the house... When the wife, burning red with shame, tried to hide her face with a newspaper, the Gestapo men mocked her: 'the goddamn Jewess, she's ashamed...'

The same tenement saw a raid performed in broad daylight on an apartment of another Jew. There, the Gestapo agents 'requested' that the ladies dance on the table in their birthday suits. The demands of the perverted Hitlerites, acting in uniform, had to be met.

From all libraries in Warsaw, the Germans have removed books that are 'blacklisted' in 'Germany'. Translations to the Jewish language suffered the same fate.

A mass deportation of Jews from Łódź has begun. They are transported in freight cars, no less than 1,700 people per day. Innocent as doves and sent away

in such an inhumane manner, these people are completely robbed before being packed up. These 'transport' are directed to Warsaw, where the deportees find refuge with their families, acquaintances, or with complete strangers. Nevertheless, a substantial portion of them end up drifting through courtyards because of an acute housing shortage in Warsaw. After an intervention from the German-appointed president of the Jewish Community in Łódź, the Gestapo 'kindly' agreed to postpone the final date of displacement of all Jews to 1 March. Yet, the very next day the Germans failed to honour the agreement and continued to round up Jews in the streets, dragging them from their flats, and, if they were asleep, even from their beds. After being completely robbed, husbands were separated from their wives, and children from their parents, after which they were loaded onto trains that were then sent in various directions. Jews from Łódź arrived in Warsaw wearing only their pyjamas. Numerous representatives of professional intelligentsia have been detained in Łódź, both Poles and Jews, from Koło and the surrounding areas.²²

In political circles, outrage has been voiced against Mr Studnicki, who did, as we are being assured, submit his memorandum to the German occupation authorities.²³ Those who read an overview of the memorandum certify that at the outset Studnicki betrayed the Polish youth, disclosing to the Germans the fact of their mass departure to France with the aim to join the army. The same source has assured us that Studnicki, although he had deplored the unnecessary prosecution of the Polish people, had admittedly consented to the formation of field military units (only the infantry), that would fight alongside Hitler's armies, for in his view Poland can only develop in the shadow of the swastika.

Germans loot the apartments of Jews in Warsaw and in the provinces in broad daylight. They grab whatever they can lay their hands on. They even steal furniture, not to mention jewellery, money, clothing, linen, etc. There have been cases reported of Jewish passers-by being searched in the street. These 'searches'

²² In an unsigned extract from a report sent in mid-December 1939 from Poland to the Centre for Information and Documentation (transformed into a ministry in September 1940), the following was reported: 'There has recently been a growing wave of Jewish refugees leaving en masse the territories annexed by the Reich. During the week between 13 and 20 December, Warsaw alone saw a group of 50,000 refugees arrive from Poznań, Łódź, Włocławek, Płock, Ciechanów, and other cities.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 98.

²³ On 21 November 1939, Władysław Studnicki submitted to the German authorities the 'Memorandum to the German Authorities on the Formation of the Polish Army and the Imminent German-Soviet War.' He recommended that the Polish Army be restored for the expected war between Germany and the Soviet Union, a war that (according to him) would result in the liberation of Eastern European nations (including a part of Poland) from the occupation by the USSR.

ended with formal looting, because the Germans are taking watches, pens and recently even personal documents, probably to facilitate their desertion.

Mass 'tributes' imposed on Jewish Communities have become a common practice. In Kielce, for instance, the local Community had to pay tribute four times, the first of them set at 100,000 zlotys, whereas the second and the third were set at 25,000 zlotys. The fourth is to be paid in solid gold. The Jewish Community in Sosnowiec was ordered to deliver in lieu of tribute 120 kg of silver and 10 kg of gold. Harrowing is the fate of the Jewish population of Nasielsk, who were expected to pay a tribute of 150,000 zlotys. They proved unable to collect the entire sum, so Gestapo agents woke the people at one in the morning and rushed them to the railway station, wherefrom they were sent in open railway boxcars. The people were held without any food for two days, they were not even allowed drinking water. In such circumstances, the train arrived in Łuków. However, the starving people were given neither food nor water. Only after the Jewish Community from Łuków paid the tribute of 10,000 zlotys were the half-dead 'passengers' freed. Many of them died. Those who survived dispersed throughout the country to join their friends and families. In Ostrów Mazowiecka, several hundred members of the population were shot on suspicion of arson.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 98

19

*9 January 1940. Note by Józef Hieronim Retinger
on the actions and statements of the Prime Minister
and Commander-in-Chief regarding Jewish matters*

Secret

POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE UNDER GENERAL SIKORSKI
ON THE JEWISH QUESTION

Declarations:

In all his declarations regarding Polish internal affairs, General Sikorski stated that absolutely all Polish citizens will be treated equally, regardless of their ethnicity or religious beliefs.

(1) In his first proclamation, on 6 Oct. 1939, General Sikorski announced: 'I declare on my own behalf, and on behalf of the Government, that the sole objective of the Government of National Unity will be to rebuild a great and honourable Poland, that will be equally just towards all its citizens.'

(2) In November, in a speech broadcast by the London radio, General Sikorski stated: 'In this extremely difficult period of history, in which the enormous advantage of the enemy has overwhelmed us, the entire nation has spontaneously stood together in solidarity with minorities and rallied around the state banners. They proved by their deeds that the Republic of Poland is not only a symbol, but the reality, and that we all have a right to life.'

(3) In a speech during lunch in the Foreign Press Association, General Sikorski said: 'I feel I must say how profoundly my country has been moved by the proofs of loyalty given to Poland by the Slav and Jewish minorities. Here is irrefutable proof that the Polish community has emerged intact from the terrible trial to which it has been subjected.'

(4) Ultimately, on 20 Dec. 1939, the Paris radio broadcast the following declaration by the Government: (translation according to 'The Times' of 21 Dec. 1939) 'While not wishing to judge in advance what should be the structure of the Polish State, the Government affirm that Poland shall take its stand on the side of Christian principles and civilisation; Poland shall be a democratic State. Her national minorities, which, together with the Polish people, took part in the struggle and remained faithful to the State, will be assured justice, free national and cultural development, and due legal protection.'

Furthermore, already in October Gen. Sikorski gave the order to the Army, calling for a just and equal treatment of all soldiers, regardless of their ethnic background and confession.

A more detailed declaration about the equality between the citizens of Jewish blood and the citizens of Polish blood was presented by Minister Al. Ładoś in his speech on the Paris radio in November, and by the Minister of Social Welfare J. Stańczyk in his speeches in Douai and Lille in December.

Facts:

Several days after assuming power, General Sikorski, accompanied by his secretary and adjutant, attended a memorial service in the main Jewish synagogue in Paris, which commemorated fallen Jews and Jewish casualties in Poland.

In his first official appointments, he appointed Mr Alfred Falter as the Deputy Minister of Treasury, and Mr Adam Pragier as the Legal Counsellor in the said Ministry. Today, among the employees of Jewish origin in the Polish higher state administration, there are: Dr Glaser, Head of the Department of Justice; Dr L. Rajchman, Supreme Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare; J. Sakowski, Head of the Department at the Information Centre; Dr K. Poznański, Consul General in London; Dir. Gwiazdoski, J. Ciechanowski, Secretary-General of the MFA, and many others.

At the National Council of the Republic of Poland, Mr I. Schwarzbart, a former editor of 'Nasz Dziennik,'¹ and one of the most distinguished Polish Zionists, represents the interests of Zionists, while another distinguished Jewish activist is expected to arrive from the country, to be appointed as a member of the Council for the non-Zionist Orthodox Jewish community.

Moreover, Herman Lieberman, another pure-blooded Jew, is also a member of the National Council.

The Polish Consuls in Palestine are Messrs Rosmarin and Szoszkies, both practicing Jews.

Lies are spreading about the Government's antisemitism:

From the aforementioned facts and declarations, it can be seen that the current Government of Poland does not introduce any discrimination between loyal citizens of the Republic, and that Jews play a major part in the Polish administration.

Furthermore, false allegations have been repeatedly voiced of antisemitism in the army formed in France, in the likes of those related in 'News Chronicle,' which were answered by the Chief of Staff, Col. Kędzior, in the following message:

¹ This is a reference to *Nowy Dziennik*—a Polish-language newspaper devoted to issues related to the Jewish minority, published in Cracow in the interwar period. Ignacy Schwarzbart served as its Editor-in-Chief in the years 1921—1924.

'A hostile propaganda is spreading false rumours about alleged anti-Jewish tendencies among the officers and ranks of the Polish Army in France. It has even been alleged that Jews who have enlisted with the Polish Army in France have been beaten up and that the French police had to be called in to establish order. Such reports are devoid of any foundation. No such incidents have occurred. There are no antisemitic tendencies in the Polish Army in France, which is intended to be the National Army to which all citizens of Poland have equal access and equal opportunities of promotion. Reports to the contrary based on false rumours are spread with the view to undermine the spirit of national solidarity which is alive in that Army.'

The person writing these words has talked with a number of civilians and officers well acquainted with the relationships in the military camps in France, among them with the Deputy Chairman of People's Party, Mr Mikołajczyk, who have all unanimously confirmed that instances of officer and NCO brutality towards their subordinates do occasionally occur; however, it is as much true of Polish as of Jewish subordinates, and that in such instances, if these cases are brought to the attention of higher authorities, they are immediately and severely punished. It should be added that in the Polish Army in France there is a high proportion of officers of Jewish origin.

London, 9 January 1940

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.85/E/3

20

10 January 1940. Report by the Consulate in Trieste on the situation of Jews in the territories occupied by Germany

Report by the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Trieste of 10 Jan. 1940

THE PERSECUTION OF JEWS BY GERMANS IN POLAND

Jews are placed outside the law under the German occupation even more saliently than Poles.

Ghettos were introduced, either completely or partially, in a whole host of cities and towns, e.g. in Puławy, there is a complete ghetto, in Piotrków a partial ghetto, etc. Jews are forced to wear special badges. In Włocławek, special badges are also worn by members of the Polish populace. In Łódź, Jews were ordered on pain of death to wear yellow armbands. Jews are not allowed either to walk down

the main thoroughfare in Łódź, Piotrkowska St., or even cross it; however, they are not forbidden from living there.

Jews are forbidden from trading in textiles (manufactures), and leather goods; leather cannot be sold in wholesale either. In Siedlce, Jews are allowed to buy neither bread nor flour.

Since the incorporation of the western regions of Poland to the Reich, there have been mass displacements in these territories of the Polish population, and of the Jewish population as well. People have been removed from Kalisz, Płock, Sierpc, Wieluń, Płońsk, Nasielsk, Nowy Dwór, etc. In Łódź, the Jewish Community was instructed to relocate 1,700 Jews a day; on 16 Dec. 1939 the decree was suspended until 1 March of the current year; in spite of that, however, Jews continue to be arrested and displaced on a mass scale. Vacated apartments and things abandoned therein (people are only allowed to carry a hand suitcase with them) are intended for the Volksdeutsche, who are to be transferred from Latvia and Estonia. The deportees are sent away in sealed freight cars, without food, to various impoverished little towns in Podlachia and in the Lublin district, where they have to be provided for by the local Jewish communities. Jews are not permitted to use general social assistance. Near Lublin, barracks for Jewish labourers are being built with materials that are to be supplied by the Jewish community of Lublin.²

Towards the end of November, in Warsaw, Cracow, and Częstochowa, armbands with a blue Star of David were introduced for Jews; identical signs were drawn on the offices of lawyers, engineers, and doctors of Jewish origin. In Lublin, Jews wear yellow armbands.

The Jewish population is seized off the streets, and from their homes, for forced labour. The work of such people is inefficient, for they are either not fit for physical labour or they are professional intellectuals. The people rounded up for labour are severely beaten. Being rounded up for labour and constantly robbed makes it impossible for the Jews to concentrate on paid employment. Germans do not allow Jews to work, anyway.

Among the more atrocious acts, one must include the instances of mass rapes of Jewish girls.

Having entered Warsaw, the Germans instantly sealed off the Jewish Community, and took all their money (ca. 100,000 zlotys). They also ordered a general census of the Jewish population to be made within eight days. Before the work was finished, the Community was ordered to relocate 160,000 people

² This is a reference to the 'Nisko' plan—the ultimately unrealised proposal of Adolf Eichmann envisaged the establishment of a Jewish settlement in the Lublin district, which was supposed to be an imitation of a country for Jews from various European countries.

to the ghetto.³ Barely had they managed to postpone the establishment of the ghetto that the Community was ordered to collect and pay a tribute in the amount of 300,000 zlotys. Afterwards, the community was instructed to take over at its own expense the Jewish hospital in Czyste, that is, to burden their budget with an additional amount of 5,000,000 [sic] zlotys; however, before they were even able to carry out the takeover of the hospital, it was requisitioned by the German authorities, while 1,800 patients were thrown out into a school on Leszno St.

The fact that Jews are placed outside of the law means that no regulations apply to them. The money decree states that a Jew is allowed to keep at home up to 2,000 zlotys, but even when several dozen zlotys are found, they are immediately confiscated. On 18 December of this year, an ordinance was issued for the disclosure of Jewish assets if the sum total of the property is in excess of 200 [sic] zlotys. The date was set for 19 January 1940. It is yet to be seen what Germans intend to do after the disclosure.

In all these decrees (i.e. the disclosure, the armbands, the marking of Jewish shops, the prohibition of business leases), not only Jews by faith, but also baptised Jews, as well as their children, are treated as Jews.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 98

21

20 January 1940. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the limitations in the execution of the Act on Revocation of Citizenship

Angers, 20 January 1940

Secret

Due to numerous instances of unfounded use by some offices of the Act of Revocation of the Polish Citizenship of 31 March 1938, item 191, Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland—I decree the following:

³ Formally, the Warsaw Ghetto was established by a decree of Warsaw District Governor Ludwig Fischer of 2 October 1940. However, the process of separating the Jewish population had started at the turn of 1939 and 1940 (under the pretence of an epidemiological threat), whereas in the spring of 1940 German occupation authorities decided to erect a wall around the quarter inhabited mainly by the Jewish population. See doc. 120.

1) The cases of revocation of the Polish citizenship shall henceforth be limited only to the instances of flagrant acts to the detriment of the State (article 1, paragraph a of the cited Act), and they shall be presented alongside sufficiently grounded motions after a thorough and exhaustive examination of a given case.

2) The cases of revocation of Polish citizenship (article 1, paragraphs a, b, c of the cited Act) wherein the decisions issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, held in the records of foreign offices of the Republic of Poland, have not been delivered to the parties, shall be subject to a thorough examination pursuant to point 1 of this instruction, and the case files, according to the result of such examination, shall be presented together with grounded motions to either change or sustain the validity of the previous decision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for further investigation. Should the MFA consider an alteration of the verdict advisable, it will submit an appropriate motion to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

3) In cases wherein the relevant decisions taken by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to revoke the citizenship have already been delivered, any documents submitted—regardless of the parties' legal right to file an appeal to the Supreme Administrative Tribunal—protests, objections, claims, and complaints shall be treated as motions to abrogate the ruling made in the given case on the basis of articles 15 and 16 of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Poland on the administrative procedure of 22 March 1928, item 341, Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland. Such motions shall be provided with appropriate grounds, which, if missing, are to be required of the party entitled to file for abrogation of the ruling. These motions are to be subject to immediate examinations in compliance with the provisions of the administrative provisions of chapters VII, IX, X of the above Decree, while the case file, according to the result of such examination, shall be presented together with grounded motions to either change or sustain the validity of the previous decision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for further investigation. Should the MFA consider an alteration of the verdict advisable, it will submit an appropriate motion to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

4) Motions to abrogate a given ruling of revocation of the Polish citizenship are subject to a fee pursuant to Journal of Laws, item 1, the Tariff of Consular Fees. The amount of the fee is to be in accordance with the circular letter from the MFA from 30 Nov. 1939, No. 686/8 on increasing the Tariff of Consular Fees; however, in its stipulation the material circumstances of the interested party shall be followed.

MINISTER
/-/ August Zaleski

22

*22 January 1940. Note by the Ambassador in London
on the attitude of Jewish circles towards the Polish authorities*

London, 22 January 1940

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs,
in Angers

In the coming days, I am going to convey to you a report on the attitude of the local Jewish circles towards the situation that arose due to the Polish–German war, and the fact that Soviets took up arms against us—and towards the new Government of Poland. I had an opportunity, when talking to you and other members of the Government, to draw your attention to a propaganda campaign conducted by certain circles, which accuse us of not speaking out, allegedly intentionally, on Jewish matters, and suggesting an antisemitic attitude to account for such behaviour. I see it as above all an attempt to elicit a more binding declaration on our part, which could subsequently provide grounds for a broader activity, aimed perhaps at our committing to a new form of minority obligations.

I am trying to oppose this campaign by indicating that our Government has on several occasions expressed its favourable position towards all minorities loyal to the State.

I allowed myself to attach a copy of a letter sent by the Embassy to Mr Goodman, Secretary-General of the Agudat, as well as an issue of ‘The Jewish Weekly’ with a note prepared on the basis of that letter.⁴

AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
E. Raczyński

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.85/E/3

⁴ Not included in this publication. The letter mentioned largely repeated the information provided in the note by Józef Hieronim Retinger (doc. 19).

23

*7 February 1940. Note by the Chief of the Second Department
of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff
on the situation of people of Jewish origin in occupied Poland*

INFORMATION ON THE CONDITION OF JEWS IN POLAND

A. German partition

1. Territories incorporated into the Reich⁵

All Jews are displaced from the territories 'incorporated' into the Reich. All Jewish estates were confiscated ('Treuhänder' were appointed). Jews are deprived of all rights; they are used in all labour, in principle without any compensation (Arbeitszwang, as opposed to Arbeitspflicht, which applies to Poles).

There is news of extreme terror against the Jews everywhere.⁶

Jews do not receive free food or food stamps. They must wear Semitic badges wherever they go. In the 'incorporated' territories, trade was taken over by Germans, whereas in the occupied territories it is being taken over by Poles.

2. German occupation

There are no precise figures as to the number of Jews displaced from the 'incorporated' territories. So far, no numbers have been reported of Jews transferred into the occupied territory from Austria, the Czech lands, and Germany. Jews are placed in central Lesser Poland, and east of the Vistula. Most of them are unloaded

⁵ According to the treaties between Germany and the USSR (see footnote 18 to doc. 14), the German occupation covered 48.4% of the territory of the Second Polish Republic, with a population of 21 million. A part of the occupied Polish territories was incorporated into the Third Reich (incl. Upper Silesia with the Dąbrowa Basin, Zaolzie, Greater Poland, Pomerania, parts of Kuyavia and Mazovia), of the remaining part the General Government was established, comprising an area of almost 95,000 km² and population of 11.5 million people.

⁶ In the undated note by Helena Sikorska, titled 'German Attitude Towards Jews', the Prime Minister's wife wrote: 'In ŁÓDŹ—Jews and Poles are not allowed to walk on the pavement. In WARSAW—Jews wear armbands. Stars have been painted on Jewish shops, and these shops still function. Jews are outside of the law. The murder of a Jew goes unpunished if it is justified as an act for the good of the Reich. The attitude of the Polish population towards Jews is appropriate. There were no antisemitic incidents. The Warsaw Jews have not been transported to the reserve in the Lublin District. A certain 70-year-old Jew, whose wares had been confiscated from his storehouse, shot himself in desperation, having left 1,000 zlotys for the funeral. In OSTROWIEC—German troops slaughtered all Jews. Fast trains are for Germans only—Jews, as well as Poles, have to obtain special permits.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.24.

from the trains without regulating the place of their settlement. Jews are not allowed to travel without a permit. There is a requirement to register your place of residence due to forced labour.

The announced establishment of a ghetto in Warsaw and in other cities has not been carried out. There has been information of a ransom paid by the Jews.

Throughout the occupied territory, Germans conduct a continuous antisemitic campaign, which in some places falls on fertile ground with the Polish populace.

The material situation of Jews in the occupied territories is similar to that in the territories 'incorporated' into the Reich.

Germans facilitate Jewish emigration to the territory occupied by the Soviets.⁷

In many towns and cities, synagogues have been burned down.

B. The Soviet occupation⁸

Almost all reports agree as to a more privileged position of Jews compared to Poles and Ukrainians.

Jews—except for the affluent circles—overall do support the Soviet occupants. The role played by Jews is regarded as despicable. Throughout almost the entire territory, Jews greeted the Soviet troops with ostentatious enthusiasm. Initially, most militiamen and local authorities were of Jewish origin. They have become the foundation of the NKVD's activity (informants etc.).

Jews have been hard on the Poles and Ukrainians to such a degree that there is a great hatred towards them everywhere. Threats that they will be treated just like the Bolsheviks when the occupants have been expelled reverberate throughout the territory.

⁷ The German-Soviet Pact of 28 September 1939 envisaged a possibility of population exchange between the occupying powers. In the report of 15 May 1940 on the situation in the territories annexed by the USSR, Lieutenant Roman Tatarski (aka Luda) wrote in the section devoted to the attitudes of Ukrainians and Jews towards Poles: 'The Jewish element has completely taken the Bolshevik bait. They are now getting their revenge on the Poles. Zionists (supporters of Jabotinsky) are as severely persecuted as Poles. The Bund is also frowned upon. Some Jewish circles do support the Poles. Among the Jewry, particularly among its affluent representatives, the sentiments are generally negative. It is indicated, for instance, by the fact that 40% of those registered to leave for the territories occupied by Germany—are Jews.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.25.

⁸ On 22 October 1939, the authorities of the USSR organised elections to the so-called People's Assemblies of Western Belorussia and Western Ukraine in the occupied Polish territories. The deputies elected in the fraudulent elections appealed to the Soviet authorities to incorporate the Polish territories into the Ukrainian and Byelorussian SSRs. Consequently, in November 1939 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR decided to annex the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic, while on 29 November 1939 they issued a decree forcing Soviet citizenship upon the inhabitants of those territories.

The news of the Jewish situation has reached the German partition, engendering there, too, unfavourable attitudes, to say the least.

It must be added that there were numerous instances when Jews provided assistance to our escapees. Nevertheless, these should be seen as exceptions.

7 Feb. 1940

Wasilewski

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.15A

24

19 February 1940. Report by the Ambassador in Rome on the difficulties in obtaining visas for Jewish refugees from Poland

Rome, 19 February 1940

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in Angers

The pieces of information gathered from the circles interested in Jewish emigration from the Polish areas occupied by the German army suggest that the British authorities, as well as the French authorities, refuse to grant entry visas to Jews, Polish citizens, wishing to emigrate from those territories. Due to this refusal, other transit countries also deny them visas, making it impossible for many people vulnerable to persecution by occupying forces to avoid such persecution. Many such people, according to the information collected, are considered to deserve every assistance and are in possession of financial means to cover the costs of the travel and of the livelihood abroad.

This particularly pertains to the Jewish people willing to emigrate to Palestine, who are denied visas by the Mandate authorities,⁹ even though these Jews had left the Polish territory before the German occupation.

⁹ From 1922, Great Britain was granted by the League of Nations the mandate for the territory of Palestine. The British representative of the highest rank there was the High Commissioner for Palestine (in the years 1938–1944, Harold Alfred MacMichael served in that capacity). Already before the outbreak of the war (in May 1939), British authorities made public the so-called third white paper, wherein they introduced limits of the number of people of Jewish origin immigrating to Palestine (set at 75 thousand

On such occasions, Polish Jews are subject to unfair discrimination, for the fact that the land of their origin is occupied by enemy troops cannot serve as grounds to treat them as people coming from the enemy country itself.

Having submitted the above, I have the honour to ask His Excellency to consider the advisability of bringing the matter to the attention of the governments of France and Great Britain.¹⁰

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
B. Wieniawa-Długoszowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (previously published)

25

20 February 1940. Report by the Consul General in Tel Aviv on the potential resettlement of Jewish refugees from Romania to Palestine

Tel Aviv, 20 February 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Minister's Cabinet
in Angers

Confidential

Over a thousand Polish citizens, Jews, are currently in Romania.¹¹ Due to the unstable political situation in that country, almost all the Jewish refugees attempt to secure passage to Palestine in any way possible. Obviously, it is not possible

people over the period of five years). Regarding the limitations introduced after 1 September 1939, see also doc. 40.

¹⁰ The report was sent to the Embassies in London and Paris.

¹¹ In the cable of 3 January 1940, the Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy in Paris, Feliks Frankowski, informed: 'The Romanian Ambassador in Paris notified me today that in response to his telegram concerning the border shutdown for the Polish refugees from the territory under Soviet occupation he had been assured by his government that the refugees not suspected of being agents of the USSR will be allowed to cross the border. The Romanian Government had opted for the restrictions against the people fleeing from the Soviet occupation for no other reason than that of a large influx thereto of people of communist affiliation claiming to be Polish refugees; therefore, strict border control is necessary; however, it will now be organised in a manner not injurious to genuine refugees.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 220.

without any certificates or visas, especially because illegal emigration from Romania proves impracticable. These refugees, deprived of any livelihood, are almost entirely dependent on allowances, which are regularly paid out to them in the amount of 100 lei (50 lei for children) per day; it is known to largely burden the Polish State Treasury.¹²

Should it prove possible to obtain for these refugees entry visas to Palestine in any form, the Polish State Treasury would instantly be exempt from the obligation to provide for them.

I am therefore allowing myself to request an adequate intervention at the English Government, in order for them to issue permits to enter Palestine for Jewish refugees from Poland, that is, the ones staying in Romania, whose number stands at approximately a thousand.

By making that bid, the Polish Government shall perform a very humanitarian act, for in the case of the Germans or Bolsheviks taking aggressive steps against Romania, the Jewish refugees—facing the shutdown of the borders to all the neighbouring countries—could fall into the hands of those from whom they had sought refuge in Romania.

Besides, when they arrive in Palestine, the Jews—Polish citizens—are certain to discover ways to find employment in spite of difficult living conditions here and will no longer be a burden for public generosity.

Because of the importance of the matter, I urge you to submit a similar request to the English Government and use special interventions to successfully persuade the English Government of the extraordinary situation of these Polish citizens, and of the Polish Government's greatest concern about the issue.

An effective action taken by the Polish Government shall, in my view, have a very positive appeal to Jewry throughout the world.

Henryk Rosmarin
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (previously published)

¹² The assistance was provided mainly by the Polish Embassy in Bucharest, which operated until November 1940, when the Romanian authorities decided on its closure, and severed diplomatic relations with Poland. The Polish interests in Romania were subsequently represented by the Legation of Chile.

26

*23 February 1940. Letter from the Consul General in New York
to the Minister of Social Welfare
on the operation of the Joint Distribution Committee*

23 February 1940

To the Ministry of Social Welfare
in Angers

Regarding the rescue mission by the American Jewish organisation of rapid assistance Joint Distribution Committee¹³

Because of the same direction and similar lines of action of the local organisation of rapid assistance 'Commission for Polish Relief, Inc.'¹⁴ and the Jewish organisation 'Joint Distribution Committee'—I am allowing myself to communicate to you the following remarks.

For 20 years after the Great War, the Jewish-American organisation 'Joint Distribution Committee' conducted a wide campaign of immediate assistance and reconstruction among the Jews in Poland, mainly by subsidising the organisations: TOZ, Centos, and Gemiloth Chessed Kassas. Since the outbreak of the current war, it has provided rapid aid both in Poland, and to the refugees in Lithuania, Romania, Hungary, and Latvia.

Since the beginning of the war, it has assisted by operating soup kitchens in Warsaw, which provide meals for 50,000 people a day, with medical care provided by the still active remains of the TOZ organisation, subsidised by the Joint for many years and by offering childcare in shelters, as well as a special action to feed these children, run by the Centos organisation. There is also a clothing supply campaign, the repatriation of the Jewish population to their places of origin; furthermore, barracks are built for people without shelter, or appropriate quarters for them are sought.

To provide such assistance, the Joint not only contributed significant funds, which they were able to transfer to Poland directly before the outbreak of the war, alongside the ready money they had at their disposal during that period, but

¹³ The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was a charity organisation established in New York in 1914. During World War II, it was one of the most important institutions that offered various assistance to the people of Jewish origin in the occupied territories.

¹⁴ This a reference to the so-called Hoover Commission (the acronym Comporel was also used), established in September 1939, with the aim to provide food supplies to the population of occupied Poland.

also the large sums they have borrowed since that time from numerous allied institutions and Jewish organisations in Poland. All the funds are now on the verge of depletion, and the Joint is looking for a way to transfer further funds to Poland while avoiding the need to send dollars into Polish territory occupied by the German army. This is in line with the Joint's former activity, as they have since 1933 carefully avoided transferring foreign currency to Germany and to the countries they had taken over. The transfers of funds to support the Joint's campaign have always been performed by way of arranging an exchange, whereby dollars were sent to foreign countries to cover the sums paid out in the local currency in Germany or in the occupied countries. In a likewise manner, the Joint intends to provide the funds required for the relief action in Poland.

In their rescue mission, the Joint cooperates both with the Commission for Polish Relief and with the American Red Cross. The moment the Commission has obtained the permission from the German authorities to distribute rescue materials under the supervision of an American permanent representative in Poland, the Joint intends to begin close cooperation with the Commission both in terms of finances and other matters. The Joint is now in constant contact with the American Red Cross, which reports on their rescue mission in the territories taken over by Germany, by providing medical care and distributing clothes for Poles and Jews by the Polish local committees.

Regarding the territory taken over by the Soviets, the Joint has calculated based on information from credible sources that there are approx. 900,000 refugees there, at least 70% of whom are Jewish. Some of them come from the territories annexed by Germany, others migrated from smaller settlements to larger cities. Of that number, approx. 300,000 homeless refugees are now in Lwów, 120,000 in other cities in eastern Lesser Poland, 100,000 in the cities of Kaunas, Łuck, and Kowel, and approx. 60,000 in Białystok.

These masses of refugees need food; more apparent still is the need of warm clothing, shoes, and medications. The Joint is conducting a wide campaign of immediate assistance mainly in the cities, where the concentration of refugees is the densest, allocating to that purpose major funds of its own, which it possessed in the region when the Soviet troops entered.

The Joint is also conducting its own rescue mission among the 25,000 Jewish refugees in Lithuania and in Wilno, spending large sums of money for that purpose. In addition to the above, it participates in a general coordinated action with the Commission for Polish Relief, the Red Cross, British relief organisations, and the Lithuanian Government. Apart from the amount of \$135,000 dispensed by the Joint on the rescue mission in Lithuania since the outbreak of the war, the organisation allocates \$50,000 a month to sustain its operation there. In cooperation with

the Commission for Polish Relief and the American Red Cross, which arrange shipments of used clothing from America to the said regions, the Joint provides funds to enable the purchase of clothes and textiles in the countries neighbouring with Poland. Only in Wilno and its closest vicinity, the Joint is making efforts to reopen the 18 credit unions previously operating there. A certain initial amount has been transferred by the Joint as a loan fund for Gemiloth Chessed Kassar.

The rescue work of the Joint in Wilno is performed under the supervision of Mosez W. Bockelman, an American member of the Joint staff. The former Director of the Warsaw Headquarters of the Joint, Icchak Giterman, was arrested by the Germans aboard an Estonian ship they had captured and subsequently interned.

The Joint also conducts an aid campaign among the several thousand Jewish refugees in Romania, Hungary, and Latvia by supplying them with food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. A register has been taken of the refugees in the above countries, and, wherever possible, efforts are made to establish contact with their relatives in America or in other countries. Since the outset of the war, the Joint has spent a sum total of over \$50,000 on the rescue missions in Romania, Hungary, and Latvia.

Regardless of their operation in the territory of Poland and in the said refugee regions, the Joint conducts rescue activities among the German, Austrian, Czechoslovak Jews, and among the refugees in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and in Italy, as well as in the countries of Central and South America, Shanghai, etc.

For the purposes of the aforementioned action, the Joint together with United Palestine Appeal, and the National Coordinating Refugee Committee has organised a collection campaign. The collection is run by a joint charity organisation, United Jewish Appeal, and is aimed to bring \$23 million in 1940.

The collection is carried out by a system of taxation of the more affluent Jews, and a stipulation of specific amounts to be donated by the respective Jewish communities.

In the mission statement issued by United Jewish Appeal, the ten major Jewish needs are listed that the collected funds are to cover, these are:

1. War victims in Poland must be fed and clothed. One meal a day must be provided for a minimum of 200,000 adults at a cost of \$360,000 per month; at least 150,000 children must also be given food. Therefore, the Joint Distribution Committee must expand its relief activities in Poland.

2. The war refugees who are now in Lithuania, Romania, Hungary, and other countries must be given the means of existence. At least 75,000 of the 170,000 refugees from Germany who are now in European countries require

support either in whole or in part. Aid must be rushed by the Joint Distribution Committee to prevent large-scale deportations to Germany. Refugees in Latin America are also in need of assistance.

3. Thousands in Germany and Austria who still have the opportunity to emigrate to Palestine, to the Americas, to Australia, and elsewhere, must be provided with the means of transportation or face the threat of concentration camps, or expulsion to Lublin.

4. Jewish communities in Romania, Lithuania, Hungary, Latvia, and Estonia must receive funds to maintain their economic, educational, childcare, and medical programme.

5. Immigration to Palestine, which has not been reduced by the war, must be supported because of the extraordinary pressure to emigrate upon Jews from Germany and Austria. Widespread homelessness has driven large numbers to seek haven in Palestine.

6. The Jewish community of 500,000 in Palestine is facing severe economic problems as a consequence of the war. Special measures must be taken to promote industrial and agricultural progress and to help 80,000 men, women, and children who have felt the shock of the economic recession.

7. The establishment of new settlements is required and so is the continued purchase of land through funds provided by the United Palestine Appeal to extend the development of Palestine and enable it to absorb the continued flow of refugee immigration.

8. Refugees coming to the United States in accordance with immigration quota require assistance in finding a foothold in American life.

9. Resettlement of refugees to ensure the soundest means of integration is one of many problems confronting the National Refugee Service, which is called upon to assist newcomers with relief, employment, retraining and education.

10. Refugees waiting their turn in Cuba, England, and other lands to come to the United States require special assistance and guidance on migration conditions.

The collection campaign performed together by the three aforementioned organisations is aimed to lower the costs of the collection which—before the establishment of United Jewish Appeal—was conducted separately in the same Jewish communities, a fact that on the one hand increased the operating costs, and on the other hindered the control of people who avoided donating to support any of the causes, by using the excuse that they had made their donations to other organisations.

Another thing related to the collection campaign is the visit to the United States by Dr Weizmann and Dr Goodman, who are trying to secure funds for the purposes of investments in Palestine and of supporting the local population suffering from unemployment. According to the most recent information, the first Jewish community to entirely subscribe to the collection amount imposed upon it are the Jews of Chicago, who have already collected the stipulated amount of \$2.5 million.

Dr Sylwester Gruszka
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Waszyngton, 67

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*[Before 24 February 1940]. Report by Jan Karski
on the situation of the Jewish population in occupied Poland*

IV¹⁵

THE JEWISH MATTER IN POLAND¹⁶

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Situation of Jews in the territories annexed by the Third Reich
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- 5) Situation of Jews in the territories annexed by the USSR
- 6) Jews—occupiers—Poles
 - a) Under the German partition

¹⁵ The report published here is the fourth prepared by Jan Karski in 1940. The previous ones, titled: 'Report of the Author's Trip', 'The Overall Situation in the Country', 'Selected Ideological and Political Issues in Poland (1940)' did not concern Jewish affairs. Having completed his first mission in the occupied Poland, Karski reached France towards the end of January 1940, where he created the said documents.

¹⁶ The section of the report on the relations between Poles and Jews in the occupied country was prepared in two versions (pages: 6, 9, 10, 11 of the original document). The second version (pages: 6a, 9a, 10a, 11a), which describes the attitudes of Poles towards Jews in a more alleviated way, is not published.

- b) Under the Bolshevik partition
- 7) The Jewish matter as an element of German internal policy in the Polish territories
- 8) Current risk related to the Jewish question
- 9) Conclusions

THE JEWISH MATTER IN OCCUPIED POLAND

Introduction:

I have not deliberately studied the Jewish matter in Poland. The elements that I have gathered comprise mainly of commonly known facts, observations of moods, and some conversations with and about Jews.

Situation of Jews in the territories annexed by the Third Reich

The situation of Jews in those territories is clear, uncomplicated and easy to understand.

They are outside of the law; unprotected by the authorities—there is an official tendency to either exterminate or remove them with the use of force, the law, and propaganda.

Jews are being relocated from these territories, their property is confiscated, 'the guilty parties' are subject to imprisonment—the intended outcome is a complete cleansing of the territory from the Jewish population.

Jews are almost deprived of life there—if they go on living, they do so covertly, in fear, illegally, as a result of the German authorities and society 'turning a blind eye to that unpleasant fact.'

All of them wear armbands or badges (the same as in the General Government) identifying them as Jews—any failure to comply with that obligation is subject to severe repressions.

Generally, they are not allowed to shop in Aryan stores, even for bare necessities; nor are they allowed to produce items, goods and articles, they may only repair things, etc.; in the early evenings they are not allowed to be seen in the city, they cannot travel without special permits, they are prohibited from even walking on certain streets, frequenting cinemas, theatres, cafés, they cannot enter a great majority of company offices and shops; Aryans are not to greet or socialise with them, Jews are subjected to forced labour, to special 'gymnastics lessons' (exhausting exercises), 'hygiene lessons' (a kind of 'water' torture), and so on. Germans often impose contributions on Jewish communities under any pretence—these tend to reach the amounts of tens and hundreds of thousands of zlotys.

Not only are all people of the Mosaic religion considered to be Jews, but also anyone whose parents, or one of his or her parents, belonged to the Jewish community.

In some cases (also in the territory of the General Government) the restrictions, ordinances and moral attitude towards Jews—also apply to the Polish population. Obviously, that is met with quiet satisfaction among Jews and produces even greater bitterness, disenchantment and a sense of humiliation among the Poles.

Circumstances in the General Government

The intention is for all Jews to be relocated to the General Government from the incorporated territories. The German plan is that these lands—'originally German and disgracefully Judaized by the Poles'—should be returned to the German fatherland, Jew-free.

In the General Government, Jews removed from the annexed territories are in a vast majority of cases placed in Lublin and its surroundings. One gets the impression that the Germans may want to establish there a Jewish reserve of sorts. That is the direction indicated in the declarations made by some German officials and a section of the German press.

The situation of the Jews in the General Government is in principle similar (as above); however, it is mitigated by the consequences of the facts that: 1) the number of Jews here is greater, 2) from here, Jews cannot be relocated anywhere further, 3) the German population in those territories is very sparse—meanwhile the Polish population does not, after all, exhibit the tendency to adopt such methods and such a stance towards Jews as the Germans do.

Be that as it may, here, too, Jews wear armbands or badges, and are subject to the same ordinances as in the annexed territories. Germans are aware that Jews here are 'still somewhat at home'—and that they have to stay.

Nevertheless, Germans are making efforts to suitably 'organise' the Jews here, 'teach them how to work,' 'how to be clean,' and 'to respect the Nordics and Aryans in general'; they want to ruin them materially and impose grave restrictions on their lives.

Forced labour of Jews is organised on a large scale—usually to 'clear' Warsaw and other cities of rubble.

Instances illustrating the living conditions of Jews under the German occupation

I cannot resist to mention several characteristic incidents which may shed some light on the circumstances and the atmosphere under which Jews live in the territories occupied by Germans.

I. Jews and the law

It once happened that a member of a Polish institution colluded with two German soldiers; they went together to the Old Town in Warsaw and simply robbed a Jewish jewellery shop in broad daylight.

When the chief of that institution (a Pole) learnt of that incident, he laid the bandit off. The latter complained to the Gestapo. The Gestapo summoned the chief of the institution. The ensuing dialogue:

‘Why have you laid off Mr X?’

‘Because he turned out to be a bandit—he robbed a jewellery shop.’

‘We know nothing of any robbery. He merely confiscated from a Jew some personal items that he needed, and he is allowed to that.’

‘We call it robbery.’

‘And for us it is confiscation. Please try to adapt quickly to our customs. Anything can be taken away from a Jew for anything Jews possess has in fact been obtained by way of legalised robbery. What is more, we want the Polish population to learn that any Pole may visit any Jewish shop, throw the Jew out from behind the counter, and our law will protect him. Anyone who so wishes may kill a Jew—and our law will not condemn him for that.’

This fact is completely true.

II. Pregnant Jewish woman

Once, I was at the Gestapo office to get a pass. Suddenly, a Jewish woman entered, intelligent, wearing a fur coat, frightened. She was expecting a child. She asked for a pass for herself or for doctor, so that either she or her doctor were allowed to cross the streets after 8 o’clock in the evening, in case labour started at such an hour.

The answer of a—Volksdeutsch—secretary (female):

‘No pass is necessary. We will not make it easier for you to give birth to Jews. Dogs are dying of hunger, such great poverty, and you want to bring forth more Jews? Heraus... heraus!’

III. Jewish camp near Bełżec

Near Bełżec (at the borderland of the territories occupied by the Bolsheviks), the Germans established a camp for Jews.¹⁷ The camp is mainly for Jewish families

¹⁷ In the extermination camp in Bełżec, operating between March 1942 and June 1943, approx. 450,000 people were murdered (predominantly Polish, but also Austrian, German, and Czechoslovak Jews). Before that, from May to November 1940 it was a labour camp for the Romani and Sinti people, and for the Jewish population. Over 10,000 people were imprisoned there, of whom several hundred were murdered. In

who wanted to illegally cross the Bolshevik border or were waiting for the alleged and expected opening of the Bolshevik-German border for the population exchange. It accommodates several thousand men, women, old people, and children. Incidentally, almost exclusively the poor. I saw this camp at the outset of December 1939.

They were walking and sleeping in the open air in great numbers. Many without suitable clothing or blankets. While one group was sleeping—the others were awaiting their turn, for the blankets were shared. Those waiting, in order not to freeze to death, were shuffling and trotting. Several hundred people, including children, women and the elderly were running for hours or shuffling in one place, for if they stopped—they would freeze. After several hours, they switched places. Now that group was sleeping while another several hundred were shuffling and trotting, shuffling and trotting. All frozen cold, dejected, uncomprehending, starving. A herd of tormented animals—not humans. It lasted for weeks.

For an entire hour, I was observing this spectacle, petrified, frightened, crushed. A nightmare or some other terrifying dream—not reality: livid and red creatures, not humans. I shall never forget it, never in my life have I seen anything more terrifying.

IV. Gymnastics and hygiene lessons in Lublin

A group of several dozen people—performing complex and exhausting exercises. Lessons of humiliating singing. Sneers, kicks and mockery by the German guards. Old men were fainting. Young boys in thoughtless, animalistic terror. Then, a bath in cold water (in December!). Some boys were forced to strip down naked—jokes were made by the Germans, as well as threats and gestures—the ‘Male race’¹⁸ is in fact a nation of heartless beings, mad with ferocious hatred.

V. In the ‘Kercelak’ market in Warsaw

I visited the ‘Kercelak’ market. A Jewish stall. Its owner, a Jew, was freezing cold. Here comes a German soldier. He takes socks, a comb, a bar of soap—and intends to walk away without paying. The Jew demands the money. The soldier seems not to notice. The old man raises his voice, the owners of neighbouring stalls are trying to hold him back, calm him down; they are concerned for him. The old man is shouting, or rather bellowing: ‘What can he do to me? What can he do? He can only kill me. Let him kill me! Let him kill me! Enough of that, I can’t take it anymore!’

The German left—without paying. While leaving, he said ‘Verfluchte Juden.’

February 1940, Karski may have misidentified the described camp (as was the case in 1942, when he was able to get into the transit camp in Izbica, which he referred to as the Bełżec Camp).

¹⁸ This is a distorted version of the ‘master race’, or ‘master people’ (die Herrenrasse, das Herrenvolk), a phrase used in the ideology of Nazi Germany.

SITUATION OF JEWS IN THE TERRITORIES ANNEXED BY THE USSR

The situation of Jews in those territories is fundamentally different. 'After all, there is no discrimination against nations or religions.' 'Everyone is equal.' 'Everyone is given employment and protection of the law.'

Jews are at home here, they are neither humiliated nor persecuted; furthermore, thanks to their cleverness and the ability to adjust to any new situation, they enjoy certain rights, both of the political and economic kind.

They join political cells, they have filled major political and administrative positions, they play a significant role in trade unions, in higher education institutions, and mainly in trade, and above all else in usury, and in profiteering, in illegal business (contraband, trade in foreign currencies, spirits, illicit businesses and illicit brokering, pandering).

In these territories, for many the situation is better both politically and economically than it was before the war.

This refers particularly to small merchants, artisans, members of the proletariat and the half-educated. The wealthier and more enlightened spheres (owners of tenement houses, larger companies, production plants, stores; lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc.) are in fact subject to the same restrictions, pressures or social annihilation as other nations, a fact stemming from the Soviet system.

Jews—occupiers—Poles

a) Under the German partition

Towards Germans, Jews are docile, submissive; they are mistreated and they live in constant fear, in terror.

There is no question of any action of active defence of their rights to live and work. They do whatever the Germans order them to—quietly, without a murmur, humbly.

There is not even the slightest attempt at resistance, particularly at organised resistance—at most, there are individual acts of desperation, of mental breakdowns.

Here, a Jew would rather commit suicide than oppose a German.

Patience, submissiveness, the state of torment, the atmosphere and conditions in which the broadest and poorest strata of Jews live in the territories annexed by the Third Reich and even in the General Government often exceed any notions of human misery.

Their only reaction are the attempts to escape to the territory occupied by the Soviets, or, even more often, literally not to be seen in broad daylight.

The attitude of Jews towards Poles is similar to that towards the Germans.

It can be sensed universally that they would be happy if there was some understanding of their position among the Poles, that both nations are unjustly oppressed by the same enemy. However, no understanding of that sort can be found among the broader masses of the Polish society.

Their attitude towards Jews is usually ruthless, often merciless. They largely benefit from the rights they have been granted in the new situation. Frequently, they not only use their rights, but downright abuse them.

That brings them a certain degree closer to the Germans.

b) Under the Bolshevik partition

Jews' attitude towards the Bolsheviks is regarded by the Polish society as very favourable. It is commonly believed that Jews have betrayed Poland and the Poles. That they are for all intents and purposes communists. That they have crossed over to the Bolsheviks with their banners unfolded.

Admittedly, in most cities Jews did welcome the Bolsheviks with bouquets of red roses, addresses, submissive declarations, etc.

However, certain distinction must be introduced at this juncture.

It is true that communist Jews welcomed the Bolsheviks with enthusiasm, regardless of the social strata that they represented. The Jewish proletariat, small merchants, artisans, all those whose situation has structurally improved, and who had been mostly subject to persecution, humiliation and excesses of the Polish population—they all adopted a positive, if not enthusiastic, attitude towards the new regime.

Their conduct is hardly surprising.

It is worse, however, when they, for instance, denounce Poles, Polish nationalist students, Polish political activists, when they supervise the operation of the Bolshevik militias from behind their desks, or as members of the militia, when they calumniate the relations in pre-war Poland. Unfortunately, it must be said that such instances are frequent, much more so than instances indicating their loyalty towards Poles or their sentiment towards Poland.

Meanwhile, I get the impression that the intelligentsia, the wealthier and better educated Jews (obviously with many exceptions and not taking into consideration appearances) rather tend to think about Poland with a certain affection and would gladly receive a change of the existing state of affairs—the independence of Poland.

Of course, there is an element of calculation to that.

Currently, they also are suffering great difficulties, if not social elimination—their houses are confiscated, whereas their shops, offices, and production plants are appropriated under the pretence of the so-called 'communisation,' which turns them into a sort of cooperative (where the participation of and the services for the

state are exceptionally high); they are prevented from earning their living, often even at the minimum level of existence.

On the other hand, they share a deeply-rooted and quite common belief that the future Poland will be a democratic country, which—owing much, among others, to the international Jewry—will be partly dependent upon it, and hence, it will not oppress Jews.

Then again, an indubitable role is played here by their Polish patriotism; however, the extent thereof is difficult to estimate.

For instance, I am familiar with an actual case when a Jew, a renowned lawyer from Lwów, Mr... (48),¹⁹ warned Poles of the threat from the GPU and of the trials prepared against them; he warned them about communist lawyers, whereas his son, a scholar (in fact, only a year earlier badly beaten by Polish nationalist students) honestly and with genuine selflessness fought in the student union for various benefits and aids for the Poles, or for a greater number of places in the dormitories for them.

Overall, however, Jews en masse created the situation in which Poles regard them as devoted to the Bolsheviks and—it can be safely said—are waiting for the moment when they will be able to simply take their revenge on Jews. In fact, all Poles are embittered and disappointed with the Jews, the great majority of them (predominantly the youth, of course) are literally awaiting any opportunity of exacting a ‘bloody retribution.’

The Jewish matter as an element of German internal policy in the Polish territories

Under the German occupation, Jews’ attitude towards Poles and vice versa is a very important and complicated issue. Much more important and much more complicated than under the Bolshevik partition.

Germans are trying at all costs to win over the Polish lower classes. Not the intelligentsia, nor the higher social strata, nor the more affluent and better educated landed gentry or burghers—but the people: peasants, workers, craftsmen, etc.

They use various methods.

Within these methods, their perfidy is only matched by their deception and ruthlessness.

Germans constantly emphasise that they ‘do not want the Polish people to suffer,’ that ‘they need the Poles,’ that it is ‘in the interest of both Germans and Poles

¹⁹ For conspiratorial reasons, Karski used numbers to refer to specific people (differing in the subsequent reports developed over the years). Number 48 was attributed to person with the surname ‘Axer’—most likely it was a reference to a Lwów attorney Maurycy Axer (after Lwów was captured by the German army, Axer was arrested and murdered in 1942, in the extermination camp in Bełżec).

to cooperate,' that 'they do not in the least want to destroy and eliminate ethnic Poland,' etc.

They are trying to present themselves before the people as 'tough, merciless, but fair.'

They use the most diverse ways to make the dejected, disillusioned and broken Polish nation orient itself towards Berlin.

They emphasise that 'the Piłsudskiite government betrayed the Polish nation,' that 'France and England have betrayed Poles once and will always betray them in the future,' that the 'current fictitious government is once again willing to inadvertently and unnecessarily put Poles in harm's way and provoke German reaction,' that 'Germans are the ones to defend the people against great capitalists and the landed gentry,' that "unfortunately" the Polish nation has to pay the penalty for the actions of its former irresponsible government.' They instigate artificial conflicts within the society, solving them 'justly'; they accept any requests of the people and intercede (in minor issues, obviously), almost always exaggerating their actual interventions.

They are trying to take advantage of the conflicts arising between the Polish police and other residual Polish institutions or officials, and the broad social strata, almost always taking 'the side of the people,' and ultimately... 'Germans, at long, long last will help Poles to set things straight with the Jews.'

Thus, the German attitude towards Jews most clearly reaches far beyond their official ideology, constituting one of the elements of their internal policy.

They are making efforts to:

- 1) extort from Jews whatever they can (money, provisions, means of production, workshops);
- 2) cleanse the territories they have incorporated of Jews at the expense of Judaising the General Government;
- 3) using Jews as an opportunity to discover the lure to win over the sympathy, recognition and respect of broad sections of the Polish population.

'Why, in the General Government it is the Germans, they at last, who are solving the Jewish question, and not only for themselves, but in view of the interests of the Polish nation'—that is how Germans intend for the society to perceive their campaign.

Much indicates that it is what they actually want.

They do not care much for oppressing Polish Jews in the General Government neither in principle nor ideologically:

After all, a Jew may pay his way out of wearing an armband or a patch if he has a lot of money—after all, he may go to the Bolsheviks if he pays—after all, he may often even receive a passport if he bribes an official—after all, Germans do

not relocate Jews, say, from Zakopane (as they have announced) after the Jewish community paid the ransom—after all, they do not imprison the most distinguished rabbis and other Jewish figures if their freedom is paid for, etc.

Regardless of the above, they are practically not solving the Jewish question at all.

Robbery, ‘mental discharge of the male *folk*’ and deception of the Polish society—these are their genuine objectives.

And, one must hand it to them, they are succeeding in that.

Jews pay, and pay, and pay... and the Polish peasant, worker or a dumb, immoral half-wit comments out loud: ‘Now, they are teaching them a lesson’—‘We should learn from them’—‘Finally, an end to the Jews’—‘Why, we must thank God that the Germans came and turned up the heat on the Jews,’ etc.

Current risk related to the Jewish question

‘Solving the Jewish question’ by the Germans, I must state it with the deepest sense or responsibility for my words, constitutes a serious and rather perilous instrument in German hands to ‘morally assuage’ broad spheres of the Polish society.

It would be an obvious mistake to assume that only that issue should prove effective and shall gain for them the respect of the society.

The nation hates its mortal enemy; however, the issue creates something like a narrow footbridge on which Germans and a large part of the Polish society do meet in unison.

Of course, the footpath is as narrow as great is the German desire to underpin and strengthen it.

Furthermore, there is a risk that this condition may demoralise broad masses of the society, a demoralisation that may cause many problems for the future authorities of the Polish state, to be reconstructed with great difficulty—too bad, ‘once learnt, never forgotten...’

Lastly, the current circumstances induce a twofold division among the populace of these lands. Firstly: between Jews and Poles in the battle against their shared mortal enemy, secondly: the division among Poles, some of whom despise and rage against the barbaric methods adopted by the Germans (at the same time realising the potential danger thereof), while others look at those (and hence, at the Germans!) with an intrigued and often pleased eye, blaming the former group for ‘remaining indifferent towards such an important issue.’

Conclusions

I will not speak to the solution of that issue: the matter would have to be painstakingly studied, investigated; it would have to take a lot of time.

It is not that difficult, however, to draw some obvious conclusion, easy to observe for anyone:

1) Whatever the Germans are attempting to do to the Polish nation—is detrimental to the latter. In principle, it should be assumed, therefore, that their manner of solving the Jewish question in the General Government, taking advantage thereof in relation to the Polish nation, their ultimate objectives—these must all pose a major threat to us. Accepting their view of that issue, reacting in a way they expect and intend us to—in the extent that it is favourable for them—is dangerous for us.

2) I do not know how to do it, nor the way to even approach it, nor still who could achieve it, nor lastly on what scale (should it prove possible at all)—however, faced with the situation where there are three enemies, if we have to regard Jews as our enemies, would it not be advisable to attempt to create, to the extent practicable, a kind of front of the two weaker parties, against the third one, the most powerful and most deadly enemy, and postpone settling the scores between the other two for later?

3) The establishment of a much broader front would certainly encounter immense backlash from the broad sections of the Polish society, whose antisemitism has by no means diminished.

4) Remaining passive in face of the current state of affairs is associated with the threat of both the demoralisation of the Polish society (predominantly its lower strata), and all the dangers stemming from such a ‘consensus’—be it only partial, though in many instances it would definitely prove sincere—between a significant number of Poles and the occupying power.

Lithuanian partition²⁰

I know too little of the Jewish matter under the Lithuanian partition to be able to take responsibility for my declarations even within such a narrow scope as above.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 98 (previously published)

²⁰ Pursuant to the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and to the German–Soviet Treaty of 28 September 1939, Lithuania fell into the Soviet zone of influence. Initially, the USSR did not annex it, instead ceding to Lithuanians a part of the territory of the Second Polish Republic (the entire Wilno region, including the city), having established bases of the Red Army in the Lithuanian territory. Only in June 1940 was Lithuania taken over by the Soviet troops, whereas in August 1940, by a resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the country became a part of the USSR, as a Union Republic. The Polish Envoy in Kaunas, Franciszek Charwat, left the country accompanied by the staff of his post in October 1939.

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*2 March 1940. Report by the Consul General in Trieste
on difficulties in emigration of people of Jewish descent*

Trieste, 2 March 1940

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in Angers

Concerning Jewish emigration from Poland²¹

Trieste is the crucial stage through which pass all those arriving from Poland. The wave the emigration resulting from war is constantly increasing in number, the vast majority here being Jews.

Whereas the immediate future of Poles is decided on the spot (some continue their travel to France, having secured a foothold there, others are directed to Rome, where the Committee for Relief provides them with subsistence for some time, at least), the situation of the Jewish populace proves to be much more complicated.

Although, admittedly, a certain part of the Jews who had arrived from Poland in the recent months mostly went to Palestine, either by obtaining or already holding Palestinian immigration permits, these opportunities have been taken away by severe restrictions imposed by English decision makers. Those who left Poland after 1 October 1939 have been prohibited from entering Palestine.²² Hence, the ban

²¹ The emigration of people of Jewish origin from the territory of the General Government was possible until 25 October 1940, when the Reich Security Main Office imposed an emigration ban.

²² The adverse impact of the ban imposed by the British was also signalled by representatives of Jewish communities in Trieste. In the memorandum of 8 March 1940, signed by Markus Braude (former senator of the Republic of Poland), and Abram Perelman (former headmaster of a gymnasium in Łódź), submitted to Ambassador Bolesław Długoszowski-Wieniawa, the authors wrote: 'In the first months of the war, a part of the Jewish populace sought refuge in the territory occupied by Soviet Russia and Lithuania, as well as in the neighbouring countries of Romania, and Hungary. Currently the borders of these territories have been closed, and Italy is the only country to allow through small groups of refugees, who arrive here in order to travel to Palestine on the basis of certificates issued by the Palestinian Government. However, any realisation of such refugees' dreams has become virtually illusory, for the British Government adds to the certificates for Jewish emigrants a provision that Palestine can only be entered by people who had left the German-occupied territories by 1 October 1939. As a result, Palestine has become practically inaccessible to Jewish refugees staying in Italy as most of them left Poland after 1 October 1939. Meanwhile, those who had fled Poland—in

applies to anyone staying locally at the moment. Already today, there is a group of several hundred people hopelessly awaiting any opportunity to leave the country. In the near future, the accumulation is going to become very significant, which will, in turn, further complicate the situation of Jewish refugees from Poland.

So far, the Italian authorities have not complicated the matters for Jews entering Italy. They are indeed required to document their ability to immediately leave the country, that is, possess a foreign visa and sufficient funds to cover travel costs, but it does not bear on the issuance of a permit to remain in Italy for some time if travel-related formalities require such a stay. However, a stay of that kind may not be overly extended.

In view of the situation that is starting to develop in connection with the English restrictions on the entry to Palestine, there is a growing apprehension and anxiety among the Italian authorities lest the influx of Jewish immigrants become a nuisance. Even now, major difficulties arise with regard to the issuance of residence cards and the extension of permit dates. The expiry dates set are getting shorter, while the growing blockage may result in a general ban to enter Italy for Jews.

Any intervention by the post into the matter is out of the question for obvious reasons. The issue can only be solved in London. There is a growing sense of urgency to it, because of the constant flood of new groups of Jews arriving here from Poland.²³

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/–/ Roman Wegnerowicz

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58

great haste—before 1 October 1939 are unable to prove it for they usually crossed the borders of foreign countries without any required documents'. Communicating the memorandum to the MFA, the Ambassador in Rome stated further: 'Personally, I wish to add that a group of approx. 300 Polish Jews have indeed accumulated in the city; these Jews want to emigrate in any direction—most of all to Palestine, for they cannot hope to be issued a residence permit in Italy. Their situation is really difficult; however, I am not inclined to regard it as tragic, because they are staying in an environment that does not pose any immediate threat to them. Nevertheless, I consider it highly advisable for our government to bring up the matter with the British Government regarding the issue of abolishing the provision incriminated by the petitioners, which regards the stipulated date of 1 October 1939.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58; see docs. 35, 36, and 40.

²³ The document was sent to the Ambassador in London on 22 March 1940. In a covering letter, the Secretary-General at the MFA, Jan Ciechanowski, communicated: 'The material attached should prove useful to your activity with regard to the matter in question. Concurrently, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland to the Quirinal is instructed to obtain the support of Sir Percy Loraine regarding the issue.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58.

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*23 March 1940. Report by the Consul General in Brussels
on his conversation with the President
of the Council of Jewish Associations*

23 March 1940

SECRET

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in ANGERS

Regarding: the mood of the Jewish population in Belgium

I have had a conversation with the President of the Council of Jewish Associations in Brussels,^x a lawyer, Mr Leon Kubowitzki, a member of the executive committee of the Jewish Congresses in Geneva.

The aforementioned gentleman is a Belgian citizen of Lithuanian origin.

During our conversation, Mr Kubowitzki, as Jews generally tend to do, made grave claims and accusations against former Polish governments. He believes Poland to have been very unjust to Jews; starting from 1919, only injuries and handicaps befell the Jews. The entire Polish legislation was directed against Jews, who in such circumstances had no prospect of transforming their social structure and were compelled to be exclusively dealing with trade, whereas other fields of employment, such as agriculture and craftsmanship, were closed to them.

There have also been accusations of persecution and pogroms against Jews.²⁴

Mr Kubowitzki believes that we can hardly expect Jews to support any future Poland to be built on the same principles. Unfortunately, according to him Jews think that the current Government of Poland has not made a clear declaration as regards the Polish Jews, nor, above all, have any Jews been appointed as members of the Polish Government, which is said to include antisemites well known to them. Undertakings of the Polish Government, such as having General Haller visit America,²⁵ cannot have a reassuring effect on Jews.

^x *comprising organisations of non-Polish Jews.*

²⁴ This is a reference to antisemitic pogroms that occurred in the Polish territories, incl. in Lwów (November 1918) and in Pińsk, Lida, and Wilno (spring 1919). The issue of pogroms was subject to investigation by a British-American investigative commission under Henry Morgenthau, Sr., which established the number of victims at 200–300 people.

²⁵ General Józef Haller, connected to the National Democracy movement, was on a diplomatic mission in Canada and the United States between December 1939 and April 1940. He met the US President, among other notable figures.

Mr Kubowitzki presented me with samples from the Jewish press (attached to the letter),²⁶ which reflect Jews' extremely negative attitude towards Poland and the Polish Government.

The president of a local Association of Polish Jews declared to me that his organisation had seceded from the Committee, due to their disagreement with the opinions held by Mr Kubowitzki.

F. CHICZEWSKI
Consul General

AAN, Poselstwo Bruksela, 13

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*31 March 1940. Note by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy in Paris
from a conversation with a member of the National Council*

Paris, 31 March 1940

SECRET

To the MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in Angers

Regarding: Conversation with Councillor Schwarzbart

On 26 March of this year, I was visited by Mr Schwarzbart, a member of the National Council, who in a longer discourse acquainted me with his views of the direction that ought to be given to the policy of the Polish Government on the Jewish matter. The conversation was an entirely private exchange of opinions; nevertheless, I consider it my duty to present its crucial aspects to you.

According to Mr Schwarzbart's observations, in Jewish circles throughout the world the attitude towards Poland has in recent times taken a negative turn. It is particularly noticeable in the United States, where the news of the alleged persecution of Jews in the Polish Army has been very badly received. Moreover, in the Jewish spheres there is a certain disappointment that the Polish Government has so far been reserved in treating the Jewish issue and has not clearly expressed its attitude towards it.

²⁶ The attachments are not included in this publication.

Councillor Schwarzbart, who emphasised his own position as a loyal Polish Jew, believes that it is imperative for the good of the cause to clarify the situation, and in order to achieve that, the Polish Government should—in his opinion—sit down for talks with the Jews and declare its position towards the entirety of the Jewish matter in Poland. Mr Schwarzbart is currently assembling a representation of Polish Jews, which is to be composed of delegates of the organisations of Polish Jews in Poland, as well as in the allied and neutral countries. Besides, he put forth a proposal to send a Polish delegation to America with a Jewish representative among its members. He would be willing, if necessary, to assume the role of the representative of Jews in such a mission.

Mr Schwarzbart mentioned that he spoke with the Prime Minister and members of the Polish Government on several occasions, but that these conversations have not resulted in any decisions thus far, a fact that he finds disheartening.

Indicating that I was expressing my personal opinion, I told Mr Schwarzbart that I regard the Jewish matter as having two completely different aspects: the first of those is the issue of Jews being treated equally to other Polish citizens; the other, the Jewish postulates of a potential privileged position as a distinct minority with special rights. Invoking the policy towards Jews applied by the Embassy in the territory of France, I assured Mr Schwarzbart that without any doubt it is the Government's intention to remove anything that could be seen as prejudice against Jews in comparison to other Polish citizens. Therefore, should Jews wish to have in future Poland the same standard of social and civic life as in France, or in England, the solution to the Jewish matter would not encounter any difficulties. If, however, Jews wish to have the status of a privileged minority, it seems to me that the matter cannot be decided at the moment, for we are ignorant of the forms to be applied as a general solution of the minority issue in Poland, and we can hardly prejudge the mood the Government will face on return to the country.

I added that the currently-voiced Jewish allegations against the Government are unfounded and that the fact that they are being advanced results in a vicious circle. After all, the Government cannot impose sympathy for Jews in society if the latter take a hostile stand towards us. The information about the anti-Polish attitude of, say, American Jews, is sure to further exacerbate the resentment of the Polish masses, which in turn may lead to an even less favourable position of foreign Jews towards Poland. The only way to break this vicious circle would be for the Jewish world to assume a markedly pro-Polish stance on the international stage, for only in that case could the allegations of prejudice of the Polish society against them be dispelled. Meanwhile, Jews react violently to even the slightest of incidents completely out of proportion to its significance, thus rendering the reconciliation even more difficult.

Mr Schwarzbart admitted that a certain excitability and tendency to exaggerate minor incidents do constitute a flaw in Jewish character, and that for

the misunderstandings with the Polish society, Jews themselves indeed are in large part to blame. Nevertheless, he continued to expatiate on the need that the Polish Government engage in an immediate discussion on regulating the future situation of Jews in Poland, both regarding their equality as citizens and the guarantee of opportunity to develop their distinct religious and cultural existence. About the latter aspect, Mr Schwarzbart declared that it is his belief that the issue hinges on education.

From the entire conversation, of which I have only cited the key moments, it was clear that Mr Schwarzbart envisions the agreement between Jews and the Polish Government in the form of a 'pact' of sorts, which would constitute a binding obligation for the future as to the rights and privileges of Jews in Poland.

Regardless of Mr Schwarzbart's arguments, I would like to point out that from my observations of the local environment, there is a sense of a reduced initiative on the part of Jewish organisations, whether international or Polish, to maintain contact with us. Among other things, whereas at the outset of the war not a single day went by without the representatives of these organisations visiting the Embassy, at present they very rarely call upon us.

/-/ Chargé d'Affaires a.i.²⁷

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.85/E/3

²⁷ When the Ambassador in Paris, Juliusz Łukasiewicz, had completed his term in the office (in November 1939), the work of the Polish Embassy was supervised by Chargé d'Affaires Feliks Frankowski.

31

[March 1940]. *Roman Knoll's memorandum:
an extract on Polish-Jewish relations*

Warsaw, March 1940

*R. Knoll's Memorandum*²⁸

...²⁹

The current conflict, besides its other aspects, does also have a Jewish facet. This is a Jewish war in the sense that the issue of Jewry's existence and forms of being has been thereby posed in all its sharpness, and also that Jewry is very much interested in the result thereof. Its end has to be accompanied by a solution to the Jewish matter that will enable the Jewish nation to develop strife-free in normalising circumstances. Even the international Western Jewry who assimilate themselves—though often continue to be separated—have for several decades now been aware that equality of rights for Jews is neither the only nor the most important of Jewish problems. That is why Zionism emerged, the Jewish national and state-oriented movement which admittedly found its most distinct expression in the Palestinian tendencies fulfilled with variable success during the last 20 years, but in principle not organically associated with the territory of Palestine. It meant, and continues to mean today the establishment of a Jewish state somewhere where it would be most appropriate, and it is clear for all Jews and for all the nations of Europe which include major Jewish population that it is the departure of Jewish masses from the vast territory of diaspora that may conclude the Jewish question, thus making the remaining small handful of people of Jewish origin, whether assimilated or not, no longer a threat to the nations surrounding it. The success of Zionism is the point of origin for the Jewish emancipation, not only in the legal sense, for that has already occurred in many European countries, but in the essential and genuine one.³⁰

²⁸ Roman Knoll, a long-standing employee of the MFA, remained in the country during the occupation and joined the independence movement. At a later stage, he served as the head of an underground Foreign Affairs Section of the Government Delegation for Poland (code name 'Moc'), which developed analyses of broadly conceived foreign affairs.

²⁹ Passages about the Polish-Ukrainian, and Polish-Lithuanian relations were omitted.

³⁰ In the unsigned note from 4 September 1940 concerning Polish-Jewish relations, the following was stated: 'The question of Polish-Jewish relations encompasses three practical issues: – the assimilation of Jewish communities, – Jewish emigration from Poland, – cohabitation of Jews and Poles. 1. With regard to the assimilation of Jewish communities, the Polish Government has adopted a strictly matter-of-fact position. It

The side interested in a thorough implementation of Zionism is predominantly Jewish, but no less are the Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, and Ukrainian nations, which hold within their womb a distinct Jewish population, tending to take over one of the social classes and hampering a free circulation of the national element. The so-called antisemitism is an ill-favoured manifestation of a natural tendency of these nations to follow modern social development. In contemporary societies, ghettos are a pathological symptom, whereas the outflow of great amounts of foreign human material within an alien national body results in automatic inflammations, which neither side is to blame for, but which are harmful to both nonetheless. This is how the situation appeared for a long time. However, it became especially acute in connection to the persecutions that Jews came to be subject to in the countries of Central Europe, and it has reached a paroxysm in the wake of the situation of Jews in the Polish territories occupied by Germany and as a result of the violence of the Jewish movement in the territories annexed by the Soviet Russia. The fragile and unstable balance of the situation has been perturbed so profoundly and over such a vast territory that a return to the status quo ante is absolutely impossible. It is impossible both physically and politically. The West may not have realised it yet, but that is the case. In such circumstances, no longer an ideal, for a distant future Zionism becomes a necessity of the moment. The alternative between the former state of affairs and Zionism is no longer valid; another has emerged instead—that between Zionism and extermination. The Jewish masses set in motion have no

regards the assimilation as a natural process. There is no intention on its part to subject it to any legal restrictions or incentives, as it leaves such developments solely to the activity of natural laws. 2. The issue of Jewish emigration to Palestine is considered by the Polish Government to be one of the major factors in solving the Jewish matter in Poland. The Government's stance on the issue is in principle favourable, a fact that shall also be manifested on the international stage. However, implementing practical regulations of the matter, the Government of Poland must take the view that emigration of Jews from Poland cannot result in an excessive outflow of assets, as that would bear negatively on the economic situation in the country. 3. The cohabitation of Jewish groups with Poles in Poland constitutes the most sensitive aspect of the problem. When solving the matter in practice, the Polish Government must above all take into consideration the interest of the Polish state, and only secondarily any other factors. Poland is a Catholic country and Polish people have the right to be the exclusive hosts of it, fashioning their own future and that of the State. Nevertheless, the Government is firmly committed to the position that Jews in Poland are equal before the law to the Polish citizens. Not only do they enjoy the advantages provided by the State to its citizens but also complete freedom of religion, language, and culture, as well as association; however, the utilisation of these rights must be framed with the notion of absolute loyalty towards the state. Accounting for a very limited percentage of the population, Jews cannot play the decisive role in the economic life of the country for that would put them in a privileged position, against the interest of the State and, above all, it would have to sooner or later engender fierce competition between the Polish and the Jewish communities.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.36.

purpose or place to return; at the same time, where they are currently staying they cannot remain unharmed. Such is the situation in the Polish lands, but this state of affairs is certain to influence the position of Jewry in Hungary and Romania, and it has to result in a threatened position of Jewry in Ukraine, should the country be de-Sovietised. Great Jewish financiers of the West ought to be informed of the fact with sufficient urgency, and their national solidarity ought to be awakened so that they start genuinely concerning themselves not only about their own well-to-do businesses, but also about the fate of their fellow tribesmen.

Palestine, beside the fact that it was a settlement area, had for the Zionist cause also the status of the land of their forebears, whether rightly so or not, for it is hard to say what part of Jewry—which had originated a long time ago, and in spite of Ezra and Nehemiah, as a result not only of retaining their tribal unity, but also of proselytising—is actually of Palestinian, or even generally Syrian [Assyrian?] background. However, it is too scanty a land for Jewry, barren, distant from their European seats, of unsuitable climate, and, to top it all off, non-Jewish. England has had enough trouble with the Palestinian question already. Until the end of this conflict, it must be given *carte blanche* in relation to the Muslim world, which is only possible if Zionism breaks away from Palestine and finds another territory to establish the Jewish state. For the Jewry that will have to be displaced from the current settlements of the diaspora after the conflict is over, Palestine is a fiction; meanwhile, the very concept is tantamount to a gauntlet thrown down to the Arab world. Besides Great Britain, both the Vatican and Christian countries are going to support non-Palestinian Zionism, for the introduction into the territory of the Holy Land a constant Arab-Jewish strife has become a phenomenon unbearable for the spiritual successors to the Crusaders.

For us, for Poland, only an actually obtainable, vast and fertile piece carved out of a partition of the Soviet empire, geographically closer to us, shall be favourable as the solution of our Jewish matter. One can safely outline this territory in the broad hinterland of Odessa, which would become a Jewish harbour town. However, it is not necessary for us to specify its future contours or its political system. We can leave that to the Jews. Adopting such a line, besides the main political goal—the emigration of the Jewish masses from Poland—offers us major tactical advantages as well. First of all, it enables us to present not a negative but a positive Jewish programme, not against Jewry but in defence of Jewry, thus we turn from antisemites who want to oppress their minority into the knights of Jewish revival. Secondly, we may associate our internal revival not with a Jewish influx and Jewish supremacy, but with a genuine, numerous and thorough Jewish emigration. That way, we instil optimism into our exhausted masses, and consolidate public opinion around a homogeneous policy.

The task must be initiated with a propaganda campaign among Hungarian and Romanian Jews. It would be most beneficial for us if this initiative that we

put forward came from those quarters, and only then would we lend it our direct support. Under no circumstances, however, can we allow ourselves to indulge in disputes about the realism of this slogan, which—regardless of its realisation—even as a mere slogan offers us immense political assets. This campaign must be implemented, as it were, blindly, without excessive planning. However, undertaking it by way of proclaiming the need to secure a national hearth for this martyred tribe somewhere else than in the land of future conflicts with Arabs is an action that we should not hesitate to perform.

...

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.15A (previously published)

32

*5 April 1940. Report by the Ambassador to the Holy See
on clarifications submitted to the Secretariat of State
regarding the attitude of the Polish population towards Jews
in the territories occupied by Germany (with enclosure)*

Rome, 5 April 1940

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Regarding 'pogroms' in Poland

We have been provided detailed information by people arriving from Poland of the alleged 'pogroms' which the Polish population is said to have perpetrated.³¹ The majority of those who have recently come here are so afraid of potential German repressions that attempts to put on record any information they may provide entails assurances of absolute confidentiality, not only regarding the informer, but also the recorded message.

Aware of the continuing concern of the Vatican about the Jewish matter in Poland, I have submitted the attached memorandum to the Secretariat of State.

/—/ K. Papée
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Vatican

³¹ It is a reference to the so-called Easter Pogrom—a series of assaults against the Jewish population in Warsaw, and Cracow in the closing days of March 1940. The incidents were instigated by the Polish National Radical Organisation, which collaborated with the Germans.

[enclosure]

German propaganda, in concert with the section of the press of the neutral countries that depends on Germany, are making efforts to poison the relations between Christians and Jews in Poland. That is why we want to address the rumours about the 'pogroms' that allegedly took place in Poland.

First, it shall be noted that in the current circumstances no 'pogrom' would have taken place without at least passive cooperation from the occupiers.

We have also been informed by various perfectly trustworthy sources that those who attempted to pillage Jewish shops in Warsaw on Wednesday, 22 March were in organised groups, paid and protected in their undertakings by the Gestapo. The pillage was carried out on Holy Wednesday to lend credibility to the German cover, according to which the Catholic liturgy of the Holy Week is meant to incite Christians in hatred against Jews.

German press and its affiliates have also disseminated the notice of a 'pogrom' having taken place in Wilno on 24 March, that is, on the day of Easter; the following passage is what the actual facts of the matter are, according to a well-informed Wilno newspaper:

'Last Sunday, about 3 p.m., a group of burglars entered the Synagogue at 90 Wilkomierska St. The watchman who noticed them forced them to run away before they were able to break the locks of the room where ceremonial items are stored.' ('Gazeta Codzienna', Wilno, 23 March 1940).

Rome, 5 April 1940

IPMS, Ambasada Watykan, A.44.122/22 (previously published)

33

*6 April 1940. Letter from a Polish citizen from Harbin
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs concerning the deprivation of citizenship*

TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
in Paris
from Judka Blausztein, a resident of Harbin, No. 45 Jamskaya St.

REQUEST

I was born in Poland, in the town of Pacanów, Kielce Voivodship. Until 1908, I worked in my home country. In 1908, I travelled to the Far East seeking

sustenance, extremely hard to find in Poland at the time of partition. I worked in my profession as a feldsher.

The moment Poland was resurrected, and its Delegate arrived in the Far East, I immediately submitted an appropriate application together with my documents and was granted a passport. I submitted my passport to the Consulate of the Republic of Poland annually for an extension and never encountered any difficulties in that regard. In 1939, when I returned as usual to address the matter at the Consulate of the Republic of Poland, the Consul, Mr Litewski, first retained my passport, then after some time I was informed that my citizenship had been revoked, and that I am a stateless person. At the same time, I was granted the document attached to this request.³² As it was explained to me, I had been deprived of citizenship for I had allegedly lost contact with Poland.³³

Your Excellency, we, Jewish citizens of the Republic of Poland in Harbin, with the exception of the very affluent ones, are treated neglectfully, as though we were second-class citizens. We are blamed for our insufficient involvement in Polish life, yet we are not admitted to the 'Polish Inn' Association.³⁴ That is also the reason why Jews do not send their children to Polish schools.

Now that we have acquainted ourselves with Mr President's proclamation and have read in the newspapers the declaration of the Minister regarding passports for Jewish citizens, our hearts have been filled with hope that we will no longer be at a disadvantage. Unfortunately, the situation in our Consulate has remained unchanged.

³² Not included in this publication.

³³ A similarly worded complaint was addressed to the minister by another Polish citizen residing in Harbin, Owsiej Swiet, who in the letter from 5 April 1940 declared: 'At one time, on the basis of documents I submitted to the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Harbin I was issued a passport, which I used until 1939. The current Consul, Mr Litewski, took my passport based on a claim that, supposedly, I have no right to possess it. They also refused to provide me with a document to certify that my passport had been held by the Consulate, without informing me of the reason behind the refusal. Apparently, the case of my passport was transferred to Warsaw, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Consulate was left without an answer. I do not want to take the passport of a Russian emigrant because I was born a Pole, I consider myself as such, and that is who I want to remain ... My being of Jewish religion cannot stand in the way of that for the blood of my brothers shed for Poland, hand in hand with Polish men, ultimately put an end to the division of Polish citizens according to their religion. Let me point out the fact that I am the only Polish banker in the Far East, which is of great importance in the local circumstances, for the greater the number of citizens holding respectable positions, the higher the relative value of Poland ... I have an abiding hope that you will grant my request, commanding the Consulate to return my passport.' Hoover Institution, August Zaleski Papers, 1.

³⁴ This is a reference to 'Gospoda Polska' (Polish Inn), a secular socio-cultural association established by Polish emigrants in Harbin in 1907.

All the above spurs me to address His Excellency with an ardent request to reinstate me as a citizen and reissue my passport, for I do not want to be a Russian emigrant, as I have always felt to be a Pole. I speak Polish, I love my Homeland, I deplore its fate and I want to participate alongside my fellow citizens in the campaign to save our country.

Respectfully yours,
Blausztein

Harbin, 6 April 1940

Hoover Institution, August Zaleski Papers, 1

34

*13 April 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Budapest
on the evacuation of Jews from Hungary to Palestine*

Budapest, 13 April 1940. Sent at 7.45 p.m.

Mr Orłowski to the MFA

No. 107

270 Jews, refugees from Poland, are to illegally enter Palestine with the financial support from the Joint, granted through the local Jewish community. Currently, as a result of disagreements between refugees and the Budapest community, the community administration has declared that it does not have funds for emigration and will not finance it.³⁵

Please intercede with the Paris office of the Joint.

IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/17 (previously published)

³⁵ In the cable of 3 February 1940, the Minister of Treasury, Henryk Strasburger, informed the Legation in Budapest: 'Messrs Izsak and Marten from a Zionist organisation are going to make the amount of 200.000 pengő available to the Legation. They are to be responsible for any legal formalities stemming from unrestricted use of the sum in Hungary. Should the need arise, the Legation may confirm that the money will be used to help refugees. Please notify us by telegraph of the reception of the said amount, which shall be retained by the Legation for further disposal of the Ministry of Treasury.' IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/17.

35

*19 April 1940. Report by the Ambassador in London
on the emigration of Jewish refugees from Poland to Palestine*

London, 19 April 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in Angers

In connection with the letter from the MFA from 13 March 1940,
No. Pol/851e/18,³⁶ concerning Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Following the indicated instruction from the Ministry, and in line with the guidelines I had received directly from Deputy Minister Graliński, on 17 April I visited Mr Malcolm MacDonald, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in order to elucidate the issue of entry permits to Palestine for Jewish refugees from Poland, and to obtain, to the extent possible, further concessions with regard to that matter.

Responding to my initial remarks, by which I presented the difficult and often tragic plight of Jewish refugees from Poland, Mr MacDonald hid behind a regulation banning Jews who left Poland after 1 October 1939 from entering Palestine.

After requesting confidentiality, the Secretary stated that the British Government is soon to announce resolutions regarding the immigration to Palestine of Jews from all territories (with the obvious exception of the territories under special restriction). These stipulate the quota for the so-called 'capitalist' class of immigrants (i.e. those who have no less than £1,000). That part of the resolution will be of a rather theoretical character because 'capitalists' can apply at British consulates at all times, and their applications are dealt with according to the date of their submission.

In actuality, the quota to be announced will predominantly encompass cases that have already been resolved.

³⁶ In the letter from 13 March 1940, the Secretary-General at the MFA, Jan Ciechanowski, communicated to the Ambassador in London: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests you to take measures with authoritative English decision-makers in order to secure, if possible, an entry permit to Palestine for the Jewish refugees from Poland staying in Romania. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes to indicate that the issue should also concern Jewish organisations in London and, for its part, suggests informing Lord Melchett about the matter, as he could probably use his influence with the English authorities in a desirable direction.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58; see also doc. 24.

Besides that, there is going to be a second category, including candidates for university studies. The Minister expects the number of people in that category to be set at approx. 3,000 people.

As before, the distribution of permits will be entrusted to the Jewish Agency.³⁷

The least adequate seems to be the third category, the one that we are most interested in—for people seeking employment. As this category is determined by the economic situation in Palestine, and as that currently is unfavourable, it is going to be reduced to a meagre 200 people.

From what I could ascertain, the distribution of those scarce permits will also be entrusted to the Jewish Agency.

As a result of my clarifications and insistence, Secretary MacDonald agreed to once again reconsider the predicament in the light of remarks we had submitted. In order to persuade him thereto, on 19 April I addressed a letter to Mr MacDonald with an enclosed short memorandum³⁸ concerning Polish Jews—refugees. I based my memorandum on the information I have gathered from Jewish sources locally, as well as from the data provided in the report by Ambassador WieniawaDługoszowski of 2 March of the current year, conveyed to us by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the letter from 22 March, No. 851-e/28/40.³⁹

Edward Raczyński
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (previously published)

36

*19 April 1940. Memorandum by the Polish Government
to the Secretary of State for the Colonies of Great Britain
on the granting aid to Polish citizens of Jewish descent*

The Polish Government are receiving information about the difficult situation of Jews from Poland who escaped the German domination and found themselves in Romania and Italy. They are not allowed to go to Palestine owing to the very

³⁷ Jewish Agency for Palestine—an international Zionist organisation representing Palestinian Jews before the British authorities.

³⁸ The following document.

³⁹ This is a reference to the documents cited in the footnotes to the report of the Consulate in Trieste from 2 March 1940—doc. 28.

strict regulation in this respect. Apart from the regulations which were in force before the war, the British Authorities are not willing to allow entry into Palestine to those Jews from Poland who left the territories occupied by Germany after the 1st October, 1939.

In Romania there are now about 1,000 Jews of Polish citizenship. They belong in a very large extent to an educated class of people who own some property in Poland and had to leave the country in order to escape maltreatment, if not death. They now have no sources of revenue, except a sum of 100 lei per day given to them as a help by benevolent societies or the Romanian Government. A great many of them have relatives in Palestine, and some even have property there.

In Italy there are about 300 Jews, chiefly at Trieste. Their position is even more difficult than that of the Jews in Romania, as they cannot obtain permission to stay permanently in Italy. They left Poland in the course of the last few months and, with great danger to themselves, proceeded to Italy in the hope that it would be possible for them eventually to reach Palestine. They mostly belong to the same social class as the Jews who escaped to Romania. In many cases also they have relatives in Palestine.

For all of these Jews Palestine is, after Poland, the only country where they could find possibilities of establishing a new life for themselves. As most of them left Poland during the autumn and winter of 1939, the decision of the British Authorities not to allow entry into Palestine to people who left the territories under German domination after the 1st October, 1939, is tantamount to a refusal of entry into Palestine.

London, 20 April 1940⁴⁰

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (previously published; ENG)

⁴⁰ The memorandum was sent by the Ambassador in London, who communicated in a covering letter from 19 April 1940: 'Dear Mr MacDonald, referring to our conversation at your office on Wednesday, April 17th, regarding the sad plight of Jewish refugees from Poland in neutral countries, I am taking the liberty to send you enclosed a short memo dealing with this problem. I do hope that His Majesty's Government will see their way to allow the above mentioned people to immigrate to Palestine. As you will observe the numbers are not so big as to upset the equilibrium of your immigration policy into that country, which, I do realise is a delicate problem. The rigid imposition of the 1st October as the last preclusive date for the granting of licences would debar the great majority of such refugees from the benefit of a shelter in Palestine. The Polish Government, therefore, hope that this regulation could be relaxed or applied with certain elasticity. It might, perhaps, be found possible for the British Government to grant by way of exception a certain number of licences which would be distributed by the British Authorities on the recommendation of the Polish Government in each individual case. Such a decision would be highly appreciated by us. AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (ENG). See also the previous doc.

37

*20 April 1940. Report by the Consul General in Rome
on the situation of refugees in Italy*

20 April 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Poland
Angers

In recent weeks, we have been able to observe a surge in the influx of refugees from Poland, both of entirely Polish background and of Jewish origin. This fact manifests itself in the crowded waiting room of the Consulate General, a development that has recently attracted the attention of local safety authorities, as well as in the number of applicants for material aid to the Adam Mickiewicz Association, which, as I have already informed the Ministry, has set up a welfare campaign.

Such a large influx of refugees forces us to find a quick solution for two problems, that is, removing the incomers away from Rome and generally outside of the Italian borders, and providing material assistance to those in need, as nearly all new refugees bring literally nothing with them; furthermore, most of these people demand to be issued tickets for further travel already at the German-Italian border.

Regarding the native Polish element, the majority are heading to France. Those refugees claim that they have relations and acquaintances in France, that they can secure a living there, as well as work in heavy industry (engineers, technicians, doctors, etc.). Family members of the officers of our army in France account for a large proportion of the refugees. It is only on arrival here that these escapees learn of the difficulties in reaching France they will have to face, which stem from—at times puzzling—ordinances of the French authorities. Having obtained the required identification documents in the Consulate General, and having received the conventional notes in their passports, the people whose travel to France is subject to no reservations go on to fill a great many forms in the French Consulate, only to be informed that they can expect their applications to be processed in several weeks' time—not always to their satisfaction. Even the immediate families of the officers of our army and navy are unable to obtain entry permits at an accelerated rate, and I am aware of instances of such people waiting many weeks for their entry visas.

In the meantime, most of these refugees become a burden for our social care, exhausting the funds of the Adam Mickiewicz Association, modest as they are. Others are needlessly squandering the money they received from their families in

France and England or are trying to sustain themselves by selling items of value. For all of them, the cost of living is twice what it would be in France, for the Italian lira is artificially kept at a relatively high rate, while prices are increasing.

The Jewish refugees sometimes find themselves in a tragic predicament. In Poland, they were mostly able to obtain short-term or transit visas, and do not have visas to their intended countries of permanent residence. Honorary consuls of many American Republics did issue them with entry visas, but these proved worthless, not even allowing their holders to board a ship. The traffic to Palestine was paralysed by the ordinances of the Mandate authorities, who require evidence that candidates left Poland before 29 September 1939. This regulation harms masses of Polish Jews, reducing them to the status of citizens of enemy countries. The stay of Polish Jews here has been complicated by the anti-Jewish law being finally imposed, a manifestation of the Berlin-Rome Axis cooperation. The local authorities, who I cooperate with on a regular basis, and who treat us with much kindness, consequently extending Jews' residence rights under the pretence of allowing them to secure the required entry visas to other countries, have now come under so much pressure from above that there is a genuine threat of deportations to the German border. These rumours are causing understandable panic among the interested parties. I have grounds to suspect that the people who had had their right of stay extended several times, and did not leave before the expiry date thereof, may very soon be subject to very drastic regulations.

Some of the Jewish refugees benefit from the aid of local Jewish charitable institutions with which we cooperate; however, a large proportion of them arrive with certificates of having been baptised in Poland, and they have to resign from the support of those wealthy organisations, falling back on our modest funds.

In such circumstances, enabling the Polish refugees to leave Italy should be regarded as a matter of the greatest urgency. First, the necessity imposes itself to decisively revise the French ordinance in such a sense that they would enable an immediate entry to France not only to the people intending to join the Polish Army there, but also to the immediate families of officers, NCOs, and soldiers on active duty. Furthermore, the entry to France should be facilitated for the people who could work in French heavy industry or agriculture, and who have either relations or close friends in France able to provide for them and assist in finding employment. Irrespective of the above, I believe pressure should be put on the legations of the governments of several friendly countries, so that they loosen slightly their immigration regulations for a relatively small number of refugees from Poland, both Christians and Jews. This particularly refers to the United States of America, as well as Brazil, Argentina, and some other South American republics. Before the outbreak of the war, there were projects for an increase in the immigration quotas for the victims of Nazi persecution and these had some successful prospects. These could find a favourable solution at present, when

migration to America from Germany, Russia, and other countries is virtually nonexistent; hence, the quotas set for those countries could be used for Polish emigrants. I think that a certain number of Jews could be received by Canada, let alone Palestine, where the settlement capacity has increased due to the war. These opportunities may prove very effective when the panic surging through our refugees in Romania, Hungary, and Yugoslavia takes the form of something akin to an exodus, influenced by political developments. Harbingers of such a movement have already emerged in the territory of Rome.

The other matter concerns an increase in social care funding. As I communicated to the Ministry some time ago, we decided to provide the care for the Polish exiles staying in Italy on social grounds; therefore, since the beginning of the flow of refugees the self-help section established at the Adam Mickiewicz Association, an institution with traditions of useful work here, has centralised the entire aid campaign in close cooperation with our state offices. We have not appealed to the Government for funding, believing the extent of needs in other territories and in other fields of activity to be incomparably greater, and above all that as a matter of principle we should resort to social generosity. By way of subscriptions and taxation imposed on the better paid employees of our offices and private people we were able to secure the initial funds. Up to this point, solely by recourse to the generosity of Poles and international friends, the Adam Mickiewicz Association was able to collect 86,500 (eighty-six thousand and five hundred Italian lire) for the purpose of aiding the refugees from Poland; more than 82,000 (eighty-two thousand Italian lire) of that amount was disbursed to cover allowances, board and lodging, medical expenses, etc. Apart from the above, a large amount of clothes and thermal underwear was donated, the supply of which proved very useful during the long period of cold weather. Simultaneously, benefits in kind were provided, the value of which should be estimated at 180,000 lire. At the present moment, the amount of ready money of the Association stands at a modest 4,500 lire, a last penny indeed, for as far as we have been able to ascertain, the sources of charitable donations have been depleted. This sum is negligible in relation to the needs, particularly now, when the refugee movement is once again growing in intensity, and when there is a hold-up due to the difficulties in leaving the country. It will cover no more than a week's expenses.

I therefore request that the Ministry immediately communicate with the Ministry of Social Welfare in order to instantly grant a larger sum for the purposes of assistance to the refugees in Rome and inform us what subsidies we may expect here in the future, for currently the further programme and range of our activity in the said field may hinge on the amount of money allocated to us by the Government.

The board of the Adam Mickiewicz Association has recently informed me that, should the funding for a future support action not be granted, it will be forced to

completely abandon that activity. I do not want to even think of such a possibility, for suspending the aid campaign in the conditions presented above would not only constitute a fact discrediting us in the eyes of the Italians, simply because a large proportion of the refugees arrive here in consequence of our interventions with the Italian authorities, but it could also prove to be fatal. People wandering around Rome without a roof or food would, on the one hand, accelerate the campaign of deportations of Polish citizens to Germany and put an end to transit, while on the other, it would result in the remaining ones becoming the subject of protection from the Embassy of the Reich, which is certain to be waiting for such a fortunate opportunity.

I ask the Ministry to treat the aforementioned issues as urgent and to inform me of the results of the undertaken efforts.⁴¹

/-/ Roman Mazurkiewicz
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Rzym, A.61/5e

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8 May 1940. Letter from the Consulate General in Jerusalem to the Embassy in London on the situation of Jewish refugees in the Middle East (with enclosure)

Jerusalem, 8 May 1940

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in London

Consulate General of the Republic of Poland wishes to communicate that in the concentration camp (Clearance Camp) in Atlit there are approx. 1,850 Jewish refugees, with 72 Polish citizens included in that number, who left Poland for Romania between 17 and 19 September due to military activity, allegedly with the knowledge of our Embassy in Bucharest, wherefrom they took an illegal route to Palestine.⁴²

⁴¹ A copy of the report was sent to the Ministry of Social Welfare, and to the Embassy in Rome.

⁴² In the cable of 20 August 1940, the Secretary-General at the MFA, Jan Ciechanowski, instructed the Embassy in Bucharest: 'Romanian Jews with Polish passports have been

The internees have been held in the camp for over 3 months.

Long term detention of immigrants in the camp is for the most part explained by the fear of the authorities lest some people among them—undesirable for military security reasons—infiltrate to the country. This may refer primarily to the emigrants who arrived from Germany or Czechoslovakia, for when it comes to Polish citizens such risk cannot be considered, as all the Polish citizens detained in Athlit had left Poland due to military activity and therefore cannot have had any contact with the Germans. For these reasons, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland believes there are reasonable grounds for separating out Polish citizens from the detainees as the English Government considers their release from the camp.

The director of the local office visited the internees in Athlit and was informed by them that almost all have relatives and acquaintances in Palestine who could both vouch for their loyalty and guarantee their sustenance in Palestine.

According to the information received from the Department of Police, the decision as to the fate of the internees rests with the Colonial Office in London, and the local authorities are not allowed to take their own stand without an instruction in advance from London.

Enclosing a list of the internees, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland kindly requests that appropriate measures be taken, if possible, with the Colonial Office regarding the release from the concentration camp of the interned Polish citizens.

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland further indicates that Mr David Ben Gurion, the Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, currently residing in London, has intervened with the English authorities regarding the internees in Athlit. The result of the intervention as of this moment has not been reported.⁴³

Jan Weber
Vice Consul of the Republic of Poland
Head of Consulate General of the Republic of Poland

reported to arrive in Palestine. The English have the information that passports are illegally purchased. Please undertake appropriate inspections.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

⁴³ On 29 May 1940, the Embassy in London forwarded the list of surnames to the Foreign Office of Great Britain with a request of intervention.

[enclosure]

LIST
of Polish Refugees staying in the Clearance Camp in Athlit

- 1) Abramowicz Herman
- 2) Awret Bencijon
- 3) Askienazy Szloma
- 4) Berger Osjasz
- 5) Berger Dawid
- 6) Baumberg Artur
- 7) Bassyk Henia
- 8) Brandschart Aron Ber
- 9) Buchstab Aleksander
- 10) Bukier Moritz
- 11) Czarnocha Dawid
- 12) Cytrynenbaum Wolf
- 13) Dembus Sara Ida
- 14) Eisenberg Chaim Hersch
- 15) Eisenberg Salomon
- 16) Eisensohn Zelig
- 17) Eisenfarb Gabriel
- 18) Fajngold Naftul
- 19) Feder Hersch
- 20) Feder Chaim Noe
- 21) Fischer Izrael
- 22) Frincher Jakob
- 23) Grunland Majer Szulem
- 24) Geisler Eljasz
- 25) Grad Henryk
- 26) Judr. Glasermann Bruno
- 27) Hanower Ichak Ajzyk
- 28) Helfer Janas
- 29) Helfer Jakob Josef
- 30) Heller Pinkas
- 31) Heilman Lipa

- 32) Hurtik Gita Chaja
- 33) Imber Markus Syweryn
- 34) Judko Abraham
- 35) Katz Salomon Mendel
- 36) Koerner Feodor Gideon
- 37) Krauskopf Szmul
- 38) Lam Maksymilian
- 39) Lander Frida
- 40) Leichtman Maria
- 41) Mudr. Leichtman Józef
- 42) Leibowicz Jakob Mer
- 43) Löwenstein Zofia Paulina
- 44) Meth Fryderyk
- 45) Makower Icchak
- 46) Mordkowicz Nuchim
- 47) Manger Hiler
- 48) Mülbauer Wolf
- 49) Meiselman Uszer
- 50) Preis Mojżesz
- 51) Reichman Izrael
- 52) Judr. Robinsohn Erwin
- 53) Rozenek Izrael
- 54) Reistein Szlomo
- 55) Leo Schlam Mozes
- 56) Schneider Aleksander
- 57) Sommerfleck Wolf
- 58) Szklarz Dawid
- 59) Sundgalter Josef Salzman
- 60) Szyjewicz Kuna
- 61) Sołowejczyk Nemek
- 62) Szubin Fani
- 63) Swiw Mordhei
- 64) Wenkert Baruch Jonas
- 65) Wegner Marcelli
- 66) Wichter Samuel

- 67) Wachs Dina
 68) Wachs Izydor
 69) Wolanof Hinda
 70) Mudr. Ungar Dawid
 71) Mudr. Zand Ignacy
 72) Zylberberg Hersch
 ATHLIT, 6 May 1940

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 97

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*9 May 1940. Letter from the First Secretary at the Legation in Bern
 to Engineer Józef Thon on the coordination of relief activity*

9 May

The Honourable Engineer
 Józef Thon
 35, Rue Prévost Martin
Geneva

Dear Sir,

In reference to your helpful letter in which you were so kind as to inform me of having assumed the office of the head of a permanent delegation in Switzerland of the following organisations:

Polish-Jewish Refugee Fund—London, and
 Federation of Polish Jews in America,

I hasten to offer you my sincere congratulations, wishing you the best of success in this new and useful office, which is of such great importance currently and which will without any doubts contribute to the alleviation of poverty and hardships of the Jewish emigrants from Poland.

I would be very grateful for informing me, as accurately as possible, about the goals, work and possibilities of both organisations, in order to establish a collaboration with the 'Polish Committee for Aid to War Victims' in Bern (Elfenstrasse 20), which—as far as I know—in spite of its modest funds, with much energy and regularity provides care for a relatively large group of emigrants from

Poland, and people who have lost the country's support (e.g. students, those ill with tuberculosis, etc.), among whom Polish Jews account for approx. 60% of provisions.

It would also be beneficial if you visited, at your convenience, the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern in order to thus establish personal contact therewith.

Most respectfully yours,

Stefan Jan Ryniewicz
First Secretary at the Legation
of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 109

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*15 May 1940. Letter from the First Secretary at the Embassy in London
to Deputy Minister Graliński: Great Britain's refusal
to grant aid to the Jewish refugees in Italy*

London, 15 May 1940

The Honourable Doctor
Zygmunt Graliński
Under-Secretary of State in the MFA
Angers

Your Excellency Minister,

On the order of Mr Ambassador, who continues to be ill and confined to his bed, and in reference to his dispatch today, I have the honour to enclose the letter received yesterday by the Ambassador from the outgoing Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr MacDonald.

Regrettably, the content of the letter is entirely negative.⁴⁴ It seals the fate of Jewish refugees who have reached Italy. However, the Ambassador recommended

⁴⁴ In the letter from 13 May 1940, Malcolm MacDonald communicated: 'You will remember that I explained, when you recently called to see me, the difficulties with which His Majesty's Government is faced in dealing with the question of refugees from enemy or enemy-occupied territory. The decision to deny facilities to enter Palestine to people who had not left German occupied Poland prior to the 1st October last was taken only

continued efforts in individual cases of your interest.⁴⁵ We are trying to do something about it through the Foreign Office, underlining the completely extraordinary circumstances and the fact that, regarding the matter, we undertake to fully guarantee the character and loyalty of the interested parties.

Antoni Baliński
First Secretary at the Embassy

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58

after careful examination of all the considerations involved and formed part of a wider decision which His Majesty's Government found it necessary to adopt, in the interests of defence and of security, regarding the general question of emigration from enemy or enemy-occupied territory. I am far from insensitive to the plight in which these Polish refugees now find themselves and I have given further careful consideration to the question whether it would not be possible to make an exception in their favour. But in all the circumstances I have come to the conclusion that this would not be possible and, greatly as I regret my inability to help you in this difficult matter, I am afraid that an exception cannot be made in their case.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (ENG).

⁴⁵ In the letter from 6 May 1940, the Ambassador in London wrote to MacDonald: 'Dear Mr MacDonald, You will remember that I wrote to you on April 19th about the plight of Jewish refugees from Poland. I sent you then a short memorandum dealing mainly with Jewish immigrants from Poland in Rumania and also in Italy (Trieste). I have since received alarming information about the position of Jews in the last named place. This information indicates that there is danger that the Italian authorities may force these immigrants back into Germany. In these circumstances permission to emigrate into Palestine would be of the greater value to these people. When writing my previous letter to you I was not yet in possession of more accurate details regarding the few families whom M. Graliński, our Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, asked me to recommend to you especially. I have now received these details which are as follows: 1) Charles Eiger, industrialist, born at Zgierz ... 2) Benjamin Rutstein, born in Warsaw in 1894 ... 3) Saweli Steinberg, born in Slonim, Poland ... 4) Adolf Eiger, born at Zgierz, Poland, in the year 1895 ... I should be extremely grateful to you if permits could be granted by way of exception to these people, who, if only possible, would desire to travel and settle down together.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58 (ENG).

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*18 May 1940. Report by the Consul General in Rome
on the situation of Jewish refugees in Italy*

18 May 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Poland
in Angers

Regarding Jewish refugees in Italy

With regard to the letter from the Ministry from 26 April of this year, No. ..., I have the honour to communicate that I have covered the issue of Jewish emigration in Italy in my report of 20 April of this year, No. ...,⁴⁶ in which I discussed the situation which had emerged due to the mass influx of refugees from Poland, the difficulty in leaving for other countries, and the lack of financial means for providing social care to the refugees.

The circumstances of Jewish refugees tend to be much worse than those of the refugees of Polish nationality. Not only the anti-Jewish law precludes their prolonged stay in Italy, but also a whole array of countries that until recently they were authorised to immigrate to, are now hindering their entry and stay. Among those, there are Spain, Portugal, Yugoslavia, and others. The legations of these countries, with which we often discuss the issue of enabling Polish Jews to cross their borders at least for a limited period, declare that the instructions they receive from their higher authorities have one direct purpose, that is, to prevent Jewish immigration, regardless of their character, their cultural and material circumstances, etc.

Regrettably, the group of countries limiting the number of their Jewish immigration quota includes Palestine, the intended destination for a large proportion of Polish refugees, predominantly the poor and unassimilated ones. The amount of the so-called 'certificates,' that is, the entry permits to Palestine recently granted to relevant relief organisations for Jewish refugees, stands in no proportion to the actual needs. As I have been informed by the local supervisors of the immigrant movement to Palestine, for the coming two months a negligible 112 'certificates' have been granted, of which half are intended for capitalists, while the other half are for students, with the provision that those desiring entry as members of the latter category do not exceed the age of, I believe, 25 years. According to the estimations from the same sources, the number of Jews awaiting

⁴⁶ Doc. 37.

'certificates' stands at: 600 in Trieste, 600 in Milan, and approx. 1,000 in Genoa. Of the Jews awaiting entry, 60% are said to be Polish refugees. In Rome, there is roughly a hundred Jews from Poland wishing to leave for Palestine.

The situation of all those Jews is rendered far worse by the fact that a great majority of them arrived in Italy on the basis of transit visas, with no residence permits, while the rest are with visas merely authorising their short-term stay within the territory of Italy. As the Italian authorities realised that Jews arriving to Italy with transit visas either do not leave the country directly or extend their right of stay under various pretences, Italian agencies stopped issuing entry visas for Jews altogether. That is why, in Vienna as well as in other cities, large concentrations have been forming of Jewish refugees from Poland, caught in an impossible situation. A very great proportion of those Jews happen to actually be former inhabitants of Palestine, who have entry visas to the country they had obtained during their temporary stay in Poland directly prior to the war.

Polish emigration to Palestine is further obstructed by a principle, ungrounded in my view, adopted by the Mandate authorities (a fact I mention in the said report), according to which entry certificates to Palestine can only be issued to Jews who had left Poland by 29 September 1939. Thus, in practice, the post-war refugees from Poland, that is, the refugees who should receive the most compassion and who should to the greatest extent be assisted for humanitarian reasons were left in a condition worse than that of regular emigrants.

In such circumstances, it can hardly be surprising that any escalations in the political situation in Italy result in fears of the Polish Jews staying here that they will be deported to Germany. Requests made by the frightened Jews that we safeguard them against once again falling prey to the Gestapo are daily occurrences in our consulates. So far, the Consulate General has been successful in its interventions in Rome, where police authorities respect us greatly and accommodate our demands. However, I have grounds to suppose that this idyll is soon to change, for there is a growing pressure on those authorities from decision makers, who in turn act under pressure from Berlin.

As for practical solutions, I have considered those in the report of 20 April, mentioned above. These people must be allowed to move to the countries where they will be able to find sustenance or at least an opportunity of a prolonged stay.

First of all, and as soon as possible, an intervention must be carried out with the British Colonial Office to ensure that they decide to increase the number of entry 'certificates' to Palestine, simplify the procedure of granting those permits to people awaiting them, and abolish the principle discussed above, so detrimental to our Jewish emigrants, which rules out the immigration to Palestine of Jews who left Poland already under German occupation.

Many from among the Jews, that is, doctors, engineers, scholars, etc., and people with financial means, should be assisted in their entry to France, where they may prove to be valuable employees.

Regardless of the above, legations of the American republics should be contacted and instructed to request by telegraph that their governments, by way of exception, facilitate entry for a certain limited number of refugees from Poland, regardless of their religion. Here, I am referring to the United States, Brazil, Argentina, and other countries. The concession granted by the Government of Brazil to the Holy See is a testament to the fact that it is possible to settle this issue in such a way. The concession consists of an entry visa quota for Jews, victims of persecution by the Nazi regime, who converted to Catholicism. We have recently been able to obtain within that quota an entry permit to Brazil for 10 families previously unable to travel anywhere. There are currently certain opportunities for establishing such an emergency immigration quota to the country without the religious stipulation, which would also include a non-Jewish element. I believe a diplomatic intervention made in Washington by the US Ambassador to the Polish Government to have some prospects of success in securing a quota for the refugees from Poland, reallocated from the pool of unused quotas intended for other countries.

Obviously, the problem of funds to support the refugees, partly solved by the sum of 50,000 allocated by the Ministry of Social Welfare, has lost none of its urgency. With regard thereto, I shall present separate conclusions.

In conclusion, I would like to add that the issues covered in this letter need to be tackled as rapidly as possible.⁴⁷

Roman Mazurkiewicz
CONSUL GENERAL

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Rzym, A.61/5e

⁴⁷ A copy of the report was sent to the Ministry of Social Welfare and to the Embassy in Rome.

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*21 May 1940. Letter from the Consulate General in Bogotá
to the Legation in Mexico City on the attitude of Colombian authorities
to the immigration of Jewish refugees*

Bogotá, 21 May 1940

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland
in Mexico City

As a contribution, important for us, on the immigration policy of Colombia, the Consulate has the honour to communicate the following:

In October or November 1939, the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs dispatched a secret circular to all its consulates prohibiting them to issue entry visas to Jews.

At the time, the Consulate received intelligence of the existence of the said circular; however, we were unable to secure the full text. It was generally stated that for Jews, at least those from Central Europe, the entry to Colombia is rendered absolutely impossible. The Jewish circles directly interested in the issue attributed it to the commonly known, antisemitic attitude of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr López de Mesa.

Some time ago, Dr Gustavo Solano, a lawyer in Barranquilla, lodged a complaint with the Administrative Tribunal (Consejo de Estado), demanding that the ordinance issued to consulates be revoked due to the fact that with that regulation, the administrative authorities crossed the provisions of Colombian immigration law.

On 15 May 1940, the Council of State of Colombia settled the appeal by confirming the legitimacy of the ordinance forbidding Jews to enter the country.

In deciding the matter, the Council of State founded the verdict on the opinions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which can be thus summarised:

For a long time, the population of the country demanded—through petitions and protests of various institutions and organisations, even in public demonstrations—that Jews be debarred from entering their country. This will of the people should be taken into consideration.

However, political developments in Europe further aggravated the situation. In the wake of the German invasions of (sic) Austria, and later Czechoslovakia and Poland, Colombian consulates in Europe were swamped with thousands of visa requests submitted by Jews. These were predominately merchants and representatives of the liberal professions—generally unwelcome in Colombia. To

make matter worse, they were all without a penny to their names. It must be added that most of them had already been declared stateless pursuant to the decrees issued by the Germans, who intended to divest both Germany and its occupied countries of Jews.

Against such circumstances, the Colombian authorities decided to dispatch to consulates a ban on granting visas to Jewish passport holders. Issuing of the ban and its severity was also influenced by the notorious fact that the Jews already settled in Colombia would assist their fellow believers wishing to arrive here, resorting to deceptions and illegal ploys.

And hence, the costs of immigration deposits were covered on behalf of foreign parties either by individual Jews or by Jewish organisations. Therefore, even though the legal requirements were apparently met, the country was infiltrated by people who were not only impoverished but additionally burdened with debts. They started to struggle for survival in these difficult conditions, yet also with great ruthlessness, creating for the locals, particularly in trade, crippling and disloyal competition.

The authorities estimate that no less than 250,000 Jews wander around Europe, keenly seeking an opportunity to emigrate to America. That is why maintaining an 'open door' policy could prove overly risky for Colombia.

To protect the country's interest, therefore, the Council of State kept in force the strict prohibition to grant entry visas to Colombia to Jewish people.

The Consulate wishes to indicate that the decision does not in fact introduce any changes, but merely sanctions the state of affairs that has lasted for several months now.

The Consulate is aware of only a few instances of Jewish-Polish citizens settled here making efforts to obtain entry visas for their relatives staying in Poland. In one such case, in which the undersigned lent his assistance in a somewhat informal manner, the permit was granted (for the wife in Warsaw).

It should, however, be assumed that many Polish Jews do indeed submit applications in Colombian consulates without taking any steps within the territory of Colombia. Needless to say, they all have no prospects whatsoever of being granted entry visas.

Aleksander Wiesiołowski
SECRETARY AT THE LEGATION

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 53 (previously published)

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*25 May 1940. Circular by Deputy Minister Graliński:
instruction regarding passport and consular matters*

Secret

Angers, 25 May 1940

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

In place of decrees No. 727/43 and No. 727/46 of 29 February 1940, which are hereby revoked, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs administers the following Ordinance:

1. (1) According to the information received by the MFA, people arriving in neutral countries from the territories under German occupation may hold travel documents of the following kinds:

a) foreign passports issued before the war by the Polish national authorities or foreign offices of the Republic of Poland with a valid expiry date, without any annotations of the German occupation authorities apart from the entry or return visa; also such passports with the indication on the first page (stamped or written) 'Gilt nur als Passersatz';

b) foreign passports issued before the war by the Polish national authorities or foreign offices of the Republic of Poland past their expiry date or cancelled by the German occupation authorities, furnished by the latter with a new expiry date; also such passports with the indication on the first page (stamped or written) 'Gilt nur als Passersatz';

c) foreign passports issued by the German occupation authorities on genuine Polish passport books (the preceding type—containing 40 sides) with the indication 'Gilt nur als Passersatz' or without it;

d) German identification cards for people of undetermined citizenship (the so-called 'Fremdenpass'), issued by the German occupation authorities—as can be assumed—to people from the territories under occupation incorporated into the Reich, from the territory of the Free City of Danzig, and to the people formerly inhabiting the territory of the Reich.

(2) In a small number of cases, travel documents of all the above listed kinds have been signalled to have regular German transit visas.

(3) Thus, the practice of the German occupation authorities with regard to issuing travel documents to leave the occupied territory is not uniform; recently it has been predominantly limited to the categories of documents listed in paragraph

1. (1) a), b), c) of this Ordinance. The altogether fantastical documents used for travelling in the first months of the occupation (such as, for instance, national identity cards, or even simple IDs with a certificate to leave the country from the 'Gestapo' glued into them, at the verso of which Italian consular offices placed their visas) do not seem to be an option any longer.

2. Passports and travel documents issued, extended or endorsed with a visa by the German occupation authorities, discussed in paragraph 1. of this Ordinance, as a matter of principle shall not be extended by foreign offices of the Republic of Poland, for it might give the impression of an acknowledgement of the legality of the occupation; on the other hand, for security and legal certainty reasons it is unacceptable to issue regular 'consular' passports to the refugees arriving from the territories occupied by Germany without conducting investigations and complying with the formalities pursuant to the provisions stipulated in paragraph 3. and subsequent paragraphs of this Ordinance.

3. (1) With regard to people arriving from the territory under German occupation, who hold passports and travel documents listed in paragraph 1. (1), (2), and (3) of this Ordinance, or other kinds of documents that may emerge in the future, foreign posts of the Republic of Poland shall proceed in the following manner:

1) If there is no uncertainty as to the identity of the person submitting the passport, or a travel document of such kind, and providing that on the basis of additional evidence (other documents submitted, testimonies of credible people, explanatory correspondence with institutions or people to whom the refugee from the occupied territory refers, etc.) the claim of Polish citizenship of the person is substantiated, they should be issued a new passport (24 sides—printed by Imprimerie Nationale in Paris); otherwise, the issue of a passport shall be denied.

2) In all the newly issued passports, as the basis for their issue, the following should be indicated:

- the manner in which the claim of Polish citizenship has been substantiated;
- the document (office, date of issuance, type of visa, and its expiry date) on the basis of which its holder arrived from the occupied territory in a neutral country, for the purpose of keeping a paper trail of their having currently left the territory occupied by Germany.

Both of the annotations must be made in Polish only.

3) The newly granted passports are to be issued with an expiry date of up to 1 year and provided with a provision that they cannot be extended or replaced with regular long-term passports by another office without prior communication with the issuing office; the objective of the above regulation is to facilitate checking and, where necessary, revising all such instances as soon as the Polish administrative authorities resume their normal operation in the country.

(2) The greatest care must be exercised when dealing with people holding German identification cards for those with undetermined citizenship (the so-called 'Fremdenpass') who hail from the Free City of Danzig or from the Reich's territory; provided they are able to substantiate their former citizenship of Danzig, they are to be treated in line with the ordinances of the MFA No. 727/9 of 20 Jan. 1940, and No. 896/7 of 16 May 1940 on providing consular care to the citizens of Danzig.

(3) The provisions of paragraph 3. (1) 3) obviously do not apply to the people for whose Polish citizenship a foreign post of the Republic of Poland can obtain strong evidence; in these cases, parties shall be issued regular 'consular' passports with the annotations stipulated in paragraph 3. (1) 2).

(4) The provisions of paragraph 3. (1) in their entirety do not apply to people who in light of the regulations in force or on the orders of the MFA are issued a diplomatic or service passport by a foreign post of the Republic of Poland.

4. (1) Regardless of the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Ordinance, the refugees from the territories occupied by Germany who have a guaranteed entry to Palestine are to be issued with short-term passports, valid for the minimum term required by the English authorities, restricting their territorial validity to Palestine only, and furnished with the provision that they cannot be replaced, extended or expanded by other offices without prior communication with the issuing office. In these cases, in order to facilitate the entry to Palestine, the requirement that the Polish citizenship be substantiated (par. 3. (1) 1)) should be treated as liberally as possible; in these cases it is also possible to waive the principle of entering into the newly issued passport, a travel document for which the given person came from the occupied territory (par. 3. (1) 2)).

(2) The acts of facilitation provided for in paragraph 4. (1) pertain exclusively to refugees from the occupied territories heading to Palestine; it shall be unacceptable to extend such instances of facilitation to other categories of people, e.g. political refugees—whether from before the war (from Germany and Danzig) or during the wartime (from Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg,⁴⁸ etc.)—whose Polish citizenship is dubious, or who had had their Polish citizenship revoked, and whose applications to repeal the revocation had not been processed.

5. Travel documents on the basis of which people applying for new passports arrived from the occupied territories are to be filed with no annotations or

⁴⁸ On 10 May 1940, Germany attacked Belgium, the Netherlands, and invaded Luxembourg. The Dutch Army surrendered on 14 May, and the Belgian Army surrendered on 28 May 1940. As a result of the invasion, Polish diplomatic and consular posts in Belgium and the Netherlands were removed (Polish Chargé d'Affaires in Brussels was concurrently accredited to Luxembourg). All these countries later established their governments-in-exile in London.

deletions; documents of that sort may be returned in exceedingly extraordinary or special cases, always exclusively with a prior authorisation from the MFA.

6. Besides a standard passport questionnaire, the people arriving from the occupied territories are to give recorded testimonies to establish the circumstances in which the applicant made efforts to be granted the travel document by the German occupation authorities; copies of the questionnaire (always with a photograph) and the recorded testimony shall be sent to the MFA (1st copy), and directly by courier to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, Section of Internal Affairs, with a reference to this Ordinance (2nd copy).

7. (1) Regardless of the travel documents stipulated in paragraph 1. (1) of this Ordinance, there have also been instances of refugees from the occupied territories holding passports for some time issued in the first stage of the occupation by Polish officials who remained in starost offices; they used original stamps to authenticate the documents, forging the signatures of starosts or other officials authorised to sign passports before the war, and usually backdated the issuance of the document, thus providing the appearances of a genuine pre-war passport. The issuance of passports of that kind at some point turned into a money-making scheme, with the participation of, on the one hand, former Polish administration officials or people who managed to lay their hands on genuine passport books and official stamps, and on the other—all sorts of intermediaries.

(2) Passports on authentic passport books and with genuine official stamps, obviously backdated, may also have been issued by the intelligence agents of the enemy.

(3) Passports of that kind are to be treated with utmost care, and investigations are to be conducted in each individual case as to the holder's actual stay abroad from the date of its issuance; even were such a passport provided with a forged, backdated stamp of crossing the Polish border, it should always be possible to ascertain the actual route of the passport holder while abroad, by way of investigating with the authorities that run immigrant records in the respective countries. All suspicious and doubtful instances shall be communicated to the MFA, with a copy of the letter sent by courier to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, Section of Internal Affairs.

(4) As regards a person holding backdated passports of that sort who would apply to foreign offices of the Republic of Poland claiming to have only recently arrived from the occupied territories, they should be dealt with pursuant to paragraph 3. of this Ordinance.

8. (1) Both for security and legal certainty reasons, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attaches great importance to foreign offices of the Republic of Poland abiding as strictly as possible by the guidelines set forth in this Ordinance, and confers civil service responsibility for the compliance therewith on both directors

of foreign offices of the Republic of Poland and clerks dealing with passport matters.

(2) The need to derogate from the provisions hereby set forth, or states of affairs not provided for in this Ordinance, are to be signalled to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (even by telegraph), in each particular case subjecting the decision of a foreign office of the Republic of Poland to a prior consent from the MFA.⁴⁹

For the MINISTER
/-/ Dr Zygmunt Graliński
Under-Secretary of State

AAN, Poselstwo Santiago de Chile, 57

44

*26 May 1940. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy in Paris
on his conversation with the Prime Minister of France
about the German aggression*

Embassy of the Republic of Poland in PARIS
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 26 May 1940
RECEIVED ON 26 May 1940

No. 18

To the Minister

Today I paid a visit to the Prime Minister Reynaud in order to express the full solidarity of the Polish Government with France and its Prime Minister in these decisive moments. R. gave me the impression of being a decisive and fully engaged person. With the utmost solemnity, he declared his firm will to continue the combat until its successful conclusion, with no regard for the difficulties.⁵⁰ He

⁴⁹ The circular was received by 'all foreign posts of the Republic of Poland, both diplomatic and consular (with the exception of honorary consulates), as well as the Section of Internal Affairs at the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, and the Second Department of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff.

⁵⁰ On 10 May 1940, German forces attacked France, which surrendered on 22 June 1940 (the armistice of Compiègne). The northern and western parts of the country became the German occupation zone, whereas the remaining territory was ruled by the

referred to the rumours of an untimely peace treaty, which provoked Churchill's declaration, as entirely fantastical, not worth speaking of. He supposes that Italy will not join the war unless the war situation in France worsens. Details in a report.

– Frankowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 220

45

27 May 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Belgrade on the conditions of refugees transit through Yugoslavia

Polexterne

Budapest

Bucharest

Receptus encrypted telegram No. 75.⁵¹ In light of the suspension of transit through Italy, and the use of the Greek and Bulgarian visa quotas for the military, the evacuation of civilian refugees through Yugoslavia can only take place by sea, as long as it remains open. Should it be possible to contract a ship, it will cost £16 per person; thus, the sum total including transport per person is estimated to stand at \$60.

In the current state of mobilisation, Yugoslavia demands transit without a stopover, and an entry visa from the country of residence, a destination visa, as well as a transit visa to one of the neighbouring countries. The French outposts firmly refuse, apart from the military, visas to France. Under these conditions, the

Vichy-based collaborationist government of the French State under Marshal Philippe Pétain. The Polish Embassy temporarily moved to Madrid, while on 15 July 1940, Feliks Frankowski returned to France, where he served as Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy in Vichy. In September 1940, after the Vichy government severed diplomatic relations with Poland, Polish citizens in France were aided by the Polish Bureaux, supervised by General Director Stanisław Zabiełło. During the war, the Polish authorities cooperated with the French Committee of National Liberation and its leader General Charles de Gaulle.

⁵¹ In the cable no. 75 of 25 May 1940, Deputy Minister Graliński communicated: 'I have been given to understand that the transit of large contingents of refugees shall not be obstructed on condition that they are provided with exit visas from the country of their temporary residence, and with entry visas to France. I request that aid be secured for the refugees, as they will spend several days awaiting further transport.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 214.

evacuation of larger groups concurrent with the large displacement of the military is impossible, and it may hinder military evacuation. However, it is realistically possible that: 1) another several hundred people will arrive here for a temporary stay, 2) a certain number of male refugees may be included in military transports, 3) individuals can be evacuated to Greece and Bulgaria in an amount adjusted to the needs of the army, both in terms of visas, and of the use of poor communication capabilities.

The indispensable condition is the possession of French visas, or the issuance of them in the necessary quantity by the local diplomatic posts, as well as the time needed to make arrangements for further travel.

Sent to the Head Office; for the attention of Budapest, Bucharest.

Dębicki

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1 (previously published)

46

3 June 1940. Report by the Consul General in Rome on the help rendered to Jewish refugees

3 June 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in Angers

Regarding Jewish refugees

Handling the dispatch of the Ministry communicated to me by the Embassy, I would like to explain that the sum allocated to us to cover the expense of French visas for refugees has been disbursed in such a manner that visas are provided to those Jewish refugees who decided to leave for France. As I have already informed the Ministry, the tendency to move to France has decreased significantly among the refugees staying in Italy. In light of the developments on the northern front, many people applied for visas to Turkey, Brazil, and to other countries, having decided against going to France.

Regarding the majority of the Jews, their destination is Palestine. I thought that it resulted from the steps we had taken in London that the Mandate authorities issued a certain number of entry 'certificates' to Palestine. The fact that this amount has been increased alleviates in part the situation I discussed previously, or at least

alleviates it in my territory. There still is a group of Jews staying in Trieste and Milan who are unable to leave.⁵² Despite all the above, the war is likely to find some Polish Jews within the Italian territory. I have been informed by police sources in Rome that all people of Jewish nationality, even those who have Italian residences and citizenship, are to be interned the moment Italy joins the war.⁵³

Let me add that 80% of visas to France in the region of Milan and over 80% of visas in the region of Trieste have been issued to people of Jewish nationality.

I believe that a larger French entry visa quota should be secured on the off chance that refugees' last-minute efforts to obtain entry visas to other countries prove unsuccessful and these people will need assistance in leaving for France.

Roman Mazurkiewicz
CONSUL GENERAL

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Rzym, A.61/5e

⁵² In the letter from 14 May 1940, the Polish Consul in Trieste informed Consul General in Rome: 'In response to your letter concerning Jewish refugees staying in our region, I would like to acquaint you with the following figures. There are approx. 550 people here, that is, roughly 250 families. Almost all of them, with small exceptions, are interested in moving to Palestine. The Palestinian Mission informs us that they are to receive approx. 50 certificates in the coming days, while in addition to that, the so-called capitalist certificates are also expected—they are very slowly being shipped from Palestine. Obviously, under the circumstances, a rather large blockage has occurred, and the chances of its clearance are negligible. Should an opportunity arise to exert pressure towards the allocation of a greater number of certificates from the general quota determined by the English decision-makers, our citizens in that category should be granted approx. 150 certificates for the refugees staying in Trieste. I would also be extremely grateful if you could inform me of the prospects of the said undertakings, and most of all whether in the near term any positive outcomes may be obtained.' *IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Rzym, A.61/5e.*

⁵³ Initially, Italy remained neutral in World War II, it was only on 10 June 1940 that the country declared war on France. On 27 September 1940, Italy signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Japan (the Berlin Pact), while on 28 October 1940 its forces invaded Greece. The Polish Embassy in Rome was evacuated on 13 June 1940. In a circular of 11 June 1940, Minister Zaleski communicated the following: 'In spite of the fact that the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Quirinal has been instructed to leave Italy together with Ambassadors of France and England, the Government of Poland does not consider itself to be in a state of war with Italy. The situation is analogous to the relations the allies have with Russia.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 219.*

47

*13 June 1940. Cable from the Ambassador in Ankara
on the transit of refugees through the territory of Turkey*

Ankara 12

Incoming cable on 13 June, 6.00 p.m.

I formulated the issue of consent for the arrival of refugees in accordance with the instructions regarding: 1) servicemen in transit to Syria, 2) civilians temporarily stopping at a staging point.

The response was generally positive; however, they requested that the size and order of the evacuation be specified: I have not received such a plan yet. In view of the above, the Turkish Government is not prepared to receive several thousand refugees for an extended stay here, and the matter would have to be subject to new negotiations.⁵⁴ Besides, I strongly warn against selecting Turkey as the territory for a long-term mass emigration, particularly of women and children. The housing and material conditions here are the most difficult in the entire Middle East. Local administration and police are not used to tolerating foreigners. The eventuality of mobilisation orders and military command in preparation for the war in the Straits may result in the refugees finding themselves in circumstances rendering evacuation impossible. Above all, the permission should be obtained from the Allied governments to move refugees to their territories. I may add that the local French Embassy questions any obligations on the part of the Government of France regarding the permission for civilians to enter Syria.

Sent to the Head Office, for the attention of Athens, Bucharest, Budapest, Belgrade.

Sokolnicki

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1 (previously published)

⁵⁴ In the cable of 12 June 1940, the Envoy in Athens conveyed: 'In light of the current situation, Turkey appears to be the only asylum for Poles from the Balkans. It is there that I direct all civilian refugees. Anticipating the emergence of an extensive accumulation of Polish people in Turkey, and the need to provide for them, I consider it necessary to transfer there the agencies and funds of the Polish Government Delegate in Bucharest. At the same time, I would like to repeat my request for 50,000 drachmas to cover the cost of the evacuation of civilian refugees from Greece.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Yugoslavia), 1.

48

*2 July 1940. Extract from the diary of Ignacy Schwarzbart:
a conversation with the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief*

Tuesday, 2 July 1940

Pro memoria

At 6 p.m. on 2 July 1940, I had an audience with Prime Minister General Sikorski. The meeting lasted about half an hour.

1) I raised the issue of creating a Jewish Army in the United States. General Sikorski revealed his position on the matter, and noted that on the previous day the representatives of the Revisionist Party had had an audience to discuss the matter with him. I also presented my opinion about the standpoint assumed by General Sikorski.

2) I asked whether Colonel A. *Arciszewski* is travelling to America with regard to military matters of the Polish Army in America in full cooperation with the Polish Government, and General Sikorski confirmed it. Col A. departs on 5 July. General Sikorski noted that he believes Colonel A. to be a suitable person for this mission. I informed the General of having provided Colonel A. with letters of recommendation (3) to various Jewish institutions.⁵⁵

3) I then touched on the need to intensify our propaganda in the United States and in Canada. I mentioned that I established contacts in both countries with regard to the matter and presented the Polish case. General Sikorski acknowledged my efforts with gratitude.

4) I submitted to General Sikorski a summary of my activities in the last ten days of my stay in London regarding the press, the unification of Polish and Jewish organisations, and contacts with the English Jewry.

5) I presented to General Sikorski the matter of the Jews being excluded from the Polish Army in France. Agitated, he declared that there was no such action, but merely that the Ministry of Military Affairs issued an order on the basis of which all the soldiers of the Polish Army in France, who do not want to go on further wandering and to continue to fight, can withdraw from the army. The right was exercised by 1,560 Jews and 6,000 non-Jews, the latter hailing from the Polish diaspora in France.

⁵⁵ This is a reference to Colonel Franciszek Adam Arciszewski, who went on a preliminary mission to Canada to establish the Polish Army there. His arrival in the United States was delayed due to difficulties in obtaining a US visa.

I presented General Sikorski with a number of complaints regarding the situation in makeshift refugee camps in England. I demanded that Dr I. Dogilewski be appointed as a member of the strict Committee for the care of refugees in the camps. General Sikorski referred me with this matter to Mrs Sikorska and to Consul Poznański, who are dealing with this matter.

6) I raised the issue of the National Council. General Sikorski informed me that the National Council will be retained and replaced at the Government.

7) I asked General Sikorski about the attitude of the English authorities and the Government towards the Polish question. General Sikorski stated that, based on the conversations he had had by then, he developed the impression that it could not be warmer. He added that a responsible member of the English Government told him that the conduct of the Polish Army and Government give grounds for a lasting alliance between Poland and England. The English Government made it easier to transport the Polish Army from France. It currently stands at 23,000 troops.

On his own initiative, General Sikorski subsequently added that the whole issue of the Polish-Jewish community would be subject of deliberations and regulations at a later, more peaceful time.

AYV, *Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart*, M.2/745

49

*5 July 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Madrid
on the influx of refugees from France to Spain*

from MADRID

5 July 1940

104

Refero 8 (?)

According to a report by people sent to the French-Spanish border, there are 450 people scattered in various locations who await transit through Spain to Portugal, the majority of those being the wives of servicemen and clerks, who would like to travel to Canada. The number of refugees in the territory of occupied France is estimated at approx. 11,000. Mr Bitner expresses his apprehension about the Polish Government leaving funds for Poles in France, as the country is noticeably hostile. I have informed him that, with the consular relations having been resumed,

all Polish citizens will therefore be provided with standard protection,⁵⁶ and it is advisable to remain in France, rather than wait in such an expensive country as Spain, where the franc is not exchanged, nor are there any guarantees when and to what destination the next stage of the travel would be.

Szumlakowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 223

50

*15 July 1940. Letter from a member of the National Council
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on relief operations for Jewish refugees*

London, 15 July 1940

His Excellency
Minister of Foreign Affairs
August Zaleski
in London

Dear Minister,

I allow myself to address you with the following kind request:

1. A group of former Polish-Jewish citizens, whose Polish citizenship was revoked on the basis of the 1938 act, have recently submitted applications to the local Consulate to be reinstated as citizens. In London, I established the Organisational Office of the Representation of Polish Jewry (Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, W.O.1.-EUSton-3952 Ex. 7).⁵⁷ The Office's task is to deal with the entirety of the Poland-Polish Jewry question. The people who have applied turn to the Office for help. They are now in danger of being interned. I know from

⁵⁶ In the cable of 27 June 1940 to the Envoy in Madrid, Minister Zaleski informed him: 'Please urge Poles unable to cross the French border, apart from our officials, to remain in the unoccupied part of France. We will try to support them financially. Should people in particular danger be among them, please try to get them to Spain, if possible.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 222.*

⁵⁷ This is a reference to the establishment of a London office of the Representation of Polish Jewry (RŻP), a committee of Jews from Poland which operated in Palestine. Schwarzbart served as a representative of the RŻP to the Polish Government-in-Exile.

the practice of the relevant MFA section in Angers that these applications were received in a relatively small number, but that most of them were dealt with under a Government regulation in the applicant's favour. I suppose that the majority of the currently filed applications reflects the state of affairs which also suggests that these are going to be processed in favour of the interested parties. Our Consulate in London gives the people concerned confirmation that the application has been submitted and that it will be addressed to the MFA. However, this confirmation is not sufficient for the English authorities to refrain from internment. Therefore, let me kindly request you to conduct an intervention with the English authorities to ensure that the people who have filed applications to be reinstated as Polish citizens be exempt from internment on the basis of an appropriate certificate issued by the MFA. I think that such an intervention is substantively justified; it is also certain to elicit positive reactions.

2. According to my information, the relevant office at the MFA, in Angers led by Chairman Frenzl, has not yet been re-established. I would like to kindly request you to have such a department organised as soon as possible, and at the same time, I obligingly ask you to have the Consulate process these cases quickly. That shall also facilitate the effectiveness of the intervention with the English authorities, which I have mentioned above. Should you consider it expedient, I am willing to assist him in the matter with my personal expertise.

3. At the same time, I wish to enclose a copy of 'The Jewish Chronicle' of 12 July of this year,⁵⁸ a very influential newspaper in the Jewish community in England, which has already been published here for an impressive 99 years, and, if I may, direct you to my statement published on page 9 of this magazine, for your information and that of the Press Office of the MFA. At the same time, let me draw your attention to a report by a correspondent, unknown to me personally, featured in the other column on the same page of the weekly, titled 'Evacuating Polish Refugees.'

4. I would like to inform you of an entire array of issues, related to my activity in London since my arrival, in person; therefore, I ask to have an audience arranged. I have also undertaken some actions in America and Canada. About these I would also like to confer with Your Excellency.

Please accept, Excellency, my deepest respect and regards,

Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart

Hoover Institution, August Zaleski Papers, 1

⁵⁸ Not included in this publication.

51

*19 July 1940. Letter from the Envoy in Buenos Aires to the Legation in Lisbon
on Julian Tuwim's departure for Argentina*

BUENOS-AIRES, 19 July 1940

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland.
in Lisbon

Having been instructed by a telegram from the Ministry with regard to Mr Julian Tuwim and his wife's departure for Argentina, the Legation wishes to communicate, on the basis of steps undertaken in the matter, that the Argentinian authorities take the view that, in order to be granted a visa, Mr Tuwim must absolutely comply with the formalities strictly required by these authorities, which consist of attending the Consulate General of Argentina in Lisbon to fill in the visa application form and submit the prescribed documents. This form, with the opinion of the Consulate, will be delivered to Dirección General de Inmigración in Buenos Aires. To hasten the matter, the documents could be delivered by airmail, should the Polish Legation in Lisbon agree. Once the application is received in Buenos Aires, the Legation will take appropriate measures to obtain a positive decision. To this end, the Legation requests that the Consulate General of Argentina inform it of the dispatch date of the application documents.

The above proceedings are intended both to secure the opinion of the Argentinian Consulate, which comes in direct contact with the interested party, and to furnish the authorities with details and information enabling them to reach a final decision.

At the same time, the Legation specifies elsewhere the additional circumstances currently accompanying the procedure of issuing entry visas to Argentina, and places particular emphasis on the importance that the opinion of the Consulate General of Argentina holds for resolving the matter, therefore its favourable stance ought to be solicited.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ In the letter from 18 July, the Envoy in Buenos Aires informed the Legation in Lisbon: "The Legation was instructed to support the efforts of the Polish Legation in Lisbon to obtain entry visas to Argentina for approx. 100 families of Polish refugees, who possess the means of subsistence. Because of the increasingly more frequent inquiries received from Portugal about entry visas to Argentina, the Legation wishes to communicate with regard to that issue that the existing procedure in that field has the following structure: The interested parties are to apply directly to consuls of Argentina in order to submit the prescribed application documents. After furnishing these applications with necessary opinions, consuls send them to "Dirección General de Inmigración." Before issuing the final decision, the latter body passes the applications on to the inter-ministerial immigration commission. Having been processed by the commission, applications are returned to

The Legation kindly requests that the content of this letter be communicated to Mr Julian Tuwim, resident of Oporto, Pensaõ Aliados.

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Zdzisław Kurnikowski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13

52

*25 July 1940. Note by the MFA conveying a cable
from the Consul General in Ottawa on the possibility of
granting aid to Jewish children in Canada*

London, 25 July 1940

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs transfers the message of the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in OTTAWA concerning the arrival of Jewish children:

Ottawa, 25 July 1940

POLISH JEWISH CHILDREN WILL BE ADMITTED ONLY IF ORPHANS.
DECISION PASSED TODAY IRREVOCABLE. INSTRUCTIONS BEING CABLED
HIGH COMMISSIONER.⁶⁰

For the Minister
Potulicki

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A.42/239 (ENG, message)

“Dirección General de Inmigración”, which issues the final decision and sends it back to the consuls. With regard to individual requests of entry, the Legation is able to support them in instances of particular importance or in those worth special consideration, either with the aforementioned inter-ministerial commission, or with the “Dirección General de Inmigración.” However, no individual case submitted without compliance with the required course of action shall be processed; hence, any efforts of the Legation in that regard are from the outset destined to fail because the Argentinian authorities abide by the immigration procedures with doubled diligence—as a consequence of the military activity in Europe ... Regarding the obtainment from the Argentinian decision-makers of a positive decision about the mass entry of 100 Polish families, the Legation will spare no efforts to achieve it; however, for that purpose it necessarily requires information about the age and profession of emigrants, and the details regarding their financial situation.’ Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13.

⁶⁰ The note was passed on to Ministers Stanisław Kot and Jan Stańczyk, as well as to Zygmunt Merdinger, the Commercial Counsellor at the Embassy in London, and to the Consul General in London, Karol Poznański.

53

*26 July 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Budapest
to the Ambassador in Ankara
on the obtainment of Turkish visas for Jewish refugees*

Budapest, 26 July 1940. Sent at 6.55 p.m.

Mr Orłowski to Angora

No. 4.

Approximately 50 Polish Jews are in possession of entry visas to Palestine, transit visas for Iraq, and railway tickets for the route via Turkey. Please take necessary measures to secure Turkish transit visas for them.⁶¹

IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/18 (previously published)

54

*5 August 1940. Order by the Commander-in-Chief
on the situation of Polish soldiers of Jewish descent*

London, 5 August 1940

ORDER No. 2/40

The success of our troops and the favourable conditions of our existence as a nation in the future require the unification of efforts and pursuits directed at a common goal.

⁶¹ In response, the Embassy in Ankara communicated by the cable of 29 July the following: 'For the time being, the matter cannot be resolved in favour of the petitioners because of their religion. Our repeated intervention in the coming days.' In the cable of 29 August 1940, Ambassador Michał Sokolnicki stated further: 'Only transit visas for our troops heading for Palestine. Under the circumstances, Iraqi visas and tickets unnecessary. The Embassy took measures to clarify it with the Turkish Legation in Budapest, promised to be done today. Jews continue to be denied transit without a special permit from the Council of Ministers.' IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/18.

Especially in the military, there must be unity and genuine brotherhood in arms, undisturbed by various antagonisms.

My position is that any soldier who has taken up arms to protect his country therefore proves his status as a Pole, regardless of his origin and religion.

I strictly forbid showing any hatred towards soldiers of the Mosaic faith, whether in the form of rude nicknames or violations of human dignity. Any offences in that regard will be severely punished.

The order to be read in front of the troops.⁶²

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
/-/ Sikorski
 General

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136

55

*6 August 1940. Report by the Consul General in Tel Aviv
 on the situation in Palestine after the arrival of the Carpathian Rifle Brigade*

6 August 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Minister's Cabinet
in London

I am trying to establish contact with the Ministry again, which was broken off due to acts of war. Because the only recourse available to me is to have the report sent by airmail, and that incurs great costs, I am forced to limit myself to a short statement without any attachments. Of course, I am asking for precise instructions in this respect, in particular for a decision on what is to happen to the ready-made financial reports.

⁶² In the letter from 17 September 1940, the Commander-in-Chief's Staff informed the Minister of Information and Documentation, Stanisław Stroński, that 'in our Land Forces in England, Jews account for approx. 1 per cent of officers, and approx. 1.7 per cent of privates, of whom only 1 officer (out of 51) and half of privates serve in combat units.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136.

Regarding the political situation, it should be noted that the arrival of the Polish Army in Palestine⁶³ contributed to the clear disclosure of the very friendly attitude of the entire Jewish society for Poland, its army and its political goals. Not only the Jewish population from Poland, but all Jews frequently express their undeniable solidarity with the Polish cause, demonstrating their feelings of cordiality and friendship towards the Polish Army. This was expressed by the representatives of the Jewish Agency in a speech at the official reception organised here by the Club of Polish Jews for the officers of the Brigade, and it is manifested every day by the local Jewish press, which furnishes articles and notes full of the most cordial declarations directed towards the Polish Army. I will not emphasize here the most cordial contact of the local Office with the Command and other key figures from the Brigade, which is quite natural, but I must say that when there was contact between the Polish Army and the general population, it turned out clearly that the attempts of this Office to gain the opinion of the local Jewish society were effective and that as far as Jewish society in Palestine is concerned, it is fully supportive of Poland and her most fundamental objectives.

Thanks to the efforts, or with the assistance, of the local Office, a concert was held by the Jewish symphony orchestra in the Brigade's camp in Latrun, with the repertoire comprising solely pieces by Polish composers, which was attended by thousands of Polish soldiers and officers. The impression made by Polish music was positive.

As I already reported some time ago, the Office here was able to establish in Tel Aviv a branch of the Polish Red Cross. For over a dozen weeks, the Polish Red Cross has been steadfastly developing its activity, supplying the troops with Polish books and basic sanitary equipment, obviously in cooperation with the sanitation as well as education and propaganda officers. Among the Jewish population, it has conducted a collection campaign, and the sums declared and collected are quite significant.

Let me on this occasion request that the Ministry communicate to the Head Office of the Polish Red Cross that the organisation's branch here continues its operation, and that due to the growing needs related to the activity of the Red Cross, a subsidy from the head office would be most welcome.

On the initiative of the local Office, the Palestinian-Polish Chamber of Commerce in Latrun set up an information point in the Brigade camp for the purpose of indicating the most expedient sources to purchase goods and supervising that the quality of these goods is appropriate, and the prices moderate.

⁶³ This is a reference to the Carpathian Rifle Brigade, stationed in the French Mandate in Syria, and evacuated to Palestine after the collapse of France.

The moment more standard means of communication are established, I will provide the Ministry with a detailed account of the entirety of the Office's activity related to the arrival of the Polish Army in Palestine. Today I am obliged to limit myself to the above.⁶⁴

Dr Henryk Rosmarin
 Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.3/2

56

6 August 1940. Unsigned memorandum on the soldiers of Jewish descent in the Polish Army

London, 6 August 1940

A CONTRIBUTION ON THE JEWISH MATTER IN THE POLISH ARMY

Among the refugees who arrived in London from France in the final days of June and in July of this year, there was a large number of men of conscription age. They were mostly soldiers of the Polish Army in France, who were either temporarily released in France or left the ranks of the army already in England.

On 7 July of this year, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in London in agreement with the First Department of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff introduced conscription among the refugees. In an assembly point for refugees in Fulham, a total of 465 people appeared before the consular commission, which operated for a period of 8 days. Meanwhile, 60 people did not appear, including 58 Jews. In 'Norwood' refugee shelter, during a session of the consular conscription commission on 30 July of this year, 32 people did not appear before the commission, including 27 Jews. During the entire period of operation, only a few Polish citizens of Jewish nationality appeared before the commission, who were convinced in advance that due to their health condition, they would qualify for exemption from active service in the army. The only Jew to appear before the commission and be classified as fit for duty (Brawerman Aron) refused to move to the camp.

As a repressive measure in relation to the people who failed to appear before the conscription commission, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in

⁶⁴ A copy of the report was sent to the Embassies in London and Ankara, and to the Legation in Cairo.

London, Mr Poznański, used the revocation of Polish citizenship. Questioned by the Consul in the presence of representatives of the English authorities, the recruits who did not appear before the military commission explained that they had behaved that way because they do not want to serve in the Polish Army, whose officers had not wanted them to board ships because of their Jewish origin. They further explained that there was antisemitism in the Polish Army, that they did not trust either the Government or the Polish State, while those who had served in the Polish Army in France claimed to have been abandoned by their commanders during the evacuation and not to intend to serve under them any longer. The indicated excuses, stereotypically repeated by all the men, appeared to have been prepared in advance.

The Consul's statement on depriving Polish citizenship was taken lightly, without attaching much importance to this fact.

It should be noted, however, that a section of Polish citizens of Jewish nationality did not even appear before the conscription commission at all, because when the commission began to take office, they declared that they were not Polish citizens, and due to the unfeasibility of confirming their citizenship, they were recognized by the consular authorities as stateless (79 people). Those Jews who were released from the refugee camp before the conscription commission began to take office, despite the commitment to appear at the commission, did not show up at the appointed time.

As a characteristic case, I wish to present the case of Włodzimierz Register, a Jewish lawyer from Warsaw, who arrived in London several months ago and was summoned by the Consul to join the camp of the Polish Army in France. He did not go there, however, instead deciding to apply for permission to serve in the English Army. Having been granted the relevant permit from the Ministry of Military Affairs, he enlisted neither in the English nor in the Polish Army.

At the same time, I report that almost all refugees of Jewish nationality arrived in Polish military transports as Polish citizens. In the port cities, they declared to the representatives of the English authorities that they were Polish citizens, and on the basis of that declaration they were directed to the Polish refugee camps, and the English clerks noted in the discharge cards that they were Polish citizens. During the registration and refugee document check by the local Office in London, all the Jews, both those from Poland and refugees from Belgium and France, of whom the vast majority did not speak Polish, and who had not maintained any connection with Poland for many years, strongly persisted their rights to Polish citizenship. It was only when the conscription commission began to take office that they came to deny their Polish citizenship, or claimed their citizenship had been revoked, with some even submitting documents depriving them of citizenship. Furthermore, there were instances of Polish identity cards being destroyed. Some refugees additionally explained that they had obtained Polish foreign passports to

facilitate their travel, as holders of those passports are privileged by the English, Spanish, and Portuguese authorities. For instance, the two Ehrenberg brothers, Zolna and others, claimed that they had paid for passports in the Consulate in Toulouse to make their journey easier.

I would also like to report that information has been obtained from people who have recently arrived from unoccupied France, that in France, Spain and Portugal, hundreds of people, mostly Jews who do not speak Polish, have foreign passports issued by the Polish Consulate in Toulouse.

From the above account, it can be concluded that Polish citizens of Jewish nationality only admit to their Polish citizenship depending on the circumstances, providing it may prove beneficial for them. However, the moment the Polish State demands their services of any kind, they are willing to deprive themselves of citizenship. Due to the expedient citizenship shifts and machinations with documents, the local Office was burdened with several cases. In particular, 190 people were directed to a representative of the Consulate to determine their questionable citizenship, of whom 79 were later declared stateless. Regardless of this, the English authorities have detained and imprisoned about 50 people of Jewish nationality for these reasons.

All the circumstances cited in this report, in particular the position taken by conscripts of Jewish nationality in relation to conscription and their explanation, make it possible to state that there is an organised action among them not to join the Polish Army. Meanwhile, making unfounded and slanderous allegations against the Polish Army and its officers in the presence of representatives of the English civilian and military authorities is also a testament to the decidedly negative attitude of a large section of the Jewish society towards the Polish state, its symbol being the army organised in such difficult conditions. In addition, it strives to create in the English authorities and society the conviction that in the Polish Army Jews were and are persecuted, which in the current circumstances is particularly harmful to the Polish cause.

I present this report as a contribution to highlighting the Jewish matter in the Polish Army and the question of loyalty of the Jewish people to the State.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.36

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*10 August 1940. Note by the Legal Counsellor at the MFA
on the situation of Polish and Jewish refugees*

Note
concerning Polish refugees⁶⁵

SOUTH AFRICA

Originally, it was planned to send some of the refugees and their families to the Union of South African, and for this purpose there was pressure put by Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in London. This was supported by the fact, among other things, that the Polish Government in London would not be faced with the issue of transfer, since the circulation of money between the Metropole and South Africa is not subject to restrictions, unlike in the case of Canada, which has its own currency.

For the time being the project has temporarily collapsed, as the government in Pretoria has refused to issue visas.

CANADA

So far, it has only been possible to obtain visas for children (9–16 years old): a) Polish, whose maintenance is taken on by Polish organisations, and b) Jewish (although to a limited extent), whose maintenance is the responsibility of Jewish organisations. In both cases the issue of transfer does not arise, given that the cost of living is not to be borne by London. As far as the travel costs are concerned, they are free of charge as far as the England-Canada route is concerned.

However, we cannot expect to be able to obtain visas for parents, since Canadians do not even grant such visas to parents who are British citizens. Although the desire of Polish parents not to part with their children is understandable from the perspective of human emotions, it should, nevertheless, be noted that it would be impossible to secure for Polish parents better treatment than that extended to the English ones. So far, a total of 148 Jewish and 2 non-Jewish children have been registered in London. Non-Jewish parents in England do not want to be separated from their children either.

THE UNITED STATES

The United States have not yet adjusted their legislation to the current exceptional circumstances. The Polish American Council⁶⁶ has notified the Government that it is ready to transfer to North America 1,500 women and

⁶⁵ The note was one of the documents enclosed with the instruction by the Minister of Foreign Affairs distributed as a circular on 15 August 1940.

⁶⁶ The Polish American Council was founded in 1936; for two years, it functioned under the name Polish Interorganizational Council. After the United States entered the war,

children. However, despite several interventions in Washington, the visas have not yet arrived. In this case, it is about people who would be admitted outside the immigration quota.

BRAZIL

The Polish Government was able to obtain 500 visas for non-Jewish Poles, and the figure seems likely to increase in the future. The people in question should either possess their own financial means, or the Polish Government should guarantee \$0.5 a day per capita during their stay in Brazil.

Practical difficulties emerge at this point:

1) The Ministry of Treasury has thus far not agreed to issue such a financial guarantee.

2) Even if such a guarantee were accepted by the Treasury, the problem of transfer would arise, which the British Government treats at the moment quite harshly. The situation would be different if we were to obtain social assistance on the spot in America, or if some of our assets were launched in America.

As for the transports from Portugal, England, etc. to South America, it is undoubtedly possible to launch a Polish ship for a group if a sufficient number of people are available.

*

As it can be observed from the above statement, the momentous endeavour of evacuating our compatriots can only be resolved by individualising the respective groups. Troops, technicians, engineers, clerks, etc., can be summoned to England by name, and the same shall be the case for the families of the servicemen on active duty in England.⁶⁷ For the remaining people, the opportunity has not yet arisen to be evacuated because of the inability of refugees to stay at the expense of the Treasury for an incalculable period of time, and finally because of the transfer policy of the British Government.

At the present time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is taking steps with the Comptrol, continuing to exert pressure over the countries with whom the negotiations related to evacuation have already been commenced, and it shall issue

the Council joined the countrywide National War Fund, from which point it also began to use the name Polish War Relief.

⁶⁷ On 5 August 1940, Poland and Great Britain signed a military cooperation agreement concerning the use of the Polish Armed Forces. Its provisions regulated, among other things, the employment of the Polish Air Force during the RAF's defence against the German air offensive between July and October 1940 (known as the Battle of Britain).

instructions in order to obtain new immigration possibilities such as, for instance, in Argentina.

Reported by Prof. Dr M. Potulicki

London, 10 August 1940

IPMS, Poselstwo Lizbona, A.47/5 (previously published)

58

*20 August 1940. Note by the Office for War Aims
on the possibility of granting aid to Jewish refugees*

Note
concerning the placement of Polish refugees—Jews

The efforts made by the Polish Government in various countries to obtain entry permits for Polish refugees indicate that the Jewish element among the refugees generally cannot expect any sort of loosening of immigration restrictions regarding collective visas for them. Meanwhile, the Jewish element accounts for a large proportion of refugees, for instance in Portugal. Furthermore, as it turns out, Polish-Jewish citizens are starting to pass through Soviet Russia to the Far East, hoping for the possibility to settle in the countries of the British Empire or in neutral ones.

The situation results in the need to undertake talks with British decision-makers concerning Jewish refugees. Regarding the Jewish refugees in the Far East, it should be possible to grant them entry to Palestine. According to the note titled 'Palestine at War' in 'The Economist' from 17 August, the immigration of the Jewish element to Palestine continues through India. Perhaps talks should be held with the British authorities along this line.

As for the Jewish refugees from Portugal, the British authorities should be able to place them in one of the British colonies, for instance in Guiana, which is already being dealt with by some Jewish organisations. It seems advisable that the Embassy should enter talks regarding the issue with the Foreign Office.

20 August 1940

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516

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*20 August 1940. Letter from the Consul General in Marseille
to the Embassy in Vichy
on the evacuation of Jewish refugees to Belgium*

20 August 1940

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Vichy

Currently, from Marseille and its surrounding area entire groups of Belgians are returning in separate trains to their places of residence and employment in Belgium. A train departs every few days.

So far, they have not taken any Poles at all, claiming that the repatriation campaign is intended exclusively for Belgians; however, they also state that the repatriation of Polish people would not cause any difficulties, should the matter be agreed in Vichy with the French authorities and, above all, with the Belgian Embassy.

The number of Polish people from Belgium who are currently staying in the local area stands at approx. 150, mostly Jews, both merchants, diamond traders, and even members of the intelligentsia. They are currently applying to the Consulate for help, and settling matters of their repatriation would be highly desirable as a means to unburden the budget of their social care.

The Consulate asks you to address the Belgian Embassy on this matter as important and urgent.

Consul General
Dr *Adam Lisiewicz*

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Marsylia, 834

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*25 August 1940. Letter from the Ambassador in Bucharest [?]
to the Ambassador in Washington
on the operation of the Delegation of the Polish Red Cross in Romania*

Bucharest, 25 August 1940

His Excellency
Count Jerzy Potocki
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
in Washington

Dear Mr Ambassador!

I kindly inform you that in order to provide for Polish refugees and Poles permanently residing in the Balkans and the Middle East and to organise their long term care, taking into account the possible political eventualities that may occur in this area, I have decided, in agreement with the Polish Government, to extend the care of Poles provided by the Red Cross, because this international organisation provides the widest possible opportunities for work and care in all kinds of political changes.

Due to organisational reasons, it is difficult to create independent agencies of the Polish Red Cross in the aforementioned area; for these reasons it was decided to use Polish sections of the Red Cross of individual countries for the intended charity work. In connection with this, the Delegation of the Polish Red Cross was established, under the leadership of Mr Aleksy Wdziękoński, the current director of the American Commission for Polish Relief in Romania, covering the following countries: Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and Palestine. I would like to point out that among the members of the Delegation, there is a representative of Polish Jews, which enables Jews to support their relatives under both occupations, at the same time ensuring the most impartial treatment of their requests. Financial assistance from Jews may contribute to alleviation of antisemitism, which appears to be increasing both in the German and in the Soviet occupation zones, as well as among the diaspora. It is the task of the Delegation to coordinate the operation of the Polish sections of Red Cross organisations in those individual countries listed above, where the Polish sections already exist, and to undertake steps towards establishing Polish sections in the countries in which none have been organised thus far. Among the tasks of the Delegation, there also is the distribution among the Polish sections in the respective countries of the funds intended for Polish relief through the

Polish Red Cross. The tasks of the Delegation will also include deepening contact with the country, primarily by increasing the action of sending parcels to the German and Soviet occupation zones, as such a possibility exists. This will be not only of emotional and propaganda importance, creating the sense that friends and relatives continue to remember those who stayed in the country, but also of actual basic help, because of the difficulties resulting from an increased embargo on and communication problems in sending parcels directly from America. It will also prove to be of much aid to Polish captives in the POW camps in Germany and in Russia. I am also considering the possibility of the Delegation extending its protection to the Polish Army in Palestine.

The Delegation is directly subordinate to me,⁶⁸ as the person granted full power of attorney in the Balkans and the Middle East, and to Minister Arciszewski, Government Delegate for refugees. In the case of a possible need to change the place of residence, the evacuation of the Delegation of the Polish Red Cross to Constantinople has been provided for.

Making the above information known to you, I kindly ask you to help the intended work by directing funds donated in America to help Polish refugees to the Delegation. For practical reasons, it is necessary to avoid sending money by banks or by cheques, because the difference in official exchange rates and the black market in the Balkan countries and the Middle East is very large, often reaching 300%. It would be most practical to use private clearing and the opportunity to address parcels to foreign agencies.

For several months, American funds allocated to help Polish refugees have ceased to flow to the local area here. This state of affairs cannot be maintained in the long run, because now the financial situation of refugees has significantly deteriorated and requires external assistance, help from America may be the best option. It should be emphasized that as a result of the deliberate departures of younger people who are in good health and numerous groups of professionals to the West, the remaining groups of refugees consist mostly of older men, women and children. Among them are those who are not authorised to return to the country by the occupation authorities, or those who consider it impossible for ideological reasons to return to Poland under the current circumstances. Due to the changes in climatic conditions, moral experiences, and material difficulties hindering normal nutrition, the health of refugees has declined and requires extensive care, especially including professional medical help. It cannot be ruled out that the allowances so far issued by the Government of Romania may be withdrawn in the near future, especially in view of the constantly deteriorating political and financial situation in Romania.

⁶⁸ Most likely the Ambassador in Bucharest Roger Raczyński.

In the countries mentioned above, there are minimal opportunities for paid employment, and even that is exclusively for experts; meanwhile, large groups of men and women, mainly comprising state and local government officials and people of the liberal professions, have no prospects of finding work in spite of the efforts both by our institutional authorities and Polish social organisations.

It should be emphasised that the very scrupulous protection of the labour market applied in most countries makes it impossible for a foreigner to find employment in practice, and there are also provisions concerning foreigners of a political nature.

For understandable reasons, the Delegation cannot be officially active, therefore it is advised in conversations and for external information to use the formula of 'assistance through the Polish Red Cross,' and to address the correspondence as private letters to Romania, București, strada Luterana 26, Aleksy Wdziękoński—or to the surname of A. Wdziękoński through the Embassy in Bucharest. Money transfers intended for the Delegations—to the address of the Embassy with the indication of its destination. Should the address be changed, the new one will be communicated by telegraph.

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 5

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*28 August 1940. Report by the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro
on the situation of Polish and Jewish refugees in Brazil*

28 August 1940

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding the emigration quota for the Polish refugees staying in Brazil

The fact that Brazil has accepted Polish refugees—currently arriving in Brazil in great numbers—was, due to the intervention of the Legation, treated overall very favourably by the relevant governmental decision makers: Brazilian consulates in Lisbon and in London received special instructions to process visa applications submitted by Poles as favourably as possible. In practice, however, only those visa applications are honoured which receive direct support from the local Legation with messages in the form of an individual note for each individual case. The

Legation has already issued several hundreds of such notes, but new requests for support are arriving from Europe daily.⁶⁹

It is very difficult to obtain visas for Jewish refugees, regardless of their actual religion. Simply, the Aryan paragraph is used, with Brazilian consuls arbitrarily deciding whether a visa candidate is of Semitic descent. Some consuls require to be presented with documents spanning three generations to prove that a person is of Aryan decent.

As a rule, all non-Polish sounding surnames are treated with suspicion.

President Getúlio Vargas' recent speech with clear antisemitic phrases intensified the restrictions on allowing Jews into Brazilian territory.

The Legation was able to learn confidentially that a special international quota had been introduced, with Jews of all nationalities falling into its scope. The quota is partly reset at the beginning of each month and has been exhausted for a couple of months in advance. Nevertheless, the Legation has managed to secure several dozens of visas for Polish-Jewish citizens within that quota.

⁶⁹ In another report, of 28 September 1940, the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro further added: 'According to the data received by the Legation from the Brazilian immigration office, between 1 Sept 1939 and 1 Sept 1940 a total of 1,256 Polish refugees arrived in Brazil, of whom over four hundred and several dozen possess 6-months tourist visas, that is, visas without the right of permanent residence in Brazil. These are all refugees from urban areas, not farmers. Under such circumstances, the immigration quota for immigrants in that category, currently at 600 people a year, has been exceeded more than twice. It is to be assumed that approx. 80% of the refugees who arrived in the specified period are Jews, who were able to get to Brazil despite major barriers to being granted Brazilian visas. In most cases, the latter category of refugees possesses financial means reaching in some cases several hundred thousand dollars a person. At present, the immigration office has declared that it will undertake further remedial measures to prevent Jewish immigrants from entering Brazil; that is, not only Jews of the Mosaic faith, but of all other confessions, including Christian, unless the candidates to enter the country can prove their Aryan origin. The entry of Jews will only be permitted within the so-called international quota, standing at 2,000 a year, which will comprise Jews of any nationality entering Brazil; hence, Belgian, Dutch, and Polish Jews, etc., regardless of their religion, be it now Christian. In such conditions, Polish-Jewish citizens, for instance, will not be included in the Polish immigration quota, but will only be able to use the international Jewish quota, mentioned above. The so-called papal quota for baptised Jews from Germany and Italy has been temporarily suspended. Because, as we have mentioned above, the Polish quota has been exhausted, the Legation submitted to the Immigration and Colonisation Council a motion to be granted a new additional quota. At the same time, the Legation is making efforts to facilitate the conversion from tourist to residence visas for Polish citizens; however, the prospects of success are rather dim.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13.

Several days ago, a new quota was established, the so-called 'papal quota.' It amounts to 2,000 people, and after almost a full year of negotiations between the Papal Nuncio and the local government it has finally been put into practice. It is generally intended for German and Italian Jews. Nevertheless, the Legation was assured that Polish citizens would also be able to benefit from it.

Returning to the prospects of Polish refugees of Aryan origin settling in Brazil, the Legation wishes to indicate that the quota for that category stands at 600 people a year. The quota has already been almost entirely used up, but the Legation received an assurance that it would be increased in case of an influx of refugees.

At the same time, the Legation requests that an appropriate ordinance be issued for consulates and legations of the Republic of Poland directing our refugees to Brazil to monitor whether the visas to enter Brazil issued to them are of the so-called residence category. There have been a number of cases where our refugees were granted tourist visas, probably issued by Brazilian consulates by mistake, and that subsequently resulted in them experiencing extreme difficulties in obtaining the right of residence, and in consequence, incurring significant costs reaching up to \$300.

At the same time, the Legation asks to instruct our consulates to always signal the arrival of refugees in Brazil by air mail, because so far the Legation has been ignorant of the number of Polish citizens coming aboard each ship and has therefore been unable to secure lodging and suitable accommodation for them.⁷⁰ For example the ship 'Angela' has recently arrived from Lisbon, carrying

⁷⁰ In the letter from 15 July 1940, the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro addressed the Legation in Lisbon: 'Every ship currently arriving from Lisbon carries a number of Polish refugees heading for Brazil, who on their arrival here encounter obstacles when disembarking, and these require constant interventions by the Legation. In order to prevent any setbacks of that sort, the local post requests that the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Lisbon inform the local post by air mail, whenever a ship bound for Brazil departs, of the number of Polish people who have boarded that ship, their surnames, age, etc., as well as whether they possess financial means to support themselves at least during the initial months of their stay in Brazil. The Legation is aware that the above request will cause the Legation in Lisbon much work at the moment when, due to the influx of refugees from France, the office there is extremely overburdened. It must be underscored, however, that pursuant to a new Brazilian regulation, shipping lines do not have the right to disclose the names of their passengers before arriving at the port, and that it is in the interest of the refugees that their coming is signalled at least two weeks before their ship's arrival in Rio.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13.

84 Polish refugees; it arrived in Rio on Sunday evening, and the Legation learnt only afterwards of such a significant number of refugees.⁷¹

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Dr Tadeusz Skowroński

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13

62

*3 September 1940. Cable from the Ambassador in Bucharest
on providing aid to Jewish refugees*

Mr Raczyński BUCHAREST

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 3 SEPT 1940

No. 187

To the Minister of Social Welfare

Due to the anti-Jewish regulations and the surge of antisemitism in that entire part of Europe, our posts have encountered greater obstacles when undertaking the—more often than not futile—interventions demanded en masse by Jews. On the one hand, it results in resentment among Jews, who defame the posts and the Polish Government, accusing them of antisemitism and of a lack of goodwill, which may have negative repercussions in America. On the other hand, our interventions on Jewish matters alienate our posts in the eyes of the respective governments and local authorities, which impacts negatively on the treatment of Polish issues and our refugees in general.

In view of the above, I ask you to influence the British Government to grant, in agreement with and on recommendation of our posts, entry visas to Palestine, or other parts of the British Empire, to Jews who are indubitably Polish citizens, the number of whom in the territory of the Balkans and in Istanbul does not exceed 2,000 people. With the emigration to Palestine having been practically stopped, the number, compared with the former quotas, even on the minimum level, should cause no greater difficulties for the English to tackle.

⁷¹ A copy of the report was sent to Buenos Aires, Washington, Lisbon, London, Curitiba, Porto Alegre and São Paulo.

I wish to add that any further influx and long-term stay of a large number of Jews in Istanbul may close all opportunities of their outflow by this route and make the transit to the military as such impossible. The matter is all the more urgent due to the fact that in light of the dwindling influence and uncertain situation of our posts, even valuable Jewish individuals may end up facing a tragic plight in the Balkans from one day to the next.⁷²

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516 (previously published)

63

9 September 1940. Report by the Ambassador to the Holy See: Vatican's policy towards Jewish issues

Vatican, 9 September 1940

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Vatican and Italy

The Jewish question

The address of the Pope to the Catholic Action, as rightly expected, did not satisfy the fascists; Farinacci in 'Regime Fascista' (vide the enclosure)⁷³ only

⁷² The note from 6 September 1940, prepared by the Embassy in London, stated: 'In response to the letter from the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Bucharest ... the Embassy intervened with the Foreign Office on 6 September, requesting it to consider the possibility of allowing 2,000 Polish-Jewish citizens to enter Palestine. On its part, the Foreign Office obliged itself to investigate this matter in agreement with competent British authorities; however—taking into considerations also the political complications that may emerge on the Arab side should Jewish emigration to Palestine be allowed, because in light of the current situation in the Middle East, the Government must reckon with the reactions of the Arab public opinion and avoid any measures that could threaten it. The Embassy believes that, without waiting for the British response to the matter, it is advisable to collect the data concerning the said 2,000 Jews, particularly to ascertain the social composition of that group.' The request for detailed information regarding the 2,000 Jews was sent to the Embassy in Bucharest, which in the cable of 26 September 1940 provided the following in response: 'The number of Polish-Jewish citizens in Romania stands at a total of 799 people, including 182 in the liberal, technical and artisanal professions, 72 doctors, dentists, geometers, and pharmacists, 156 lawyers, clerks, pensioners, 100 former tradesmen and merchants, 241 women and children. The number has recently decreased because of individual departures.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

⁷³ There is no attachment.

maintains the appearances of praising it, in a manner causing dissatisfaction in the Vatican because of the patronising air of the approval. In his article, Farinacci (generally considered to have authored this entire cycle of articles) presses new demands on the Pope: he wants the Pope to participate in 'the battle against Jewry.' The mere fact that the demand has been stated is a clear indication of the willingness to shift the issue towards the aspects on which the Vatican cannot accept the Italian position. For it pertains to the ethical and dogmatic reasons which preclude the form of antisemitism that, in the footsteps of Hitlerites, fascism promotes. Far from entertaining the thought of participating in 'the battle against Jewry,' the Vatican since the outset of the persecution of Jews by Hitler has tried to protect at least the Catholics of Jewish background and race, obtaining for them a quota of visas to enter Brazil, and establishing with the help of Jews a special fund to facilitate their travel. This results in a relatively paradoxical phenomenon that we currently encounter rather often, that when applying for entry visas to Brazil, Catholic Jews are more easily granted the Vatican's support, and a greater support at that, than are Polish Catholics, with no Jewish blood in the generations of their immediate ancestors. Furthermore, in the Secretariat of State a special office for Jewish matters was established (*Ufficio Razza*), which became indispensable due to the great influx of Jewish petitioners to the Vatican.

In light of the above, accusing the Vatican of friendship with Jews is rather simple, while demanding that it participate in the battle against Jewry takes on the sense of a provocation. There is also an undertone of a personal taunt against Pius XII in calling him to return to the alleged traditional antisemitism of his predecessors and alluding to a 'certain modernism of the Vatican,' going against the interest of the Church.

K. Papée

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Vatican

IPMS, Ambasada Watykan, A.44/115/3 (previously published)

64

*12 September 1940. Cable from the Ambassador in Ankara
on the transit visas for Jewish refugees*

Mr Sokolnicki, ANKARA

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 12 SEPT 1940

Receptus 33⁷⁴

Jews, not only Polish citizens, are refused transit visas on the basis of a resolution of the Council of Ministers. Any derogations from this rule may be taken into consideration by way of applications submitted via the relevant Turkish consulates. All interventions made by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland and other diplomatic missions have been and continue to be to no avail.⁷⁵

The above was communicated on 14 August to the interested relatives of R.⁷⁶ by the Polish Consulate in Bucharest.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516

⁷⁴ In the cable no. 33 of 11 September, Minister Zaleski instructed the Embassy in Ankara: 'Rosmarin informs us that Turkey has refused to issue transit visas for Polish-Jewish citizens who have entry visas to Palestine and are now staying in Romania. Please take appropriate measures and inform Bucharest and Rosmarin of their result.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

⁷⁵ In the cable of 2 October 1940, Tadeusz Kunicki from the Consulate General in Istanbul informed: 'In relation to the efforts of the Government, signalled to us by the Embassy in Bucharest, aimed at obtaining asylum for Polish-Jewish citizens in the British territories, I wish to communicate that there are approx. 100 Jews staying in Turkey, who receive aid and are willing to continue on their way, mainly to Palestine. Besides the asylum permit from the British, their cooperation with the Turkish Government is also required to secure the passage for Jews currently staying in other countries, for, despite our efforts, the Turks do not allow Jews to pass.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

⁷⁶ Henryk Rosmarin.

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*13 September 1940. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in London
about contacts with Jewish organisations*

London, 13 September 1940

*Urgent
Confidential*

To the Ambassador
of the Republic of Poland
London

In response to your letter from 20 August of this year, No. 851.e/137,⁷⁷ I wish to communicate that—while generally sharing the beliefs expressed in it regarding the attitude of the Polish authorities towards organisations grouping Polish-Jewish citizens, and organisations bringing together Jews-foreign nationals or Polish and foreign citizens—I ask you to express in conversation with Dr Schwarzbart the favourable opinion of the Embassy regarding the establishment of the Council of Polish Jews in Great Britain, out of the conviction that the council may be of valuable service to Polish Jews, whether remaining in Poland or staying in England,

⁷⁷ This is a reference to the letter from 26 August 1940, in which the Ambassador in London informed: 'I send you herewith a copy of the letter from the Organisational Committee of Polish Jews of 13 August, requesting that the Ministry give me an instruction in consultation with parties interested in the matter, which under the present circumstances falls beyond the competence of the Embassy, and draw attention of the entire Government. In my opinion, we should abstain from issuing a written response, as it would give better grounds for false interpretations. I would prefer to give an oral answer to Dr Schwarzbart, in keeping with the following guidelines: 1. The Embassy is always willing to maintain contact with Jewish organisations, both the international ones, that is, those bringing together also foreign citizens, as well as the organisations of Polish citizens of Jewish descent. 2. However, the Embassy would not be able to simultaneously hold talks with two Jewish organisations, one comprising solely Polish citizens, the other—predominantly foreign nationals. It would be very difficult to find common ground for such talks, as an organisation of Polish citizens has certain obligations to the Polish Government and certain rights stemming therefrom, whereas an association of foreigners is not bound by any legal relationship with the Polish state; hence, even the political character of the relation thereto must be different. Consequently, talks with a joint council of the two said organisations would always be based on a false premise, detrimental to both parties.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58.

or even in other countries. The Embassy, welcoming the Council's declaration of its willingness to provide the Polish authorities with information and assistance, expresses its belief that the authorities will benefit from that readiness.

Obviously, it is advisable that you explain, in conversation with Mr Schwarzbart, that the issues stemming from the attitude of Polish-Jewish citizens as such towards the Polish authorities should not and cannot be treated within the talks between *the Polish Government* or the Embassy and the Council, but only between the Embassy and the organisation of Jews-Polish citizens, for the reasons stated in your letter.

I share your opinion that as the response to the submitted memorandum Mr Schwarzbart should be given an oral answer.

I have informed the relevant departments in the Polish Government of the text of the memorandum, as well as of your remarks and this reply of mine.⁷⁸

MINISTER
August Zaleski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58

⁷⁸ In the letter from 23 September 1940, the Ambassador in London communicated: 'Referring to your instructions from 13 September, I have the honour to inform you that on Saturday, 21 September, Mr Schwarzbart paid me a visit at the Embassy, while today a delegation of the Inter-Association Council of Polish Jews in Great Britain represented by Messrs I. Schwarzbart, Goldberger, the President of the Association of Polish Jews, and Joskowicz, the President of the Federation of Polish Jews. During Mr Schwarzbart's visit on Saturday, we set out in a friendly exchange the character of the council (in keeping with the Embassy's remarks of 20 August, and your instruction of 13 September). Mr Schwarzbart justified his activity above all with practical reasons. He admitted that the conduct of the Federation of Polish Jews towards Poland and the Polish authorities had not always been appropriate; however, he expressed his belief that it would change in the future, and that he himself would strive to ensure that ... Towards the end of the conversation, Dr Schwarzbart mentioned a propaganda campaign of his organisation, particularly through a series of publications. Mr Schwarzbart intends to submit a detailed plan of that undertaking to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 58.

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*19 September 1940. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to a member of the National Council
about Jewish refugees in Portugal*

London, 19 September 1940

To Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart,
Member of the National Council
of the Republic of Poland
in LONDON

Returning to your letter from 22 August 1940 regarding the situation and the needs of Polish Jews, emigrants, residing in Portugal, I wish to inform you that I requested that the concerns raised by Mr M. KLINGER be investigated; I also issued an ordinance to accelerate and facilitate the processing of reasonable applications.

As far as social care is concerned, the Minister of Social Welfare did everything necessary to provide all emigrants staying in Portugal with maximum care and assistance, within the financial capacity of the Polish Government. Both the diplomatic offices of which I am in charge, the posts and the Committee for Relief established by the Minister of Social Welfare in consultation with me fully guarantee that the care and assistance is provided to all emigrants equally, and I have not found a single Jewish emigrant mistreated because of his origin.

As for the emigration of Jews to Brazil, unfortunately I am not able to help those interested in obtaining the necessary entry visas. The interventions by my Ministry do not guarantee any success. Refusals by the Brazilian Government resulting from a failed intervention would only hinder the individual's intervention, which, as I know, give positive results in individual cases.

Lastly, your informant has raised a rather difficult and complicated issue of the extension of Polish passports. I cannot agree with your view that people holding a Polish passport are classified as Polish citizens. If someone holds a passport that has been expired for a long time, it may have resulted from that person's citizenship having been revoked as per the act of 1 April 1938. Whatever one may say about the application of this law in the past, it is difficult to take the position that all judgments issued on its basis were wrong and can, or should, be annulled by a simple administrative act. The caution of the Polish Legation in Lisbon in these matters has been caused by this state of affairs and law, and not—as presumed by Mr Klinger—by antisemitic attitudes of officials. Beside general considerations, Mr Klinger did not state any actual facts in his letter. Had the allegedly aggrieved

citizens complained to the Ministry, after their cases were rejected in Lisbon, they would certainly have had their claims processed long time ago.

Nevertheless, I wish to assure you that appropriate instructions have been issued to competent foreign offices, and I have particularly stressed that passport applications of people who are able to emigrate are to be treated as urgent.⁷⁹

MINISTER
/–/ August Zaleski

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A.42/239

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*25 September 1940. Letter from the Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Envoy in Mexico City about the obtainment of visas
to South American countries for Polish refugees*

London, 25 September 1940

Referring to the exchange of telegrams on entry visas for Polish refugees from Portugal, Spain and France to neutral countries of America, the Ministry asks that you continue your efforts in this respect with the government to which you are accredited to.

The Ministry wishes to indicate that the Polish Government is unable to arrange mass transit of refugees from Portugal to any of these countries—such as, for instance, Canada or Brazil—due to the difficulties in obtaining money transfers from England, as well as the scarcity of financial resources at its disposal. On the other hand, the Government is obliged to make attempts to evacuate refugees from Portugal as it committed itself in that regard with the Portuguese Government in June of this year. Our continuous inability to evacuate the refugees from Portugal has so far resulted in great difficulties in obtaining Portuguese visas for new groups of refugees from Spain and France. It is therefore also in the interest of the refugees in France and Spain that Portugal be relieved of Polish refugees. The Ministry wishes to mention that a group of refugees from Portugal will be transferred to England, but it will not significantly alleviate the issue of our refugees in the Portuguese territory.

⁷⁹ A copy of the letter was sent to the Consulate General in London.

In view of the above, the Ministry requests that you make every effort to facilitate the entry of our refugees from the above-mentioned countries to Central and South American countries. The most beneficial solution would be for legations of those countries in France, Spain, and Portugal to receive instructions to treat applications for entry visas submitted by Polish citizens favourably. Some of those who will receive a South American visa in this way will go to England and will not take advantage of the opportunity to go to America. The Ministry leaves it to your judgement whether to focus these attempts at the obtainment of a visa quota for our refugees, which was the course of action that has been adopted by the Polish Legation in Rio de Janeiro, which was able to secure a total of 500 visas to Brazil.

The Ministry further indicates that it is possible that the Polish Government will come to the aid of clusters of refugees in American countries should the situation of those refugees absolutely demand it.

The Ministry requests to be informed of the results of your undertakings and that the copies of reports on this matter be sent directly to Lisbon and Madrid.⁸⁰

For the MINISTER
J. Ciechanowski

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 170

⁸⁰ The instruction was also sent to the Envoys in Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile and for the attention of Lisbon. Responding in the letter from 14 October 1940, the Envoy in Mexico City, Mieczysław Marchlewski, communicated: 'As instructed by the Ministry, the Legation addressed the governments of all the countries within its competence with the request to treat the applications for entry visas submitted by Polish refugees favourably. Thus far the only response came from Guatemala (a copy enclosed); regrettably, the response is negative. In individual cases, the Legation has occasionally been able to obtain entry visas; however, so far none of the indicated countries has pledged any greater assistance. All these governments hide behind declarations that they must above all take into consideration Spanish refugees, for that population is the most desirable for racial reasons ... Besides, as regards non-Spanish immigrants, there are concerns that fifth columnists intend to infiltrate into these countries using foreign passports. These considerations resulted in Mexico closing its borders to citizens of European countries other than Spain, and only granting visas in quite extraordinary cases and with the deposit of 100,000 pesos for entry into the region of the capital city, and 50,000—into the province.' *AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 170.*

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4 October 1940. Letter from an Official of the Refugee Section at the MFA to the Counsellor at the Legation in Lisbon on the possibility of granting aid to refugees in South American countries

London, 4 October 1940

Dear Sir,⁸¹

As a follow up to my letter from last week, I wish to offer more context behind our telegram to Lisbon sent on 27 September, concerning refugee matters. Our exhaustive instruction for Envoy Dubicz with regard thereto will be sent soon;⁸² nevertheless, I consider it advisable to clarify our position already.

As I have mentioned, the chances that our Government will organise mass evacuation of refugees from Portugal, for instance to Canada are miniscule. When we considered the problem comprehensively, we were forced to conclude that the Government cannot perform such an action, for it would become very heavily burdened, even before factoring in the problem of money transfers—in itself significant. Should it be done, all refugees, wherever they are currently staying, would have to be supported by the Government. Under such circumstances, I saw it appropriate to dispel the illusions entertained by some refugees in Portugal that the Government would evacuate them en masse and maintain materially until the end of the war; hence, we sent the dispatch of 27 of September, approved of by all decision makers here.

This position does not mean that we will fail to aid refugees in Portugal, nor that we will neglect the matter of relieving the Portuguese territory. On the contrary, I believe that such a clear-cut approach to the matter will help to slowly advance it. First, having learnt that mass evacuation is out of the question, the refugees may undertake successful efforts themselves. We sent instructions to the Legations in Mexico City, Rio, Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile that they take steps to secure the possibility of locating refugees there. Lisbon received a copy. Obviously, at the same time, we are investigating the possibility of supporting refugees in American countries, be it only during the initial period of their stay. We are particularly taking into consideration the funds held by the American Red Cross (\$70 million). Two days ago, the Committee of Ministers dealt with this issue, and the session is scheduled to be continued next week, with specific resolutions to be adopted. For that reason, we are temporarily postponing providing Lisbon with exhaustive and official information until immediately after the above conference has taken place.

⁸¹ The addressee of the letter, Counsellor at the Legation in Lisbon Józef Potocki also served as the Delegate of the Polish Red Cross in Portugal.

⁸² The following document.

A number of refugees should and may be brought here. Admittedly, the English authorities are disinclined to take that step; however, I discussed the matter with Ambassador R.,⁸³ who for his part promised to intercede vigorously with the Foreign Office. Nevertheless, the local English authorities received a request from the Embassy in Lisbon, asking to be granted authorisation to issue 200 visas to England for Polish refugees, allegedly upon request from the Polish Legation. I believe that the intention behind it is precisely to move some of our refugees from Portugal to England. I am afraid that the issue cannot be solved before we here receive a detailed list of names of candidates to be transferred to England because the English authorities are very apprehensive of the fifth column and want to subject every newcomer to strict scrutiny. For our part, we contend that our Legation in Lisbon has already been doing that in consultation with British posts, but I fear that the English authorities will be unwilling to waive their demand.

As for the Jewish refugees in Portugal I wrote about last time, we had asked Ambassador R. to hold talks with the British decision makers aimed at locating that category of refugees within the British territories. We will inform you of the outcome of these talks. Some of these refugees should be able to obtain visas to American countries, for we can see that despite hindrances it has turned out to be possible.

Regarding the departure of our refugees from Portugal to the American countries, I wish to inform you that together with the Ministry of Social Welfare we have been, so far confidentially, urging the Minister of Treasury to finance refugees' departure from Portugal to these countries. This is one of the issues to be decisively addressed during the next week's conference. Thus far, things have been progressing favourably. We are still in need of telegraphic information about the cost of travel for a single person from Lisbon to, say, Rio de Janeiro or Buenos Aires. We are, of course, considering the least expensive travel, perhaps by cargo ships. I hope that the cost of travel on such a ship will range between \$20 and \$50. At least that is what I have been told by some people who have recently arrived from Lisbon. Obviously, a low cost of travel would facilitate a positive solution to the issue.

At the same time, we are sending the report of 9 September by Mr Skowroński from Rio on unloading refugees in Brazil.⁸⁴ Its content will undoubtedly interest

⁸³ Edward Raczyński.

⁸⁴ In the report, the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro, Tadeusz Skowroński, communicated: 'Having learnt of Polish refugees expected to arrive in Brazil, the Legation appealed to Polish Consulates in Brazil and to the most distinguished members of the Polish diaspora to come to the aid of the refugees so that they are taken care of by individual families ... The Legation wishes to indicate that the living conditions in the aforementioned settlements are more than primitive, often reminiscent of similar circumstances in poor Belarusian huts in Polesia, the difference being that the food is ample and healthy throughout. The Legation estimates that 200 orphans and widows may be located in the Polish settlements without incurring any or with only minimal costs; obviously,

you. In light of that report, the situation appears to be even more promising than we could imagined.

I ask you to kindly inform Mr Schimitzek about those issues as he has recently asked me for the information about our intentions. I will write to him to Lisbon at the earliest new opportunity.

My *highest regards* and respect to you,

J. Marlewski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13

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7 October 1940. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Envoy in Lisbon on the possibility to evacuate refugees from Portugal

London, 7 October 1940

CONFIDENTIAL
URGENT

To the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
In Lisbon

Pursuant to the telegram of 27 September,⁸⁵ I would like to convey the following:

Having comprehensively examined the issues of Polish refugees in Portugal, the Government concluded that it is unable to organise mass transportation for

all people who depart must be prepared in advance to the extremely primitive living conditions.' AHP, Kolekcja Tadeusza Skowrońskiego, 422.

⁸⁵ In the said cable, also sent to the Envoy in Madrid, Minister Zaleski stated: 'The Government does not consider it possible to evacuate en masse refugees from Portugal to Canada or to South American countries. The Government will cover the cost of their travel to England, where the refugees would be located outside of London ... Regarding other people, particularly those possessing their own funds, the Government does not object in any way to their attempts to travel to the neutral countries of America. I request that you support the individual requests for visas to those countries at the respective missions in Lisbon.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 225. See also the previous document.

refugees from Portugal to any of the American countries. The main obstacle to the implementation of such a project is, on the one hand, the scarcity of Government funds to support the refugees in American countries and, on the other hand, the inability to obtain from the British authorities a transfer of money from England to the countries concerned.

The Government does acknowledge the commitment you made in June of this year to the Portuguese Government to move our refugees from Portugal, and the Government is and will be striving to effect their evacuation either to England or to other countries. I enclosed a copy of the instruction regarding the matter that I had sent to Polish envoys in the Central and South American countries.

As far as England is concerned, we are making efforts to locate the refugees from Portugal on the so-called billeting, and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland is conducting talks to that end with the British officials. Under these conditions, a certain number of refugees from Portugal who decide to relocate to England (we expect a number of around 200 people) will be able to be placed here. The costs of travel to England for this category of people will be paid by the State Treasury. The Government, via the Embassy, has already commenced efforts with the English authorities to obtain the required entry visas.

With respect to the remaining refugees in the Portuguese territory, if they do not intend to stay there, they should themselves undertake steps to obtain visas to American countries. The information provided by the Polish Envoy in Buenos Aires suggests that Argentina is also ready to accede to individual applications for entry visas submitted by Polish refugees, and the required instructions have been forwarded to the Argentinian Legation in Lisbon. I request that you extend the Legation's support to these individual efforts. I wish to inform you—and ask that you inform the Relief Committee—that the Minister of Treasury agreed to cover the cost of travel to American countries for those refugees who are unable to do so with their own funds. Those who have decided to relocate to American countries are to be at the same time informed that they will not be able to rely on any further assistance from the Government for their upkeep in those countries. The Minister of Treasury demands that the refugees be explicitly informed of that fact. For my part, I believe that our diaspora may come to the aid of a number of refugees in South American countries, as indicated in the report by Envoy Skowroński of 9 September, a copy of which I enclosed (see No. 738/Br./40 of 4 Oct 1940). It is advisable that a list of names of the refugees willing to move to those countries be sent to the Legations in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, and possibly also to Mexico City and Santiago de Chile, so that they can make all the necessary arrangements. Please instruct the Relief Committee to send a list of people opting to leave for American countries, with the estimated cost of their travel.

I gather that the refugees of Jewish origin staying in Portugal constitute a group that must receive special treatment. Generally, I believe that this group, either possessing their own means or able to rely for support on Jewish organisations, has all the more reason to apply to enter American countries. Admittedly, some American countries have introduced entry restrictions on Jewish refugees, I am nevertheless aware of instances of Jewish refugees having been able to obtain the right of entry even to such countries as Brazil.

Acknowledging, however, that the process of relieving Portugal of Jewish refugees under such circumstances must be slow, I instructed the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the British Government to conduct talks with the British decision makers in order to obtain authorisation to locate at least some of the Jewish refugees from Portugal within the British territories, whether in Africa (Kenya, Southern Rhodesia), or America, e.g. in Guiana. I will inform you of the results of the steps taken with the British authorities at the appropriate time.

Finally, I wish to point out that the offer to send children and mothers to the United States submitted by the Polish American Council still stands; that also applies to industrial engineers wishing to go to Canada. I will send you a separate instruction regarding these issues.

Relieving Portugal of our refugees should facilitate the Portuguese authorities' favourable handling of applications for visas to Portugal submitted by our refugees from Spain and France. As for me, I ask you to inform me of any outflow of refugees from Portugal, and any shifts in the composition of that group; with the view of which, the Delegate for refugees in Portugal, Mr S. Schimitzek, could periodically provide me with appropriate reports.⁸⁶

MINISTER
August Zaleski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

⁸⁶ In the report of 8 November 1940, the Government Delegate for refugees in Portugal, Stanisław Schimitzek, informed the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare: 'On the basis of the registration cards completed by refugees in the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Lisbon, the Committee for Refugee Relief has for the third time developed a statistic, which indicates that, as of 21 September, there were 992 refugees holding Polish passports in Portugal, compared with 923 at the beginning of September, and 873 at the beginning of August of this year. Under the local circumstances, the material which we must use as the basis for our statistics cannot be completely reliable. The Legation started to systematically register refugees around mid-July of this year, so refugees who may have left Portugal before that moment have not been included therein. After the commencement of the registration, a part of the refugees—for various reasons—either did not present themselves at all, or only did so after some time; others still filled in

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*14 October 1940. Report by an organisation of Polish Jews in Lisbon
on the aid measures taken by the Government*REPORT

On 10 October, a conference of representatives of Jews from Poland and Jewish emigrants was held in Lisbon.

At this conference, the issue of the reference of the Legation in Lisbon towards Polish citizens of Jewish origin was mainly discussed. The majority of Jews now staying in Portugal are loyal Polish citizens, who fought in the battles for Polish independence and participated in the last war, as well as in the social and economic life of the nation. Most of them had left all their possessions and families in the country in the wake of the German invasion. Many have been blacklisted by the Gestapo, compromised because of their active political and economic involvement against the Third Reich.

They arrived in Lisbon with the hope to receive assistance from the Polish diplomatic post and to find support in their attempts to continue their journey in order to avoid any dangers that they have been exposed to.

However, they ended up completely disappointed. The Envoy has a single answer to all arguments they present to him: 'There is nothing I can do for Jews, you have to fend for yourselves; I did not tell you to come here nor did you ask me whether or not to come.'

Jews encounter difficulties and categorical refusals as regards the extension of their passports, the motivation being that they must have had their citizenship revoked.

the registration cards imprecisely. Lastly, refugees often fail to register with either the Legation or the Committee their departures from Portugal, resulting in the records of people who have left the country having to be supplemented—especially as regards people who do not receive allowances from the Committee—with information obtained from other sources (shipping line offices, police, etc.). Therefore, the data available in such conditions is imprecise; however, it enables us to have an overview of the evolution of refugee movement through Portugal. With the above reservations, I estimate the number of refugees in July of this year at 1,095 people, which was lowered in the first days of August by 222 people. It was a period of increased departures of servicemen and officials summoned to England, and of people with financial means and visas, received usually before their arrival in Portugal, to one of the overseas countries. That way, the number of refugees had fallen to 873 by early August. That month saw 154 people leave and 205 arrive; hence, the headcount stood at 923 people at the beginning of September. By the latter half of October, another 141 people left and 210 people arrived. Thus, the number of refugees including their families who were staying in Portugal stood at 992 people.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13.

At the same time Roman Catholic Poles enjoy all due elements of protection and provision, when the Legation without any reservations issues letters of recommendation to them, which enable them to obtain visas to overseas countries, and the Legation itself arranges for them visas to Brazil, the Polish Jews are left by the Legation to their own devices, which results in them falling prey to the so-called 'fixers' and are only able to get a visa to Brazil for hundreds of dollars (namely \$650). The pretext that Brazilian authorities differentiate between people of different religions is merely the figment of the Polish diplomatic post in Lisbon.

There are 150 Polish Jews detained in Portuguese prisons for illegally crossing the border at the time of the armistice in France; nobody cares for them, and the Legation has not even deemed it appropriate—merely for the sake of form and keeping appearances—to take an interest in their fates. The Envoy responds to appeals submitted by their not-imprisoned families and friends by saying in jest that they are doing well there and are now perfectly safe.

Belgian and Latvian Jews, minimal numbers of whom had been imprisoned for the same reason, were quickly released owing to the interventions of their consulates.

Representatives of the official diplomatic posts of Belgium, the Netherlands, France do not differentiate between their citizens, arranging with all interest and benevolence all the necessary formalities and visas for their citizens, enabling them to travel to Brazil and other overseas countries. They all enjoy equal rights, whether Jews or Christians, even the naturalised people. No one encounters any pretext that the Brazilian Consulate grants visas to Christians and does not grant visas to Jews. Should there be any particular hindrances against Polish Jews in the Brazilian Consulate in Lisbon, these have been instigated by the Polish Legation in Lisbon. Evidence was presented that there is an agreement between the Brazilian Consulate and the Legation stipulating that the Legation itself arranges everything with the Consulate for non-Jewish Poles, which entails that any Polish citizen who individually applies to the Brazilian Consulate for a visa is a Jew—unprotected by the Legation, resulting in him either being refused a visa, or falling prey to those 'fixers' who, having been paid, arrange a visa without problems.

An unofficial representative of the Czechs (who do not have an official diplomatic post here) was able to obtain entry permits to the United States for hundreds of his compatriots, both Christians and Jews.

Having detailed the above particulars, the conference concluded, therefore, that Polish Jews in Portugal had found themselves in a terrible plight, without any protection from the Legation, abandoned to their own fate.

Hence, the conference decided to appeal to the English and US Governments that they provide their protection to the approximately 2,000 Polish Jews staying in Portugal—and to appoint an official in charge of the matters of the Polish

Jews—who [Jews] in spite of having fulfilled all their civic obligations and contrary to the declaration of equal treatment of all Polish citizens made by the Government of General Sikorski, found themselves pariahs, deprived of any moral protection from the Polish Legation in Lisbon, in line with the agenda of most reactionary and antisemitic governments.

Mr Sliwowski, Secretary-General of the Union of Polish Jews in France, called those gathered at the conference to above all petition to the Polish Government, that is, to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland in London, not entertaining doubts that as soon as the case is presented, appropriate instructions will be issued with the purpose of immediately changing the existing situation.⁸⁷ He further emphasised that the relevant decision makers are probably fully aware of the significance of the present moment and of the role that Polish Jews, dispersed in all parts of the world, may play as a propaganda factor for the Polish interests.

The proposal was passed; therefore, the above memorandum will be addressed to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland in London, the answer of which is to be expected before other measures are undertaken.⁸⁸

Lisbon, 14 October 1940

IPMS, Poselstwo Lizbona, A.47/5

⁸⁷ On 10 October 1940, the Envoy in Lisbon was also presented a memorandum of the Lisbon Committee of Refugees—Polish Jews from France and Belgium (one of its members being Józef Sliwowski), in which, among other things, the following was stated: ‘Among the several thousand of Polish Jews who have been able to reach Portugal, there are several people who actively participated in the activity of the Committee of Associations of Polish Jews, and who are compromised with the Germans due to their involvement therein. They must be assisted in every way to depart to other overseas countries, where they would be able to continue their efforts for Poland and its allies. In order to carry that out in practice, the delegates request that you contact the Polish diplomatic posts in Latin America or in South Africa by telegraph, according to your best knowledge, to obtain via their intervention with the local authorities the entry visas for those people. The list of people will be developed in conjunction by you and the delegates. In order to put an end to the circulated rumours that Poles of Jewish origin do not find adequate protection from the Legation in Lisbon and that the attitude towards them is downright hostile, the delegates express their readiness to facilitate the establishment of contact and to simplify certain procedures of agreement. We have also received claims of unfair treatment of citizens because of their origin and religious beliefs from the Commission for Polish Relief. We ask the permission to delegate a representative to cooperate with this Civic Committee for Relief. Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 12.

⁸⁸ See doc. 84.

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*23 October 1940. Letter from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
to the MFA: information of the Government Delegate for refugees in Romania
on the situation of people of Jewish descent*

London, 23 October 1940

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

LONDON

Minister Arciszewski has communicated in the telegram No. 299 that 'hundreds of Jews demand to be evacuated, but all roads are closed for them.' The telegram suggests that the key difficulty lies in Jews being denied Turkish visas.⁸⁹ There is an apprehension that a failure to evacuate Polish-Jewish citizens from Romania, coupled with the impossibility of sending Jewish refugees to Brazil, caused by other reasons, also coupled with the exclusion of Jewish children and mothers from leaving for America, may be presented as deliberate, which may cause negative sentiments in some areas, especially American ones. Therefore, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare⁹⁰ considers it necessary to initiate steps to facilitate the evacuation of hundreds of Polish-Jewish citizens from Romania. As an attempt to obtain for them a residence permit in Palestine may raise major objections of the English authorities, and even if such a permit is granted, the problem with Turkish transit visas would not be removed—we must consider whether it would be possible to send those Jewish refugees to India by sea. In light of the burdens already undertaken by the State Treasury, charging it even further would be very difficult. Therefore, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare recommends sending the following telegram to Minister Arciszewski:

'Please report whether Jews demanding to be evacuated from Romania would be willing to depart to India and whether they have adequate funds to cover the costs of travel and sustenance.'

MINISTER
Stańczyk

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516

⁸⁹ In a cable of 9 October 1940, the Ambassador in Ankara, Michał Sokolnicki, informed the Embassy in Bucharest: 'The local transit restrictions against Jews have been tightened by the introduction of a racial instead of a religious criterion. In light of that, I am willing to make efforts to obtain transit for a specified number of Jews-Polish citizens on condition that they possess visas to a country neighbouring with Turkey, and that each group covers the cost of a Turkish guard. I ask you to inform me of the number and to accept the above conditions.' IJPA, Archiwum Michała Sokolnickiego, 91/13, MS.

⁹⁰ In October 1940, the Ministry of Social Welfare was transformed into the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Jan Stańczyk continued to fulfil the function of minister (until 1944).

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*3 November 1940. Speech by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
on the Polish-Jewish relations*Address by Minister Stańczyk at the Academy of Polish Jewry
on 3 Nov 1940

Honourable Gentlemen,

You have gathered here, in London, away from the country, in extraordinary circumstances, to express the profound devotion that Polish citizens of Jewish descent have for Poland, our common Homeland, so unfortunate currently.

I have been given the honour of speaking to you on behalf of the Polish Government. There can be no doubt that all of us together, regardless of our nationality, religion or political and social beliefs, we share a single desire—to overcome the enemies who invaded our country, not only destroying the liberty and well-being of its citizens, but currently oppressing them in a barbaric manner, unheard of in the history of mankind.

We have all carried away from Poland the images of burning towns and villages, murdered children, women, and the elderly. All of us still have before our soul's eyes the tormented Poland, a nation persecuted in all its social and religious strata. The symbol of the invaders' hatred of Poland and its inhabitants are the patches of cloth that identify Jews and Poles, intended to humiliate them in the eyes of the Hitlerite tyrants. For us, these patches are an honourable distinction. They indicate that together we are fighting and suffering for the loftiest ideals that are and will remain in the hearts and minds of mankind.

There is no doubt that this terrifying war has its origin in totalitarianism with its barbaric doctrine of national and racial hatred. As long as the adherents to that barbaric doctrine are not vanquished—humanity shall not be able to find peace, nor shall the suffering countries be liberated.

Fighting against that doctrine and its followers, we are not only fighting to liberate our Homeland, but also for the freedom of all oppressed people and nations.

I do not wish at this solemn occasion to pass in silence over the fact that also in Poland there were people who had been deceived by the pernicious slogans of totalitarianism, racism, and antisemitism. I wish to stress with pride, however, that these slogans never came to be the motto for the Polish society, that these always remained alien to its psyche.

The current Government, in accordance with the nation's psyche and the declarations it has made thus far, opposes these slogans.

The Polish nation has remained faithful to its most beautiful traditions of liberty, symbolised by the words: 'For our freedom and yours.'

We do not know how long this war will last, but I do know that there are many hardships still ahead of us, and that our nation over there, in the country, and the entire Polish population has experienced a period of even more cruel persecution. We will endure this road of ordeals and our unfortunate nation will persevere in the battle for liberation; it will endure all hardships that the merciless enemy employs against us.

I know that the enemy will be vanquished, and that Poland will be free.

The President of the Republic of Poland as well as the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General Sikorski have in several declarations expressed the ideas in the name of which we are fighting to liberate our country, and according to what principles we want to later organise the social and political life of the liberated Poland.

I want to assure you once again on behalf of the Polish Government that nothing, Ladies and Gentlemen, will lead us astray from democratic principles, which guarantee to every citizen of the future Poland equal civic, political and social rights.

As Polish citizens, Jews will be equal in their duties and rights in the liberated Poland with Polish society. The cultivation of their culture, religion and customs will be unhindered. It will not only be guaranteed by the laws of the state, but also by mutual sacrifices in the struggle for its liberation and mutual suffering in this most tragic time of adversity.

Fighting in the Polish Army, alongside their Polish brothers in Arms, Jews-Polish citizens are winning for themselves also in that way an indelible right to work in peace and achieve well-being and happiness in the liberated Homeland, towards which we are heading through our sacrifices and sufferings, and which we will certainly reach.

IPMS, Akta Rady Narodowej RP i Rady RP, A.5/21 (previously published)

73

*18 November 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Athens
on Jewish refugees in Greece*

Mr Guenther, ATHENS
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 18 NOV 1940
RECEIVED ON 18 NOV 1940

No. 110

In the recent weeks, several Polish-Jewish families holding illegally obtained Greek visas have arrived in Athens. The total number of Jews in the Polish settlement stands at 70. In Greece, they have been treated as an undesirable social element, especially since the Italian invasion;⁹¹ besides, they compromise the genuinely Polish settlement even politically, being an uncertain element. We have attempted to direct them to Palestine via the English Legation, but visas thereto depend on the immigration quota.

Under these circumstances, it is advisable to put pressure on the British Government towards treating such Jews as refugees, not as immigrants, granting them refugee visas and creating special living conditions for them in Palestine, be it in concentration camps. Locating refugees that way could solve the issue of more numerous groups of refugees of that category in the Balkans, whereas in the situation of war—a great relief for the Legation in Greece, at it is currently responsible for material and moral protection of an alien and uncertain element. Should the case have a positive outcome, please effect a concurrent instruction to the Palestinian authorities and to the English Legation in Athens.⁹²

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516

⁹¹ This is a reference to the Italian aggression against Greece on 28 October 1940.

⁹² In the letter from 21 November 1940, the Secretary-General at the MFA, Jan Ciechanowski, communicated to the Ambassador in London: 'In reference to the telegram of the Polish Envoy in Athens, No. 110, concerning a group of 70 Polish Jews in Greece, I request that you conduct talks with the Foreign Office in order to clarify where these refugees could be placed.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

74

*19 November 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Belgrade
to the Legation in Budapest on the Jewish refugees*

Belgrade, 19 November 1940
Received at 12.30 p.m., 20 Nov

Mr Dębicki to the Legation

Recently, there has been an illegal influx of Polish-Jewish citizens from Hungary, transferred by a private operation with the help of the Hungarian authorities. As their departure from here is out of the question due to the restrictions adopted by all countries, there is a possibility that most of them will join Polish refugees and become a financial burden for the Polish Government. Moreover, such an influx may change the favourable attitude of Yugoslavia towards Polish refugees, because of the local antisemitic regulations. Wishing to avoid a potential incoming wave, even from Poland, should the information of the subsistence provided here spread, I refuse to support them financially, granting them instead consular assistance. I will make a request to the local Jewish organisations to provide aid for the 20 people who have already arrived here.

Sent to: London, Bucharest

IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/18 (previously published)

75

*[After 20 November 1940]. Unsigned note
on the situation of Jews in the territories occupied by Germany*Jewish matters

(in the period of 15 Oct–20 Nov 1940)⁹³

The situation of Jews both in the General Government and in the territories annexed by the Reich has generally not changed. Officially, a series of regulations

⁹³ The note was probably prepared on the basis of the materials of the Government Delegation for Poland. Once Poland was occupied by Germany and the Soviet Union, the Underground State was established as a set of legal, organisational and civic structures erected to ensure the continuous functioning of the Polish state within its own pre-war borders. The Underground State was comprised of military structures, with the most significant one being the Union of Armed Struggle (subsequently transformed into the

were issued which are to indicate that Jews are treated as the worst social element, but these are not enforced in practice. That results in their living conditions being better than those of the Polish population. The displacement of all Jews from Cracow ended with most of them staying, and even some who did leave the city are now returning. In Warsaw, a special Jewish district was established with Jews being instructed to move there by 1 Nov of this year, but the term was postponed to 15 Nov, a concession never granted by the German authorities in the case of regulations applying to Poles. On 17 Nov, the territory was closed. Jews from other districts who had not moved there by that point were forced out of their apartments and shops and prohibited from taking their possessions. The apartments and shops were then sealed off. Strong stations of German gendarmerie do not allow the Jewish populace to enter the city centre (posts situated at street mouths, not walled up for transportation reasons). No goods are to be carried into the Jewish district (particularly no food). Jews got immense amounts of goods into the Jewish district. They were buying up everything, prices were rising extremely high, particularly the prices of food products. There is a risk that because of that, a range of products may disappear much sooner in Warsaw.

Jews who had been displaced from Germany to Poland before the war enjoy special treatment from the occupiers. They keep to themselves, speak only pure German, and are handled much better than Polish Jews, while many of them keep in contact with the Germans and work for the Gestapo. Polish Jews also render their services to that institution. However, despite the aforementioned considerations, the situation of Jews under German occupation is difficult, and they, too, painfully experience terror. Along the current border with the Soviets, the occupiers established a series of camps in which only Jews are detained; they have their temperature measured daily and those with more than 38°C are shot to avoid the plague. They usually work digging drainage canals; they are treated and fed badly, which results in diseases and a high mortality rate. Jews also continue to work in labour battalions and are captured to perform fortification works. The latter tasks prove to be the harshest for Jews because the occupiers, to protect secrecy, often shoot entire groups employed to work on particularly important structures.

The attitude of Jews towards Poles is decisively hostile. Jews quite intensively cooperate with the Gestapo, and that cooperation is directed above all against the Polish nation. Communist propaganda spreads among Jews, and it is also obviously directed against Polish interests. In line with the guidelines of the communist

Home Army), as well as civil structures, namely the Polish Consultative Committee (subsequently transformed into the Home Political Representation and later into the Council of National Unity). In addition, the Polish Prime Minister in Exile appointed a Government Delegate for Poland, whose task was to organise the Government Delegation for Poland as part of the underground state administration.

party, labour battalions are organised in such a manner that they should be able to assume the functions of the communist militia at a suitable moment.

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.5/1

76

*28 November 1940. Letter from an Official of the Refugee Section at the MFA
to the First Secretary at the Embassy in London
on Jewish refugees*

London, 28 November 1940

A. BALIŃSKI
First Secretary at the Embassy
of the Republic of Poland
in London

Dear Colleague,

In reference to our telephone conversation, please find below the numbers of Jewish refugees in the respective territories:

1. Portugal—560
2. Romania—400
3. Greece—70
4. Yugoslavia—20

Ambassador Roger Raczyński communicated several weeks ago from Bucharest that the sum total of Polish Jews-refugees in the Balkan countries stands at 2,000 people. A certain number, albeit reportedly a minor one, of approx. 100 people, is in Turkey. Others may have boarded a ship named 'Patria,' which reached Haifa last week.

Ambassador Romer in Tokyo signals that many Jewish refugees from Poland have been arriving in the Far East. He expects their influx to soon soar to approx. 2,000 people. Unable to locate them in Japan or China, he would like to disperse them in the British territories.

Best regards,

/-/ J. Marlewski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516

77

*2 December 1940. Note by Roman Przedpełski
on a group of Jewish refugees who arrived in Canada*

Vancouver, 2 December 1940

CONFIDENTIAL

Consulate General of the Republic of Poland
in Ottawa

A group of Polish-Jewish citizens⁹⁴

Regarding a group of Polish-Jewish citizens, comprising of 21 people, who arrived in Vancouver on 16 November of this year, I wish to declare that members of that group, as well as a large number of Polish citizens, also Jews, heading to the United States, conducted themselves exemplarily during their journey from Yokohama to Vancouver. There were no complaints against the Polish authorities, no criticisms, instead there was pride that Poland had been able to persevere as long as it had and that it had not sued for peace.

I was most impressed by the fact that most of them, with the exception of the rabbis and some third-class travellers, spoke Polish among themselves. Whereas in the evenings, young people were singing Polish songs.

Members of that group of arrivals to Canada are predominantly of the affluent class—industrialists, owners of numerous properties in Warsaw, Cracow, Łódź, etc. They are thinking about how to return to the country and to their estates as soon as possible.

Of the most constructive type of people are the Pajewski family. Mr Pajewski is a relatively young man (35); he comes from Warsaw, where he owned a large trade office and was the general representative of the chemical concern Radocha. He is a good Pole, a patriot, and a person brought up within the Polish culture. It was he who originated the initiative to send a dispatch from the group to the Polish authorities in Canada. Mr Pajewski had his dispatch answered. Consul Brown decided to take care of the group; however, Mr Pajewski did not receive any detailed information from the immigration authorities.

The said group comprised the Lax family (15 people), the Pajewski family (4 people), and Messers Pinkusiewicz and Denger. The latter two have already left

⁹⁴ The note was forwarded on 17 December by Consul General in Ottawa Wiktor Podoski to the Consulate in Montreal, with the following information in a covering letter: 'The Consulate General encloses an extract from a letter by Mr Roman Przedpełski, former Delegate of the National Export Institute in Shanghai and an employee of our Legation in that city, on a group of Polish-Jewish citizens who on 16 Nov arrived in Vancouver.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

for Montreal. The Lax family has tickets to Cuba; besides, they are listed in the 'quota' and expect to be moving to the United States soon. The worst situation is that of the Pajewski family. They have a three-months visa to Chile. However, instead of going there, they would prefer to stay in Canada. The reason behind it is that they have family here—the Roths from Warsaw, who came here 10 months ago with a permit.

The Pajewski family approached Consul Brown about the matter, and he promised to send their application, accompanied by his private letter to Mr MacKenzie King, to Ottawa, to the Canadian authorities. At the same time, Mr Brown asked me, as the person closest to the Pajewski family, to seek the support of the Consul General in Ottawa for their application to the Canadian authorities. Enclosed you will find copies of the application and of the letters to the Canadian authorities;⁹⁵ I wish to further indicate that the family is worthy of our support.

The Pajewski family are financially independent, and they additionally have approx. \$10,000 in New York. Furthermore, the previously mentioned Roth family is extremely wealthy, even by Canadian standards. The oldest of the Roths—they are three brothers—used to be the General Director for Europe of the IG Farben-Industrie conglomerate, with its headquarters in Switzerland. Before the war, he arrived in Canada on invitation from the Canadian Government and it was he who managed to obtain permits for his brothers. His address is: M. Roth, 1469, Drummond Str, Montreal, Ont.

/-/ R. Przedpełski

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518*

78

5 December 1940. Cable from the Envoy in Budapest to the Legation in Athens on the evacuation of Jewish refugees to Palestine

Budapest, 5 December 1940. Sent at 6 p.m.

No. 13. Mr Orłowski to Athens
Receptus cable No. 14⁹⁶

Having examined the matter, I declare it absolutely impossible that any of the youth, arriving in very limited numbers from Poland and from the POW camps,

⁹⁵ There are no attachments.

⁹⁶ In the cable no. 14 of 3 December 1940, the Envoy in Athens Władysław Schwarzburg-Günther informed: 'To our [representative?] in Thessaloniki the youth arriving in subsequent transports—who had been able to escape from Germany, Switzerland and Poland—complained of the lack of moral and financial protection in Budapest and Belgrade, where they were allegedly told that they should not have had come. I consider it my duty to communicate the above.' IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/18.

had been told that they should not have come. Arrivals are granted complete protection and given priority for evacuation. Out of our scope, however, and with the assistance from the Hungarian authorities, Polish-Jewish citizens are being smuggled to Palestine.⁹⁷ I am aware of the fact that the Jews for whom we have not been able to obtain Palestinian or Turkish visas, and who we have been trying to prevent from leaving, expressed their dissatisfaction with such an 'evacuation.'

Sent to: Athens, for the attention of Belgrade (No. 35)

IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/18 (previously published)

79

*9 December 1940. Letter from the Deputy Minister of Labour
and Social Welfare to the MFA
on providing aid to Jewish refugees in Turkey*

9 December 1940

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
IN LONDON

The Representation of Polish Jewry (Dr I. Schwarzbart) asked the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare for material support and help in evacuating 80 Polish Jews staying in Turkey.

According to a report by the Polish Consul in Istanbul we received some time ago, Polish Jews staying in Turkey tend to have sufficient means of subsistence. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare deems it necessary to request that the Consul extend material aid to those who do not have their own funds, and it therefore asks the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send a telegram to the Consul General in Istanbul, instructing him to grant material aid to all Jews-Polish citizens who do not have means of upkeep of their own.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare wishes to indicate that in December it transferred the sum of 14,000 Turkish pounds to the Consul General in Istanbul for the aid of refugees in Turkey.

⁹⁷ In the cable of 28 December 1940, the Consulate General in Istanbul informed the Legation in Budapest: 'On 26 December Platoon Officer Cadet Franciszek Murias, along with others who did not want to wait their regular turn, paid Grzybowski 15 pengő each to get across the border. It is suspected that the illegal transit of Jews has been performed with the knowledge of Pałamarczyk.' *IJPA, Archiwum Leona Orłowskiego, 68/18.*

At the same time, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that steps be taken to obtain entry permits to British territories for that group of people.⁹⁸

UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
Karol Popiel

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516

80

12 December 1940. Report by the Envoy in Tehran on Jewish refugees who arrived in Iran

TEHRAN, 12 December 1940

To the Minister of the Foreign Affairs
in London

Approximately 60 Polish citizens of the Mosaic confession, who had found themselves in Lithuania as war refugees, were helped by the British consuls who granted them entry visas to Palestine and transit visas to Iraq. Later, with the assistance of the Soviet 'Inturist' and the Iranian 'Irantur' travel offices they obtained Soviet entry visas and Persian transit visas, the latter exclusively owing to currency scheming, for Iran in principle refuses to issue visas to Jews, as our Legation has been directly informed during several respective interventions. The first group of these refugees ended up in Tehran and are currently unable to continue their journey, as Iraq disinclined to allow their transit, claiming that their visas are invalid. Accordingly, I have carried out an appropriate intervention with the local Chargé d'Affaires of Iraq, and sent a letter to the English Envoy, asking both to tackle the issue rapidly in Baghdad. You will find copies of both documents enclosed;⁹⁹ additionally, I wish to state that the transit visas to Iraq issued by English consuls are in fact valid, and that their issuance was perfectly legal. I was

⁹⁸ In the cable of 17 December 1940, the Minister of Foreign Affairs instructed Consul General in Istanbul Wojciech Rychlewicz: 'We are making efforts to obtain entry visas to British territories for Jewish refugees. Barlas sent a telegram to Schwarzbart saying that Jewish refugees were not provided material support by the Consulate. In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare, I request that you provide material assistance for the Jewish refugees who do not have means of their own.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

⁹⁹ Not included in this publication.

also able to confirm that fact with the local English Envoy, who told me that he had been informed on that matter and that he fully endorsed my firm intervention with the Iraqi authorities; however, he does not consider it possible for the English authorities in Iraq to exert pressure on the Iraqi Government because it does not align with the interests of Great Britain, considering the strained relations between Jews and Arabs. Finally, he told me he contacted the Turkish Ambassador about the issue in order to find another route to relocate those people to Palestine, and he does not think my further interventions on the matter advisable.

Thus far, all interested parties have presented themselves in the Legation of the Republic of Poland, although, being financially independent, they did not request material aid. Some of them engaged in efforts to possibly exchange their entry visas to Palestine for entry visas to other British Dominions.¹⁰⁰

Jan Karszo-Siedlewski
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 525

81

*21 December 1940. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Embassy in Ankara regarding granting aid to refugees*

To Polmission ANKARA,

For the attention of BELGRADE, BUDAPEST, ISTANBUL, JERUSALEM
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED ON 23 DEC 1940

Receptus 101 *Ankara*¹⁰¹

Ad. III. It is the duty and the task of the diplomatic offices of the Republic of Poland to counteract the panic among refugees and their tendency to evacuate. For its part, the Government would prefer the refugees to remain in their current

¹⁰⁰ See. doc. 100.

¹⁰¹ In the cable no. 101 of 17 December 1940, the Ambassador in Ankara, Michał Sokolnicki, informed: 'I. The sea route Istanbul-Suez is yet unavailable; the cost of the land and sea route from Istanbul via Basra to Bombay no less than £25 per person. II. In view of the above, the relocation to India should be limited to 1) a small number of people or groups particularly at risk and unable to be placed anywhere else, 2) Jews emigrating

places of stay. The motions to evacuate are made by offices under their own responsibility. The Government has been making efforts to obtain asylum in the British territories from the British authorities. I must stress that the British Government receives our motions with unwillingness. From London, we have no way to influence the composition of groups intended for evacuation. As regards the refugees in Yugoslavia, it has been decided that only those politically threatened are to be evacuated. Regarding the families of the servicemen *who serve* here and in Egypt, these have been included in the category to be evacuated, especially that they receive their due provisions.

Ad. IV. I requested twice already the list of names of refugees from the Consulate in Cyprus. Until I receive it together with the information as to their material circumstances, it will be difficult to consider relocating any number of them to India. Regarding Jews, I am, together with the Minister of Social Welfare, of the opinion that they should be evacuated to India at their own expense.

Sent to: Ankara, for the attention of Belgrade, Budapest, Istanbul

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 224 (previously published)

82

30 December 1940. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Legation in Madrid: instruction for the Director General of the Polish Bureaux in France on transferring funds to Jewish refugees

from London, 493 of 30 Dec

Refero 439. To Zabiełło¹⁰²

Comporel asked the Government for permission for Stephens to disburse 2 million francs by way of aid for Polish-Jewish refugees. We have agreed to that,

permanently and financed by their own committees. III. I suggest that the Government should oppose the manifestations of unfounded panic and the refugee hysteria; a stay in poor conditions in Yugoslavia will be much better than a terrible journey (third class, deck) and the severe climate, while the notion of political threat is overused and treated carelessly ... IV. The final extra-quota group from Romania has already arrived in Palestine; I would, however, consider it advisable, if possible, to send away from Cyprus and Palestine some refugees with their own funds or Jews by sea route to India; that would free up space for additional quotas, which should, nevertheless, always be reduced to a reasonable minimum.' IJPA, Archiwum Michała Sokolnickiego, 91/14, MS.

¹⁰² In the cable no. 439, Minister Zaleski communicated: 'Representatives of Jewish organisations claim there allegedly are approx. 6–7 thousand Polish Jews deprived of

requesting that the payment of the sum be strictly arranged with you. It shall be left to your judgement whether the aid should be paid out by the Polish Red Cross or directly to the organisation providing assistance to Jewish refugees. According to the Ministry of Social Welfare, the aid should be first of all distributed among the Polish Jews who have arrived in France since the beginning of the war.¹⁰³

Zaleski

IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.53/1

83

*31 December 1940. Note by the Presidium of the Council of Ministers
with a report by a Major in the Polish Army
on the situation in occupied Poland (extracts)*

Situation in Warsaw and in the General Government

The report below was prepared by Major D.,¹⁰⁴ who recently, already under the occupation, has been employed in the Municipality of Warsaw. Besides, he cooperated with one of the Polish organisations. Despite that, however, not all

protection in the unoccupied zone in France, as Jewish charity organisations had to either suspend or limit their operations. Jews request that the Polish Red Cross extend its assistance to the Jewish population in France. I ask you to investigate the matter and submit a proposal.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 223.

¹⁰³ In another cable, of 8 February 1941, the Minister of Foreign Affairs communicated: 'In the telegram No. 493 of 30 Dec via Madrid and later by letter, I informed you of the permission to allocate the sum of 2 million French francs of the amount held by Stephens to the aid for Jewish refugees in the unoccupied zone of France ... Regarding the instructions to donate the entire remaining amount of the American Red Cross, the local representative of the Comptoir motivates it with the project to move Stephens to Belgium; however, the American Red Cross would continue to disburse the same monthly amounts to you. We recommended that Stephens pays out to you the remaining amount providing his departure is intended to last long.' IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.53/1. Responding in the cable of 19 March 1941, Director Zabiełło informed: 'Jews are included in the aid given by the Red Cross in a campaign of individual aid in civilian and military camps in equal measure as the Poles ... there is a total of 1,800 people benefiting. In spite of the reservations of the French authorities, we have received a number of Jews to our shelters. The aid is not provided to Jews who do not have certified Polish citizenship, including many from Belgium. They, however, receive the help from their own Belgian and French organisations.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

¹⁰⁴ It proved impossible to ascertain the identity of the author of the document. See doc. 91.

details of this report are congruent with the data gathered from other sources. Therefore, the report below should be treated as one of a number of contributions, and not as a synthesis.

A report of 14 months under the German occupation in Warsaw. Prepared during the transit through Turkey by Major D., recently a commander of a battalion of sappers, who left Poland towards the end of October 1940.

...¹⁰⁵

VII. RELATIONS BETWEEN NATIONALITIES

1. Poles' attitude towards Jews and contrariwise

What the occupiers have been able to accomplish in regard to the fight against Jews is beyond the wildest dreams of the fiercest antisemites. Perhaps only the fear that after the victory of the democratic countries this whole intricate structure may easily collapse like a house of cards keeps the most reactionary antisemites awake even today. A lack of stability can be sensed by our antisemites in certain steps taken by the Germans. Among themselves, many Poles express their satisfaction at Jews being removed from the city, or rather in cities, from Polish districts, institutions, liberal professions, industry and trade; however, they never allow themselves to manifest it outwardly in any form. For those people are disgusted with the way that these things have been carried out. The characteristic trait of these undertakings is human suffering, therefore they actually show their quiet compassion for Jews and, where possible, help them, or at least try not to further complicate their already difficult situation. (These things are best observed in Polish institutions, and in trade).

Some Poles openly show their positive attitude towards Jews.

2. Occupiers' attitude towards the Jewish minority and contrariwise

Regarding the Jewish matter, the occupiers are implementing their old programme, the one they have scrupulously tried at home. They encountered two additional difficulties here—one: the multitude of Jews in Poland, the other: the fear that mass displacement during an outbreak of typhus may prove disastrous for the military and for civilians. That is the sole reason why they were dragging out the matter—that was to be solved at once—for an entire year. Germans have constantly overestimated the risk of typhus in Poland. Hence, a series of drastic sanitary measures, such as compulsory vaccinations, quarantines, delousing, baths, etc. Even today, though typhus has already subsided in Poland, across the outbound routes crossing the Jewish quarters and the old town there are signs hung that say: 'typhus-prone area; Germans must not stop, they may only pass through.' For those reasons, even though the establishment of the ghetto had been decided, and the

¹⁰⁵ Passages unrelated to Jewish matters were omitted.

walls across the streets separating the Jewish district were built a long time ago, it was only after a precise statistic was established both as regards typhus patients and Jewish residents in the respective districts of Warsaw that the Germans finally decided to create the ghetto, which incidentally was becoming an urgent matter due to the need to set up the 'German district.'

I will not consider here at length the commonly known regulations, according to which all Jews are obliged to wear armbands with the star of Zion, whereas all Jewish enterprises, such as shops, medical and technical offices, etc., have been forced to place the same star in a visible spot. I do want to mention, however, that according to the said ordinance only those with two or more grandparents belonging to the Jewish community were considered to be Jews.

Meanwhile, it has been recently announced in the journal of ordinances that one is considered to be a Jew in legal terms if one has three grandparents who belong or belonged to the Jewish community, whereas mixed-ancestry Jews are those who have two such grandparents. Furthermore, it was stated that the regulations on the property of Jews do not pertain to mixed-ancestry Jews unless explicitly stipulated otherwise.

All Jewish property, that is, first and foremost their enterprises and real estate, was entrusted to the administration of trustees, predominantly Germans. Thus, in some enterprises silent Jewish-German joint operations emerged.

Every Jew was forced to perform compulsory unpaid labour for the state (3 times a week if I am not mistaken). The execution of that ordinance was entrusted to Jewish Communities which, on every demand, provide—for instance—in Warsaw several thousand people, usually from among the poor and the unemployed, for the more affluent people, and even quite impoverished Jewish artisans, that is, tailors, cobblers, etc., to say nothing of doctors, engineers, lawyers, etc., try to buy their way out of that labour. They pay to the community a daily wage equal to that paid by the community to those who attend the compulsory works in their place. Jews set off to that labour alone, every morning, marching in units with shovels in their hands. If the workplace happens to be outside of Warsaw, German trucks await them in a specified place, where they are also returned after work. Currently, works of that sort occur rather smoothly. Initially, when the numbers in such units were diminishing along the way, they were instantly supplemented in the streets with members of the Jewish intelligentsia, rushing to their work. Thus, a doctor could end up performing earthworks instead of a surgery. Now, such things almost do not occur any longer.

Apart from that, by the decree of the German authorities some four or five months ago, the municipality of Warsaw prepared a record of exactly several hundred thousand Jewish artisans according to their specific specialties (tailors, hatters, saddlers, furriers, cobblers, carpenters, electro-technicians, etc.), who are

now also used on every demand of the German authorities to work either locally or even away.

The method of work is always the same: an ordinance is issued by the authorities to the municipality, which executes the order with the Jewish community as the intermediary; the elder of the Jewish community is now a frequent visitor in the municipality of Warsaw, and he is received out of any queue order.

Anything that could be taken away from the Jews, has been taken away already. Initially, all their schools were closed. They were prohibited from travelling by railway, walking in certain districts, streets, or even sides of streets. One could appropriate their furniture, and later their apartments in any non-Jewish district. (At present, when there are no more Jewish items to be taken, one may take office equipment and home appliances for German institutions and apartments from the apartments of Poles). They are strictly prohibited from going out into streets after dark in the entire territory of the General Government, including during journeys. Since the last visit in Warsaw of Governor-General Frank, the curfew for Poles was shifted from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., but at the same time it was explained that due to the establishment of the ghetto, Jews are allowed to remain in the city only until 7 p.m., whereas in the ghetto until 8 p.m. Jewish doctors cannot treat non-Jews. In mid-October, special trams for Jews were introduced. These trams have a yellow sign on the roof of the first car. There are also mixed trams: the front car for Poles, the rear one for Jews. These have a white and yellow sign. It happens that there are terrible crowds in the first car, while in the other—a single Jew. But there is a series of tram lines that Jews are not allowed to use at all. In the suburban railway, special cars for Jews were also introduced.

The establishment of the ghetto in Warsaw will completely elevate the density in the already heavily overcrowded Jewish quarter. The misery and poverty of that district—according to what the doctors say—is beyond words.

I do not know how the removal of Jews from Cracow proceeded; however, a trustworthy person, who had seen many things, witnessed the scenes that took place in Lublin at night, when the deportees from Cracow (apparently coerced, already after the set date) passed—or rather, were pushed—through Lublin. Trodden upon, beaten, shoved around and finished-off old men, and women with children, who were too exhausted to continue their journey—left a shocking impression on the observer.

Jews in Warsaw are in for one more blow. All Jewish shops in the German and Polish district are also to be either transferred to the Jewish quarter or closed down. However, even the Germans understand that it requires much more time than the relocation of inhabitants. That is why they have not set a date for this action, but they encourage Jews to undertake appropriate steps in advance.

What is left to discuss is the way that the occupiers implement their anti-Jewish regulations, and how Jews react to those, as well as their attitude towards the occupiers. The highest municipal authorities are summoned and informed that such and such undertaking will be carried out. The departments of population records and statistics are obliged to provide the required information. Based on that, the initial works are performed; the municipality makes efforts to make them less severe or to extend the date of their completion. Finally, the regulation is issued with a strictly defined realisation term. The moment that posters with the regulation have been put up, it is certain that the regulation will be carried out. If the interested parties do not perform it, German police battalion will execute it with absolute ruthlessness.

The Jewish population treats all German ordinances as divine retribution. They believe that the people of Israel have suffered so much over the millennia that it will also endure these new blows. Especially in light of their deeply ingrained belief that all of that has to end someday. Jews' extraordinary ability to adjust to new and even the most difficult living conditions saves them from perdition. However, the information surfaces also from over there that Jews cannot take it anymore and take their own lives.

Germans are not allowed to come in contact with Jews at all. Even for intercourse with Jewish women, who are prohibited from prostitution, German troops are severely punished, as it is seen as 'racial degradation.' Nevertheless, in bribing the Germans, particularly of the lower level, it is Jews, or rather Jewesses, that serve as intermediaries. The same is the case in trade. Even though enterprises are run by trustees, usually Germans, often the head of a Jewish owner perfectly complements the wallet of a German trustee. The incredible flexibility, a good working knowledge of the situation and the knowledge of the language prevail. Jews, though by a string, still cling to their businesses.

There are no Jews in the German institutions. They appear semi-officially on the occasion of scrap metal collection. They wear a special green armband on their sleeve, which does not absolve them from wearing the Jewish armband anyway.

...

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.86/B

84

*3 January 1941. Letter from the Envoy in Lisbon
to the Consul General in New York:
clarification of the situation of refugees in Portugal*

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Dear Mr Consul,

Minister Potocki showed me your letter¹ about the situation of Jewish refugees, Polish citizens, who found themselves in Lisbon; therefore, I hasten to provide you with exhaustive clarification.

The evacuation of Polish citizens from Portugal has encountered major difficulties. Only servicemen on active duty, their families, and the people summoned by the Government in London are allowed to travel to England.

¹ This is a reference to the letter from 6 December 1940, in which the Consul General in New York, Sylwester Gruszka, wrote to the Counsellor at the Legation in Lisbon, Józef Potocki: 'Several days ago, a good friend of mine, Dr Henryk Szoszkie, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Tel Aviv and currently the Managing Director of the Federation of Polish Jews in the United States, received a letter from Lisbon, from Polish Jews there, with a request that it be made known to the Jewish press here ... As I entertain much doubt as to the credibility of the said letter, please find it enclosed herewith, alongside my kind request that you investigate the matter. Even though the arguments presented therein appear to be greatly exaggerated, some may at least outwardly bear vestiges of plausibility to them, and their publication in the local Jewish press would make an undesirable impression and result in negative comments. This would be of great inconvenience for us here, for, as I have mentioned above, our relations with the local influential Jews have been rather good, owing to the cooperation of many distinguished Jewish refugees from Poland. Furthermore, the Consulate General is extremely liberal in applying all our existing regulations in the matters of Jews-Polish citizens.' Responding, in the letter from 7 January 1941, Józef Potocki informed: 'I am very glad, on the one hand, that you did not allow for that note to be published, and on the other, that you sent it to me here, for it shall also help me to rectify with London the various unfounded claims and insinuations. I am aware that Envoy Dubicz responded to the factual aspect of that note in his letter to you of 3 January. You shall find therein the information to use in case of further similar complaints. I am not, of course, considering a polemic of any sort, but merely the keeping of good relations with the Jewish community, which you have mentioned. I showed your letter to Mr Schimitzek, the Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare, and the de facto president of the local committee for refugees. He made several reports on these matters for London, setting right the groundless complaints regarding the handling of Polish Jews. I must add that some of the latter have not presented themselves at the Polish offices at all; consequently, even keeping a record of their number oftentimes poses many difficulties.' IPMS, Poselstwo Lizbona, A.47/5. See doc. 70.

Any departure to the United States has been impracticable until the new Polish quota is made available—and you are yourself most familiar with the difficulties in obtaining a visa, regardless whether for Christians or Jews. Generally, only a few people could obtain a visa.

All other countries are closed for our emigration, with Brazil being the only one to have granted us a visa quota. On 16 August 1940, Envoy Skowroński from Rio informed both me and the Government in London by telegraph ‘that obtaining visas for non-Aryans is out of the question. Visas may only be granted to ‘capitalists with \$12,000,’ and the Brazilian Consulate in Lisbon categorically refused to accept applications from non-Aryans. Hence, the allegation that restrictions against Jews have been fabricated by the Polish Legation in Lisbon is rather ridiculous.

Jews are in fact able to obtain visas—providing they pay \$650—via the Emigration Office in Rio. There is an illegal scheme whereby some people in Brazil earn a lot of money: benefitting from the existing restrictions, they bypass the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and deal directly with the Emigration Office by paying extra.

I have made several attempts to help Jews by writing personal letters to the Brazilian Embassy and Consulate in the cases deserving special treatment. However, I was always refused, therefore I generally do not accept any applications from Jews who wish to receive recommendations to the Brazilian Consulate, for I cannot subject the Legation to such constant refusals and thus make even more difficult the already not easy obtainment of Brazilian visas for Aryan Polish citizens. There were instances when the Brazilian Consulate, suspecting that we might intend to smuggle Jews as Christians, denied visas to ethnic Poles, such as Tępa, Górecki, etc., believing them to be ‘camouflaged’ Jews.

The claims of Polish-Jewish citizens—with regard to their alleged tendentious treatment by the Legation to facilitate their further emigration from Portugal—are not so much unfounded as completely ridiculous. After all, it is in the interest of the Legation to unburden Portugal as quickly as possible from our refugees, who—by the fact of staying here—hinder the further obtainment of even transit visas for our citizens attempting to leave France.

Moving on to passport issues, all Polish citizens holding Polish passports have their date of expiry automatically extended. Regarding this matter, I wish to refer back to the telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 19 Sept 1940, which stated that inaccuracies occurred during the evacuation from France and, in view of Polish passports having been issued by some delegations to people who do not hold the right to them, the Ministry invalidates passports issued after 17 June in Lourdes, Perpignan and Toulouse. Besides, many people of the Mosaic religion arrived in Lisbon without any Polish documents, but merely certificates from French prefectures. In such cases, I, for my part, have absolutely no grounds to grant them Polish passports (these people usually speak no Polish)—I leave

all these questionable cases to the decision of London. That results in a certain delay; however, it does not bar the way for anyone, and the allegations that I am disinterested in the fate of those people are unfounded.

Regarding the alleged acquisition of visas to the United States by Czechs, that information is simply untrue. The unofficial Czech consular post in Lisbon has so far been able to obtain a single entry visa for Czech citizens.

Regarding the detained people—this information is also untrue. No one is detained for crossing the border illegally, as the Portuguese police do not detain those crossing the border illegally, but send them back, and people are detained for falsifying documents and fraud. It is difficult to expect the Legation to intervene in those cases where the police detain people who have violated criminal law. Those to be administratively held in Cascais are only notorious prostitutes, who arrived here accompanying the wave of refugees and who by a mere coincidence are of non-Aryan descent.

I believe that these clarifications will shed new light on the complaints that have reached you; I also request that you inform me of any further potential complaints in order to enable me to get acquainted with the issues particularly severely affecting the Jewish refugees in Lisbon.

Dubicz-Penther

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 502

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*4 January 1941. Note by the Legation in Lisbon
on the possibility of evacuating Jewish refugees to Brazil*

Confidential

NOTE

1) In July ~~1939~~ 1940, the Consulate General of Brazil in Lisbon, in the wake of the intervention made by Minister Dubicz-Penther with the Ambassador of Brazil in Lisbon, informed that it would consider the possibility of granting temporary (six-month) visas to Polish citizens whose dossiers will be submitted by the Legation to the Brazilian Consulate in Lisbon.

2) The position initially adopted by the Brazilian Consulate did not rule out the possibility of granting visas also to non-Aryans; the Brazilian Consulate required,

however, a confidential certificate from the Polish Legation, indicating the racial origin of petitioners and their religion.

3) On the basis of the received information, the Legation of the Republic of Poland was able to put together approx. 200 dossiers of both 'Aryan' Poles and Jews, enclosing confidential certificates that indicated the Slavonic descent and the Catholic religion in the case of Poles, meanwhile in the case of Jews—the racial and religious origin: 'impossible to determine due to the Polish Legation's inability to establish the above data.'

4) In July 1939 1940, the Legation of the Republic of Poland submitted the first batch of 20 dossiers and learnt that the Brazilian Consulate had reached a positive decision and granted visas to all the 'Aryan-Christians,' whereas the dossiers of the Polish citizens whose racial and religious origin remained undefined—had all been rejected by the Brazilian Consulate.

5) On the basis of this experience, and of the declaration made by the Brazilian Consulate that it was not authorised to issue visas to non-Aryans, the Polish Legation, unwilling to risk more refusals, stopped forwarding any further dossiers of Jews.

6) In all the cases when the Polish Jews had the required data and appearances to pass for 'Aryan-Slavs' of the Christian religion (Polish first and last name, a photograph not showing Semitic features, *baptismal certificates*), the Legation of the Republic of Poland prepared dossiers for the Brazilian Consulate, furnishing those persons with confidential certificates of their Aryan descent and Christian religion. That mainly concerned Polish-Jews coming from Poland, and already assimilated members of the intelligentsia. The Legation used that method wishing to facilitate the obtainment of Brazilian visas to the greatest number of Polish citizens.

7) As Jews were unable to get Brazilian visas in Lisbon, they started to make efforts to obtain permanent emigration visas in Rio. The number of such visas to have been sent (*according to private information—at the cost of large sums of money*) was relatively high. In these cases, after receiving the notification from the Brazilian Consulate that an emigration visa had been granted, the Legation prepared an appropriate dossier, which did not, however, feature the confidential certificate of the applicant's racial origin and religion.

8) From 1 January 1941, the Brazilian Consulate in Lisbon has stopped granting any visas, according to the instructions it received from the central authorities in Rio. People wishing to travel to Brazil must turn directly to the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Lisbon, 4 January 1941

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 502

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*7 January 1941. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to a member of the National Council
on Jewish refugees in France and Turkey*

London, 7 January 1941

Dr I. SCHWARZBART
in London

Dear Sir,

I confirm the receipt of your letter from 2 January of this year,² and wish to inform you that immediately upon receiving your letter from 23 November I conveyed to our post in Vichy its content regarding the situation of Polish-Jewish refugees in the unoccupied zone of France, together with your conclusions, instructing that the matter be investigated and a detailed report sent. Mr Dogilewski was informed about this instruction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by my ministry. At the same time, I would like to mention that last month my department in consultation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare sent an instruction to Vichy that the Polish Red Cross in unoccupied France should extend its aid campaign to Polish-Jewish citizens, who had arrived in France from Poland because of war. Regardless of this, in the final days of December I informed Vichy that the Polish Government had agreed to allocate 2 million French francs for the aid campaign for Polish-Jewish refugees from the funds of the Comporel in France.

² In the said letter, Ignacy Schwarzbart recommended: 'Please allow me to return to the issue of social assistance provided by our Government to Polish-Jewish citizens in the unoccupied zone of France. According to the received information, the Ministry of Social Welfare informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of its decision that such assistance shall be provided to the one thousand Polish-Jewish citizens of the most recent wave of emigration directly from Poland. Unfortunately, I hear that despite the passing weeks the instruction in question has not been communicated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to our diplomatic posts in the territory of southern France ... Already in my previous letters, I mentioned that I believe that all Polish citizens are due equal assistance. It was, therefore, with much regret that I observed that in the territory of southern France such assistance was in no way equal for Polish-Jewish citizens ... I shall also return to the other matter, that is, to extending the evacuation action of the Polish Government to the Polish-Jewish citizens in Istanbul. Let me also mention the issue of social assistance for those Jews, should they require it ... I have recently been asked by a Jewish organisation from America why among the Polish evacuees from Romania to Palestine ... there are not Poles of the Mosaic religion included. What am I to respond to that?' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

Regarding the protection of Polish-Jewish citizens in Istanbul, I want to inform you that in agreement with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare I sent an instruction to the Consulate General in Istanbul that it grant from its funds assistance to Jewish refugees who do not have their own means of subsistence.³

Concerning the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Turkey, I wish to communicate that I have ordered the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London to conduct talks with the British Government in order to relocate this category of refugees either to Palestine or to India. I will inform you of the result of the talks with the British side at the appropriate moment.

My highest regards,

(-) *August Zaleski*

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

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8 January 1941. Report by the Envoy in Lisbon on the influx of Jewish refugees to Portugal

Lisbon, 8 January 1941

To the MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

1) Beginning towards the end of June 1940, Jews—allegedly of Polish descent—started to arrive in Portugal; they had resided permanently in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. The various documents on the basis of which they were able to cross the Portuguese border as Polish citizens included:

- a) foreign passports issued in Poland before September 1939;
- b) consular passports issued by Polish consulates before September 1939;
- c) passports issued between September 1939 and June 1940;
- d) Polish passports not in the booklet but in the sheet form, issued between 20 June 1940 and 1 October 1940 by consulates of the Republic of Poland;
- e) certificates-passports issued in the Prefecture of Perpignan by Mr Jerzy Morozewicz, who signed those for the Consul of the Republic of Poland;

³ See doc. 79.

f) certificates issued by the Prefecture of the Hérault department, with the 'Polish' nationality (nationalité polonaise) indicated therein;

g) titres de voyage issued by various French prefectures, with the Polish nationality (nationalité polonaise) indicated in them;

h) certificates issued by the occupation authorities in Luxembourg, with the Polish nationality (nationalité polonaise) indicated.

There are also passports issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to private individuals in Bordeaux and Bayonne on yellow service forms, with the single word 'service' crossed out.

2) The Legation accepts all passports issued by legal consulates, even if these passports have been issued in the form of sheets; however, it finds it difficult to accept the documents issued by non-Polish institutions (Perpignan, Hérault, French prefectures, Luxembourg offices).

3) After 20 June 1940, the obtainment of passports by Jews of the alleged Polish descent in the consulates of the Republic of Poland in France was relatively simple, as to be granted a passport one only had to present a French or Belgian identification card, with an annotation stating that the holder is 'of Polish nationality.' All Jews who after 20 June 1940 passed through either Toulouse or Marseille hold such passports, which from a legal standpoint are legitimate and must be accepted, having been issued by the offices of the Republic of Poland operating abroad. Jews of Polish descent who did not travel through those cities, and who had had the same identification cards, do not possess consular passport, only the certificates issued by the French or Luxembourg offices.

4) In the total figure of 700–800 Polish-Jewish citizens in Portugal, there are currently approx. 75–100 Jews claiming to be of Polish descent, who have arrived here as Polish citizens, even though they have no identity documents issued by Polish offices. For the Portuguese police, they are all, without exception, Polish citizens.

5) The refugees who ended up in Portugal are making efforts to obtain visas to various countries of North, Central and South America. Consulates of these countries do not accept the documents indicated with letters: e), f), g), and h), and demand that the interested parties present regular passports, issued by the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Lisbon.

6) Oftentimes, Jews of Polish descent also hold—apart from documents e), f), g), and h)—the old yellow and green passports, expired already in 1932/33, as well as certificates of birth, certificates of residence in villages, and other Polish documents.

7) Jews of Polish descent of the indicated category turn to the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Lisbon, requesting to be issued regular passports, which are

required to obtain American visas. However, the Legation cannot by itself issue the passports required by petitioners without first obtaining the permission from the central authorities, on the assumption that the documents held by applicants are insufficient to ascertain their Polish citizenship.

In light of the above, the following facts must be established:

I. Jews of Polish descent of the category specified above are considered by the Portuguese administrative authorities to be Polish citizens, because it is on the basis of that recognition that they had been allowed to enter Portugal as Polish refugees;

II. Consulates of foreign countries refuse to issue visas to people not holding normal passports, issued either by the legations or consular posts of the Republic of Poland;

III. Thus, the people of that category are not permitted to continue their travel, even though Portugal allowed them to enter on a general request for a temporary stay from the Polish Government, until further evacuation.

Under the circumstances, it is necessary to find a decisive way out for the people who, in spite of having entered Portugal as 'Polish citizens,' have in fact more than doubtful right to that citizenship.

Therefore, I ask you for an instruction whether the people in question are to be issued Polish passports to facilitate their leaving Portugal, or whether we are to remain disinterested in them. In the latter case, I expect that, even though the people concerned do not speak Polish nor have any connection to Poland, claims and complaints will emerge against the Legation, voiced in letters to the Government and in the American press, which I have already encountered in the letter from Consul Gruszka from New York.⁴

For my part, I consider it the most practical solution that the people of questionable citizenship who arrived in Portugal after 18 June 1940 should be issued passports with an annotation that such a passport cannot be extended without prior contact with the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Lisbon, as that will allow us to solve the case conclusively at a later date, and in a territory different than Portugal, where the failure to issue identity documents by the Polish office, which would result in leaving the said people stateless, would have to cause protests from the Portuguese authorities and further impediments for Poles entering the country. After all, the Portuguese police allowed these refugees to cross the border trusting that they were Polish citizens.

In the case of people of doubtful citizenship who would currently be granted passports in Lisbon, a special control register would be set up, thus the Legation

⁴ See footnote 1 to doc. 84.

would be able to deny the extension of their documents when asked by other consular posts; with appropriate motivation, these passports could even be annulled at a later time.

I wish to mention that the consular posts of the United States require passports to be valid for 2 years if they are to grant visas to the interested parties.

Faced with impatience and importunity of the Jews of the said category, I ask you to send me your decisive answer by telegraph.⁵

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Dubicz-Penther

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 510

⁵ In response, the MFA informed in the letter from 7 February 1941 that ‘it cannot give its assent to issuing Polish passports to the aforementioned people, both as a matter of principle (the failure to ascertain their Polish citizenship), and so as to avoid setting a precedent (as regards other people in analogous situation, and as regards the Portuguese authorities) ... Nevertheless, fully acknowledging the need to loyally respect the obligations assumed in relation to the Portuguese authorities and aware of the significance of the territory of Portugal as a transit area, the Ministry is determined to find an appropriate solution to the issue in question. However, the Ministry believes that in view of the fact that the number of people regarding whom the special difficulties discussed here arise stands at only 75–100, the issue of their discharge should not be considered of fundamental importance. According to the Ministry, the Legation should most of all focus on facilitating the departure to the refugees who are able to present documents certifying their Polish citizenship, and whose number—as stated by the Legation—stands at several hundred people. The cases of other refugees, who do not hold such documents, should be handled at a later stage, in line with the following procedure: a) Regarding people to a certain extent likely to have Polish citizenship ... their cases are to be presented to the MFA, which will refer to each specific case in conjunction with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. b) Regarding the people who would be able to present the decision by the Ministry of Internal Affairs depriving them of Polish citizenship ... —a motion is to be issued to the Ministry MFA that they be reinstated as Polish citizens ... c) Regarding the remaining people ... we should in principle remain disinterested in them ... When it comes to the Jewish population there, the manner of solving the issue envisaged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ought to convince them of the far-reaching goodwill of the Polish authorities with regard thereto.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 510.

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*16 January 1941. Letter from the Consul General in New York
to the Minister of Internal Affairs
about the Jewish circles in the United States*

New York, NY, 16 January 1941

Professor Stanisław Kot
Minister of Internal Affairs
in London

Dear Minister,

I wish to thank you for your letter from the end of October and to address its section concerning Jewish matters.

I know the local Jewish circles rather well, including almost all the people holding managerial positions in the organisations of Jewish life in America. As I was the Consul in New York in the years 1925–27 and 1935–40,⁶ I have many points of comparison, and I must admit that contrasted with the situation *quo ante*, the general mood of both the Jewish masses and their leaders has undergone a wholly unexpected change for the better. By that I mainly mean the change of the local Jewish attitude both towards Germany and Soviet Russia, so the states or nations which always had their major allies and friends here. The German Jewry ruled here for almost a century and that reign of theirs has recently collapsed utterly. Of course, we must be very careful lest an undesirable revival occur when the situation in Germany changes. Regarding Russia, the antipathy of the broader Jewish masses and a major section of the American public opinion was directed predominantly against Tsarist Russia. Consequently, Bolshevism—not only as a social and political movement, but also as the antithesis of tsarism—has always had many adherents here, to say nothing of the fact that in all liberal societies, there are always numerous groups of the so-called *boudoir* Bolsheviks. Today, all that seems to be a thing of the past, whereas in dealing with the latter group nothing helped us more than the arrival of a dozen or so Polish Jews from the USSR, who are describing left and right during public meetings what the Soviet Union actually is. Suffice it to say that over the past several weeks, the local communist-Jewish newspaper ‘*Freiheit*’ has lost over 20,000 readers.

⁶ Sylwester Gruszka served as the Consul General in New York until October 1941, when he was replaced by Sylwin Strakacz.

All that gives rise to a perfect set of political circumstances for us, incomparably better than in the period of 1916–17: one that we should not in any way undermine with our deeds or neglects.

Regarding the declaration that you mentioned, I would like to inform you that I have had several conversations about that issue with the late Mr Jabotinsky, and this is what he told me and what can be considered to be his testament of sorts:⁷

‘I am aware of the efforts made by Polish Jews in Paris (still during our stay in Angers) to elicit from the Government a declaration concerning the future constitution of Polish-Jewish relations. A perfectly understandable pursuit. However, knowing my friends, the Zionists, who I parted ways with several years ago, I realise how difficult it is to meet that demand in a truly political fashion.

Every declaration on Jewish matters made by Polish ministers, and there were several of those, is immediately picked up by the Germans and used in Poland to discredit the Government and drive a wedge between the Polish population and Jews, suffering today under the German occupation.

That is why Jabotinsky considered it appropriate to make a single declaration on the matter and not speak about it until the end of the war, for, in his view, statements that are too frequent do more harm than good.

The other idea which Mr Jabotinsky used to constantly elucidate to me was that Poland as a country very much interested in the Jewish matter in Europe should submit to the English Government the demand that the re-establishment of the Jewish state be posited as one of the major objectives of the war, and that, with the support of America—which also demonstrated great interest in that issue—here would be great opportunity for it to succeed.’ So much for Mr Jabotinsky’s opinions.

Regarding swaying American Jews to our side and winning their support for the broad solution of Polish issues, I have every reason to believe that the matter is on the right track here and it should see a positive outcome. In and of itself the matter is rather complicated and difficult because of the divisions among Jews in America and the relatively small influence on it that Polish Jews have here and now. You mentioned Mr Schwarzbart’s position, i.e. that Polish Jews in fact do not have influence on American Jews, and this is indeed correct; however, should we be able to consistently present our case in London and in New York, we may significantly improve the situation in our favour. In other words, today the issue has become not as much factual, as it is par excellence tactical, and it is on our diplomatic dexterity that everything or much will depend. Even today, I can hear in my ears the words of many American Jews of the olden days, claiming that if

⁷ The Jewish Zionist leader, Ze’ev Jabotinsky, died on 4 August 1940 in New York; see doc. 173.

late Mr Roman Dmowski had not impacted Jewish matters at the last moment in 1918, these would have looked different in Versailles.⁸ That is why we are looking forward to Ambassador Ciechanowski's arrival here,⁹ for I assume that he will bring instructions, if not in writing then at least verbal, and determine the framework of our position for the future. Lacking it, I do whatever I can to not lose any contacts; I constantly tell Jews that our Government's serious treatment of the Jewish matter is one of the more significant issues for us. These contacts and conversations, combined with the general atmosphere of the present times, create a perfect platform to commence talks, when an opportune moment arises, in line with the clear guidelines provided by you and Minister Zaleski.

Currently, I am greatly aiding a group of Polish refugees here—approximately 800 (with 15 perfectly good names)—to organise themselves, while at the same time telling American Jews at every occasion that if they want to discuss Polish matters with us, they should first consult our Jews, for there is much they can learn about those affairs from them; besides, these are matters much closer to their hearts than to those of the local Jews. Furthermore, taking into consideration that the position taken by American Jews has so far always reflected whatever was happening in our Jewish relations, with Poland being silenced today, the voice of Jewish refugees from Poland may and should have more gravitas.

When Ambassador Ciechanowski comes, which is to take place in two weeks' time, I will submit to him a detailed report on the state of Jewish affairs here in the hope that he will be able to use it to define our tactics towards American Jewry.

Respectfully yours.

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 502

⁸ Roman Dmowski died on 2 January 1939. In August 1918, Dmowski travelled from Paris to the United States, where, heading the Polish National Committee, he worked to secure the support of American politicians for the Polish cause. He met President Woodrow Wilson twice and made efforts to enlist soldiers in the newly established Polish Army. Dmowski was critical of the Jewish circles in the United States, claiming, among other things, that they represented a pro-German stance.

⁹ The Secretary-General at the MFA, Jan Ciechanowski, was appointed as the Ambassador in Washington on 15 December 1940. He left for the United States on 5 February 1941, whereas on 6 March 1941 he submitted his letters of credence to the President.

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*20 January 1941. Letter from the Ambassador to the Holy See
to the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro
on facilitating the transfer of Jewish refugees to Brazil*

The Vatican City, 20 January 1941

To the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
in Rio de Janeiro

Polish citizens staying in Italy and intending to travel to Brazil encounter difficulties when applying for a Brazilian visa, which stems from Brazilian consular regulations. These regulations require that the various birth certificates, certificates of no criminal record, of Aryan origin, etc., should be presented in their original form, that is, as official documents. Because the operation of our Embassy is officially limited to the Vatican City, and there are no Polish diplomatic posts in Italy, there is no one authorised to issue such certificates. I have learnt via the Brazilian Embassy to the Vatican that the Brazilian Embassy to the King [of Italy] submitted a request to its government that visas be issued also to those Polish citizens who, instead of an official certificate of their Aryan origin, present a certificate issued by the Church authorities, that is, by the Rector of the Polish Church in Rome, validated by the Vicariate of the City of Rome.—I believe that it is in the interests of our refugees, for whom the stay here is becoming more and more difficult due to the increasing alien influences, that we support that undertaking; that is why I am informing you thereof. Concurrently, I am sending a copy of this letter another way.

K. Papée
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
to the Vatican

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/201

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*2 February 1941. Cable from the Ambassador in Tokyo
on the influx of Jewish refugees to Japan*

CABLE No. 12
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in London
Tokyo, 2 February 1941

The influx of refugees has forced me to establish an emergency consular operation in Kobe, as it is the least expensive place to locate them. I have employed for several months a former official from the Consulate in Harbin. So far, the costs have been covered with the consular income.

We have established a special Polish committee, supplied mainly with American funds, which has thus far been able to cope with the difficult situation in conjunction with general Jewish committees.

By the end of January, 566 Polish refugees had arrived here, of whom 95% are Jewish, with 300 having already been sent to: the United States—142, Palestine—43, Canada—35, Central America—29, Argentina—23, Brazil—16, Shanghai—5, South Africa—4, Australia—3. In February, we expect another 250 people, while later only single individuals, due to impediments introduced by the Soviets.

I have spared no efforts to extract from Wilno several families of our major military and civilian figures, in view of the risk of the reinstatement of Soviet deportations. In individual cases, I will resort to the help of the MFA.

Executing your instruction No. 5 of last year,¹⁰ together with the English Embassy and the Legations of Australia and Canada we have been investigating the opportunities to place the remaining refugees, which is becoming more and more difficult. We will soon present to you the conclusions that we have reached.¹¹

/-/ Romer

Hoover Institution, Tadeusz Romer Papers, 3

¹⁰ In the cipher telegram no. 5 of 19 August 1940, Minister Zaleski instructed: 'The efforts to place refugees in the Dominions are hampered due to basic and transfer-related matters. Canada only accepts parentless children, South Africa so far negative. Brazil granted us 500 visas, excluding Jews ... We are undertaking steps in other South American countries; however, our chances are slim. Therefore, I instruct you to discuss the situation of refugees in the Far East with local British authorities so as they consider placing them in the British territories there.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 225.

¹¹ In the wake of the reports of the Ambassador in Tokyo on the refugees who had arrived in the Far East from the territories occupied by the USSR, the Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote in a letter from 13 February 1941 to the Ambassador in London:

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*[Before 4 February 1941]. Report of the Bureau of Studies
on the situation in the territories of occupied Poland (extract)*

ACTIVITY OF THE OCCUPATION AUTHORITIES
IN THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1 SEPT 1939 AND 1 NOV 1940¹²

...¹³

Attitude towards Jews

The fate of Jewry in the occupied territories has, from the first days of September to the present day, consisted of a series of sufferings, humiliations, persecutions and expropriations That includes both the system of emergency laws imposed by the authorities, as well as the uncontrolled operation of the military, the Gestapo, the administration and the German population itself. De jure, Jews are

'Ambassador Romer has recommended the following distribution: England and the colonies—100, Canada—79, Australia—66, South Africa—40, New Zealand—15, total: 300 people. The relocation of the newcomers to the Far East depends on a prior decision of the British Government and the Governments of the Dominions to grant us a quota of visas ... Pursuant to the letter from the Prime Minister from 3 February, No. 232/VII-a/41, the action to rescue people from the territory of the Soviet occupation is to be predominantly carried out for the benefit of the Polish populace, excluding national minorities. On the other hand, we are aware that both the British Government and the countries of the British Empire are reluctant to accept Jews. In view of the fact that the entire group on which the action is focused has already come to the Far East, I believe that for our part we should attempt to locate them in Japan; otherwise, we have to expect difficulties—if not Japan's refusal—to accept any more refugees from the Soviet occupation zone. In particular, the efforts to facilitate the crossing of Russian borders by Poles from Wilno region should soon result in an influx of Polish refugees to the Far East. Bearing in mind these considerations, please conduct talks with the Foreign Office, as well as with the High Commissioner of Australia, and inform me of their outcome. The issue of the quota of visas to Canada depends in fact on the decision by the Polish Government to provide for the refugees throughout their stay in Canada.' AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1815. See doc. 95.

¹² The report was sent out on 4 February 1941 by Minister Stanisław Kot, who communicated in the covering letter: 'CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION: This report was developed by the Bureau of Studies, a body cooperating with the Polish Government.—In spite of its provisional character, the authors intend to publish it. Therefore, I request that all who have received it not publish any part thereof without contacting me first; I also ask for any comments regarding the potential publication.' While preparing the document, the Bureau of Studies most likely benefitted from the information provided in doc. 83.

¹³ Extracts unrelated to Jewish matters were omitted.

subject to emergency laws; de facto—they are outside of any law. Jewish property, the personal dignity of Jews, their freedom of movement, provisioning, education, the right of residence, religion, professional employment, social rights—all that depends on the will of the administration, on the temperament of the respective officials or Volksdeutsche who were given the opportunity to fully take it out on Jews by way of oppressing them. To a much lesser extent than the Poles, they are the victims of the bloody political terror (by the Gestapo) or deportations to slave labour in Germany, which is in fact self-evident.

German propaganda makes efforts to present that whole system of violence and expropriations as the implementation into the Jewish life of an adequate German order, which brings to life the principle of Jewish national and religious autonomy. In 'Warschauer Zeitung' of 13 March 1940, Dr Dietrich Redeker wrote that ghettos are nothing less than the implementation of the principles 'Juden für sich,' with Germans not tolerating pogroms, street violence, the abuse of Jews, etc., as was the case in the... Polish era. At the same time, the Polish population is constantly being incited against Jews, and hostility towards Jews as [alleged] profiteers, demoralisers and exploiters is spreading. 'Es liegt im Interesse jeder einzelnen nicht jüdischen Person, eine nahe Berührung mit dem jüdischen Bevölkerungsteil auf das strengste zu vermeiden' (translation: it is in the interest of every non-Jewish individual to avoid as strictly as possible close contacts with the Jewish population). That is the overarching principle of the anti-Jewish policy.

Already in November 1939, a decree issued by Governor-General Frank introduced white armbands with the Star of David as the external marking for Jews. Jewish shops and companies also must be marked with that star, whereas their signs can only be written in Polish and Hebrew. Violations of these regulations are severely punished with fines, imprisonment, and immediate beating of the guilty parties. Jews are not allowed (since summer of 1940) to enter many public gardens, for instance, not a single garden in Warsaw; likewise with cafés, restaurants, cinemas (signs 'Juden Eintritt verboten,' entrance forbidden to Jews); nor can they walk around certain squares and streets (all Adolf Hitler Squares, Ujazdów Avenue in Warsaw, etc.). In the Reich, Jews are not allowed to ride city trams and buses (in fact, neither are Poles), whereas in the General Government they have separate cars or compartments, with some routes being prohibited for them. The railway is completely inaccessible for Jews: the reason is clear—the fear of the spread of epidemic diseases and the intention to make profiteering in trade difficult. Attempts were made to establish separate post offices for Jews, Jews are separated from the so-called queues, distinct (Jewish) convenience stores have been designated for them.

Ghettos are the fragmental form of isolating the Semitic population; these are formally referred to as 'epidemic prone areas,' for instance, in Warsaw. The Warsaw Ghetto was established in October 1940, the ghettos in Łódź and Łowicz—much

earlier,¹⁴ and the entire Jewish population was relocated from Cracow. Not everywhere are there ghettos; for instance, there are none in the lesser cities of the Dąbrowa Basin and in the so-called Reich. The Warsaw Ghetto created the problem of relocating 110 thousand Jews, and 70–80 thousand Poles. Likewise, in Łódź. Population density in the ghettos exceeds that of the cities of China: 5–8 people per room; however, it is the Jewish Community that regulates the allocation of the displaced persons. Ghettos tend to be overcrowded, dirty, deprived of gardens and oftentimes also of sewerage, with old buildings, frequently ruined by the war. Communication with the ghettos is in principle prohibited (Łowicz, Łódź). The mortality rate there is high (in Łódź reaching 50 people a day). Jews live in constant terror of a further extension of the ghetto system: it may also include the district population, which would be concentrated in barrack camps throughout districts. Thus far, no such camps have been established. Some ghettos have already been closed (Łódź), which renders it impossible for Jews to find employment and provide for themselves.

The discrimination of Jews with regard to basic food provisions is strikingly bad. They are treated even worse than Poles: the ration of bread is half of the Polish one, the sugar ration—a third, and there have never been Jewish coupons for meat. Coal, potatoes, salt—generally in the same amounts as the Polish population. Jewish restaurants do not receive any food rations.

In February 1940, the order was announced to register Jewish property in the General Government (valid until 1 March 1940). Registry obligation will pertain to money deposited in banks and cash held at home or in companies, all pecuniary claims (promissory notes, payment orders, etc.), certificates of inheritance, real property, stocks and shares of any kind, mortgages, supplies of goods, means of transportation, valuables, carpets, paintings, home appliances, clothing, furs, etc.—both in the country and abroad. This registration campaign—potentially related to the ordinance, issued in the autumn of 1939 by the civil administration of the entering German armies, to limit the amounts of ready money to be held by Jews to 2,000 zlotys—has so far had no direct results. However, Jewish accounts in banks and financial institutions were frozen, forced administration was imposed on Jewish real estates and companies, and Jews were removed from company managements. These ordinances lack formal legal basis in the laws passed under the occupation. Forced administration tends to have its special objectives; for instance, while administering housing in Warsaw, commissioners strictly execute the rent receivables from Jewish tenants, but they do not cover any costs of the owners, not even the interest. Jewish commissioners have been removed, Jews were prohibited from maintaining tenant registers, Jewish craftsmen were eliminated from performing any maintenance work. As the amount of rent payments in

¹⁴ The ghetto in Łódź was created in February 1940, while the ghetto in Łowicz in May 1940.

Jewish houses in Warsaw alone is estimated at approx. 50,000,000 zlotys annually, it may demonstrate the scale of effects of such an economy.

Jewish education and cultural centres have been completely destroyed. Despite some hopes, the authorities did not even allow Jewish primary schools to open in the year 1940/41. Jewish bookshops were closed and so were book rentals. They also barred Jews from accessing Aryan book rentals and libraries, with these having been purged of all works by Jewish authors, both Polish and foreign. The Berson Museum, a well-known Jewish institution of the Jewish community, was transported away; the Jewish library was closed and transported away. Warsaw statues deemed manifestations of the Semitic spirit have been removed: the statue of Chopin by Szymanowski and the monument of the Polish Military Organisation by Wittig. Jewish artists are not allowed to perform outside of the ghetto.

The liberal professions have been decimated. Jewish lawyers have been eliminated altogether, Jewish doctors are not allowed to treat Christians, they were dismissed from Social Insurance. Jews are not allowed to own pharmacies. Jewish engineers are predominantly unemployed. Likewise, musicians, journalists, writers.

Jews are persecuted in matters of religion. Houses of prayer and synagogues are closed, collective prayers—required by the Jewish religion—are prohibited. Numerous synagogues have been burned down (Częstochowa, Kreis Zichenau) or converted into granaries, power plants (e.g. in Przemyśl), etc. The rabbinate in Jewish Communities was abolished, rabbinical schools—closed. Jews are forced to work during the most solemn Jewish festivals (New Year, Yom Kippur).

The so-called forced labour of Jews marks a special development. The obligation was imposed by the decree of Governor-General Frank of 26 October 1939 on male Jews between 14 and 60 years of age, with compulsory registration extended to youth over 12 years of age. Two-year labour camps were envisaged, on the grounds that Jews need to be taught physical work. Registration in Warsaw yielded the number of 117,000 people under duress. Thus far, only a limited number of such camps have been established: approx. 4,000 people left Warsaw, mainly for the right bank of the Vistula River (Lublin region). They are treated very poorly: no food, terrible lodging (barns, cellars, etc.). Besides, Jews are recruited for labour ad hoc, on site, a task partly assumed by Jewish communities. In Warsaw from November 1939, there had been up to 12,000 people (the so-called labour battalions) rounded up daily for these works (clearing snow and street rubble, tasks for the military, etc.). Since September of this year, as the German Arbeitsamt introduced the rule of pricing such labour, the number of people required has fallen to 500–1,000 per day. Hence, instances abound of seizing people outside the Jewish community, directly in the streets.

Jews are subject to unspeakable moral disregard. Being beaten in the face, kicked, patronised, derided, robbed of furniture, furs, food supplies—for them, these constitute their everyday life in the General Government and in the Reich.

In October 1940, the mayor of Warsaw issued an ordinance that any Jew meeting a uniformed German soldier in the street should step aside in a particularly noticeable manner, and if so demanded—step onto the road. Ordering Jews to walk on the road was and is widely used in the territories incorporated into the Reich. In Sieradz, Włocławek, Łódź and other cities, Jews are obliged to bow before uniformed Germans. In Warsaw, they must be without head coverings when walking past the town hall. In summer, many Jews deliberately wore no hats to avoid conflicts. There are signs at Warsaw hospitals stating that sexual intercourse of Germans with Jewish women shall be punished, and that Jewish women are prohibited from prostitution.

Jewish pensioners of the Social Insurance Institution have been deprived of their pension rights. Polish employees (Power Plants, Trams, Municipalities, Railway, etc.) are required to submit declaration of their Aryan origin. Mixed marriages result in the Aryan spouse being released from work. Jews cannot set up industrial enterprises, own land, work as suppliers to state authorities and local governments; nor can a Jew serve as a legal guardian of Aryan minors, a proxy for an Aryan person, etc. Polish enterprises are forced to subscribe to the antisemitic weekly 'Der Stürmer' and to display anti-Jewish posters.

The Jewish population does, however, have certain self-government (Jewish Communities) to represent it before the occupation authorities. They are not politically persecuted unless in absolutely exceptional cases; Jews are not deported to the Reich. The occupation heralds the extermination of Jews from Europe, whereas what is at stake for the Polish nation is its destruction in its place of settlement: a violent, bloody and integral destruction. The Jewish population themselves sense a certain advantageousness of their position in relation to Poles, whereas their suffering is to a certain extent of external character (property, affronts to personal dignity).

Hoover Institution, Poland. Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, 11

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*7 February 1941. Report by the Embassy in London
on the obtainment of visas to India for Jewish refugees*

London, 7 February 1941

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The Embassy has the honour of confirming the receipt of the letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 20 January, No. 738/Ż/41, with an enclosed copy of a letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare regarding the evacuation of Jews-Polish citizens to India.¹⁵

As the Ministry knows, we have been able to obtain 360 visas to India for Polish refugees from Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary. No increase in that number seems possible at present, particularly in view of the fact that we have been carrying out an action to obtain visas for certain categories of Polish citizens under the Soviet occupation, for whom—potentially—the journey to India may prove easier and less expensive than the journey through Siberia and Japan to Canada. For those reasons, the Embassy believes that the issue of interceding in the evacuation of Jews should be secondary, especially since, as can be inferred from the incoming information, the Jewish population—being more industrious and wealthier than Poles—is able to manage better and more easily.

Edward Raczyński
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519

¹⁵ In the letter from 2 November 1940 sent to the MFA, Minister Stańczyk made the following recommendation: 'In reference to the telegram from Minister Arciszewski of 29 October of this year, No. 317—the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that talks be conducted immediately with the British authorities in order to obtain the permit to travel to and reside in India for 200 Polish refugees-Jews currently staying in Romania who have the means to cover the cost of travel to India and living there. The proposal submitted by the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Bombay would serve as the basis for those talks. Being able to carry out that transport would to a certain extent constitute an experimental attempt to locate Polish refugees in India ... Should the proposal to evacuate those people to India encounter any difficulties, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that the possibility be considered of proposing to the English authorities that they accede to moving those people to Palestine without a guarantee from the Polish Government that it would cover the cost of their transit and upkeep, but instead on the basis of an investigation performed on site, in Bucharest, by the Polish and English posts to assess whether the people in question do in fact have the private means to cover the costs of travel and residence.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 516.

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*7 February 1941. Report by the Envoy in Stockholm
on the situation in Lithuania and Latvia*Stockholm, 7 February 1941To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

The Sovietisation of Lithuania and Latvia¹⁶ resulted in two mass waves of applications submitted by Polish citizens staying there to be granted the right to move to Sweden.

The first of the two came in after these territories were taken by the Red Army and lasted through the latter half of June and July, until the early days of August. The second, more numerous, wave of applications started to come in December of last year, and has been ongoing until today, having been caused by the announcement of the registration obligation for all Polish refugees so that they could be counted either as Soviet citizens or as foreigners. To be declared a foreigner, one is required to present a foreign visa, possibly with an ultimate date of departure from the USSR to be set subsequently.

The dates of registration were indicated in many different ways, depending on the locality, and frequently subject to several extensions. The recently established deadline for Wilno expires on 10 February.

Meanwhile, the Swedish authorities, which had been rather liberal in granting transit visas to Polish citizens before direct communication with the West was terminated, radically altered their position after Denmark was occupied by the Germans.¹⁷ Whereas, the moment the Soviets took over the Baltic states, the Swedish MFA declared that, because of the events unfolding there, it considered the Swedish borders to be in principle closed for entry.

As repeated interventions of the Legation did not cause any change of that position, the only option left was to obtain visas by way of laborious exceptions.

¹⁶ After the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed, Latvia fell into the Soviet zone of influence and was forced to sign an agreement of mutual assistance with the USSR. Pursuant to the pact, Soviet troops entered the territory of Latvia; subsequently, in June 1940, rigged parliamentary elections were held, in which communists won the majority of seats. In August 1940, by resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Latvia became a part of the Soviet Union as a union republic. The Polish Legation in Riga had been liquidated in October 1939. On the situation in Lithuania, see footnote 20 to doc. 27.

¹⁷ German occupation of Denmark started on 9 April 1940. The Polish Envoy in Copenhagen, Jan Starzewski, left the country on 13 April 1940.

That way, the Legation was able to secure the right of entry to Sweden for approx. 60 Polish citizens; moreover, Swedish diplomatic posts in Kaunas and Riga, still operating at the time, independently granted visas in several scores of cases.

To complete the picture, it should be stated that in addition to Polish and Swedish citizens, only several mixed married couples with Swedish women came here during that period; apart from those, there was *literally almost* no one who came from the Baltic states.

Besides the restrictions introduced by the Swedes, what was of importance here was also the decision of the Soviet authorities not to grant exit visas, which resulted in a number of people, especially Poles, who had already obtained Swedish visas, being unable to leave.

The restrictive attitude taken by the Swedish authorities was further tightened during the latter period (December–February 1941). Despite that, during that interval we were able to obtain 90 entry visas to Sweden and several transit visas to Finland, owing to a large extent to the friendly stance assumed by the competent officials of the local MFA, particularly Secretary-General Boheman.

Please find enclosed the list of people for whom we have been able to obtain visas after 1 January 1941.¹⁸ The Legation wishes to add that having limited possibilities when making the choice, it was forced to perform an extremely careful but also strict selection, taking into consideration the personal situation of the people, their social usefulness, as well as humanitarian aspects (e.g. separated families), which oftentimes greatly improve the chances of those cases in the eyes of the Swedish decision-making authorities.—The number of visas obtained is in fact far fewer than the number of submitted applications, of which more than 300 have been sent in, predominantly by telegraph, and which even now continue to arrive daily.

Unable to obtain any further entries to Sweden at present, the Legation provides the applying parties with individual certificates from the local Consulate General of the Netherlands, indicating that there are no obstacles for their departure to Curaçao and other Dutch islands of the Antilles. Recently, on request by the Legation—the Dutch Consulate concurrently sends dispatches, identical in content, directly to the interested people, and, as these arrive much sooner, it enables the Polish citizens in question to avoid registering themselves as Soviet citizens.

Admittedly, the action is rather costly for it stands at over 10 Swedish crowns a person (the certificate—5.55 crowns plus postage fee, dispatch 4.75 crowns; additionally, the cost of further communication); however, it is important as a preventive measure against the citizenship regulations of the Soviet authorities.

The above expenditure, as well as the cost of plane travel from Riga to Stockholm—and in the case of the arrival of a larger group of refugees also the

¹⁸ There is no attachment.

costs of their subsistence—I intend to cover with the subsidy received for that purpose from the Ministry of Treasury in the amount of \$8,000.

However, the Legation wishes to indicate that so far the entire or partial costs of subsistence of approx. 300 refugees already staying in Sweden have been covered by the Polish Aid Committee, established on 8 September 1939 in Stockholm, exclusively from its own funds, either obtained via public charity or from Swedish governmental aid institutions for refugees. As of 8 February 1941, the sum total collected by the local Committee stood at 93,035 Swedish crowns.

The Legation will have to cover the costs of subsistence of the Polish refugees—for whom visas were obtained in the period of December-February 1941—at least partly, as it was indicated as a condition of the issuance of their visas by the Swedish authorities.

So far, however, none of the people for whom visas were obtained post 1 January 1941 arrived in Sweden; meanwhile, the various pieces of information received from Lithuania and Latvia suggest that, on the one hand, major difficulties emerged there in obtaining exit permits from the Soviet authorities, while on the other, there is an outflow of Polish refugees to the South, or to the Far East.¹⁹

In this respect, the situation of Jewish refugees—favoured also by the Soviet authorities, in any case—is better, as they leave in organised groups via Japan, with their tickets bought in advance by their friends or Jewish organisations in America.

There were suggestions from Wilno that similar aid should be organised for Poles, which would encompass 2,500 people, and entail at its first stage the obtainment for them of the right to leave for Turkey, as this country is nearer and does not currently accept Jews.

In some cases, this would furthermore require covering the costs of the rather inexpensive travel.

The Legation has contacted the local Turkish Legation regarding that matter, but the issue—obviously being beyond the competences of a diplomatic post—could not be positively solved here. Therefore, the Legation has requested assistance on that issue from the MFA in London by telegraph on 1 February and 7 February 1941.

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
G. Potworowski

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 72

¹⁹ In the cable of 12 May 1941, the Envoy in Stockholm, Gustaw Potworowski, asked the Ambassador in Tokyo, Tadeusz Romer (via the MFA): 'I request information on the state of affairs with the military visas from Lithuania. Besides, approx. 20 Polish citizens, Jews, wishing to leave Sweden, have transit through the USSR and visas to the United States secured. Is the obtainment of transit through Japan possible?' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 72.

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*7 February 1941. Report by the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro
on the introduction of emigration restrictions by Brazil*

Rio de Janeiro, 7 February 1941

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

In the context of the mass influx of Jews or people of non-Aryan descent to Brazil, the Brazilian authorities issued a series of regulations intended to completely bar the flow of refugees to Brazil.

On 1 January 1941, the Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a relevant circular to the subordinate institutions (the text of which I received in confidence from the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), pursuant to which only the following people may apply for a visa to Brazil:

1. Citizens of the member countries of the Pan-American Union.
2. Capitalists able to present to the Bank of Brazil the minimal amount of 400,000 Brazilian reals (approx. \$20,000) per person.
3. Engineers and technicians employed in Europe by Brazilian production plants and brought to Brazil by way of a contract. In the latter case, specialists may only be brought over by plants which have existed locally for at least 5 years and have the share capital of no less than 200,000 Brazilian reals.
4. Under no circumstances can the above stipulations concern Jews, or people of non-Aryan descent, even of Christian confessions, as they are completely prohibited from entering Brazil.

The ordinance in question is so strictly applied that even the applications of 260 people submitted as individual requests by the Legation already before 1 January 1941 have been rejected despite numerous promises of positive consideration. The Under-Secretary of State also rejected, although in a very courteous manner, a series of requests that I had personally submitted, concerning the people telegraphically indicated by the Minister. In a letter from the Under-Secretary of State, Ambassador Nabuco, it was indicated that under the current conditions only the President of the Republic can issue an extraordinary permission that refugees be granted visas.

Regarding paragraph 3 of the circular quoted above, which allows a certain category of engineers to enter the country, this exception is also of a rather theoretical character. For it is currently more than problematic for Brazilian

production companies to get involved overseas and take the responsibility for engineers they are unfamiliar with.

It may be an indication of the local relations that the government journal, *Diario Oficial*, published a compromising correspondence between certain state officials and third parties, related to the discovery of an organisation which, through bribery to the amount of up to \$1,000, facilitated the issuance of Brazilian visas to Jews. At the same time, the police have recently arrested approx. 90 people, including state officials, involved in the 'visa affair.'

Recently, one could observe a sudden shift of the Brazilian public opinion on refugees in general, and Jewish refugees in particular. A series of articles appeared in the entire Brazilian press condemning the 'provocative behaviour of certain categories of refugees, unwilling to adjust to the customs of the local society,' who create disloyal competition and propagate alien ideologies. Articles of that sort were published not only in the metropolitan, but also in the provincial press.

In view of such a social mood and the recently issued ordinances discussed above, taking any steps to obtain visas for refugees does not, at least for now, have the least chance of success.²⁰

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Dr Tadeusz Skowroński

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 67

²⁰ The report was sent to the Embassy in Washington, the Legations in Madrid, Lisbon, Mexico City, and Buenos Aires, as well as the Consulate General in Ottawa.

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*21 February 1941. Cable from the Ambassador in Tokyo
on the arrivals of Jewish refugees in Japan*

Mr Romer, TOKYO
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 21 FEB 1941
RECEIVED ON 22 FEB 1941

No. 24

Receptus 23 and 27²¹

Irrespective of our activity, the influx of Jews is increasing and it is likely to stay that way until February (?). The Japanese Government, wishing to avoid any larger concentration of foreigners, particularly now, makes the issuance of further transit visas dependent on the departure of those who have already arrived here. I have an opportunity to send a larger number of Jews, especially since their organisations possess immense funds; however, these are also required to effectuate British quotas, which we would only in part allocate to Jews. Visas to Dutch colonies in the Americas are not recognised here. Japan grants transit visas in the Embassy in Moscow, or in the Consulate in Vladivostok, to holders of other residence visas with guarantees of being able to cover the cost of the entire journey. Guaranteeing them myself, I could obtain a limited number of Japanese transit visas without those stipulations. Therefore, I request that Stockholm sends me by telegraph 25 of the most urgent names, along with first names and age, exclusively of Poles, indicating as a decoy at least several addresses in groups, and indicating the ones whose journey would have to be paid for.²²

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 72

²¹ In the cable no. 23 of 15 February 1941, Minister Zaleski informed: 'The Government has decided to focus the evacuation from Soviet Russia mainly on the Polish population ... The English Government and Dominions *unwilling* negative towards accepting Jews; therefore, we need to bear in mind the difficulties in locating that population, which arrived in great numbers in the Far East.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 233. The cable no. 27 of 18 February 1941 featured the information from the Envoy in Stockholm, Gustaw Potworowski: 'I have sent to approx. 300 refugees in Lithuania certificates for Dutch colonies in America. Their departure only possible with Japanese transit visas, otherwise probably exile. I request to be informed soon whether visas of the local MFA may be sent directly to their addresses; subsequently, I would send the list of names of the people we intend to evacuate. I have requested from the MFA visas to America for them, these are also to arrive in Tokyo. Approx. 150 refugees will receive visas to Sweden and Finland.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 232. See also doc. 90 and 99.

²² In the subsequent cable, sent before 24 March 1941, Ambassador Romer informed: 'Facilitation of the outflow of Jews from Japan rendered even more urgent, for the

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*28 February 1941. Letter from the Ambassador in Tokyo
to the Envoy in Mexico City
about the possibility of evacuating Jewish refugees to Honduras*

Tokyo, 28 February 1941

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland
in Mexico City

Due to the influx of Jewish refugees from Poland who had been staying in Lithuania recently—and whose number in the territory of Japan currently stands at over 1,200 people—the Embassy is making efforts to obtain a number of immigration visas to the British Empire and to other countries.

According to the Consul General of Honduras in Japan, there are prospects for placing a certain number of engineers, industrial specialists and possibly farmers, etc., in Honduras.

The talks conducted by Mr K. Staniszewski, the Secretary of the Polish Embassy in Tokyo, with the Consul General in Kobe, Mr Francisco Aleman, suggest that Honduras might be willing to accept a certain number of refugees, who, owing to their personal qualifications or a financial guarantee of sorts, would warrant that they do not become a burden for the receiving country. Mr Aleman advised Mr Staniszewski that the Polish Embassy in Washington should approach the Government of Honduras via the Envoy of Honduras in Washington, who is said to have much gravitas in his home country, to allow the entry of a number (100–300) of Polish citizens, and authorise their representative in Japan to grant them visas.

At the same time, Mr Aleman requested that the fact of his participation in that initiative not be disclosed. He indicated that the case would be dealt with in Honduras by: the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the MFA; however, as always it

concentration of over 1,500 of them here has recently made the Japanese Government introduce entry restrictions, which left other newcomers in critical situation, including Poles, whom we want to arrive here. I have been counteracting the situation as far as I can, so far in individual cases. I suppose that we will soon be able to obtain the guarantee of subsistence from Jewish organisations, I shall report on it shortly. The local Legation of Canada, which has already started to issue visas from the quota allocated to us, expects to raise that number to 140 people, and has so far demanded no such guarantees. I am very careful in distributing the Canadian quota.' IPMS, Ambasad London, A.12.53/37L.

would hinge on the President, who may be influenced by the Envoy of Honduras in Washington.

In view of the fact that Honduras falls within the competence of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Mexico City, the Embassy hereby requests that the Legation start taking appropriate measures and telegraph the Embassy in Tokyo about the possibility of seeing the matter through. As the route suggested by the Consul of Honduras would lead via the Republic's Envoy in Washington, the Embassy requests that our Embassy in Washington be contacted regarding any potential joint measures to be adopted.

As the Japanese authorities have made the acceptance of further refugees from Poland in Japan dependent on the outflow of those already there, the Embassy asks that the matter be treated as particularly urgent and requests telegraphic information as to the steps undertaken.²³

Tadeusz Romer
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 52

²³ A copy of the document was forwarded to the Embassy in the United States and to the MFA in London. In the letter from 25 March 1941, addressed to the Embassy in Washington, the Envoy in Mexico City, Mieczysław Marchlewski, communicated: 'pursuant to the letter from Ambassador T. Romer from 28 February 1941 ... the Legation approached the local missions of the Dominican Republic, Honduras and El Salvador with the request that they accept 20 families each of those currently staying in Japan. Heads of all three legations to whom I have delivered my memorandum promised to personally support the case; nevertheless, for the time being it is difficult to evaluate the chances of our intervention, with the exception of the Dominican Republic, as they acceded to the entry of twenty families, comprising up to a hundred people in total. Addressing other countries lying in the competence of the Legation does not currently have any favourable prospects due to the antisemitic sentiments there; these are alarmingly high even in such a liberal and progressive country as Costa Rica, where the merchant circles—doubtless, influenced by totalitarian propaganda—have demanded that all Jews should be expelled at the end of the war unless they have already got the citizenship of the country, and that their businesses should be liquidated. As requested by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tokyo, the Legation has the honour to ask for your kind support for the intervention in the Legation of Honduras, in the manner suggested in the letter from the said Embassy.' *AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 52.*

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*28 February 1941. Letter from a Polish citizen in Turkey
to the Secretariat of State of the Holy See:
request for assistance in emigrating to Brazil*

Istanbul, 28 February 1941

His Eminence
Fr Angelo Dell'Acqua
Secretary of State of His Holiness
Citta del Vaticano

Praised be our Lord—Jesus Christ!

I hereby allow myself to approach you with my polite and heartfelt plea for assistance in departing to Brazil, for which I obtained the entry visa No. 94 of 7 Nov 1940.

I am a Polish citizen, aged 31, single, with no immediate family. I graduated from the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at the Free Polish University in Warsaw. Since 1928, I have been an employee of Bank Zachodni, while in 1936 I assumed a managerial position at the Gdynia Office of the Bank as a specialist in maritime trade, and all the activities related to it, such as transport, transshipping, etc. I held the position of a commerce proxy-manager of the freight division of Bank Zachodni in Gdynia until the last moment, that is, until the outbreak of the war. Currently, as a refugee from Poland I have for several months been in a critical financial position without any prospects or hope for finding employment.

My situation is rendered more difficult than that of other Polish refugees from the country by the fact that I am of Jewish descent: I was only baptised after the death of my parents (evidence: enclosed baptismal certificate);²⁴ regrettably, the many months of my wandering convinced me that the Christian society closes itself off from people of Jewish origin, whereas the Jewish society at every turn hampers any undertakings of neophytes.

When—on two occasions and in two different countries—I turned to local aid committees for refugees from Poland, even though I had submitted documents confirming my Roman Catholic faith, I was directed to Jewish institutions, which I neither could nor wanted to ask for help. Thus, I have been completely deprived of protection that others enjoy.

²⁴ There are no attachments.

On another occasion, when I had the possibility to gain employment in a port enterprise in Palestine, during the efforts to obtain an entry visa, the company intending to take me on learnt from the documents I had submitted that I am a Catholic; this proved enough for them to terminate the talks with me, their justification being that they could only employ a Jew.

Under such circumstances, my current situation is tragic, for not accepted by the Christian society and persecuted by the Jewish society I find protection in neither; I have spent most of my resources during the wandering thus far, whatever I have left—can only suffice for the shortest of periods.

Thanks to the efforts of my friends, I have recently been granted an entry visa to Brazil and, being a specialist in commodity science and maritime trade, I have all the qualifications to find employment there.

Unfortunately, my current financial situation makes it impossible for me to embark on such an expensive journey, which for a Polish citizen, unable to obtain a transit visa to Italy, leads through the British Raj, i.e. is long and expensive. The cost of such a journey, in my estimation, stands at approx. \$600–\$700, while from my own funds I am only able to pay \$100, that is, the sum offered to me by several of my friends who want to facilitate my departure.

Therefore, I sincerely request that you grant me returnable aid in the amount of \$500—to cover the cost of travel from Turkey to Brazil, which will enable me to reach a Catholic country, but one with no racial prejudice, and to find employment and live a peaceful life built up on the Holy Faith and the Holy Catholic Church.

If need be, reputation testimony about me may be provided by:

Janina Cylkowska—head of the Hospital of the Naval Port of Gdynia—currently in Ankara, Atatürk Bulv. 287 Çifçi Apartm.;

Dr Mieczysław Oxner—Consul of the Republic of Poland in Monaco;

Witold Wasilewski—editor—currently in Ankara, at the address of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara;

Józef Wentland—an industrialist from Warsaw—for the time being in Tel Aviv, at the address of the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Tel Aviv.

I am, unfortunately, unable to complement this list of people with the names of my spiritual directors, that is:

Fr Canon Teodor Turzyński from Gdynia,

and Fr Sudy from the Jesuit establishment in Gdynia,

for the former, a man of a great mind and a warm heart, was the victim of the Hitlerite barbarity, whereas I am ignorant of the fate and address of the latter.

Please, find enclosed the following documents:

a photocopy of the baptismal certificate;
 a photocopy of the certificate of no criminal record;
 testimonies of two credible people, whose signatures have been authenticated
 by the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Istanbul.

With my deepest regards and filial affection,

JAN RUDOLF FRANKENTAL

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/79

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*7 March 1941. Report from the press conference
 of the representatives of the Ministry of Information and Documentation
 on Polish-Jewish relations*

Report

from the press conference at the Ministry of Information and Documentation
 held for the Jewish press on 6 March 1941

The conference was attended by representatives of the following organisations,
 agencies, and journals:

Sidney Solomons, press representative of the Board of Deputies of British Jews;

Hodes, director of the Palestine Correspondence Agency (PALCOR);

Charles Solomons—director of the London office of the Jewish Telegraphic
 Agency (JTA);

Dr S. Levenberg, press representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and
 the World Zionist Organisation;

A. Abrahams, President of the Executive Committee of the New Zionist
 Organisation, Editor-in-Chief of ‘The Jewish Standard’;

– Barnett, representative of the editorial board of ‘The Jewish Chronicle’;

Dr Yapou, representative of the Overseas News Agency (ONA);

– Harendorf, cable officer of the New York ‘Jewish Morning Journal’ and
 ‘Forverts’;

Dr Goldsmidas, representative of London’s ‘Die Zeit’;

Mr Perlman, editor of the ‘Zionist Review’.

The conference was attended also by Dr Dogilewski and Dr Lachs. The persons present on the part of the Ministry of Information were Professor Dr Górká, Director Stanisław Paprocki, and H.M. Winawer.

The conference was opened by Professor Górká, who presented the position of the Ministry of Information on the Jewish matter. Almost all the attendees participated in the discussion. Below is a summary thereof.

Mr Hodes, having presented an account of the series of restrictions to which Jews were subject in Poland—in spite of formal guarantees of equal rights in both constitutions²⁵—asked about guarantees envisaged to put an end to arbitrary interpretations.

Mr Abrahams claimed that no such guarantee existed, and that he personally believed that no such guarantee could be given.

Mr Harendorf thanked Professor Górká for organising today's meeting. There are many problems that are interesting for the Jewish press and should be adequately explained. For instance, the passport issue, 'Jestem Polakiem',²⁶ and the books by

²⁵ This is a reference to the two basic laws that regulated the political and social system of the pre-war Republic of Poland, referred to as the March Constitution (adopted on 17 March 1921) and the April Constitution (adopted on 23 April 1935).

²⁶ This is a reference to the emigrant weekly magazine *Jestem Polakiem*, published in the years 1940–1941 in cooperation with the National Party. Regarding the weekly, on 30 August 1940 a member of the National Council, Adam Ciołkosz, addressed the Prime Minister with an official inquiry: 'Starting from 4 August 1940, a London based magazine "Jestem Polakiem" has been published as a weekly. The journal, as can be inferred from the article titled "Stawiamy sprawę jasno," is the organ of the National Camp, or the nationalist movement, or the National Party. The Party is represented in the current Government of National Unity; therefore, the journalistic endeavours by the collaborators of the "Jestem Polakiem" weekly may, in the public opinion, burden the Government of the Republic of Poland. It is all the more possible because the said weekly published articles by the ministers: Marian Seyda (No. 1), and Józef Haller (No. 3) ... There can be no objections against journalistic activities by ministers and other high government officials as long as these do not contradict the basic policy of the Government of National Unity. Here, however, that is not the case. Both in its content and in its manner of writing, the weekly, with which the said people collaborate, undermines the foundations of existence of the Unity Government. Above all, "Jestem Polakiem" emphasises its admiration for fascist rules in other countries ... The participation of some ministers and high government officials in the works of the "Jestem Polakiem" magazine makes the impression that at least part of the Government does sympathise with the ideology thereof, especially because the said magazine in fact makes attempt to present itself to the English public opinion as the expression of the entirety of public opinion in Poland. Therefore, I ask whether the Prime Minister would be willing to assert that the ideological foundations of the Government have not undergone any transformations.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.37B.

Węgiński²⁷ and Retinger.²⁸ The Ministry does not realise the damage caused by such declarations, especially as these cannot be regarded as private actions.

Dr Goldsmidas raised the issue of 'Dziennik Polski',²⁹ claiming that, although the paper is not antisemitic as such, it is not suffused with the same lofty spirit as the addresses by Professor Górką.³⁰

S. Solomons regarded the speech delivered by Professor Górką as a momentous event, which required as much publicity as possible, and requested that the Ministry of Information should record and broadcast it on the radio.

Dr Yapou discussed the address delivered by Minister Beck in Geneva in 1934, on Poland's renunciation of the Minority Treaty.³¹ The Jewish press had warned Polish officials against taking such a step, indicating that it could result in the exemption of other countries from their obligations towards Poland.

Mr Hodes expressed his belief that the phrase about evacuation had been flagrantly inconsistent with the entirety of Professor Górką's speech. Admittedly, there were Jews who so claimed, but they constituted only a very minor group. One could not at the same time call for cooperation on the one hand, while on the other consider forced evacuation.

Mr Abrahams: The fact that there is antisemitism among some Polish parties is beyond question; therefore, one should not turn a blind eye to it, the Government will better show its true colours instead of hiding them only because it happens to be in exile. The realistic view requires that the Jewish matter be solved radically, as it may cease to exist in 50 years. He expressed his view that there was nothing anti-Jewish in the book by Retinger. The evacuation is not only a Jewish issue, just because it had already been addressed and discussed by Jews; everyone had the right to subject it to consideration.

²⁷ This is a reference to the book by Karol Estreicher, published under the pseudonym Dominik Węgiński, titled *September 1939*, Minerva Pub. Co., London 1940.

²⁸ Józef Hieronim Retinger authored the book *All about Poland: Facts, figures, documents*, Minerva Pub. Co., London 1940 (reissued in 1941).

²⁹ *Dziennik Polski* was the most popular of emigrant newspapers, considered to be an unofficial organ of the Polish Government-in-Exile, as, among other items, it featured official releases and declarations of the Polish authorities. It was published from July 1940 (from 1944 after a merger with *Dziennik Żołnierza*, as *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza*).

³⁰ This is a reference to the address by Olgierd Górką with which he opened the conference (titled 'Opening Remarks' and comprising 9 pages of typescript).

³¹ The Minority Treaty, also known as the Little Treaty of Versailles (between the Allied and Associated Powers and Poland of 28 June 1919), regulated, in addition to the issue of minority rights, also a series of issues associated with Poland's relations with the Entente. See footnote 14 to doc. 159..

Dr Levenberg was of the opinion that there are no greater allies of the Polish question than Jews. Polish aspirations have never been criticised. What was criticised were the anti-Jewish declarations made by specific individuals. Should books as the one by Mr Węgiński continue to be published, we are certain to respond to the offences and lampoons, and we will defend ourselves. The Polish-Jewish question is not a legal matter. We do want to cooperate; however, we should judge by deeds, and not by words.

Mr Solomons: two situations shocked me this week. Hitler's address,³² and the publication of 'Jestem Polakiem.' I have devoted two sentences to Hitler's speech, whereas my note about Jestem Polakiem was rather exhaustive. I consider the fact of antisemitic speeches by Hitler to be an everyday matter, but the stand taken by 'Jestem Polakiem' in London to be an extraordinary development.

Mr Abrahams inquired whether the Jewish representative at the National Council is obliged to communicate all demands issued by the respective Jewish organisations. Does the Jewish representative in the National Council represent the entire Jewish population, or merely a single party among them?

Mr Barnett inquired whether the address by Professor Górká had been authorised.

Then, Professor Górká gave a joint answer to his interpellators, underscoring at the outset that the lively discussion and lively interpellations prove the extent to which such an exchange of opinions is purposeful. As certain issues are reiterated in respective questions, he would respond to those summarily.

Regarding the fundamental issue of the first and second Polish constitutions, he may only restate the previous words, whereas any anticipations as to the regulations of the future constitution are premature, to say the least. Personally, he is persuaded that the victory of England would bring about the spirit of progress and humanitarianism throughout Europe; and hence, he considered all the apprehensions as to the future regulations concerning Jews to be groundless, obviously providing England does come out victorious.

In regard to the minority obligations, Professor Górká declared that we had not renounced any obligations towards Jews, but merely the limitations of our sovereignty; especially considering that in practice, it was the Germans who most often appealed to the minority provisions, whereas Jews did not appeal even once.

Concerning other Polish internal affairs, Professor Górká reminded the attendees that Poland had granted [citizenship] to 430,000 Jews in doubtful cases within the country, whereas all contentious issues arose abroad, where a series of individuals wanted to have Polish citizenship without assuming or performing any civic duties. No such thing is possible in any country or under any law. As regards

³² This is most likely a reference to the address of 24 February 1941, delivered to commemorate the anniversary of the establishment of the NSDAP, in which Hitler, among other things, accused Jews of warmongering.

ritual slaughter, Professor Górką mentioned that the matter was impossible to solve economically; however, religious needs had been taken into consideration and it was the Government that in fact helped to retain ritual slaughter for religious purposes.

As for the complaints about the use of the phrase ‘evacuation of Jews,’ Professor Górką insisted that if Jews themselves openly discuss the matter in that form, he used a known expression for the sake of simplicity, once again underscoring that in his view the issue will be of no practical relevance during the period directly after the war, considering the inflow of Germans who will have to be dislocated; furthermore, as a real politician, he does not see the reason to discuss potentialities for the distant future.

Then, Professor Górką passed on to more specific questions. Concerning ‘Jestem Polakiem,’ he had already presented an exhaustive explanation in his previous address. He deemed it necessary to remind especially journalists that we are in the country of free press and printed word, and, on the other hand, to declare that it is in the community of Polish emigrants that after a period of censorship in Poland there is a strong aversion against any attempts at censorship, resulting in vigorous protests.

A government that has among its members people fighting for the freedom of speech must be prepared for that. Therefore, the best proof of goodwill is the well-known press statement by Minister Stroński that, in view of the fact that ‘Jestem Polakiem’ had not been published for six weeks, he assumed that it would no longer be printed. Minister Stroński presented that explanation with the best intentions; still, it cannot be helped that in the English conditions, suddenly, after a long hiatus, another issue was in fact published, being indeed the first to feature some downright antisemitic remarks. Regarding ‘Dziennik Polski,’ Professor Górką thanked for the comments and obliged himself to communicate them to the appropriate people. Concerning the book by Mr Retinger, the Professor stated—in line with what representatives of the Jewish press had already said—that it did not feature anything that could be labelled as antisemitic; however, he admitted that there were such passages in the work by Mr Węgiński. Nevertheless, it was not an authoritative pronouncement on the issue and there was no one to forbid Mr Węgiński from publishing the observation that Jews behaved badly in September 1939, just like no one could prohibit Professor Górką from printing the anecdote of their good conduct.

Regarding the role of Mr Schwarzbart, Professor Górką reminded everyone that there were only two distinguished representatives of Polish Jews in exile as of October 1939. One—upon his own request assumed the office of Consul General in Tel Aviv,³³ the other was appointed as a member of the National Council. Jewish circles should best acknowledge that the Jew to have been selected was the only one who received 30,000 votes of Jewish citizens back in the country.³⁴

³³ See doc. 15.

³⁴ This is a reference to the parliamentary election of 1938, which saw Ignacy Schwarzbart elected as a member of the Sejm for the Jewish Parliamentary Group.

Regarding his introductory address at the conference, Professor Górká informed the journalists that it had been presented to an appropriate person.

* * *

The entire conference proceeded in the spirit of kindness and mutual understanding. Speeches were delivered in English, with Mr Winawer serving as an interpreter and facilitating the exchange of views.

Afterwards, a supper was held in Piccadilly, leading to prolonged and friendly conversations. A great contentment with the discussion could be sensed from all parties, accompanied by frequent and spontaneous assurances that the Jewish press had never opposed Poles or Polish matters, but that it must speak out against any manifestations of antisemitism.

Certified as true to the course of the meeting:

/-/ K. Winawer

/-/ Prof. Dr Olgierd Górká

London, 7 March 1941

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 97

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*17 March 1941. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Embassy in Tokyo on the limitations
concerning the evacuation of Jewish refugees to Australia and Canada*

TO Polmission Tokyo
Washington, for the attention of Ottawa

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 17 March 1941

Refero our 23 and 33³⁵

Australia is rather unwilling to accept any Jewish refugees. It makes its agreement conditional upon a guarantee from the Polish Government to provide

³⁵ In the cable no. 33 of 5 March 1941, Minister Zaleski informed the Ambassador in Tokyo: 'Canada agreed to receive 79 refugees from Japan and sent an instruction to its Envoy in Tokyo. Talks with the Prime Minister of Australia are held about locating 66 refugees there, as well as further groups thereof.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 233. On the cable no. 23, see footnote 21 to doc. 95.

for them during their entire stay. The same stipulation, difficult for us to accept, has been put forth by Canada. According to your telegrams, Jewish refugees do have the funds to cover the costs of travel and subsistence in asylum territories. I suggest that the interested parties themselves obtain from the American Joint or other major Jewish organisations guarantees of subsistence during wartime to facilitate our effort. Australia requested details of the 66 refugees intended to land in its territory. We responded that you have sent the data to the Envoy of Australia in Tokyo. Menzies promised to decide on the matter before leaving England.

Zaleski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 233 (previously published)

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*18 March 1941. Report by the Envoy in Tehran
about the way to evacuate refugees from the territory of Lithuania*

TEHRAN, 18 March 1941

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

In response to the telegraphic inquiry of 21 February, I wish to clarify that the group of several dozens of Polish-Jewish citizens, about whom I reported in the letter from 12 Dec 1940, No. 662/Ir/27,³⁶ left Lithuania owing to the Polish certificates issued by the representative of Great Britain in Kaunas in the period after the departure from the country of the Polish Legation and before the incorporation of the Lithuanian Republic into the USSR. Based on these certificates, the Lithuanian authorities issued sauf-conduits, with which Cook's travel agency—in conjunction with the Soviet 'Inturist' and the Persian 'Iranatur'—was able to obtain great sums of money transit visas through the USSR and Iran. The necessary condition for that was the prior obtainment of an entry visa to any country, which was not difficult at the time for a series of foreign legations in Kaunas did issue such visas, for instance the legations of China, Japan, and Great Britain (to Palestine).

It can be hence inferred that the specified procedure, used at that time in Lithuania, cannot be used for Poles remaining in the USSR, as the Bolshevik authorities do not allow any Polish citizens to legally cross the border. Allegedly,

³⁶ Doc. 80.

there were several instances when Poles were released, having paid much money (over \$1,000 per person), but only if that the said people had wealthy relatives abroad or their own money, and were able to discreetly handle the procedure via the Soviet institutions abroad (such as 'Inturist,' 'Torgpredstvo,' etc.). In such state of affairs, the insurmountable obstacle becomes the obtainment of a non-Polish passport or other document which the Soviet authorities would be willing to recognise and which could serve as the basis for Poles leaving the territory of the Soviet Union. Another difficulty would be the obtainment of transit visas to Iran or Afghanistan, as these countries categorically refuse to grant them to Polish passport holders for fear of the Soviet Government, and the instances of these visas having been issued to the said group of Jews in Lithuania do not prove anything, for these were obtained with non-Polish documents in a manner unofficial and extraordinary—if not directly illegal—and at a high cost. Receiving residence visas to Iran and Afghanistan is out of the question. I do not know what the situation in Turkey would be like; however, Japanese legations are said to grant visas to Poles who appear in person to collect them.

Jan Karszo-Siedlewski
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 525

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*21 March 1941. Letter from the Acting Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
about Jewish refugees in Yugoslavia*

London, 21 March 1941

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

In connection with the telegram from a group of Jewish refugees in Kuršumlijska Banja, Yugoslavia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received the following clarification from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Belgrade.

The group of refugees in Kuršumlijska Banja comprises almost exclusively Jewish refugees who in the recent months have crossed illegally into the territory of Yugoslavia from Hungary; therefore, they were placed in a camp. Some of those refugees served in the Polish Army during the war and almost all are penniless.

The Legation of the Republic of Poland immediately extended its protection to them while approaching Jewish organisations about rendering assistance to them. The Jewish community also took a number of them under its care.³⁷

Since the outset, the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Belgrade made efforts to enable the departure from Yugoslavia of a group of Polish-Jewish citizens. Approx. 20 of them were able to leave in the recent weeks. As for enabling the departure for more of them, the Legation has undertaken appropriate measures; however, there have been difficulties in obtaining transit visas. Regarding those fit for the military, the Legation, in conjunction with the military attaché, commenced an action to evacuate them to the Palestinian Brigade.

On 17 March, Envoy Dębicki received a visit from Chief Rabbi, with whom it was arranged that the Jewish community will continue to grant material aid to the refugees, cooperating closely with the Consulate of the Republic of Poland as regards the protection and assistance on the part of the latter.

SECRETARY-GENERAL³⁸

Jan Wszelaki

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519

³⁷ In the cable of 18 March 1941, the Envoy in Belgrade, Roman Dębicki, communicated: 'The group of Jews in question ... is entirely without means of subsistence and provided for by the Jewish Community. At the request of English authorities, the military attaché will not evacuate them to the Polish Army, even though some of them served in the military during the war. Moreover, any attempt at their departure encounters major difficulties, resulting from the request of the Aryan clause made by transit countries. Yesterday, I received a visit from the Chief Rabbi, with whom we arranged once again that the Jewish community would provide material assistance and the Polish posts—consular protection, albeit confined by the difficulties posed by the local authorities ... The Rabbi only requested that I facilitate to the extent possible the departure of individual Jews. I responded by saying that approx. 20 Jews have recently been able to leave thanks to the Legation (these departures are at their own expense). Could the English allow those fit for the military to join a Jewish legion?' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519.

³⁸ After Jan Ciechanowski's departure to the United States (due to his appointment as the Ambassador in Washington), the post of Secretary-General at the MFA was temporarily (in February 1941) filled by Mirosław Arciszewski, who was subsequently nominated as Political Director at the MFA (Chief of the Political Directorate). Adam Tarnowski was appointed as the new Secretary-General in early April and assumed his position in the beginning of June 1941, on his arrival to London. From March to May 1941, the office of the Secretary-General at the MFA was filled by Jan Wszelaki as 'Acting Secretary-General.' Already in October 1941, Tarnowski was replaced by Kajetan Dzierżykraj-Morawski.

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*21 March 1941. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to a member of the National Council:
situation of Jewish refugees in the Balkan countries*

London, 21 March 1941

To Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart
Member of the National Council
in London

In response to your letter from 22 February concerning Polish-Jewish refugees in Romania, I wish to inform you that I have instructed the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in London to hold talks with the British Government in order to authorise the evacuation of that group of refugees to the British territories.³⁹

Ambassador E. Raczyński conducted talks on the matter with the British authorities, which suggest that today British decision makers do not consider it possible to evacuate anyone from Romania. Before leaving Romania, the British

³⁹ In the letter from 22 February, a member of the National Council, Ignacy Schwarzbart, communicated: 'This morning, I received the telegram of 21 February from the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency in Istanbul (address: Barlas, Park Hotel, Beyoğlu, Istanbul) in the following words: REPRESENTATIVE PALESTINE OFFICE BUCHAREST RELATES DESPERATE SITUATION TWO HUNDRED JEWISH REFUGEES POLAND REMAINING THERE STOP PLEASE DO UTMOST ENABLE EVACUATION SAME AS OTHER POL. REFUGEES STOP AWAITING REPLY ALSO REGARDING EIGHTY POLREFUGEES HERE REGARDS—BARLAS. In view of the desperate situation of those refugees in Romania, I entreat that you take appropriate measures to rescue them, providing it is still possible. I never differentiate in my estimation of the rights and duties of Polish citizens according to nationality and religion, but I am still forced to emphasise that among the Polish evacuees from Romania to Palestine there were, to my knowledge, only a few Jews, while among the 504 people evacuated to Cyprus—only 22 Jews ... As for the 80 Polish refugees in Istanbul, I have already had an opportunity to intercede with you on their behalf and I have submitted my letter. I request that you take appropriate measures also regarding that group, for they, too, are in a danger zone and may soon find themselves in the same situation as the other Polish refugees in Romania. Perhaps there is a way to evacuate these refugees to India or Australia, an action which—as I have been informed—is now being undertaken. I would like to once again stress that in the circles of Polish Jewry there is some bitterness because of the failure to provide equal care for endangered Polish-Jewish citizens. I am familiar with the difficult situation of our Government with regard to that matter; however, I request with full responsibility that you take into considerations the circumstances I have summarised here.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519.

Legation issued British visas to a group of endangered Polish refugees in Romania, including the youth; however, the evacuation of that group proved impossible because of the difficulties created by the Romanian authorities. Several scores of refugees who had already boarded a ship in the port of Constanța had to disembark on the order from the Romanian authorities. Under such circumstances, the British authorities see no way to issue British visas to and facilitate the departure from Romania of any groups of Polish refugees still staying in Romania. Nevertheless, the British authorities expressed their readiness to kindly grant entry visas to Palestine to those refugees from Romania who would be able to arrive in Istanbul by their own endeavours and who hold entry certificates to Palestine. The British Consulate in Istanbul has received appropriate instructions.

Regarding Polish refugees in the territory of Turkey, the British authorities adopted the position that it cannot currently be regarded as under threat and that priority should be given to other territories, such as Hungary and Yugoslavia. This view should be considered justified. The Embassy of the Republic of Poland, in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expressed its assent before the British authorities. In fact, already when making efforts to obtain the first quota for Polish refugees to Palestine, we provided 57 visas for refugees in Turkey, whereas a greater part of the refugees staying in Turkey were directed to Palestine at that moment—that is in December of last year and in January of this year—including a number of Jewish refugees. Nor can Greece be considered a territory under a greater threat than Hungary or Yugoslavia; therefore, the issue of evacuating refugees from Greece shall be dealt with at a later period. The British Government has been duly informed of the number of refugees who will have to be evacuated from Greece.

For your information, I wish to indicate that the British authorities have on several recent occasions declared that they see no possibility of directing any further groups of Polish refugees to Palestine—firstly, because of the large number of those already placed there, and secondly because of the local situation. There are some prospects for departures to Palestine of individual refugees, in the case of people who will be able to obtain an entry certificate to Palestine, as the latter may serve as the basis for our efforts to have entry visas granted to them.

The British authorities underscore that they encounter great difficulties in relocating Polish refugees to their territories; in addition, however, the requests submitted by the Polish Government require special investigation as to the conditions in the respective territories and reaching agreements with the local authorities. Regardless of the general consent to evacuate Polish refugees from the countries under threat, the British authorities reserve the right to evaluate the level of threat posed to specific groups or individuals every time, and—depending on their own assessment thereof—to grant asylum to refugees in the British territories. The decision of the Polish Government to provide subsistence for the respective

groups or individuals does not prejudice the decision of the British authorities whether to issue visas to asylum territories.⁴⁰

In light of these clarifications, I hope that you will acknowledge the difficulties associated with the evacuation of our refugees from the respective territories and will bear in mind these circumstances in case of receiving applications from individual refugees or groups thereof from the territories where our refugees still remain.

MINISTER
/—/ A. Zaleski

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1813 (previously published)

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*22 March 1941. Report by the Director General of the Polish Bureaux
in France on the assistance provided to Jewish refugees*

Vichy, 22 March 1941

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in LONDON

In light of the request from the Ministry, expressed in the letter No. 177/41 of 18 January of this year, I am conveying a series of facts providing insight into the assistance granted to Jews-Polish citizens by the Polish Red Cross in France.

The issue of protecting Jews who hold Polish citizenship was subject to consideration on more than one occasion both by the Managing Committee and the Delegation, as well as by the Council of the Polish Red Cross, established on 27 September 1940. During these considerations—despite the French Government

⁴⁰ In the letter from 26 February 1941, the Minister of Foreign Affairs instructed the Ambassador in London: 'Enclosed, I send for your information a copy of the letter from 22 February which I received from Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart concerning Jews-Polish citizens in Romania, as well as in other Balkan territories. Given that Mr Schwarzbart has intervened with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on several occasions for the Jews-Polish refugees in the Balkan countries, and that he considers the failure thus far to obtain British visas for them to have been motivated by the reluctance of the Ministry, I ask you to hold appropriate talks with the Foreign Office and notify me of their result, so that I will be able to inform Mr Schwarzbart of the decision taken by the British authorities.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519.

having issued a decisive anti-Jewish decree and a series of ordinances to complement it—the managerial bodies of the Red Cross adopted as the basic tenet of its care work the principle of equal treatment of Jewish refugees to that of all refugees holding Polish citizenship. Only at the express request from the Commissariat for refugees, communicated to President Chiczewski in October 1940, the authorities of the Polish Red Cross were forced to stop accepting Jews to Polish shelters, for, according to the general policy of the French Government, they should be concentrated in special camps intended solely for the Jewish population. The position adopted by the French central authorities was echoed by the attitude of most prefects, who—giving the permission to establish shelters in the territory of the respective departments—made a reservation that no Jews are to be placed there. Despite this, the Managing Committee made efforts to locate Jews even in those shelters, providing a more moderate attitude was taken by some prefects and the interested parties themselves expressed such a wish. On this occasion, I must place particular emphasis on the energetic campaign launched by the Managing Committee of the Polish Red Cross to render aid to Jews detained alongside native Polish refugees in camps for unemployed foreigners. An expression of the clear line of conduct, fully embraced by the Polish Red Cross on this occasion, is the enclosed circular of 16 January of this year, sent by the Managing Committee to all district delegates of the Polish Red Cross.⁴¹

Having investigated the situation of Jews holding Polish citizenship due to the dispatches received and the letter from the Ministry mentioned at the outset, I wish to declare that they to a greater or lesser extent benefit from all forms of assistance and protection provided by the Polish Red Cross.

SHELTERS

All Polish Red Cross shelters in the districts of: Toulouse, Perpignan and Périgueux are located in departments where the prefects prohibited the acceptance of Jews. Owing to a more lenient attitude of prefects in the departments of Isère and Drôme, the shelters in the Grenoble district do accommodate a number of Jewish inmates, who receive aid on par with Poles. However, I consider it advisable to indicate on that occasion that Jews generally do not feel comfortable in the very Polish atmosphere of these shelters and do not appear to be particularly interested

⁴¹ In the said circular, the President of the Managing Committee of the Polish Red Cross, Feliks Chiczewski, made the following recommendation: 'We kindly request that Delegates pay particular attention to the situation of Jewish refugees-Polish citizens gathered either in civilian camps or in special camps established exclusively for refugees. We wish to obtain as soon as possible the information both on the number of refugees in that category, as well as on their actual attitude towards the Polish state ... We state for the record that in mixed camps help should not be denied to Jewish refugees with indisputable Polish citizenship; however, protection should not be extended to those who in fact can[not] evidence that citizenship.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

in that form of aid, whereas those who have been accepted tend to avoid the company of other inmates and keep to themselves.

OPEN ASSISTANCE

That form of aid, consisting in allowances of money, permanent or temporary, is the one that best suits Jewish refugees; therefore, they use it relatively very broadly. I have personally gone through the list of temporary allowances, issued in more serious cases directly by the Managing Committee, and concluded that Jews comprise no less than 25% of people; what is more, with relatively substantial amounts of money by the Red Cross standards, for oftentimes exceeding 2,000 francs on individual occasion (in one case, the amount issued was 5,000 francs). In the largest of the Red Cross districts, Toulouse, of the 3,170 people using assistance, 600 are Jews, half of whom use cash allowances. In the district of Marseille, there were 170 Jews receiving allowances. In the district of Perpignan, over a 100. A financial report by the district delegate in Toulouse for February of this year suggests that out of the sum total of allowances at 57,000 francs, Jews received over 13,000 francs. A similar ratio can also be found in other delegations. In the distribution of clothing, refugees of Jewish descent are treated entirely on par with Poles. They benefit from the medical care much more frequently than Christians; for instance, in the district of Toulouse, out of 900 recipients of medical advice in February of this year, almost 600 were found to be Jews. Generally, out of 3.5 thousand people benefiting from various forms of the so-called open assistance, Jews account for approx. 1,000; however, that number tends to be growing, just as the French authorities are terminating the issuance of allowances for refugees, and as financial resources are depleting.

STUDENTS

Jewish academic youth—as long as they can provide evidence of their Polish citizenship—use the protection provided by the Polish Red Cross to Poles. In Grenoble, there were 16 Jewish students, of whom 6 are lodged in Polish halls of residence, who applied for and received support from the Polish Red Cross. As the Jewish youth from Poland had concentrated mainly in the University of Montpellier, the Polish Red Cross entered into a special agreement with the Entreaide universitaire association, which grants a monthly subsidy of 4,000 francs to aid exclusively 54 Jewish students, who in February had additional temporary allowances of 1,280 francs allocated to them; and that is excluding another four scholarships given to Jews. Of the total of 350 students that the Polish Red Cross is currently providing for, the number of Jews stands at 80.

CIVILIAN CAMPS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

The major concern for the Polish Red Cross is Polish citizens, both native Poles and Jews, interned in civilian camps for unemployed foreigners. This is because of the particularly difficult living conditions in those camps. Based on February

data, it should be assumed that during that period there were approx. 1,800 Jews in civilian camps with either confirmed or probable Polish citizenship. In the worst of those camps—that is, in the Argeles camp notorious among Poles—there were 285 Polish Jews, including 173 men, 68 women and 44 children. District delegates of the Polish Red Cross, despite their strenuous efforts, were only able to gain first access to those camps in December 1940. The assistance they subsequently started to provide, in the form of financial allowances and medical care, clothing distribution, extra meals, etc., was extended to all Polish citizens regardless of their religion. Apart from those detained in camps for the unemployed, a large number of Jews, i.e. 424 people, are held in prison camps in Gurs and Vernet. Fugitives from Spain during the civil war period account for a fraction of that populace; then, there are those suspected of being communists, spies, those deprived of documents, etc. Lastly, a group of Polish citizens is held in two camps (Breus and Recebedou) intended exclusively for Jews (also French Jews), where the living conditions are bearable.

MILITARY CAMPS

A minimal number of Jews, soldiers of the Polish Army in France, who are staying in work battalions alongside 3,200 Polish troops, benefits—based on the principle of equality—from all forms of assistance provided in those camps by the Polish Red Cross.

THE CITIZENSHIP ISSUE

Because the Polish Red Cross, pursuant to its statute approved of by the French authorities, is only allowed to protect Polish citizens, the issue of establishing citizenship of a Jew applying for aid is of major significance. This is no easy task, given the cunning and cleverness typical for that category of applicants, well known to all consular officials. However, taking into consideration the humanitarian approach to all refugees in time of need, it is to be assumed that there are no instances of help being denied to Jews whose Polish citizenship seems plausible, and that among people benefitting from the protection of the Polish Red Cross there may be stateless Jews, or those with dual citizenship, for instance, Polish and Belgian. Altogether, we estimate the number of Jewish refugees from Belgium at 5 to 6 thousand, though the great majority either never had the citizenship or had lost it a long time ago. Belgian Jews are provided for by a general Belgian Refugee Relief Committee, which—after a period of hesitancy that lasted until the end of last autumn—stopped differentiating between religions and grants aid to all refugees from Belgium. As for Jewish refugees from Belgium who have Polish citizenship and use the assistance of the Polish Red Cross, there have been several instances reported of their concurrently receiving aid from the Polish, Belgian, French and Jewish institutions.

ASSISTANCE FROM JEWISH AND FOREIGN SOURCES

If one takes into consideration that refugees of Polish nationality receive aid exclusively from the Polish Red Cross, with all other sources being closed for them, the situation of Jewish refugees should be regarded as indubitably more favourable. Owing to the fact that there is no real antisemitism in France (in spite of official tendencies manifested by their institutions), not only do Jews benefit from the help of their own relief organisations, but also from that of three national units of the Red Cross—the Polish, French, and Belgian branches—and of the Quakers, YMCA, etc.

Jewish organisations providing social assistance do not generally encounter major difficulties in their operation, particularly when their focus is on civilian camps. Objectively, I must admit that based on available information, Jewish organisations operate effectively and have been able to mobilise considerable financial resources. Jewish camps such as, for instance, the already mentioned Breus and Recebedou camps, are better than the mixed camps for foreign nationals in every respect: they have the best food, the best medical care, very good and expensive childcare (separate children's care houses), etc.

Despite my efforts, I was unable to obtain exhaustive materials that would enable me to outline the entirety of relief activities on the part of Jewish organisations. The characteristic feature is that they prefer to operate in dispersion, seeking individual contacts with the French authorities as well as with foreign, mainly American, relief organisations for war victims, avoiding all coordinated activity. The endeavours by the Managing Committee of the Polish Red Cross to establish relations with minor Jewish organisations in order to eliminate the possibility of individuals drawing assistance from several sources at the same time have thus far proven to no avail.

In its activity, the Polish Red Cross has already encountered signs of assistance activity performed by the following Jewish organisations and associations:

CAR—Comité Aide aux Réfugiés, disbursing 300 francs per person per month;

OSE—mainly providing assistance for Jewish emigrants;

HICEM—providing assistance for emigrants;

ORT—professional experience and training (crafts and agriculture);

AJDC—

Bureau de Bienfaisance—disbursing 6 francs per person daily;

JOINT—a representation in Lisbon, a delegate in Marseille who provides Jewish organisations with funds but performs no direct activity;

Commission Centrale des organisations juives d'assistance—Vichy.

Furthermore, there is a series of organisations and committees of French Jews—operating indeed rather efficiently, with broad contacts in the apparatus of the state and in capitalist circles—which are able to find sources of financial support.

Established several months ago, the Comité de Coordination pour l'Assistance dans les camps based in Nîmes—which brings together all organisations of various nationalities (including the Polish Red Cross and the Polish YMCA) and provides aid to refugees in camps—devotes much effort and work to Jews. Thanks to that committee, Jewish organisations are able to signal their needs to the central authorities in Vichy directly through their representatives, which they eagerly use, and which they underscore with a certain sense of pride as a positive achievement against the backdrop of the current policy of the Vichy Government. I suppose that further development of that policy—which manifests itself in the decree, announced several days ago, on the establishment of the General Secretariat for Jewish matters headed by deputy Xavier Vallat—shall rather result in the separating out of all Jewish actions than in their limitation.

Besides the assistance received by Jewish organisations from the three branches of the Red Cross, they remain in good relations with a number of American institutions (Hoover's aid, American Fund for European Refugee Relief, the Quakers, the Unitarian Service, etc.) and European ones, with the French Service Social d'Aide aux Emigrants deserving to be mentioned first.

The insight gained into that entire situation made Mr Stephens take the position that there is no justified need to put aside special sums of money for Polish Jews from the funds allocated for the protection of Poles; consequently, the Comporel decided to withdraw the instruction to transfer two million francs for the protection of Jews-Polish citizens.

Director General
S. Zabiełło

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

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*27 March 1941. Circular by the Acting Secretary-General at the MFA:
instruction on the restoration of Polish citizenship*

London, 27 March 1941

Secret

To All Foreign Offices of the Republic of Poland

Certain foreign diplomatic offices of the Republic of Poland, when submitting applications to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to restore the Polish citizenship to those who had been deprived of that citizenship on the basis of Paragraph 1 section b. of the Act of 31 March 1938 on Revocation of Citizenship (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland No. 22, item 191), either do not attach relevant opinions to these applications, in spite of explicit regulations pertinent thereto of point 3 of the circular letter from the MFA from 20 January 1940, No. Og. Kons. 719/85,⁴² or send in data that does not offer enough grounds to reach a competent decision. Obviously, such practice leads to superfluous correspondence.

Therefore, the Ministry hereby decrees as follows:

1) When sending an application to have the Polish citizenship restored, all items related to the interested party's connection with Polish statehood during their stay abroad shall be specified, that is, in particular: whether or not they are fluent in oral and written Polish, whether or not they were in contact with the country during their stay abroad, whether or not they participated in the life of the Polish settlements abroad, etc.

2) Furthermore, the date of departure from Poland must be investigated and brought to the knowledge of the Ministry, as well as the manner of that departure (legal, illegal); another element particularly important is finding out the duration of a given person's stay abroad, in the case of men to establish whether or not their departure from Poland resulted from the intention to avoid military service.

3) If possible, it should be ascertained whether the interested party has been registered in the military abroad.

4) The original or a certified copy of the decision to revoke the person's citizenship shall be enclosed with the application to have the citizenship restored.

For the MINISTER
/-/ Jan Wszelaki

AAN, Poselstwo Santiago de Chile, 56

⁴² Doc. 21.

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*7 April 1941. Address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on the possibility to secure British assistance
for Polish and Jewish refugees*

Address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
POLISH REFUGEES IN PORTUGAL AND IN THE FAR EAST⁴³

My ministry has recently held a series of talks with the British authorities about our refugees, asking the British Government for help in placing them in the British Empire. In those talks, all territories were considered, that is—the Iberian Peninsula, the Balkan countries, the Far East, as well as the evacuation of the Polish population from the Wilno region within the current possibilities.

For the moment, I wish to limit myself to the issue of our refugees in the Iberian Peninsula, particularly in Portugal, and in the Far East—in Japan.

The Portuguese authorities have recently introduced a number of restrictions for foreign refugees. Many refugees were served with a 30-day notice to leave Portugal; otherwise, they will be transferred to concentration camps.⁴⁴ These ordinances have stemmed from the fear of German aggression, as well as economic difficulties emerging in the territory of Portugal. They are also aimed to put pressure on refugees and their governments to relocate the mass of refugees from Portugal.

⁴³ The address was delivered during a session of the Council of Ministers on 7 April 1941.

⁴⁴ The situation was reported on also by Stanisław Schimitzek and his deputy Karol Maxamin, who—in their capacity as Delegates of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare—coordinated the assistance to Polish citizens in Portugal and oversaw the dispatch of food and clothing parcels to the German-occupied part of Poland. In the cable of 18 April 1941 (forwarded in the letter from 26 April from the MFA to the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare), they communicated: 'More and more refugees are being forced by the police to sign declarations that they will leave the country within the period of 30 days. When the time limit has expired, they are arrested. The Portuguese authorities intend to dispose of the refugees using ruthless restrictions, justifying it by pointing out that refugees were only issued transit visas. The establishment of a shelter would signal the tendency to prolong their stay; it would, therefore, encounter opposition and facilitate action against foreign citizens. Approx. 30 people are planning to leave for Brazil; they already have visas. Another approx. 30 people expect to soon obtain visas to the United States, that is, excluding Jews, whose departure is financed by HICEM. The travel of these 60 people will cost approx. £3,000. Due to the constantly deteriorating situation—in addition to a ship to England and the means to send the 60 people—it is necessary to evacuate to Canada at the earliest opportunity at least 250 endangered and valuable refugees. They have no prospects for obtaining visas to overseas countries. The matter is extremely urgent.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/42.

In the recent months, 1,900 Polish refugees, 90% of them Jews, have arrived in the Far East from Soviet-occupied territory. The Japanese authorities demand that we relocate these refugees, making the issuance of visas for any further people from the territory occupied by the Soviets dependent on their relocation, which is of significance for us in view of the evacuation of Polish population from the Wilno region, and in the future potentially also of the exiled people. Recently, Japan has annulled the transit visas issued by its agencies in the Soviet Russia. There is also an unknown number of people in Vladivostok, who request to be issued Japanese entry and residence visas in order to be able to leave the borders of the Soviet Russia on their basis.

The British side expresses its full understanding of our refugee problem, and accommodates our requests as much as possible, as indicated by the reception of refugees in Cyprus, Palestine and India. Moreover, the British authorities support our demands on refugee matters with the Governments of the Dominions. To the Prime Minister of Australia, currently on a stay here,⁴⁵ we have submitted an exhaustive memorandum concerning our refugees in the Far East, requesting that he grant a number of them asylum in wartime. Our endeavours are based on the following principles:

- 1) the persons fit for military service shall be directed to the Armed Forces;
- 2) we will seek asylum for the refugees whose loyalty we can vouch for;
- 3) after the end of the war, refugees shall return to Poland.

Our efforts to relocate refugees from the Far East are encountering immense obstacles because of the national composition of the refugee population. Of the countries of the British Empire, i.e. South Africa, Australia and Canada all refuse to admit Jews, and the former two countries are particularly categorical about it. Furthermore, both the British Government and the Governments of the Dominions potentially accept our refugees, dependent on a prior guarantee of the Polish Government that the refugees will be provided for in terms of sustenance.

Jewish refugees arriving in the Far East tend to benefit from financial aid of Jewish organisations, mainly the American JOINT. Ambassador Romer, in conjunction with my ministry, is taking steps to relocate Jewish refugees based on guarantees issued by the JOINT. We do not know the number of refugees for whom the JOINT would be willing to issue such a guarantee, nor whether that would prove sufficient for the British countries. My ministry is holding talks on the matter with British officials. Nevertheless, the Polish Government must make a crucial decision regarding the financial guarantee to provide subsistence to refugees

⁴⁵ This is a reference to a four months' stay in Great Britain of the Prime Minister of Australia, Robert Menzies, related to his participation in the sessions of Winston Churchill's War Cabinet.

during wartime, as demanded by the British Government and the Governments of Dominions. For instance, it is currently possible to transfer a certain amount of our refugees from Japan to Burma, the government of which offered asylum to 200 refugees; the Foreign Office requested our declaration on providing sustenance to refugees in Burma during their stay there.

I would like to inform you that due to our direct intervention and efforts by the British Government, the Government of Canada offered asylum to several hundred of our refugees on condition that we cover the cost of their travel and living, maintain the racial ratio, and facilitate their repatriation after the war. The offer is valid for refugees of all the Allied countries, primarily, however, for Poles. I further believe that based on that proposal we could direct to Canada at least 600 refugees.

Within that quota, Ambassador Romer in Tokyo has already obtained 140 visas to Canada. Although the Canadian Government has thus far not demanded our guarantee of subsistence for that number of people, we must, nevertheless, reckon with the possibility that the same Canadian conditions as those stipulated above pertain also to that group.

Considering the refugee situation in Portugal, we could—as part of the Canadian proposal—transfer a certain number of refugees from Portugal to Canada. I have recently been given the figure of 300 refugees in Portugal as referring to those considered valuable and endangered, who should be removed from Portugal as soon as possible. I request that the Ministers make decision on this matter, particularly regarding covering the cost of travel and the guarantee of their subsistence in Canada; I will then make efforts to carry out the relocation for my part. In Portugal, those refugees benefit from the Government's assistance. Furthermore, unburdening Portugal of refugees is of uttermost importance for us in connection with the endeavours to evacuate valuable people from unoccupied France, particularly servicemen and military industry experts. The current state of affairs on refugee matters in Portugal resulted in the Portuguese authorities' refusal to issue entry visas to the country. These restrictions apply even to individuals who already have residence visas, for instance to England, or elsewhere. Relocating a number of our refugees from Portugal will facilitate the change of the attitude (as of now negative) of the Portuguese authorities regarding visas for Polish citizens in unoccupied France.

London, 7 April 1941

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/35c (previously published)

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*12 April 1941. Report by the Ambassador in London
on the effort to obtain British assistance
for Jewish refugees in Romania*

12 April 1941

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In accordance with your instruction connected to the news from Turkey, the Embassy issued a letter to the Foreign Office, a copy of which you will find enclosed within, about the decision of the Romanian Government in relation to 600 Polish refugees of Jewish descent.⁴⁶ The letter was personally delivered by Secretary Baliński to Mr Roberts, the Foreign Office official responsible for Polish affairs. Mr Roberts promised to respond as soon as possible, openly stating that the answer would be negative.

In view of the above, the Embassy wishes to communicate that during a conference held on 13 March at the Foreign Office and devoted to Polish refugee affairs the situation in Romania was also discussed. Below, the Embassy provides the appropriate passage from the minutes of that meeting, prepared by the British side:

‘Romania. The Polish Ambassador said there were still over 1,000 civilian Poles in Romania largely Jews. It was explained that there was no hope of granting new

⁴⁶ In the letter from 10 April 1941, the Secretary at the Embassy in London, Antoni Baliński, recommended: ‘We today received a telegram from our former Ambassador in Bucharest, who is now at Istanbul, that information has reached Turkey of measures which the Romanian Government have decided to take in respect of some 600 Polish refugees of Jewish descent. These unfortunate people have received orders to leave Romania before the 21st instant. We do not know what would be the consequence of their non-departure by the above-mentioned date, but we must, of course, anticipate the most drastic measures. In view of the above the Embassy have been instructed to approach the British authorities with a request for visas for Palestine to be granted to these people.’ In the letter from 16 April 1941, Thomas Snow (Head of the Refugee Department at the British Foreign Office) responded: ‘I am very much afraid that Palestine’s immigration policy does not permit of the issue of any new visas for people in countries under enemy occupation ... You may rest assured that His Majesty’s Government is fully alive to the unfortunate situation of Polish nationals of Jewish descent in Romania at the present time. The measures which it is proposed to take in respect of those who actually hold certificates marks, however, the outside limit of the practical expression which, in existing circumstances, it is possible to give to that sympathy.’ AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1813 (ENG).

visas to these people; the most that could be hoped for would be that those of them who already had valid visas and immigration certificates to Palestine might be enabled to proceed thither.'

Edward Raczyński
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1813 (previously published)

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*12 April 1941. Cable from the Envoy in Athens
on the refugee situation in Greece*

MR GUENTHER—ATHENS
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 12 APRIL 1941
RECEIVED ON 12 APRIL 1941

No. 84

Today, the English Legation sends all Yugoslavian refugees who arrived here over the last three days to Egypt and Palestine without visas.⁴⁷ Having learnt of that, members of the Polish settlement caused a scandal at our Legation, accusing the Polish Government and our Legation of incompetence in protecting them against the German threat. When I inquired at the English Legation about the reason for such a different treatment of Yugoslavians and Poles, I was told the Legation had

⁴⁷ The influx of refugees resulted from the attack of German, Italian and Hungarian military forces on Yugoslavia and Greece on 6 April 1941. The Polish Legations in Belgrade and Athens were evacuated. See doc. 111. In the report of 1 December 1941 from Istanbul, S. Borowicz informed on the situation of the Jewish population in occupied Yugoslavia: 'Before the war, there was virtually no Jewish question in Serbia. Jews were relatively scarce. Their attitude was mainly patriotic (in the sense of Serbian patriotism). Among themselves they spoke Serbian.—At present, the same restrictions for Jews have been introduced as throughout the territories under German influence. Jewish shops and apartments have been confiscated. Jews wear yellow stars on their chests. They are not seen in the streets at all; the great majority of them, up to 95%, is said to have been placed in concentration camps or exterminated. In certain periods, the number of executions peaked at 300 people a day. The reaction of the local populace is such that no one is happy about these persecutions—for Jews are humans, too—but no one is particularly saddened by it, either. There are absolutely no Jews in Banat anymore: IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.54.

received an explicit order from London to that effect. I must state that in the recent days I have requested that the MFA induce the local English Legation to evacuate the Polish settlement from Greece, regardless of other efforts previously made by the MFA. Thus far, the English Legation here has received no such instructions. For the fourth time, I ask for the maximum immediate effort to obtain instructions to evacuate 194 Poles from Greece.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 522

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*14 April 1941. Note by the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief
to the US Secretary of State on providing assistance for refugees*

April 14th, 1941

The Honorable Cordell Hull,
Secretary of State

Dear Mr. Secretary,

Allow me to assure you that I am deeply appreciative of the very friendly way in which you gave me the opportunity of putting before you the immediate problems of Poland during our conversation of April the eighth.⁴⁸ I am especially grateful for your very kind interest with regard to the sufferings of the Polish people under both occupations, to the desperate situation of our deportees at present in Soviet Russia, of whom there are nearly one-half million. You were kind enough to say that you would like to have a memorandum stating all these problems in a more detailed way in order to see what the United States Government could do to ease the situation. I shall certainly send you such a memorandum in due course of time. At present, however, encouraged by your kindness and solicitude for the sufferings of my people, I take the liberty to send you this personal letter concerning two major Polish problems which have become so urgent that they require an immediate solution.

The first of these problems is that of our refugees in Portugal who have been granted temporary asylum in that country when forced to flee from France in

⁴⁸ The visit of Władysław Sikorski to the United States took place on 6–10 April 1941. After the official part, the Prime Minister remained in the United States until 9 May; among other places, he visited major Polish settlements. Beforehand, on 1–6 April, he had stayed in Canada.

order to escape direct personal danger at the hands of the Germans. There are among them some Polish intellectuals with their families whose preservation becomes daily more urgent in view of the methods of extermination applied to our intellectual classes by Germany and Soviet Russia in Poland. I have just received alarming telegrams from my Government in London informing me that the Portuguese Government has decided to place in special camps all refugees who, by the first of April, had not obtained visas from other countries enabling them to leave Portugal. Already now some people are being arrested by the Portuguese authorities.⁴⁹ These new regulations force the Polish Government to find the possibility to withdraw from Portugal about 300 of the total number of some 1,200 Polish refugees at present there. For some of these refugees we have been able to obtain asylum for the duration of the war from the Canadian Government. We are likewise trying to obtain such asylum for at least some of the refugees in Cuba and the Dominican Republic. It would, however, be impossible to carry out this very urgent task, if the United States Government did not also grant right of asylum to some of these refugees and allow that more visas, both for transit to Canada, as also to the United States under the immigration quota should be made available.

⁴⁹ In the subsequent note sent on the same day to the US Department of State, Prime Minister Sikorski informed: 'The Portuguese Government has ruled that all the refugees who will not leave Portugal before May 1st, will be confined in concentration camps. In connection with that many of them have been arrested. The Polish Government consider it their duty to do the utmost to evacuate 300 refugees as soon as possible. Canada has consented to grant asylum to a number of Polish refugees for the duration of the war and several South and Central American Republics have already granted such facilities, or are being approached on the same subject (Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador). In accordance with an agreement with the Portuguese Government at the moment of the collapse of France, it was understood that the refugees allowed to come into Portugal would not exceed the number of 1,500 and that they will remain there only temporarily, would be given opportunities to go to other countries, thus making way for new arrivals from adjoining countries. The difficulty of obtaining visas to other countries, and particularly to the United States has greatly hampered the carrying out of this arrangement. On account of the war developments in Europe as well as because of the new, above mentioned regulations applied by the Portuguese Government, the problem became so urgent that immediate steps have to be taken in order to solve it. The Polish Government would be greatly obliged if the State Department would deem it possible to assist in the following: 1) Granting greater visa facilities for asylum of Polish refugees from Portugal and Spain within the framework of the President's Advisory Committee for Political Refugees; 2) To have a larger number of visas allotted to the American Consulate in Lisbon within the annual Polish quota; 3) It would greatly facilitate the evacuation of Polish refugees from Portugal if transit visas would be more liberally granted to those whose final destination is any country of the American Continent, including Cuba; 4) One of the most important features of the above problem of evacuation of Poles from Portugal is the securing of shipping facilities for their transportation overseas.' NACP, RG 59 CDF 1940-44, 860c48, M 1197, roll 73 (ENG).

At present only 25 visas monthly are being granted at the U.S. Consulate in Lisbon under the quota regulations.

The same urgency applies to about 200 refugees at present interned in Spain. I am informed by our Legation in Madrid that even the evacuation of some of these refugees to Cuba would be greatly facilitated if they could obtain United States transit visas as this would render possible their further journey to Canada. Should this be possible, these refugees could sign declarations at the American Consulate in Madrid guaranteeing that they would not attempt to remain in the United States. The British authorities are doing all they can to help us in this matter, but as things are at present, this very important problem cannot be solved without the friendly cooperation of the United States Government.

In the course of our conversation we talked about the problem of the Polish deportees in Russia. Their plight is becoming daily more distressing. Our experience proves that there is but little hope that Soviet Russia would allow any neutral Committee to investigate the situation of these unfortunate people on the spot. Apart from this, the sending of food parcels and clothing is rendered inoperative on account of the prohibitive duties levied by the Soviet authorities, which the deportees, being deprived of all they possessed, cannot pay. I have just been informed that it would be possible for the deportees to purchase some food-stuffs for themselves and also clothing on the spot if they had the funds to do so. It occurs to me that the supplying of such funds to the deportees might perhaps be undertaken by the American Red Cross if you would raise no objection to such a course. It appears to me that the saving of this population of nearly one-half million, mostly intellectuals, practically doomed to death if help is not immediately available, is well within the framework of Red Cross activities. Personally, I see no other way of easing this most distressing situation.

I venture to add that the unanimous resistance of the Polish people and their unfaltering faith in the ultimate victory of Democracy in the face of the inhuman oppression which they are subjected to, would surely justify all steps that could still be taken to keep up the spirit of the Polish nation at this very crucial moment of the war.

In thus appealing to you regarding these problems, I am sure of your understanding and I trust that you will be able to find a way of helping us towards their solution.

With deepest gratitude, accept, Mr. Secretary, the expressions of my highest consideration and warmest regard.

Yours sincerely,
Sikorski

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*15 April 1941. Note by the Ministry of Information and Documentation:
collection of accounts on the situation in the territories of occupied Poland
(extracts)*

SECRET

London, 15 April 1941

Information received from the Post of Information and Documentation in Lisbon

Yesterday, the Karo family (father, mother and daughter)—Jews—arrived in Lisbon from Warsaw, having left Warsaw on 11 March on a road to Berlin. From Berlin to Madrid, they travelled by plane. They were able to leave based on an Argentinian passport, which was obtained for the said family by their daughter, who lives in Argentina.

Our interviewees are visibly disturbed by the moods and terror in Poland; in their stories they tend to exaggerate in every direction so that during the conversation it is difficult to ascertain actual facts. Mr Karo, the father, had owned a pharmacy.

The Police. Ghetto

Our interlocutors do not find the words to condemn the conduct of the Polish policemen serving under the Germans, who outbid one another in their subservience to the Germans, denouncing minor offences that are ignored even by the Germans. Our interviewees give examples particularly associated with communication with the ghetto, which—as it is known—has been surrounded at the gates with Jewish, Polish and German police stations. In that regard, Polish policemen harass Jews more than the Germans, at the same time accepting bribes. The main area of contention is the smuggling of food to the ghetto, where food rations are much smaller and therefore the prices in illegal trade are much higher. For example, they indicate that on the Polish side bread costs 4,50 zlotys per kilogram, whereas in the ghetto up to 9 zlotys. The contraband is either run through gateways or thrown over the wall, under the eye of the corrupt policemen.

The Jewish district is greatly overcrowded. Its streets are always packed. Order is maintained by Jewish police, who are also extremely servile to the Germans. Our interviewees recall an incident they witnessed, when a German policeman scolded such a Jewish policeman, who approached him to denounce his brother in faith because of some trifle. The German told him: 'Du bist ein Jude und er ist ein Jude—schaemst du dich nicht,' etc.

Persecutions

Already at the outset of the conversation, our interviewees inform us that before their departure they were ordered to sign a declaration that they would not divulge any information against the Reich. Regarding persecutions, they are unable or unwilling to state a single specific fact, a single name. They only speak in general and with signs of great anxiety about the terror, roundups in the streets, executions in the garden of the Sejm and the University, etc. When asked, they estimate the number of people detained, transported to concentration camps, and shot, at 50,000 in Warsaw alone.

They stipulate that nothing in Warsaw can be known for certain, one only knows that 'people say'. It is said that there was to be a trial, subsequently transferred to Magdeburg (?), against Mayor Starzyński, accused of having caused the destruction of Warsaw. According to the same rumours, Mayor Starzyński was to be executed and the same fate was to befall General Rómmel, his co-accused.⁵⁰

According to the testimony of our interviewees, during the winter there were no roundups in the city, apart from of a single day in January.

Information from a letter by the former Deputy Minister of Treasury Świtalski

In June and July, many people travelled from Lithuania to the General Government by crossing through the forested areas along the border; during the attempt, many were captured and have been in Soviet prisons to this day. On 27 December, the Soviet authorities started to—with various complications—issue exit visas to holders of Polish passports and certificates. Approx. 2,000 people were able to leave, mainly Jews, through Vladivostok and Tokyo. The journey to Tokyo had to be paid for with actual dollars, \$220 a person, that is, 6,600 roubles at the exchange rate in the black market.

Sadowska, Kowol and Żeleńska from the former Polish Legation in Riga have been recently imprisoned by the Bolsheviks.

...⁵¹

Information received from a Polish Telegraphic Agency correspondent in Stockholm

In a report from Warsaw, the issue of 'Litzmannstaedter' of 3 April emphasises the complete separation of Polish people from Germans; with the best hotels, restaurants, shops, theatres and cinemas being exclusively reserved for the latter. In

⁵⁰ The Mayor of Warsaw, Stefan Starzyński, was arrested by the Germans and murdered most likely towards the end of December 1939. According to other hypotheses, Starzyński was shot in the camp in Dachau in 1943. General Juliusz Rómmel (in 1939 Commander of the Łódź Army, and subsequently of the Warszawa Army) was taken captive and imprisoned in a German oflag (liberated in April 1945).

⁵¹ An extract about the situation in Italy and that in some Polish cities was omitted.

a subsequent passage of the report, the author states that in Warsaw cafés, there are many elegant women who can afford luxury goods for exorbitant prices—at the same time, one observes terrible misery and ruins, the ‘result of the preposterous defence.’ The author concludes by saying that members of the Polish intelligentsia, ‘contrary to the lies circulated by the enemy, live peacefully unless they are involved in politics.’

...

Information received from a Polish Telegraphic Agency correspondent in Helsinki

...

Polish border. According to the incoming information, the cost of travel of Polish refugees from Lithuania to Japan stands at \$185. Recently, apart from Jews also several refugees-Poles have left for Japan. The right to leave the country continues to be granted solely to refugees.

Polish border. The municipal authorities of Wilno are said to have cancelled dinner assistance for refugees. However, owing to the strenuous efforts of refugees, the soup kitchen has been retained for now.

Polish border. Permanent residents of Wilno, as it is known, became Soviet citizens automatically. However, they have so far not received Soviet passports. Meanwhile, the refugees wishing to remain in Wilno have to first ‘procure’ Soviet citizenship.

From ‘Action Française’ No. 72 of 25 March

Invasion of England. On the pages of ‘Le Journal’, General Duval discusses the possibility of an invasion of England and comes to a conviction that with the military methods used so far, no such invasion would be possible; however, he admits the possibility that owing to new systems of warfare, above all based on the immense capability of air power, such an invasion could prove successful.⁵²

Minister

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.10/1

⁵² The note was sent to the Prime Minister, members of the Government, and the Chief of the Commander-in-Chief’s Staff, Tadeusz Klimecki.

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*19 April 1941. Minutes of the talks between the Prime Minister
and representatives of the American Jewish Congress
and the World Jewish Congress*

AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

330, West 42nd Street, New York City

For your attention

19 April 1941

Certified Minutes

General Władysław Sikorski, the Prime Minister of the Polish Government, assured the delegation of the American Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress during an interview held at the Buckingham Hotel that the Polish Government believes that it is assisting in the ideological war by which the new world order will be established, based on peace and justice. It is currently known that General Sikorski declared that the principles adopted by the Polish Government fall within the five principles announced by President Roosevelt, namely: freedom of religion, freedom of speech, protection against attack, freedom of information and education, freedom of the press, lastly freedom from want. The motto of the current Government is: Equal duties and equal rights.

After these declarations by the Polish Prime Minister, he was presented a Memorandum⁵³ envisaging the next steps to be taken by the Polish Government to assure the Jewish society of complete equality before the law—as regards both civil and public law—to be granted to Polish Jews in the restored Poland.

The above Memorandum was submitted on behalf of the delegation by Dr Stephen S. Wise, President of the Jewish American Congress. The following persons came as members of the delegation: Dr Nahum Goldmann, President of the Executive Committee of the World Jewish Congress, Dr Samuel Margoshes, Chairman of the Committee for Polish-Jewish Affairs, common for the above organisations, Dr Maurice I. Perlzweig, President of the British Section of the World Jewish Congress and Maldwin M. Fertig, member of the Governing Council of the American Jewish Congress, Chairman of the Executive Department of the American Federation of Polish Jews.

The delegation welcomed General Sikorski to America and expressed their deepest sympathy for the Polish nation 'in the hour of its greatest need.' Gratitude was expressed for the honourable participation of Jewish soldiers in the fight

⁵³ See doc. 121.

against the Nazi invasion as well as the hope that the victory of democracy would result in the restoration of Poland.

Responding, General Sikorski declared that the Polish Government opposes antisemitism, which is altogether alien to it. Our shared suffering, he said, created a spiritual community between Poles and Jews. The Polish Council of Ministers decided to unanimously combat antisemitism, whereas the circulation of the 'Jestem Polakiem' magazine within the Polish Army was prohibited, with the Polish Government having declared the publishers of that journal violators of Polish national discipline.⁵⁴

Furthermore, the attitude of the Polish Government towards Jews was defined in the declaration by Minister Stańczyk in November of last year in London.⁵⁵ Minister Stańczyk declared that complete equality would be guaranteed to all citizens of the restored Poland. General Sikorski stated that the declaration was only made after an exhaustive discussion and with a unanimous resolution passed by the entire cabinet.

General Sikorski pointed out that the cooperation between American Poles and American Jews in the United States is of extraordinary significance and instructed the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in the United States, present during the interview, to support that cooperation.

The General offered to consider and discuss with the Polish Minister of Justice whether it would be advisable to issue a declaration as to the annulment of the acts and ordinances which differentiated between Polish citizens, enacted by the former Polish Government. As he said, it would be a mere formality, for the current Polish Government supports the new world order which will stem from the victory of democracy, and hence any legislation of that sort shall become impracticable.

The Polish Government is founded on the principles of peace and freedom, declared by President Roosevelt, with the motto of the Polish Government being: Equal duties and equal rights.

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.5/3

⁵⁴ In the unsigned note from 11 May 1941, titled *The Jewish matter and Belgian affairs—a report for Dr Retinger* (who accompanied the Prime Minister during his stay in the United States), the following was stated: 'throughout the period of your absence, the problem of the 'Jestem Polakiem' magazine has not left the pages of the English and Jewish press. At the outset of April, the matter became so notorious that the Council of Ministers saw itself forced to issue via the Polish Telegraphic Agency ... another declaration on the question. It would be advisable to put a definitive end to the publication of that journal, for I am afraid it will continue to cause constant irritations.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.57.

⁵⁵ Doc. 72.

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*24 April 1941. Letter from the Acting Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
about refugees in Greece*

London, 24 April 1941

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes to inform the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare that during the last two weeks it received from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Athens information on the number of Polish refugees in Greece having increased to 200 people. The MFA has also undertaken appropriate efforts with the British authorities to obtain asylum for refugees in Greece; the increase in that tally having undoubtedly been influenced by the fact that refugees have been crossing over from Yugoslavia. The British authorities granted asylum to further 100 non-Jewish refugees moving to Palestine and 30 Jewish refugees to Burma, making efforts to relocate the rest of the refugees.

In the meantime, Envoy Guenther informed in the telegram No. 92,⁵⁶ that on 17 April all endangered refugees and others who expressed their willingness to depart boarded SS Warszawa, 74 people in total.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 522

⁵⁶ In the cable no. 92 of 18 April 1941, the Envoy in Athens communicated: 'Yesterday, all the endangered people and the settlement who wanted to leave, 67 people in total, were embarked on the ship. Apart from them, also some members of the Legation departed with their families—7 people. I stayed behind with three officials, with whom we are departing for Crete; there is a possibility that we take our radio station: AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 226. See doc. 107.'

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*24 April 1941. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Envoy in Lisbon about refugees in Portugal*

London, 24 April 1941

Very urgent—Secret

To the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
in Lisbon

I confirm the receipt of your telegrams in which you inform me of the situation of Polish refugees in Portugal that emerged in the wake of the recent ordinances adopted by the Portuguese authorities, demanding that refugees leave Portugal within 30 days, for otherwise they will be sent to concentration camps.

I have made the relevant departments aware of the content of your telegrams; I also wish to inform you that the Government has decided to endeavour to evacuate at least a portion of the refugees from Portugal.

For our part, we have intervened on several occasions with the British decision makers to remove Polish citizens holding entry visas to England from Portugal. The British authorities committed themselves to organising the departure of these people in the shortest possible time. The data received from Portugal suggests that there is a total of 106 people involved.

Regarding refugees who either already have visas to enter American countries or are assured that they will receive them, the Government has decided to come to their aid in covering their travel expenses. The relevant instructions have already been sent by telegraph from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare to Delegate Schimitzek to communicate the amount needed for this purpose, with Jewish refugees still to be financially assisted with their travel costs by Hicem.⁵⁷

The Polish Government presented the refugee problem on the Continent of Europe and in the Far East in an exhaustive manner to the British Government as well as to the British Dominions. As a result of this action, Canada has offered us wartime asylum for several hundred refugees, with the racial proportions retained, provided that the Polish Government accepts a guarantee of their maintenance

⁵⁷ HICEM—a Jewish aid organisation, established in 1927 by the union of three associations: HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), ICA (Jewish Colonisation Association) and the Berlin Emigdirect. The name HICEM is an acronym of the three institutions. After Germany invaded France, HICEM moved to London, wherefrom it tried to support the refugees in Portugal.

for the duration of their stay in Canada. The Government is willing to issue such a guarantee but is unable to do so because of the unavailability of transfer to Canada. I also instructed Consul General Podoski to find a change in this condition and to make efforts with Polish and Jewish organisations to ensure the maintenance of at least a certain number of our refugees in Canada.⁵⁸ Mr Podoski has been taking measures in this regard. I also instructed the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Washington that the Polish American Council should take over the task of providing for 100 women and children in conjunction with the offer it made to the Polish Government in July of last year to provide wartime assistance in America for 1,500 women and children.

As for the question of which category of refugees should be taken from Portugal, the same principles should be applied here as in all other refugee territories, i.e. the first to be evacuated should be those refugees most at risk because of their past activities, valuable people and military families. As I have been informed, there are approx. 350 people falling into these categories. The Polish Government is also making efforts to transfer this number of refugees from Portugal. If there were to be undeniable difficulties in directing these refugee groups from Portugal overseas, the Government seeks the consent of the British authorities to bring them to England, from where they would then be directed to their destination.

The Government does not see any factual and political grounds for taking other refugee groups from Portugal, without of course refusing to help them, as far as possible, in facilitating the obtaining of destination visas and ensuring their existence during their stay in Portugal.

In your telegrams, as well as in the communications by other officials in Portugal, there are frequent mentions of the commitment to transport refugees out of Portugal that you made last June. As far as I know, other governments have also made the same commitment. Our Government is also making efforts to enable refugees' departure to British territories or to neutral countries, as proven by the departure of several hundred refugees; however, as you well know, the Government encounters immense obstacles in organising a broader action in that regard. Because of the said commitment and the inability to remove refugees, the Government made attempts to prevent refugees from becoming a burden for the Portuguese authorities or society. Furthermore, despite its difficult situation, the Government continues to transfer sums of money for assistance to refugees, who

⁵⁸ In the letter of 16 June 1941 sent to the MFA, Minister Stańczyk informed: 'The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare obtained the consent of the Ministry of Treasury to issue a re-guarantee to provide for 100 Jewish refugees in Canada on condition that a relevant Jewish organisation in Canada shall submit in writing to the Polish Consulate the obligation to provide for those refugees. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare kindly requests that the Consul of the Republic of Poland in Canada, Mr Podoski, be appropriately informed thereof by telegraph.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

not only do not burden, but constitute a rather significant source of income for Portugal, which must be of major importance for the country that used to benefit greatly from the currently non-existent tourism sector. This is a very important argument, one that you should use in your interventions with the Portuguese Government regarding the affairs of our refugees, particularly in order to prevent their arrests or detainment in concentration camps. Additionally, that fact should help you obtain Portuguese visas for the Polish population in France, first and foremost for the families of servicemen who already have entry visas to England, and for industrial experts, who we very much want to pull out from France.

Various projects have recently been submitted to the Polish authorities to organise the departure of Polish refugees from Portugal, among others, aboard a rented Spanish ship paid for by a certain group of wealthy Jewish refugees for the departure of Polish refugees, and even Czech and Belgian refugees. The same wealthy refugees would also cover the costs of living expenses in the country of asylum. I consider such proposals to be less factual and impossible for the Government to consider. I would like to emphasise here that, in view of the difficulties we have in obtaining asylum for refugees, our efforts can mainly cover refugees who have strong ties with Poland and whose return to the country we care about.

Concerning the Jewish refugees in Portugal who before the war resided in Western Europe and were poorly connected with Poland, Jewish organisations should assist them in their applications for visas, and they undoubtedly offer opportunities in this regard, which the Government, for its part, will support. It should be noted that the Government does not intend to make distinctions between Polish citizens; however, it is unable to extend equal assistance to all asylum seekers because of the encountered reluctance on the part of the British and neutral countries to accept large numbers of Jewish refugees.

I trust that together with Minister J. Potocki you will make efforts with the Portuguese authorities to normalise the situation of our refugees, whose material existence is guaranteed by the Polish Government, and that the Legation together with the Delegation for Refugee Affairs will calm the minds of refugees. The news coming from London indicates too much agitation among refugees and exaggerated panic that needs to be counteracted on the spot. The situation of the Polish population in other territories, for instance, in France, is without a doubt worse, both currently and in the foreseeable future; however, the Government does not have to deal with such manifestations of panic and insistent appeals such as those from Portugal. Moreover, a number of refugees from Portugal were assured of coming to England (specialists), but they refused to leave, which is known to British authorities and which hinders our efforts.

I look forward to the comprehensive report on the regulation of the situation of our refugees, in cooperation with Delegate S. Schimitzek, which will take into account the above guidelines.

MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

August Zaleski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

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*3 May 1941. Cable from the Ambassador in Ankara:
information from the Delegate of the Ministry of Treasury
for the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare about refugees in Hungary*

MR SOKOLNICKI—ANKARA
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 3 MAY 1941
RECEIVED ON 6 MAY 1941

No. 96

Stypiński to the Minister of Social Welfare

The Committee is operating as usual.⁵⁹ Before Easter, I distributed monthly allowances in civilian and military camps. I bought a lot of clothing. The Hungarians

⁵⁹ This is a reference to the activity of the Civic Committee for the Care of Polish Refugees in Hungary, headed by the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Henryk Sławik. In 1941, Sławik was temporarily arrested. After his release, attempts were made to evacuate him; however, Sławik remained in Hungary and became involved in relief activity. In the wake of Germany's invasion of Hungary, he was arrested and murdered in the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp in August 1944. In the letter from 17 December 1940, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare informed the MFA: 'The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asks that the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Budapest be instructed to assist to Mr Henryk Sławik in obtaining an entry visa to England as well as transit visas, in order to enable him to reach England. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare envisages the possibility of employing Mr Sławik in England in case his stay in Budapest proves no longer possible for political reasons. The Ministry believes that Mr Sławik should remain at his post until the moment events render his further activity impossible and become a direct threat to his freedom; that is exactly the reason why Mr Sławik needs to obtain a visa in time, as that would enable him to leave when necessary. At the same time, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests

are still to return the seized 75,000 pengö. I am without means to operate. I am communicating that to the Ministry of Treasury by telegraph.

Sławik together with his colleagues—interned near Budapest. Currently treated well. His escape impossible at present, but all the documents are ready. I have the right to visit him for an hour a week. We are providing material aid and covering the costs of legal protection. I encounter great difficulties with regard to the endangered people; American help required hastily from Washington. The report with a courier.

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 522*

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*14 May 1941. Letter from the Acting Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Embassy in London
on the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Sweden to Australia*

London, 14 May 1941

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in London

Confirming the receipt of the letter from the Embassy from 24 April, No. 792,⁶⁰ the Ministry wishes to inform that it received the telegram from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Stockholm about Australia having refused the British Legation's request to issue visas for the 57 Jewish-Polish citizens holding Swedish documents for stateless people. Concurrently, Envoy Potworowski is asking whether there are any prospects for a change in Australia's decision.

that the enclosed telegram be forwarded to Mr Sławik.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 522*. See doc. 186.

⁶⁰ In the said letter, Antoni Baliński communicated: 'Referring to the letter from the Ministry from 18 April, concerning 57 Jews-Polish citizens in Sweden who want to depart to Australia on the basis of Swedish travel documents, the Embassy wishes to communicate that it submitted to the Foreign Office a request for help on this matter already on 2 April. Unfortunately, the Embassy does not consider it possible to renew contacts with the High Commissioner for Australia. The stance taken by the Australian authorities with regard to our request that visas be issued to 66 Polish citizens of Jewish descent who are currently staying in Japan, and particularly the position adopted by the representative of the High Commissioner during a conference held at the Foreign Office on 13 March, was of such sort that the Embassy sees no prospect of appealing to the local office again without jeopardising its own status.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519*.

The Ministry has informed the Legation in Stockholm of the reluctant position of Australia on issuing entry visas to Jews, communicating at the same time that it will intervene at the Foreign Office in order to clarify whether the 57 Jewish refugees could be granted entry visas to any of the British territories.

Having brought the above to the attention of the Embassy, the Ministry requests that appropriate talks be held with the Foreign Office, pointing out that the relocation of that number of Polish citizens from Sweden is of importance for us because of the efforts to obtain Swedish visas for the Polish population of the Wilno region. Envoy Potworowski was assured that should the said group of Polish citizens leave Sweden, an appropriate number of Swedish visas will be granted to Poles from the Wilno region.

The procurement of Swedish visas for the Polish population of the Wilno region is all the more important for us, as the attempts made via the British Embassy to evacuate Poles from that region have so far been to no avail. Furthermore, the Ministry takes the opportunity to ask the Embassy to also discuss with the Foreign Office the issue of Poles in the Wilno region and the efforts made by Sir Stafford Cripps, as for a long time we have not received any information on that from the British authorities.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 519

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*19 May 1941. Letter from the Consul General in Ottawa
to the Consulate in Montreal on the endeavours
to obtain Canadian visas for Jewish refugees*

19 May 1941

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consulate of the Republic of Poland
in Montreal

Responding to your letter from 17 April, I wish to inform you that at this stage, having at my disposal 200 visas intended for Polish citizens staying in Japan, I can try to allocate no more than a third of the quota to the Jewish population, that

is, 70 visas at most. I was urged to keep the appropriate ratio both by our Prime Minister and by the Canadian Government (as I have been able to acknowledge in today's conversation). Tomorrow, after the conference in the Department of External Affairs, we will send—the Canadian authorities for their part, and I for my own—dispatches to Tokyo, instructing them to issue 70 Canadian visas to Polish citizens of the Jewish race, with particular emphasis on candidates from the Rabbinical College.

Under such circumstances, I am unable to take into account Mr Sapir's request; I am returning his letter, which is attached.⁶¹ My motivation being that, according to the Department of Immigration—an opinion which I share—neither Mr A. Sapir nor the demand he made deserve special treatment, for, as Director Blair pointed out to me in a letter from 6 January of this year (forwarded to your post with our letter No. 738-a/127 of 7 January of this year), Mr A. Sapir had given two false statements to the immigration authorities in Vancouver: one about his racial origin, the other of his financial standing.⁶²

Wiktor Podoski

CONSUL GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

N.B. Canada initially agreed to accept 79 Polish citizens, of whom—with the consent of Minister Zaleski—the majority was to be Jewish, as it was mainly

⁶¹ There is no attachment.

⁶² In the letter from 30 May 1941, Consul Wiktor Podoski informed the Government Delegate for Relief Affairs in the United States, Aleksander Znamięcki: 'I have just received a dispatch from Delegate Schimitzek in Lisbon with an inquiry about where to send our refugees who have been granted Canadian visas and who are leaving individually without any financial means. I kindly request that you inform me as soon as possible of the prospects for transport of these 300 people, who may now be prevented from arriving in Canada only by transport difficulties. I want to emphasise at this juncture, having had another conversation with Minister Falter today, that here, in Canada, we undertake to provide protection and subsistence during wartime for 300 of our compatriots from Portugal (as well as many from Japan). On the other hand, we do not have any funds, nor are we able to make any efforts when it comes to passage, whether by sea or by land, to the assembly area (which probably will be Toronto) ... I understand that all travel issues in this context are centralised in your hands ... Minister Falter advises that the missing sum for journeys, besides the money offered by the Polish diaspora, should be submitted by the latter group in New York (e.g. directly to you) in American dollars; meanwhile, the equivalent of this sum in pound sterling would be allocated by the Polish Government in London for various relief purposes, *for* which the emigrants send *transfers* from time to time. On the other hand, perhaps Jewish organisations in the United States, being financially comfortable, would be willing to partly also cover the cost of travel of Christian Poles ... I wish to add that the Federation of Polish Jews in Canada declared its willingness to cover 25% of subsistence costs for Christian Poles in Canada.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36.

they who were at the time staying in Japan among the refugees from Poland. Subsequently, the number was increased all the way up to 1,000 people, but it includes citizens from all Allied countries, mainly Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Netherlands. If Poland were to take a half of that number, that is, 500 people, leaving the remaining half for other Allied countries, it would probably be a fair estimate. At the same time, I hope that—should the other countries not exhaust their full quota (at least until the end of the war)—we could obtain some more. Of the 500, after subtracting 300 for Spain and Portugal, 200 would be left (at present) for the Far East.⁶³

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

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19 May 1941. Report by the Envoy in Mexico City on the activity of the authorities of Costa Rica

19 May 1941

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding anti-Jewish activity in Costa Rica⁶⁴

I have the honour of communicating the following
to the Ministry:

A few months ago, a semi-official commission was created by the Costa Rica Congress to investigate the alleged danger looming over the country's industry and trade from Polish Jews.

The committee included parliamentarians and prominent merchants and industrialists.

It concluded its investigation with resolutions demanding that the Government introduce strict police surveillance of Polish Jews, as an undesirable and downright harmful social element, and expel them altogether when the circumstances in Europe return to normal.

⁶³ Copies of the report were sent to the MFA and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, as well as to the Embassies in Washington and Tokyo, the Legation in Lisbon, and the Consulate in Winnipeg.

⁶⁴ The Envoy in Mexico City, Mieczysław Marchlewski, was also accredited in other South American countries, including Costa Rica.

Alarmed by these regulations, a Polish association in San José, Costa Rica—composed of 97% of Jews—and named ‘Dom Polski,’ approached me with an urgent request for help.

The association stressed that the regulations pose a genuine threat. They are the result of not only competitive motivations, but also of a ruse by the German population, who are highly influential in Costa Rica both economically and politically.

I wrote an extensive private letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Alberto Echandi, pointing out the extreme nature of these regulations and expressing the opinion that the regulations suggest Nazi influence, for which antisemitism is a fundamental weapon. (I note that the Government and society of Costa Rica are opposed to totalitarian states.)

Furthermore, I brought the issue to the attention of the US Envoy in San José, Mr Hornibrook, with whom I established close relations during my official visit there.

* * *

In recent days, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Echandi, has informed me in an official note that the Polish settlement has no cause for fear, that these acts against it emerge within a narrow group of competitors, and that the administrative authorities would only carry out research on whether the papers of Polish citizens were in order.

Furthermore, I received a notification from Mr Hornibrook that the Government was not going to take into consideration the regulations of the commission and that the issue has been ‘shelved.’ I confidentially informed the president of ‘Dom Polski’ of the result and received a response, which you will find enclosed.⁶⁵

Although ‘Dom Polski’ believes that the matter was solved because of my intervention, the Legation is naturally unable to assess whether and to what extent our action resulted in disregarding the resolutions of the commission. Be that as it may, the Legation requests that the matter be treated in confidence in order not to undermine the authority of the Government of Costa Rica, with which the Legation intends to maintain the best relations possible. These are certain to be useful for us in the future more than once.

Dr *Mieczysław Marchlewski*
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 67

⁶⁵ Not included in this publication.

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*23 May 1941. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation
in Buenos Aires on the attitude
of the Chilean authorities towards Jewish refugees*

23 May 1941

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

In addition to the information previously provided, I hasten to inform you that in the recent days I have had a long conversation with the Director of the Consular Department, Mr Errázuriz, who clarified his point of view on the arrival of Polish refugees as follows.

The arrival of Jews from anywhere is out of the question; furthermore, Mr Errázuriz includes in that category also Jews who have converted to Catholicism. He told me that he was ready to fully respect and believe my certificates stating that a given person was not of Semitic origin, because showing a certificate that someone was a Pole-Catholic was not sufficient for him, as it could also apply to Jews who had converted to Catholicism. Mr Errázuriz explains the utterly negative stance with regard to the arrival of Jews by the fact that due to a great scandal associated with the arrival of, as he claims, 12,000 German Jews to Chile, neither the Minister nor the Under-Secretary of State will sign any entry permits for Jews unbeknownst to the President, while the President had experienced so much trouble in that context that he assumed a definitely negative position on the matter. Regardless of this, there is no doubt that Mr Errázuriz himself, though very kind to us, is a definite anti-Semite. Therefore, I was forced to telegraph to our Embassy in Tokyo that any efforts to get Jews, even Catholics, to come here were completely hopeless.

Regarding ethnic Poles, even though in principle the position of the Chilean Government today is unfavourable towards any immigration—as there is a belief that as soon as the United States enters the war, the (economic) situation in Chile will deteriorate significantly—Mr Errázuriz promised me to kindly consider every application for the arrival of Poles in Europe to Chile, but still each case must be considered individually, taking into account the person's profession and their ability to find a job in Chile.

As for the Polish refugees residing in Brazil, and possibly also in Argentina, Mr Errázuriz is fundamentally opposed to their arrival in Chile, because he claims that once they are in Brazil and are not in any danger, it is better that they stay there. Exceptions could be made in cases where there is a specific reason for a person to

wish to come to Chile—having a family, having a specific opportunity to find a job, etc.—but hoping to find a job here more easily, or believing that Chile’s economic situation is better than that of Brazil, is not enough reason.

I wish to remind you that some time ago I contacted our Legation in Lisbon, suggesting that you send me several names, with appropriate dates for each person, of those who would like to come to Chile, except for Jews, but I did not receive a reply to this letter.⁶⁶

Envoy of the Republic of Poland⁶⁷

AAN, Poselstwo Buenos Aires, 252

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*23 May 1941. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Consulate General in Jerusalem
on Polish-Jewish relations*

TO Polconsul JERUSALEM
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED ON 23 MAY 19[41]

No. 164

At the request of Minister Kot

I ask you to communicate the following to the Commission for Jewish affairs:⁶⁸

The Commission’s circulars with testimonies from Jewish refugees from Poland often contain one-sided accounts. All these statements emphasise that the persecution of the Jewish population by the occupiers occurred with the participation of degenerate Polish individuals, and some even speak of a several-day long mass pogrom of Jews by a street mob. Meanwhile, they entirely fail to mention the permanent help provided by Poles to Jews, accounts of which are recorded in all reports from the country. They do not explain that the robbery of Jewish shops in Warsaw had been organised by the Germans and recorded on film for propaganda purposes to drive a wedge between the Polish and Jewish communities.⁶⁹ The correction of the messages is not only the right thing to do, but is in the best interest of both societies, whose only salvation is to overthrow

⁶⁶ The report was sent to the diplomatic posts in Lisbon, Madrid and Vichy.

⁶⁷ Chargé d’Affaires Mieczysław Chałupczyński resided in Buenos Aires but was also accredited at the Governments of Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay.

⁶⁸ This is a reference to the United Committee for Aid to Polish Jews in Tel Aviv.

⁶⁹ This is most likely a reference to the so-called Easter pogrom of 1940. See doc. 32.

German tyranny. Therefore, it is in our mutual interest to avoid anything that could set world opinion against the cause of the Polish state.⁷⁰

ZALESKI

AAN, Instytutu Hoovera, MSZ, 229 (previously published)

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*27 May 1941. Report by the Consul General in Bombay:
report on the activity of the Polish Committee for Refugees in India*

27 May 1941

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in LONDON

Report on relief activity in the territory of the British Raj
for the period between 15 September 1940 and 31 March 1941⁷¹

Referring to the report No. 791/W/353 of 18 September of last year, please find enclosed⁷² for your information the financial report on the activity of the

⁷⁰ In the letter from 4 June 1941, the Minister of Information and Documentation informed the MFA: 'The Committee for Aid to Polish Jews with headquarters in Jerusalem has been recently sending out testimonies, copied via a Roneo machine, of Jews who left Poland. As suggested by the "internal circular" enclosed with those testimonies, they are to be used by the press with the indication of their source. These testimonies, besides many interesting pieces of information providing the right perspective on the situation in Poland under the two occupations, also include some that are to highlight the antisemitism manifested by the Polish society. Even without undermining the truthfulness of these facts, it must be concluded that publicising these in the press is detrimental to the interests of Poland. In one of those statements ... the three south-eastern voivodeships are referred to as "Western Ukraine," thus blurring the Polish character of that part of the territory of the Republic. Bringing the above to your attention, the Ministry of Information and Documentation requests that you provide it with specific information on the said Committee for Polish Jews and issue appropriate instructions to the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem so that it starts dealing with the witness reports sent out by that Committee and takes measures to stop it from including therein passages detrimental to the interests of Poland.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136.

⁷¹ A copy of the report was sent to Minister Stańczyk and the Ambassador in London.

⁷² Not included in this publication.

Polish Committee for Refugees in India for the period between 1 April 1940 and 31 March 1941.

General income during that period reached the amount of Rs 21,246.14.6 whereas the transfers, cash payments in Bombay in the form of allowances, loans, purchase of textiles for clothes and underwear, footwear for the refugees, the expenses related to the operation of the Polish Inn, and other administrative costs—reached the amount of Rs 25,204.4.2.

From the moment of their arrival in India (December-January 1940/41), the direct assistance provided to refugees in Bombay reached the amount of Rs 4446.2.8; with the indirect help—that is, the cost of keeping some of the refugees in the Polish Inn, providing them with clothing and underwear, etc.—reaching the amount of Rs 3787.10.0; and the total standing at Rs 7633.12.8. The average monthly expenses were approx. Rs 1900 (that is, approx. £145).

Assistance was not only extended to refugees and emigrants, but also to Polish servicemen who crossed Soviet Russia and reached India. Some items constituted loans granted by the Committee to people who were unable to cover the increased costs of travel to destination countries with their own funds.

April and May 1941—due to the arrival of a greater number of refugees, including 8 from a group of 31 engineers—burdened the Committee's budget significantly.

In April of this year, cash assistance granted	Rs 2485.8.0
in May, to this day	Rs 1216.4.0

The above amount must be increased by the cost of upkeep for 18 people in the Polish Inn (in early May of this year the number reached 23 people)	Rs 2281.0.0
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giving the sum total of:	Rs 5982.12.0.
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The remaining amount will allow the Committee to maintain the relief campaign for two to three months and, perhaps most importantly, to maintain the Polish Inn, this pied-à-terre, which for many accidental refugees is a salutary solution to their temporary material difficulties.

* * *

Refugee and emigration traffic has declined significantly in the last month as a result of restrictions on entry to India, a lack of ships and the closure of transit countries: Iraq and Iran. Only individuals are currently arriving.

At the moment, there are 51 refugee families in India, including many single people, of whom 29 families have already decided to go to their destination countries, predominantly to the United States (100% of those people are Jewish).

A small percentage wants to move to Brazil. It is difficult to predict whether in the latter case, some new difficulties may arise that the refugees may have to overcome. Today, for instance, I have learnt from the Thomas Cook and Son company in Bombay that the Japanese shipping line company going to Argentina demands that Polish refugees pay a deposit in the amount of 2,500 pesos per person as a guarantee for their escape to Argentina. Incidents of this kind allegedly took place and the ship's line had to bear the financial consequences for this very reason.

Of the remaining group of 22 families, the larger part decided to stay in India, whereas the smaller group is seeking to relocate to other territories, with a more moderate climate and more favourable conditions than in India, to be better able to adjust to the life experiences and diligence of people from the continent. Of this group, 9 people have found employment and are slowly starting to settle in. Of the group of engineers, 7 of whom had been evacuated from Romania, one left for the United States, whereas another three have already found paid work.

* * *

Of the population of refugees who passed through India in the period of December 1940-May 1941, 85% are Jews. In the group of 22 families that intend to remain in India, there are 7 families (incl. 5 single people) of Polish descent, while 15 (incl. 4 single people) *are of Jewish descent*. The Jewish population in that group is financially secure.⁷³

Dr E. Banasiński
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1540

⁷³ In the cable of 6 December 1941, Minister Raczyński informed the diplomatic posts in Shanghai and Tel Aviv: 'Banasiński communicates that he has not received any sums of money from Jewish organisations to provide for and cover the travel cost to Palestine for Jewish refugees who arrived from the Far East. Banasiński requests financial support from the Government (£300). Please let me know whether we can expect the Joint and HICEM to meet their obligation to cover those costs.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 233.

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*30 May 1941. Unsigned note
on the situation in the Warsaw and Łódź Ghettos*

30 May 1941

Jewish district in Warsaw

A separate, closed Jewish district in Warsaw, created in November 1940, has only recently been regulated by law. According to the issued regulations, it is an independent administrative and self-governing unit subordinate to a special German commissioner, with the competences of the city district head, and—in terms of self-governing economy—to the chairman of the Jewish Council, to whom the competences of the mayor were delegated. The office of the Jewish Council is divided into several administrative departments, apart from which it also runs the Security Service (the so-called Jewish police) and a special procurement service, which is currently being established and is intended as a limited liability company. Within the district, there is a revenue office that collects state taxes and a municipal enforcement network which so far continues to transfer all revenues from the communal fees to the cash offices of the City Board of the City of Warsaw. The situation is said to change soon, but for the time being the Jewish Council, which for all intents and purposes has taken over the duties of a local government, does not receive any tax income. The Council covers its budgetary needs from a poll tax, which is the same for all residents; from a compensatory contribution, the amount of which depends on the payer's wealth, and from one-off payments, collected irregularly. All that revenue is insufficient in view of the enormity of the needs of the Jewish community. At the moment, the population of the district stands at approx. 510–520,000 people, with 240,000 of them classified as low-income residents who require financial assistance from social welfare. However, such a large number of people cannot be granted assistance because the modest food rations enable the community to distribute only 120,000 bowls of soup, that is, for only half of those in need. Individual allocations of ration cards are completely inadequate. They include only 2,500 grams of bread per month, and 180 grams of sugar per month. The inhabitants of the ghetto have to purchase all other products on the open market, which is only supplied by smuggling, because officially the import of food, fuel products, etc. into the Jewish side is prohibited. Under these conditions, the price of food products on the Jewish side are extremely high in relation to the prices on the Aryan side. Towards the end of May 1941, these stood at: bread—32 zlotys per kg, potatoes—8.50 zlotys per kg, butter (negligible quantities) 100 zlotys per kg, pork fat—90 zlotys per kg. The prices of other products have not soared so much, and since the Jewish side is home to the largest wholesalers of

various industries, these goods find willing buyers from the Aryan side. Of course, all trade with the Aryan side is carried out illegally, i.e. through smuggling, because legal trade in goods from the ghetto with the outside world—i.e. the so called 'over the wall trade,' from the walls surrounding the borders of this district—can only take place through a special German office, called the 'Transferstelle.' This settlement office has only been established to mediate in purchasing goods for the Jewish population and selling products originating in the Jewish district; however, it charges a brokerage commission of 10–15%, whereas the sums collected on behalf of Jews are not paid out to them individually. Besides, by its very nature this administrative apparatus is ill-suited for the purposes of commerce; therefore, not only Jews and Poles, but also Germans avoid its intermediation, particularly the military authorities, who place orders or perform purchases directly in the ghetto, paying fees in cash to sellers, even though it is prohibited under law.

The material situation of the Jewish population is extremely dire, which may be explained by the fact that only approx. 4,000 craftsmen and labourers work in collective workshops of the Jewish community, on the executing orders for the German authorities (these are predominantly tailors, hatmakers, and some shoemakers). Another group of that size works for the military. Approx. 50,000 people live off illegal trade, that is, smuggling. The rest partly deals with various other businesses, such as trade for local needs, profiteering in foreign currencies and securities, etc.—but more often than not, they remain unemployed. Those more well-off continue to sell the jewellery and valuables which they still possess, but such people are very scarce; meanwhile, the poor simply die of starvation and the rampant diseases (mainly of the heart and the lungs). Both the disastrous state of food and the terrible housing and sanitary conditions result in an extremely high mortality rate, increasing from one month to the next, reaching 5,000 people in May, which means 120 per mille annually; compared to the pre-war period, it marks a twelve-fold increase [sic]. As the number of births has dropped to a minimum, not only is there no growth in population, but on the contrary, a decline. Despite this, the number of inhabitants is constantly increasing due to the transports of Jews forcibly displaced from provincial towns, where there is no intention of creating separate Jewish districts. Only about 8,000 people were deported for forced labour (mainly drainage). Such a small number of the latter is explained by the fact that there are no Jews able to perform hard physical work anymore. Every day, the corpses of those who died during the work (approx. 20 per day) are brought in, as well as the severely ill, who are then sent away for treatment. The working conditions of forced labour, particularly the barracks in which they are housed and the food, are terrible. Furthermore, the manner they are treated by camp guards, mostly Ukrainians, is very bad.

The Polish police are on duty in the Jewish quarter, but they are composed of units specially selected for this purpose, mainly from Poznań residents and Pomeranians. Jewish security guards do not fight crime; they hand over such

cases to the Polish police. The German uniformed police do not operate in the Jewish district at all (they only secure its borders). The Gestapo, on the other hand, operates in the area through secret agents-Jews under the guise of a special open facility to combat covert trafficking. It is significant that the German authorities are striving to separate the Jewish district politically. There is, for instance, a tendency to deprive Jews of identity cards confirming their Polish citizenship and replace them with Jewish passports, as well as introducing a special currency for the ghetto. Apparently, this is explained by the fact the Warsaw Ghetto is an experiment on which the formation of Jewish relations throughout Europe would be modelled on in the future, after the introduction of the 'new Nazi order.' It should be noted that, apart from Warsaw, no closed Jewish district was organised anywhere within the General Government. Wherever such districts have been established, they are only a free zone for the Jewish settlement; however, access to it for Aryans is not forbidden as in Warsaw, and Jews can either move freely throughout the city or at least are allowed to leave the ghetto with passes. Also, in the lands incorporated into the Reich, there are areas where Jews continue to live in much better conditions than in Warsaw. That is why every day 400-500 people secretly leave the Warsaw Ghetto, trying to reach the province, even outside the perimeter, to return to the places from which they were displaced some time ago, or to where their relatives are, etc. The only other closed Jewish district outside Warsaw is the ghetto in Łódź. It has existed for much longer than the Warsaw one, and the effects of the conditions in which Jews live can be felt much more. It may be well-illustrated by the fact that during the first 3 weeks of May 1941, there were 1,080 Jews (out of the total number of 150,000) who died in Łódź against the number of 8 births. Such a high mortality rate is the result of extreme exhaustion which destroys the body's resistance to illnesses, because when it comes to death from starvation, incidents of this kind do not happen in Łódź, where the entire Jewish population is fed there by soup kitchens. Following this example, the commissioner of the Jewish district in Warsaw put forward a project to organize common soup kitchens and to abolish individual family households.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.86/A2

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*7 June 1941. Letter from the Minister of Justice
to the Prime Minister about contacts with the delegation
of the American Jewish Congress*

7 June 1941

Prime Minister
General Władysław Sikorski

Regarding the memorandum submitted to you in New York by the delegation of the American Jewish Congress,⁷⁴ please allow me to present the following remarks as suggestions for a reply:

The Polish Government, based on the principle of equal duties and equal rights of all citizens of the Polish state, refers to the Polish Constitution of 17 March 1921, to which the memorandum refers, and which was an act of free will of the Polish nation, and not to the Minority Treaty of June 1919, which was imposed upon Poland. (I consider this reservation to be important, as the efforts of relevant circles in the international arena are leading to imposing such a treaty on us again).

The percentage of the Jewish population in Poland before the war was much higher than in other countries, for it stood at almost 10%, and currently it has risen above 10%, due to the fact that the German Government has, by force, relocated Jews from other lands to Poland. That issue should attract international attention in the harmonious interests of both regular internal affairs in Poland and the situation of the Jewish population, oftentimes living in deplorable conditions. (There may be doubts as to whether to mention this for tactical purposes).

Regarding the accusations contained in the memorandum, the fact is that in several cases there have been local anti-Jewish riots, which are deeply deplorable; but there were no large-scale 'violent Jewish pogroms treated by Government officials with understanding'; in the relevant cases referred to above, there were lawsuits and harsh court sentences.

The misleading information consists of accusations of 'a long series of laws and regulations issued by successive governments' and reflecting anti-Jewish tendencies. There were no such laws and regulations.

If the memorandum complains that during the tenure of the previous Government the number of Jewish members of the Sejm decreased, which is true, we must objectively state that the situation of the Jewish population in this period

⁷⁴ See doc. 110.

was much better than the position of Poles belonging to opposition parties, who ruthlessly fought the system at that time. It should be added that during that same period, the then Polish Government granted Polish citizenship to 600,000 Russian Jews, as officially stated by the former Prime Minister General Składkowski.

The order to close shops on Sundays did not harm the religious freedom of the people, and this is a common practise in the world, both in the United States and in England. The ban on ritual slaughter did not exist in Poland either; only the restriction of kosher slaughter of cattle for the use of the Jewish population was introduced.

We are not aware of any laws or regulations that would restrict the activities of Jewish craftsmen. Some Jews had indeed lost their monopoly concessions in the last years before the war, but again impartiality suggests that the participation of Jews in state monopoly concessions is incomparably greater than the percentage ratio of the Jewish population to the total population of the Polish state. Nor are we aware of any restrictions on Jews using state loans; on the contrary, Jewish influence in the major Polish banking institutions was considerable. More taxes are paid by the western Polish territories, which have a small percentage of the Jewish population, incomparably more than any other Polish territory.

Excluding Jews from liberal professions was out of the question; in most areas of the country the vast majority of vacancies were filled by Jews. On the other hand, there were indeed efforts to separate Poles from Jews in self-government organisations of lawyers, doctors and students, as well as at universities.

The military defeat of Poland in September 1939 was not caused by the country's minority policy, as reflected by the fact that these minorities—with the exception of the German fifth column and certain circles that were demoralised by Bolshevik propaganda—were loyal to Poland.

As for the demands set out in the memorandum, it must be stated that the Polish Government opposes all anti-Jewish propaganda both in the Polish Army and among Polish civilians, and it will continue to do so, clearly abiding by the principle of equal duties and equal rights of all citizens of the Polish state. The Prime Minister has invoked that principle on behalf of the Polish Government on several occasions. Nevertheless, the Polish Government cannot announce the annulment of the regulations and laws of anti-Jewish character enacted by the former Government of Poland because there are no such regulations or laws.

We do not cover up the symptoms that existed in reality, but at the same time we must state that raising unjustified accusations against Poland causes it serious harm.

/-/ M. Seyda

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.5/3

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*[Before 11 June 1941]. Motion by the Prime Minister
on the amendment to the Act on Revocation of Citizenship*

Motion by the Prime Minister
for the Council of Ministers
on the amendment to the Act of 31 March 1938 on Revocation of Citizenship⁷⁵

The Council of Ministers wishes to enact the following:

The Minister of Internal Affairs in conjunction with the Minister of Foreign Affairs shall immediately start developing a project of a decree of the President of the Republic of Poland to amend the Act of 31 March 1938 on Revocation of Citizenship (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland, No. 22, item 191) in order to remove from it any provisions incompatible with democratic legal sense or allowing for an open-ended interpretation, not based on the said presumptions.

COMMENT

The Act is to be executed—according to Article 6—by the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs; therefore, it is they who should be responsible for preparing the amendment. The issue does not fall in the competence of the Minister of Justice, and the motion of the member of the National Council, Mr Schwarzbart, was addressed to the Minister of Justice as a result of mistaken competence.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/361a (previously published)

⁷⁵ The motion was passed during the session of the Council of Ministers of 11 June 1941 (same as the motion published in the following document). On the annulment of the act, see doc. 145.

123

*[Before 11 June 1941]. Motion by the Prime Minister
on the attitude of the Polish Government towards Jews*

Motion by the Prime Minister
for the Council of Ministers
on the policy towards Jews

The Council of Ministers wishes to enact the following:

The Government of the Republic of Poland shares the principles laid down by the President of the Council of Ministers in the United States concerning the Government's policy towards the Jews, and in particular sympathises with his declaration on this matter, which was made to the National Council on 4 June 1941 in the following wording:

'In accordance with the genuinely democratic policy of the Government, in the future Poland the principle: equal obligations, and equal rights will apply to all citizens of the Republic of Poland, regardless of their nationality, race and religion. This is the position of the Polish Government. I would also like to point out that a different approach to this difficult problem would never have been understood by the American society, nor by the British one, which was waging an unrelenting struggle against Nazi ideology alongside us. I have no doubts that the same rules will ultimately prevail in this local area, which is so limited. Whoever acts otherwise would work against the interests of his own people.'

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/361a (previously published)

124

*17 June 1941. Letter from the Minister of Justice to the Prime Minister
on the service of Jewish soldiers in the Polish Army in France*

17 June 1941

Prime Minister
General Władysław Sikorski

Several weeks ago, during a session of the Budget Committee of the National Council, there was a heated clash about the Jewish issue between Dr Schwarzbart and Mr Józwiak. The attack by Dr Schwarzbart was fiercely countered by Mr

Józwiak, who, among other things, referred to the fact that 80% of Polish Jews had failed to perform their military service for Poland.

For my part, I appealed to Dr Schwarzbart, saying that Jews should exercise restraint, for, by overstepping their bounds, they are complicating the situation for the Polish Government, at the same time doing harm to themselves, as consequently they face matters such as the one mentioned by Mr Józwiak being brought up.

When Dr Schwarzbart contradicted Mr Józwiak's statement in that regard, I informed him that unfortunately, some time ago in Angers, the Commander-in-Chief, who could not be accused by Jews of antisemitism, pointed out with his deepest regret that 80% or 82% of Polish Jews obliged to military service had evaded their obligation.

Dr Schwarzbart referred to this at the meeting of the National Council on 26 March and stated the following:

'I am glad to see Minister Seyda in the room today for it was he who voiced the accusation against us, citing the highest authority, that, in France, 82 per cent of Jews had refrained from military service. With all due respect to this authority and to Minister Seyda, I wish to state that the facts upon which he based his figures are wrong. I am saying for all of you here, for the record, and perhaps also for history, that the Jewish participation in the Polish Army at the beginning of May 1940 was about 9% of the Polish Army in France, i.e. about 5–6 thousand. They served in the infantry units of the so-called 1st Grenadier Division, the 2nd Infantry Division, the Polish Independent Highland Brigade, and the 10th Motorised Cavalry Brigade, and there were several hundred Jews in each. Furthermore, there were larger concentrations of Jewish soldiers in the camps, as well as a large concentration of Jewish doctors, there were Jews in assembly areas, in workers' companies, sanitary units, etc.'

I responded to Dr Schwarzbart's statement, explaining that I did not and have no right to suppose that the Commander-in-Chief was ill-informed and that he subsequently misinformed the Council of Ministers, and I promised to send the relevant paragraph from the minutes of the meeting of the National Council for the information of the Commander-in-Chief. Dr Schwarzbart thanked me for that.⁷⁶

I hereby fulfil the said promise.

Marian Seyda
MINISTER

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.5/1

⁷⁶ See doc. 128.

125

*17 June 1941. Letter from the Consul General in Bombay
to the Ambassador in Tokyo
on the evacuation of Jewish refugees to Burma*

17 June 1941

By airmail

To the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
in TOKYO

Regarding the settlement of Polish refugees in Burma

In reference to the plan undertaken by you to arrange the settlement for the duration of the war in Burma of some Polish refugees who are located in Japan, I take the opportunity to send⁷⁷ for your information a copy of the correspondence received in this matter between the Department of Internal Affairs of the Government of Burma and our Consul in Rangoon, Mr Somerset Butler.

I know the case only from a short cable of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which was sent on 23 March this year.⁷⁸ It informed me of your intention to send 50 refugees to Burma with their own funds. If the group mentioned in the letter from the Department of Internal Affairs of the Government of Burma is a part of the financially independent fraction, I consider the issue to be solved in the sense that, after temporary difficulties resulting from encountering a new territory, they will be able to settle in. However, any chances of finding paid employment there must be ruled out. We have had examples of that in India. Regarding Jewish refugees, large numbers of whom found their way to India, no more than 2% decided to remain there. Others are trying everything to get to the United States, Brazil, Palestine, and even Japan as, in their view, it is a better foothold to reach the American territories. Considering that India is not attractive to the group, Burma shall be even less. It is a small, highly exclusive country; in terms of the English element, in its socio-economic system it is more alien than India. I am afraid that for these reasons, refugees may start gravitating towards either leaving

⁷⁷ There are no attachments.

⁷⁸ This is a reference to the cable prepared on 18 March and sent from London on 21 March 1941, in which Minister Zaleski informed: 'The British Government offered us to place 250 refugees in Burma. Ambassador Romer is sending 50 refugees from the Far East, who have their own funds. I ask you for information as to the conditions in Burma, as we would wish to direct thereto our refugees who arrived in the Far East.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 227.

for the territories of India, or, through India, to other lands, which today causes overwhelming difficulties (see the relevant report).

The attached letter from the Government of Burma suggests that the Polish Government guaranteed to provide for the refugees during the first two months of their stay, from which I can conclude that the group sent has no financial resources. Should my assumption be right, the question arises what will happen after the two months. As I have pointed out above, it would be highly risky to expect that, after the passing of two months, they will become financially independent and not need any assistance from the Polish Government because they will have found paid work. It may be the case that one or another individual will indeed find employment, but such an instance will not solve the problem of maintaining the entire group. In my opinion, the matter should be decided immediately in order not to put ourselves in an awkward position with the Government of Burma.

As for the matter of voluntary enlistment, also referred to in the letter, it must, if it occurs, rely on the Office in Bombay as the supreme office, which has instructions in this regard. The situation with regard to the matter here was outlined in the letter from the local Office of 16 June of this year, No. 745/W-Tj/96, to the post of the Republic of Poland in Shanghai, a copy of which was sent to the Polish Embassy in Tokyo.

Even if we imagine that some individual refugees will meet the qualification of a volunteer, as stipulated in the letter from the Government of India (see the attachment to the letter from the local Office, No. 745/W-Tj/96 of 16 June 1941), the problems will arise: first, with the cost of travel from Burma to Bombay, and—second—with the cost of the volunteer's stay in Bombay for a month or even two, and with providing for him the so-called petty cash for his journeys to Bombay, and from Bombay to the Middle East, to the army. Therefore, should there indeed be among the refugees in Burma some who would want to meet their obligation on the basis of a declaration submitted to the Embassy, the issue of a special fund for these purposes would have to be solved first. I imagine that some of it would have to be put at the disposal of Consul Butler in Rangoon (so that he can cover the cost of travel from Burma to Bombay), while some—at the disposal of the Office here to cover the expenses related to providing for the volunteers in Bombay and their allowances for incidentals.

Submitting for your consideration the remarks that occurred to me in connection with the letter from the Government of Burma, I kindly request that you inform me, in greater detail, of the entirety of the settlement plan in Burma, as well as regarding the people who have departed or are intending to depart, for these matters must necessarily be of interest for the local Office.

At the same time, I wish to point out that according to the information I have received from Mr Butler, the Government of Burma entertains the idea of establishing a so-called 'Rest Camp' in Shah to place refugees there.

Dr E. Banasiński
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

126

*27 June 1941. Circular by the Prime Minister and the Minister
of Foreign Affairs: instruction on the German aggression on the USSR*

Circular (directly)

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 29 JUNE 1941

Circular 22

Circular instruction of the Government

Hitler, by undertaking the self-proclaimed alleged defence of the European continent against the threat of Bolshevism, is carrying out the most riskiest and the most fraudulent plans for Germany.⁷⁹ He is hoping to win the sympathy of the reactionary circles throughout the world, particularly in the United States. His aim is to eliminate, even before his assault on the British Isles, the Bolshevik armed forces, which currently threaten the rear of the German army, and to annihilate German communism as the national centre of revolution, already dangerous for the Third Reich.

The Polish Government is actively counteracting in the international arena the efforts of German propaganda, which is deliberately trying to mislead world opinion. At the same time, it calls the nation to defend the banner of freedom, independence, and democracy, which for the time being is synonymous with maintaining its current position towards the two occupying powers, yesterday's mutual allies.⁸⁰ Recognising the difference between the German and the Russian

⁷⁹ Germany attacked the USSR on 22 June 1941, first taking over the Polish territories occupied since September 1939 by the Soviet Union.

⁸⁰ In the instruction sent on 25 June 1941 to the Government Delegate for Poland, Cyryl Ratajski, and the Commander of the Union for Armed Struggle, Stefan Rowecki,

threat, and decidedly indicating the former as the more dangerous for the nation, the Government does not consider it possible under the current circumstances to engage in cooperation with Russia. That position has been fully recognised by our ally, Great Britain.⁸¹

The conflict between Germany and Russia, which the Government regards as highly beneficial for the Polish question, is to be used to boost Poland's standing in the international arena.

As the situation unfolds, the time may come for assuming a more precise position towards Russia and then the Government shall issue an appropriate instruction.

SIKORSKI

ZALESKI

27 June 1941

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 226

General Sikorski and Deputy Prime Minister Stanisław Kot also pointed out that it was necessary to warn the Polish society not to yield to German instigations to perpetrate acts against Jews from the territories occupied by the USSR from 1939. In turn, in a dispatch of 25 September 1941, General Rowecki communicated: 'I wish to report that all steps and declarations by the Government and by the members of the National Council related to Jews in Poland make the worst impression in the country and greatly facilitate any unfriendly or hostile propaganda against the Government. Such was the case with the "Day of Jewry" and the speech of Schwarzbart, the appointment of Lieberman, and the greetings for the Jewish New Year. Please accept it as a fact that the overwhelming majority of the population shares an antisemitic sentiment. Not even the socialists are an exception. The only differences are that of tactics. There are virtually none who would recommend following the German methods. These resulted in responses of compassion, but it decreased after the two occupied territories merged and the general public learnt of the conduct of Jews in the East.' AAN, AK, 203/I/20.

⁸¹ As a result of negotiations carried out under pressure of the British Government, on 30 July 1941 Poland and the USSR signed the so-called Sikorski-Maisky Agreement, which stipulated, among other things, that Polish prisoners should be released and that a Polish Army should be formed in the USSR. On the basis of the agreement, diplomatic relations were reestablished and the Polish Embassy was set up in Moscow, which was subsequently relocated to Kuybyshev due to the threat that the German military would invade Moscow. The position of Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy was temporarily filled by Józef Hieronim Retinger, who was later replaced by Ambassador Stanisław Kot. The Polish authorities also established a network of delegations and appointed trusted representatives, whose task was to register Polish citizens, issue documents, enlist men for military service and provide Poles with material assistance. The signing of the treaty, which did not guarantee the pre-war Polish-Soviet border, also led to a Government crisis and the resignation of three ministers, including August Zaleski.

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*9 July 1941. Report by the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare in Lisbon on the assistance for refugees in Portugal*

Lisbon, 9 July 1941

To the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

In the report No. 289/41 of 6 March of this year, I provided you with the figures related to Polish refugees in Portugal based on the register of the Committee for Refugees.

In the meantime, there were major shifts in the quantitative composition of that group. The recent figures present the following picture:

	as of the beginning of the month	arrived	departed	as of the end of the month
March	1,024	104	107	1,021
April	1,021	76	162	935
May	935	68	169	834
June	834	29	270	593

These figures suggest that the number of Polish citizens in Portugal was reduced from 1,024 people as of 1 March of this year to 593 people as of 30 June of this year.

During those 4 months, a total of 277 refugees arrived in Portugal, with 708 refugees leaving Portugal; hence, there was a decrease of 431 people. The influx of refugees from Spain, France, etc., was decreasing from month to month, and it has almost entirely stopped in the recent weeks. Meanwhile, there has been an increasing trend in the outflow of refugees-Polish citizens from Portugal. It was mainly caused by the following factors: strong pressure exerted by the local police to have refugees leave the country; a period of availability of visas to the United States; the British authorities having provided passage on a ship, towards the end of June of this year, for a large number of Polish refugees departing to England; lastly, some outflow of refugees holding Canadian visas, 53 of whom have already left, thanks to the financial assistance in covering the cost of passage from the Committee and other social institutions. Assigning larger than before credits to aid refugees enabled us to develop a broader campaign to finance departures, which greatly influenced the structure of the refugee figures outlined above.

As of 30 June 1941, among the 593 refugees, there were:

	male	female	children	total:
Christian	83	85	48	216
Jewish	144	151	82	377
total:	227	236	130	593

that is, percentage-wise:

	male	female	children	total:
Christian	14%	14%	8%	36%
Jews	24%	26%	14%	64%
total:	38%	40%	22%	100%

Before the war, out of the 593 refugees—218 people lived in Poland, while 375 lived in other countries. That division matches almost perfectly the breakdown by religion. Jews—Polish citizens, currently staying as refugees in Portugal, used to live outside Poland before the war (the majority of those in Belgium: 190 people).

As for the immediate future, I believe that we may expect an influx of new refugees from France providing that the stringent and negative guidelines set by the Portuguese authorities regarding visas—the consequence of, among other things, several months when the passage to England was unavailable and the unresolved issue of refugee transport to Canada—are altered in part. On the other hand, we must reckon with a decrease in the outflow because, apart from the refugees holding Canadian visas (approx. 150 people)—that is, assuming they are able to obtain transit visas to the United States—there is almost no chance at present that the rest of the refugees will obtain any visas to destination countries, particularly after the United States issued new regulations, making the immigration of Polish and other refugees in fact impracticable.

Lastly, I want to point out that the statistics of refugees receiving allowances has been slightly different from the general refugee statistics. During that period, wealthier people were the first to leave, while those remaining in Portugal were either without any money for a long time, or, having used up their modest resources, they were forced to approach the Committee for help. As of 30 June of this year, the number of people receiving allowances from the Committee stood at 470.

Stanisław Schimitzek

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

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18 July 1941. Letter from the Commander-in-Chief to the Minister of Justice on people of Jewish descent serving in the Polish Army in France

London, 18 July 1941

MINISTER OF JUSTICE
in London

Participation of Jews in the Polish Army

Responding to the letter L.287/41.L. of 17 June 1941,⁸² I wish to communicate:

1. Assuming, in line with the statement of Dr Schwarzbart, that the participation of Jews in the Polish Army in France reached 9% of the total number of ground and air force—this can be expressed by the number of 6,592 Jewish officers and privates to 66,649 Polish officers and privates.

I do not currently have detailed data that could determine whether the figure of 6,592 Jewish officers and privates who served in the Polish Army in France was an appropriate figure in relation to the total number of Polish-Jewish citizens who were in France and were subject to compulsory military service. From the reports from both my Staff and the Central Recruitment Office submitted to me in Paris, it appeared that the number of Jewish citizens of the Republic of Poland during periods of call-ups to active military service, they applied to postpone their conscriptions into the ranks under various pretexts.

2. After the collapse of France, the number of servicemen to have reached Great Britain stood at:

– 23,505 Polish officers and privates,

– 312 Jewish officers and privates, which in relation to the total number of troops in the Polish Army in France gives the ratio of:

– 35.25% in the case of Poles,

– 4.73% in the case of Jews.

Assuming that Jews were allocated equally to front-line units and to rear area formations—their number after the evacuation to Great Britain in relation to that of the evacuated Poles should stand at 2,322 men, corresponding to the percentage ratio of 35.25%.

⁸² Doc. 124.

3. The conscription carried out in the territory of Great Britain recorded that in the period between 30 Nov 1939 and 1 July 1941, among the people who evaded being drafted to the Polish Army, there were:

- 99 Poles,
- 214 Jews.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND MINISTER OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
Sikorski
 General

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.5/3

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*23 July 1941. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
 to the Ambassador in Tokyo on aid for Jewish refugees*

TO Polmission Tokyo

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
 SENT ON 23 JULY 1941

No. 104

Receptus 76 and 77.⁸³

Podoski informs me that Canada has refused to accept any further groups of Jewish refugees. Wodzicki communicated that New Zealand promised 30 visas. The

⁸³ In the cable no. 76 of 10 July 1941, Ambassador Romer communicated: 'I have exhausted visa quotas to Canada and Australia. I am still to receive an answer in relation to the list of candidates I have sent from here to New Zealand. The departure to Burma of the first group of 35 people is in progress. I have advised the rabbinic group to approach the Canadian Government through American Jewish organisations, seeking a special quota for approx. 100 people for organising a religious school ... with a guarantee to remain in one place until the war ends ... Apart from that group, there are also another 300 refugees staying here who deserve our support. Therefore, I intend above all to make attempts to obtain another quota to Australia. I would also like to ask that you take steps in South Africa.' In the telegram no. 77 of the same day, he added: 'Approx. 100 our refugees here, whose American visas were deemed secured as of 1 July, have lost the chance to receive them because of the new procedure. In view of the influx of Germans evacuated from the countries of the Pacific to Japan, the local police exert more and more pressure for our refugees to leave, which forces us to transfer them to Shanghai, despite difficult conditions, and this is only viable as a temporary solution.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 233.

Burmese Government agreed to take in 250 people. I ask you to consult with the Joint the issue of providing for Jews in Burma. I am contacting the Government of South Africa again, as they asked me on the previous occasion to leave the matter up in the air, for it may result in internal political complications. I continue to expect more difficulties. Ciechanowski has been making efforts to obtain American visas, at the same time informing of the possibility to relocate 300 refugees in Ecuador. I instructed him to conclude the talks with Ecuador and inform you on the matter.

Zaleski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

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*7 August 1941. Letter from the Consul General in Buenos Aires
to the Legation in Santiago de Chile
on Jewish refugees accepting Argentinian citizenship*

Buenos Aires, 7 August 1941

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland
SANTIAGO DE CHILE

In reference to the letter from the Legation of 7 July of this year, No. 715/Chi/14, on Jewish refugees accepting local citizenship, I wish to communicate that in my view that process should not be obstructed, for it gradually leads to them developing attachment to their place of residence and facilitates their involvement in local life, potentially resulting in greater opportunities for employment and simplifying the vital matter of bringing relatives, etc.

Jewish refugees from overseas countries practically did not participate in the return movement to Poland, therefore emigrants of that sort should be considered permanent; hence, it follows from that fact that their acceptance of local citizenship should be accepted; it is a circumstance which may be used by those people to the benefit of Poland if they have any fondness for their Homeland.

The participation of Jewish emigrants in applying for voluntary military service, at least locally, is quite marginal.

Head of the Consular Department
Roman Mazurkiewicz
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Poselstwo Santiago de Chile, 56

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*[After 12 August 1941]. Letter from the Consul General in Sydney
to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
about evacuating a group of Jewish refugees from Japan to Australia*

Ministry of Social Welfare
in LONDON

Under the agreement between the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Tokyo and the Australian Envoy in Japan, the Government of Australia allowed 66 Polish refugees from Russia, who were staying in Kobe, to come to Australia.

12 people have already arrived, whereas the others are on their way. Ambassador Romer appointed Mr Jerzy Sand as the Delegate for Refugees; he was entrusted with the task of taking care of the newcomers. Together with Mr Sand, we have contacted the local committee of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, which committed itself to providing for those who do not have money.

On 22 July, together with Mr Sand we went to Melbourne, where we had a series of conferences with the Polish-Jewish Committee, which also took a great interest in the emigrants and promised all help.

On the following day, in the presence of Consul Burke I introduced the delegation of the above Committee to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Senator Foll. I took the floor on behalf of the delegation and, having discussed the fate of Polish refugees in Japan, I asked the minister to be so kind as to grant another 200 entry visas to Polish citizens in Japan. The Polish-Jewish Committee has guaranteed to place them in factories. The minister is going to present our request during a session of the council of ministers.

The Australian Jewish Committee in Sydney also guarantees to provide for 50 refugees. Please find enclosed a copy of their resolution sent to me.⁸⁴ I wish to point out that the committees in Sydney and Melbourne, whose members are exclusively people of the Mosaic religion, declared that their guarantees extend to people of all religions.

The Sydney committee is in possession of £50,000 it received from America. It seeks employment opportunities for labourers, enables them to settle down in the countryside or grants them loans of up to £1,000 to set up their own businesses or factories.

On 12 August, I went to Melbourne with a group of 26 people who arrived on the ship 'Kashima Maru,' in order to personally hand them over to the Polish-Jewish Committee. The Jewish association received us with great hospitality at breakfast, during which I addressed the refugees and thanked the Committee for the kindness and help they have given.

⁸⁴ Not included in this publication.

Yesterday, the Jewish Committee in Sydney adopted a resolution granting every newcomer a loan of £2 per week until they find employment.

Apart from the passengers, 'Kashima Maru' brought Hersz Rozenberg, who arrived without a permit or a ticket, as a stowaway hidden on the ship.

I have intervened with the Minister of Internal Affairs, and Rozenberg received a permit for a one month's stay. The local Australian Jewish committee provided a financial guarantee for him.

The military unexpectedly arrested Rozenberg and detained him in a concentration camp until they complete a background check on him. I immediately contacted the Embassy in Tokyo, requesting that they send information about Rozenberg, and I am waiting for an answer.

W. NOSKOWSKI

PS: Rozenberg was released on 25 August at my request, I am currently looking for a job for him.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

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*22 August 1941. Cable from the Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Consulate General in Jerusalem
on assistance for Jewish refugees arriving in Japan*

TO Polconsul JERUSALEM
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 22 AUG

No. 274

Receptus 284⁸⁵

More than 2,000 Jews-Polish citizens arrived in Japan from the territory of the Soviet occupation, for over 1,000 of whom we were able to obtain visas to American

⁸⁵ In the cable no. 284 of 30 July 1941, the Consul General in Jerusalem, Witold Korsak, communicated: 'The union of rabbis—refugees from Poland in Palestine—approached me with a request to contact the Polish Government, asking it to intervene with the British Government, so that Palestine or any other suitable British colony accepts approx. 2,000 Jews-Polish citizens, currently staying in Kobe, Japan, including approx. 500 rabbis and students of talmudic schools from Poland. Should helping them all be impossible, I ask you to at least help the latter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 229.

countries and the British dominions (Canada, Australia, New Zealand). The action to transfer 250 people to Burma is in progress. Among the remaining group, there are approx. 400 rabbinic students and rabbis with families. We are experiencing major difficulties in securing asylum for them. The Dominions refuse to accept any more Jewish refugees.⁸⁶ Please inform the Union of Rabbis accordingly and investigate the possibilities of securing entry to Palestine for a number of Jewish refugees from Japan. Depending on the information you provide, we shall take adequate measures regarding Palestine with the British Government.

Tarnowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

⁸⁶ Izaak Lewin intervened on the matter, writing in the letter from 3 May 1941 to the Consul General in New York, Sylwester Gruszka: '1) There are over 400 rabbis and students of rabbinic schools in Poland currently staying in Japan, who were able to reach Japan from Poland via Vladivostok. Prominent American organisations, such as the Union of Rabbis of America and Canada, Agudat Israel of America and Canada, etc., are interested in the fate of those rabbis. 2) These organisations seek to transport those 400 rabbis either to the United States or to Canada, where the funding is secured for the operation of Jewish schools from Poland during wartime. 3) At present, still open is the issue of obtaining Canadian visas for the refugees from Poland staying in Japan. The aforementioned organisations beseeched me to bring, on their behalf, to the attention of the Polish consular authorities the grave significance of rapid transfer and establishment of Polish-Jewish schools in Canada. Besides the matters of prestige—also of utter importance—I wish to stress that the rabbinic group is highly valuable from the Polish point of view. Besides, due to the lack of Jewish religious institutions in Japan, it is a la longue untenable there. It would therefore be decent on all accounts if the rabbinic group was the first to benefit, to the largest extent possible, from the Canadian visas which the Polish Government has recently been able obtain for the Polish refugees in Japan.' AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 504.

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*3 September 1941. Report by the Ambassador in Washington
on his conversation with a representative of Jewish organisations
in the United States*

3 September 1941

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

Conversations on the Jewish matter and the participation of Polish Jews in organising aid for Polish citizens in the territory of Soviet Russia

On 26 August, I received Dr Arieh Tartakower, a member of the Central Representation of Polish Jewry, Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress. He informed me that he was acting on behalf of both organisations, with both wishing to clarify the details of Polish-Jewish cooperation, particularly with the possibility of opening up such a cooperation in Soviet Russia. Having heard his arguments, I asked Dr Tartakower to submit them to me in writing so that they might be sent to the Minister for the Polish Government who, as I explained to him, is the only person competent to take a stand on these matters.

During a friendly conversation I had with Dr Tartakower, I pointed out to him that it seemed to me that the present moment, during the war, was not the most appropriate to put forth any major issues regarding, for instance, the increase in the participation of Jews in state institutions. I brought to his attention the extremely favourable position of the Prime Minister towards Jewish delegations with which he came in contact during his visit to the United States, indicating that this is another reason why the happily established relations, based on mutual trust, should be limited to cooperation of the Jewish population with the Polish Government and Polish society, without conditioning that relationship by making such conclusions.

Dr Tartakower agreed with me; however, he explained that he did not intend to put forward any conditions as an ultimatum, but merely to indicate the great importance attached by the Jewish circles to a 'more just' consideration of the Jewish population in such cooperation. He expressed his regret that there was not much enthusiasm on the part of Polish Americans and asked me, in line with the conversation that Jewish delegations had had with the Prime Minister, to raise the issue with the Polish American Council. I intend to do so during my next meeting with the president of that organisation, Mr Świetlik.

Forwarding a copy of Dr Tartakower's letter⁸⁷ to you, I would like to ask you to kindly consider the issues he has raised and possibly instruct me as to the response that should be given to those proposals.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Waszyngton, 64

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*5 September 1941. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires
at the Legation in Buenos Aires
on the immigration policy of South American countries*

Buenos Aires, 5 September 1941

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Following the instruction No. 738/F/41 of 19 March 1941 and of 25 July 1941, the Legation has recently delivered addresses in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, Uruguay and Peru in order to investigate in greater detail the difficulties—known from the measures already taken—in obtaining visas for Polish citizens, refugees staying in France, Spain, Portugal, North Africa and Japan.

The result of these addresses was positive in the mere sense that the Argentinian and Uruguayan Ministries of Foreign Affairs expressed their readiness to consider individual visa applications submitted to the appropriate consular offices; however, both expressed the reservation that the issue of entry for Polish citizens could not be treated in any other way than what stems from the existing regulations pertaining to immigrants of all other nationalities.

In its interventions with both these ministries, the Legation carefully articulated a wish that in time of special need small groups of Polish citizens be able to benefit from an accelerated procedure introduced especially for that purpose.

It is such collective treatment, even if it were to concern only small groups, that has been categorically rejected by both the aforementioned ministries. In a very polite way, the Uruguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated in the note of

⁸⁷ There is no attachment.

30 June this year that 'among the current, delicate and serious conditions which give rise to inter-national migration, the Uruguayan Government has seen itself compelled to apply severe restrictive measures and, because of their nature, could not create any exceptional procedure in this area.' This refusal refers to, among other things, the proposition by the Legation to ease the obligation applied to Polish citizens, refugees, to submit an immigration guarantee in the amount of 2,500 pesos per person. In the said note, the Ministry informed us further that 'any efforts undertaken by Polish citizens who would meet the conditions required to be allowed to enter the territory of the Republic shall be duly considered.'

In the note from 26 August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina informed the Legation that the measures taken by the latter regarding the discussed issue were subject to careful scrutiny of the Ministry of Agriculture (the institution responsible for immigration affairs). 'In view of the present conditions in the labour market, and the contemporary economic situation,' it is with regret that the Ministry communicates that it is unable to grant the request of the Legation that special facilitations be introduced for Polish refugees, whose categories have been meticulously defined in relevant interventions. In the same note, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs points out that the Argentinian Government shall treat as favourably as possible individual applications submitted by people meeting the conditions specified for immigrants by the relevant regulations. Such applications shall be processed gradually, according to the capacity available at a given moment.

This position of the Argentinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not changed in any way for a long series of months; the situation has not improved even with the appointment of Dr Enrique Ruiz Guiñazú, who until recently, while taking up the position of Ambassador to the Vatican, had the opportunity to learn about the refugee issue both thanks to close contact with Ambassador Papée and as a result of the apparent interest in this issue by the Secretariat of State, and even the Pope. In my conversations with the new minister, I got the impression that he was well-disposed to the Polish cause and that personally he would like to help improve the fate of refugees. In a few cases, it was possible, probably thanks to the position of Mr R. Guiñazú, to obtain the right of entry for individual persons by way of an absolute exception, bypassing the normal procedure. Such exceptions, in principle objectionable, can be made only in cases where they concern 'prominent figures,' either because of their official status or social situation.

Among the particular circumstances associated with strenuous efforts made by the Legation in order to obtain visas for 150 Polish citizens interned in Spanish concentration camps, the Legation has ascertained that the Peruvian Government categorically refuses to deal with visa cases as a whole and is operating with far-reaching reservations of an economic nature and nationality in considering individual applications.

To sum up, the Legation wishes to indicate that the possibilities of locating refugees in the countries falling within its competence are limited when it comes to Argentina, Uruguay and Peru (and the same was discovered on another occasion in relation to Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay) by the need to submit individual applications and the generally restrictive visa policies of those states.

Each of those countries (except for Uruguay) is willing to facilitate to the greatest extent possible immigration only for thoroughly vetted agricultural immigrants. In all of those, there are far-reaching nationalistic restrictions with regard to immigrants (the undisclosed Aryan paragraph). Obtaining visas both to Argentina and to any other country falling within the competence of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Buenos Aires must be individual, whereas in some cases it is even exceptional.

As a practical conclusion of this report, the Legation recommends instructing all Polish diplomatic posts in Europe and Africa to inform the refugees intending to travel to Argentina—or any other country within the competence of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Buenos Aires—that the first and indispensable step in applying for a visa is to submit an application (in person if possible) at the relevant consulates, and the second, after obtaining the confidence that the application will be addressed to the relevant immigration directorates, is to send a notification to the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Buenos Aires with complete personal data, as many as possible. The latter enables the Legation to intervene while respecting local procedure, to which the South American authorities attach great importance.

Any applications, whether written or telegraphed, which skip the initial step by being sent directly to the Legation, unfortunately cannot accelerate individual cases (unless it refers to ‘prominent figures’ recognised as such also by the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs).⁸⁸

Chargé d’Affaires a.i.
/-/ M. Chałupczyński

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

⁸⁸ A copy of the report was sent to the Embassies in Washington and Tokyo, to the Legations in Santiago de Chile, Rio de Janeiro and Mexico City, and to Consulates General in Ottawa and Curitiba.

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12 September 1941. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington to the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare for the United States: information from the Ambassador in Moscow on the necessary assistance to Polish citizens in the USSR

Secret

Washington, 12 September 1941
To Minister Sylwin Strakacz
in New York

I hasten to communicate to you the content of the cable from Ambassador Kot, which I received yesterday via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London:

Ambassador Kot reports that there are about one and a half million Poles in Russia scattered from Arkhangelsk to Tbilisi and Sakhalin. The Ambassador believes that only mass-scale assistance as soon as possible may save them. He requests that large transports of all necessary goods be organised as fast as possible in consultation with Polish diaspora and the American Red Cross. Large amounts of men's, women's, and children's clothing of all sorts are needed, even old ones, as well as footwear, wellingtons, snow boots, winter hats, hats with ear-flaps, woollen gloves, men's hats, jumpers, socks, stockings, kerchiefs, towels, pairs of trouser braces, garters, shoelaces, bedding, blankets, supplies of canvas, wool, cloth, sole leather, thread, needles, buttons, razor blades, safety razors and shaving brushes, ordinary soap, washing soap and shaving soap, all sorts of brushes, penknives, scissors, candles, electric torches with batteries, toothpaste, mattresses, spoons, knives, forks, kitchenware, plates—mainly of metal—backpacks, travel sacks, strapped suitcases, straps, ropes, letter and office paper.

As for food: animal fats, fruits, sugar and chocolate, hardtack, condensed milk, canned meat, coffee and tea.

As for medicines: quinine, magnesia muriatica, sulphuric quinine, Rivanol, iodine tincture, lint, gauze, Pyramidon, Xenofom, Pantopen, morphine, tetanus antitoxin (a word missing here) [sic], sets of surgery instruments, rubber gloves.

There is also a need of a less abundant supply of: watches, fountain pens and a supply of ink, pencils, carbon paper, sealing wax, crêpe paper, shoe polish, sewing machines, typewriters, woodworking tools, carpentry tools, cobbler's tools, sewing kits, locksmith's tools, safety razors, several sets for dental offices, radios, any number of Polish books, games and toys.

In the above matter, Ambassador Kot requests that direct contact with him be maintained.

The delivery routes of the above goods to Russia have been more or less outlined. For obvious reasons, I am not going to discuss them in this letter; instead, I will communicate them to you verbally at the earliest opportunity.

J. Ciechanowski

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 5

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*6 October 1941. Unsigned note on the conversation between
the Head of the MFA and the representatives
of the World Jewish Congress in Great Britain*

Note on the conversation between the Head of the MFA⁸⁹
and the representatives of the British section of the World Jewish Congress

On 6 October 1941, Ambassador Raczyński received the representatives of the British branch of the World Jewish Congress who were announced by Dr Schwarzbart—the headquarters of this organisation is located in the United States; the British branch, in view of the almost complete liquidation of other European branches, now represents the European interests of the organisation—that is Mr Silverman, a member of the House of Commons, and Mr Barou. The purpose of their visit was the issue of caring for Polish-Jewish citizens in the Soviet Union and the participation of Jews themselves in that care. Messrs Silverman and Barou referred to their conversations and correspondence exchanged with the MFA (i.e. Minister Tarnowski, and subsequently Minister Morawski), and their contacts with Ambassador Kot before his departure for Moscow.

Expressing their satisfaction with the appointment of Miss Aszkenazy to the position of the attaché at our Embassy in Moscow, Mr Silverman nevertheless expressed his disappointment that someone 'whose name would bare more weight, and whose name would be more known' had not been appointed. Ambassador

⁸⁹ After the resignation of August Zaleski, Edward Raczyński was appointed as the Head of the MFA but, at the same time, continued to hold the office of the Ambassador in London. On 6 June 1942, the President appointed Raczyński as a minister (but not the Minister of Foreign Affairs).

Raczyński objected to this approach, explaining the main reasons why it was impossible to appoint people who are not in the civil service to a strictly diplomatic position and whose tasks would be of a social nature. At the same time, Mr Raczyński explained how the issue of a social action in Russia would look like. Mr Silverman and Mr Barou did not stand by their opinion, agreeing with the Ambassador's arguments. Instead, they made the following requests:

1) Due to the number of deported Jews, the interest aroused by their fate in the Jewish world, and the possibility of organising an adequate charity campaign, they asked that Ambassador Kot nominate a prominent figure, a big Jewish name in the world, to cooperate with our Embassy on the assistance for Polish-Jewish citizens. The name of the candidate is important, as the appointment of a person well-known and trusted in the Jewish world would undoubtedly affect the results of the charity campaign. They suggested the names of former Deputy Hartglas and Rabbi Soroczkin, who are both currently in Palestine, but ready to move to Russia at once. Of course, the issue of establishing the role of that person would be left entirely up to us. If Prof. Kot had in mind any other candidates from among the local Jews, they would be grateful for providing them the names (they heard that the names Mr Sommerstein and Mr Alter were mentioned).

2) When the Embassy in Moscow appoints local delegates, Jewish candidates should be taken into account in predominantly Jewish communities.

Ambassador Raczyński, emphasising the fact that these matters are within the sole competence of Ambassador Kot, promised to telegraph him information based on the demands presented by Messrs Silverman and Barou.

Then, Mr Barou informed the Ambassador that in the United States, the institute for Jewish matters had been established under the patronage of the World Jewish Congress, whose first task was to prepare materials for defining the position of Jews in the post-war organisation of the world. Mr Barou is the representative of the institute in London and would therefore like to liaise with a relevant Polish institution (to exchange information, materials, etc.). Ambassador Raczyński pointed to the Polish Research Centre as the institution best suited to maintain relations of that sort.

London, 6 Oct 1941

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 97

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*11 October 1941. Letter from a member of the National Council
to the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief
on organising a relief campaign in the territory of the USSR*

London, 11 Oct 1941

To General Władysław Sikorski
Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief
London

Mr General!

At my last audience with you on the 2 October, I raised, among other things, the issue of mobilising material aid and funds for hundreds of thousands of Polish citizens in Russia and the cooperation in this action of relevant Jewish institutes.

In accordance with your wish, I submit a specific proposal in writing on this matter:

1. The campaign requires hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Our Government is unable to meet these requirements. The American Red Cross should play an important role in this plan. I am aware that there are many efforts being made towards this idea. Besides the Polish diaspora in the United States, Jewish institutions should also be encouraged to support this action. I would regard such a combined effort to be not only a humanitarian act, but also a symptom of political cooperation.

2. In the territory of the United States, the following institutions are first and foremost to be considered:

- a) The Joint Distribution Committee;
- b) The American Jewish Congress;
- c) The Federation of Polish Jews.

3. I am in contact with all three institutions. It would be advisable for Minister Stańczyk and our Embassy in Washington to hold talks with them as soon as possible so that these institutions adopt the principle of a joint action under the patronage of our Government for all Polish citizens in Russia, regardless of their religion and nationality; in case this principle is adopted, technical details of the action should be arranged jointly.

I am willing to assist with the matter to the best of my abilities on account of my relations with these institutions. In the joint Committee in America, there would have to be an appropriate representation of these institutions, and at the Embassy

in Moscow, a properly legitimised Jewish representation in the Committee dealing with this issue within the Embassy.

4. On Canadian territory, the following institutions should be considered:

a) The United Jewish Refugee & War Relief Agencies, Montreal;

b) The Canadian Jewish Congress, Montreal;

c) The Federation of Polish Jews in Canada, Montreal (the latter organisation forms a part of the first of the above-listed as far as social campaigns are concerned).

I also remain in contact with these institutions. Our Consulates in Canada, or just one of them, should conduct analogous talks, as I mentioned above under point 3). I want to point out that the Federation of Polish Jews in Canada has already contacted me regarding the matter, declaring their utmost readiness to launch a clothes collection campaign, and they are also most likely to agree to host a food or medical supply collection.

5. In Argentina, there is a federation of Polish Jews worth considering, named Union Central Israelita Polaca en la Argentina in Buenos Aires. I remain in contact with them. They informed me by telegraph and by mail of their complete willingness to carry out the campaign in question and already asked me about which way to send the aid to Russia. Our Legation in Buenos Aires should hold appropriate talks as soon as possible. I know from reports in letters that this organisation is in close cooperation with our Consulate in Argentina both regarding this matter and Polish-Jewish citizens volunteering for the formations of our army.

6. In Palestine, from where technical communication with the territory of Russia is relatively easiest at the moment, the organisation to be considered for our campaign is the Representation of Polish Jewry, based in Tel Aviv. I have already contacted it regarding the matter. Our Consulate in Jerusalem, or in Tel Aviv, should contact the Representation on the said matter.

Regarding the territory of Great Britain, I shall address the issue separately. For the time being, the matter is being discussed by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, as well as the Polish-Jewish Refugee Fund. I am in contact with these institutions.

7. I believe that it would be advisable for me to be given an opportunity to present the details to the Government Committee dealing with the issue, and that I am allowed, perhaps alongside the representatives of the local Jewry, to cooperate permanently with the Committee on the matter.

Please accept my deepest regards,

I. Schwarzbart

AYV, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/78

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*18 October 1941. Letter from the Director General of the Polish Bureaux
in France to the Legation in Bern on passport issues*

Vichy, 18 October 1941

SECRET

TO THE LEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
in Bern

According to the information received, a number of Poles living in France have contacted the Legation and asked to have their Polish passports extended or re-issued. These requests have recently been a widely occurring phenomenon; I have even been informed, admittedly from sources yet unverified, of the existence of brokers who undertake to obtain Polish passports in Bern for money.

Issuing important documents for Poles in France by the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern is an extremely important matter, because in the current conditions it allows them to be provided with genuine, full-fledged personal documents.

In practice, a valid Polish passport here is only required to travel abroad; in all other cases concerning administrative and police procedures—applying for a French identity card, issuing of food stamps and coupons for all sorts of rationed goods, proving one's identity to the police, the gendarmerie, etc.—identity certificates issued by the Polish Bureaux are perfectly adequate.

This fact is important because I would not consider it desirable in the current conditions for the spread of Polish passports from Sweden among local Poles, as it could draw the attention of occupation authorities, including questioning the validity of these passports. I cannot even be certain whether the passports extended or reissued by the Legation will facilitate the departure from France, as already today I have been informed of instances when French prefectures question the validity of the Polish passports extended in Switzerland after the closing date of the Polish Consulates in France.

Secondly, the passport situation is far from being normalised in the wake of the defeat of France in June 1940 and the consequent emergence for some time of gangs of forgers and providers of Polish documents. The French having disbanded Polish diplomatic posts in September of last year made it impossible to arrange the situation again.

Therefore, I wish to point out that the MFA decreed in August of this year the annulment of all passports issued after 21 June 1940 by consulates and other Polish diplomatic posts in France. I mention the regulation as I am not certain whether your Legation is aware of it.

Against the background of these remarks, I recommend that the Legation should take into account only requests for passport renewals received from private persons, only in relation to fully validated passports in the sense of complete certainty of the citizenship of the holder of Polish citizenship, with the exception of passports issued during the chaos of the evacuation of France in the last year (ordinary passports with the seal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sheet passports, issued in Toulouse, Marseille and Lyon). I would request that you extend such documents only if the application is supported by a recommendation either from myself or from one of our Bureaux.

Regarding the issue of new passports, it should be carried out solely based on a certificate of identity issued by one of the local Bureaux. The document is issued by the Bureaux according to a procedure analogous to the standard passport procedure and all the regulations and ordinances on the retainment and revocation of Polish citizenship. By the way, it should be noted that a number of people of Jewish descent who were refused a certificate of identity by the local Bureaux are said to have approached your Legation with a request for Polish passports.

In my opinion, the only exception to these regulations may only occur should the people be personal acquaintances of the Legation, or when there has been an intervention with regard to their cases on my behalf or that of the heads of local Bureaux. I wish to stress that such cases may occur due to the requirements of the local military circles, or in connection with people in whom we take particular interest for some special reasons.

Note that the military circles here have also spoken against Polish passports being issued without the knowledge and approval of the local institutions.

DIRECTOR GENERAL
S. Zabiełło

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 404

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24 October 1941. Report by the Press Attaché at the Embassy in Kuybyshev from the conversation between the Commander of the Polish Army in the USSR and representatives of Jewish circles

KUYBYSHEV, 24 OCT 1941

REPORT FROM THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN GENERAL ANDERS
AND REPRESENTATIVES OF POLISH JEWS
IN THE TERRITORY OF THE USSR

On 24 October 1941 at 11.30 a.m., at the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev, a conversation was held on the initiative of the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland between the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army in the USSR, General Władysław Anders, and representatives of the Jewish society from Poland, staying in the USSR.⁹⁰

The participants were:

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Professor Stanisław Kot;

General Władysław Anders;

Representatives of the Bund:⁹¹ Messrs Henryk Erlich, Wiktor Alter, a representative of the Polish Socialist Party, Otto Pehr, and Mr Seidenman as a representative of general Zionists.

A written report of the conversation was prepared by the Press Attaché at the Embassy in Moscow, K. Pruszyński.

General Anders at the outset expresses his satisfaction at the opportunity that comes to him to discuss certain matters with representatives of Polish Jewry. He wants to familiarise them with the conditions in which the Polish Army in the USSR is being formed. They should not be indifferent to them, since a very large percentage of the soldiers of this army are of Jewish origin. The conditions are very difficult now. Initially, the Soviet authorities wanted to only establish a single division. General

⁹⁰ On 14 August 1941, Poland and the USSR signed a military agreement which provided for the establishment of the Polish Army in the USSR, as envisaged in the Sikorski-Maisyki Agreement. General Władysław Anders (previously held in the NKVD prison in Lubyanka) was appointed as its Commander-in-Chief.

⁹¹ Bund—a social democratic party established in Wilno as the General Jewish Labour Bund in Lithuania, Poland and Russia in 1897. After the restoration of Poland's independence, it functioned as an independent political party in Poland from 1918. During the period of the German occupation, the Bund was a co-founder of the Jewish underground movement, participated in projects of the Council to Aid Jews and collaborated with the Government Delegation for Poland.

Anders demanded that two be formed, as well as a reserve centre. Consequently, the number of food rations granted to the Polish Army by the Soviet authorities is very small. It is limited to 44,000. Of those rations much is put aside for the families of servicemen and for civilians who arrived here with the army. Hence, there are very difficult conditions in the army, not to mention the issue of housing these masses, among others.

Against this backdrop, Jewish-related conflicts arose. They began in the aftermath of the policy adopted by the Soviet authorities, which entailed the release from camps of, above all, Polish citizens of Jewish nationality or descent. Therefore, they were the first to join the Polish Army. This resulted in a large percentage of Jews in the army, much greater than in Poland. In view of the fact that the formation of the Polish Army had been limited by the Soviet authorities, Poles released at a later time and arriving to the Polish military could not be accommodated, even though—as opposed to many Jews—they had served in the army before and were adequately qualified. There is no doubt that among the Jews, there were some men of no great convictions, for whom the military under the current circumstances of war is a refuge of sorts, especially as long as they do not go to the front.

According to the General, Polish Jews can be divided into two categories: Jews from the western and central territories of Poland and Jews from the Eastern Borderlands. During the grim days of the collapse of Poland, the latter behaved at times in the worst manner. They would disarm Polish troops. They would tear Polish eagles off their hats. The General tells how in Lwów, contrary to the assurances of the surrender agreement, the Soviet authorities gathered Polish soldiers in one place to be deported. The Jewish population was insulting Polish prisoners of wars. At a later stage, Poles and Jews found themselves together in Soviet prison camps. And again, there are many Polish complaints about the attitude of Jews towards Poles. Such things cannot remain without a trace, so when the situation is exacerbated by current ills, the old grievances flourish much more strongly. One must be prepared for that. General Anders issued appropriate orders to all his subordinates. Antisemitism will not be tolerated, but the possibility of this danger cannot be denied. Unfortunately, too many of the conditions have already emerged.

There have been requests made by Jewish groups that an active political stand be taken.⁹² Two such groups submitted their memoranda to General Anders regarding

⁹² For instance, in the letter from 4 October 1941, a representative of Jewish communities in the USSR contacted the Ambassador in Kuybyshev with the following proposals: 'Among the Polish citizens currently staying in the territory of the USSR, there is a very large number of Jews. For national and religious reasons, their interests require special treatment. It is, therefore, most advisable that a bureau or a section for Jewish affairs be established at the Delegation of the Polish Legation. The duties of that section would involve: 1) obtaining financial, clothing and food assistance from American, English and Palestinian sources, that is, via Yorat, Foreign Committee, Board of Deputies, and Jewish Agency; 2) arranging at present emigration to Palestine, America, etc; 3) settling various issues related to the formation of the Polish Army in the USSR; 4) propaganda

Jews in the Polish Army. One of those documents was created by the revisionist circles. It was submitted by Miron Szeskin and Marek Kahan. Their memorandum is aimed to eliminate antisemitism in the Polish Army by separating Jews from the army and the formation of distinct Jewish units or, lastly, a Jewish legion under the authority of the Polish Army and its Commander. The revisionists intend to secure for themselves American aid for that purpose and strive to lead that Jewish army out of the USSR to Syria. According to their estimation, Jews comprise 900,000 out of 2 million Poles in the USSR, which should enable them to form a Jewish army consisting of 100,000 men. According to General Anders, this reasoning and the numbers on which it is based are not accurate. It is difficult to establish the numerical ratio of Poles and Jews; nevertheless, the percentage of Jews is lower than indicated by revisionist representatives. Ultimately, the army always constitutes 7 and not 12 per cent of a country's population. General Anders himself calculates the capabilities of the Polish Army in the USSR at 100–140 thousand. The Revisionists' calculations are therefore frivolous.

The aims of Poles diverge from those of the revisionists. The goal of the Poles is to rebuild the Polish State, while the goal of the revisionists is to create a Jewish state in Palestine. That is the reason why the General's reply to their proposals was negative. He does not want any efforts at creating national armies or units within the Polish Army, for it will encourage Ukrainian or Belarussian attempts. The army must be uniform. All soldiers must fight for Poland.

The other memorandum was prepared by a member of the Bund, Lucjan Blitt. According to him, Jews should be treated as normal citizens and a separate Jewish army is out of the question. However, Blitt would like to organise lectures and meetings for Jews. The General does not consider it possible. All army events ought to be of common and not of factional character.

Finally, there is another unpleasant issue. According to both Polish reports and the communications of the NKVD, many Jews already enlisted in the army are leaving Buzuluk for Tashkent. Others are spreading propaganda against the Polish military in the Polish Army, calling for the departure to Tashkent. The latter is unacceptable by the same principle. Regarding leaving the army and moving to Tashkent, General Anders allows it due to the extremely difficult living conditions of the Polish Army, which not everyone can endure. Having no food, barefoot soldiers go to the fields to dig up potatoes even now. In such circumstances and with such a great number of volunteers with military training, the authorities allow men to leave the military camps. However, such cases are to be carried out formally, which Jews generally fail to do. That is exactly what a group of 200 men has recently done, which is another thing not making the relations any easier.

for the Polish affairs abroad. It should be noted that the means listed in point 1 shall be entrusted to the delegation and shall be divided among all Polish citizens.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 147.

The General will not accept antisemitism. However, in that endeavour he needs help from the Jewish side.

MR ERLICH starts with the painful events of 1939. He encountered them himself and saw the signs of friendliness of the Jews from eastern borderlands towards the Red Army; however, he soon ended up in a Soviet prison. For him, as a member of the Bund and as a Jew, these phenomena were no less upsetting than for the Poles...

MR ALTER (interrupting): these were isolated events.

General Anders: No, these were not isolated events.

MR ERLICH is of the opinion that these phenomena should be understood. They emerged against the background of bad national relations that existed in Poland and which in the last years before the catastrophe of war deteriorated even more. This is what you must remember. Finally, the attitude of Poles towards Jews in Soviet forced labour camps was also marked by antisemitism. Relations were bad on both sides. Mr Erlich's formation has always been a supporter of the citizenship of the masses of Polish Jews and treating them equally with the rest of the citizens. They strove to prevent mutual irritations. General Anders' position on the planned 'Jewish army' corresponds completely to the demands of the Bund. We, Jews, we are not fighting for Palestine, we are fighting for Poland, and we want to fight for Poland. We do not want to be ignored in that struggle for whatever reason.

As for the action of the revisionists, Mr Erlich is of the opinion that this entire formation, as demonstrated on several occasions by local and municipal elections in Poland, does not present any significant power. Erlich knows the authors of that 'memorandum'; Kahan behaved in a particularly nasty way, having in bad faith taken over the editorial board of 'Der Moment.' He was condemned for this by Jewish writers and journalists in a special resolution. In conclusion, Erlich states that members of the Bund want nothing else than for the declaration of General Anders to be carried out, that there is only one army, the Polish Army, and only one aim—the fight for new Poland, the same fight for everyone.

MR SEIDENMAN adds that as a Zionist—although admittedly not of such high standing in his formation as Erlich and Alter in theirs—shares the same view. He does not want any separation of Jews in the army; he wants them not to differ in that regard from the rest of Polish citizens. There must only be one Polish Army.

Mr Erlich believes, however, that a Jewish advisory institution or body should be established for General Anders to deal with all these affairs.

General Anders categorically opposes the above suggestion. The structure of the army does not and cannot allow for any 'advisory bodies.' The military is apolitical. The political side of things lies in the competence of the Ambassador. Such an institution could be established at the Embassy. The General does not want any political movements in the army as much as he does not want any national differences. Those who will not serve as soldiers will be dismissed from the army.

MR ALTER understands that point of view; however, he is of the opinion that propaganda and education for Jewish soldiers could be of major service.

AMBASSADOR KOT reminds the participants that in the bureau of propaganda and education in London, there is a Jewish officer, specialist for Jewish affairs.

GENERAL ANDERS will consider that issue in the future as part of the entire education section in the army. The current conversation was only preliminary in view of the limited time at the General's present disposal. There seems to be a general agreement that Jews should not be separated out from the Polish Army, and that the same norms are to be applied to all Polish citizens in the military.⁹³

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 147

140

24 October 1941. Circular by the Secretary-General at the MFA on desertion of people of Jewish descent from the Polish Army

London, 24 October 1941

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends enclosed⁹⁴ a list of 15 Polish citizens of military age who are physically fit and who, having volunteered for military service in Lisbon, failed to fulfil their obligations and departed to the United States of America instead of England.

Should these people present themselves at your post, they are to be refused any consular protection (their Polish passports are not to be reissued or extended) and the Ministry must be informed.

SECRETARY-GENERAL
Kajetan Dzierżykraj-Morawski

AAN, Poselstwo Santiago de Chile, 56

⁹³ In the cable of 27 November 1941, Consul General in Tel Aviv, Henryk Rosmarin, communicated: 'At yesterday's press conference in Tel Aviv, a member of the Jewish Agency, Grünbaum, expressed his gratitude to the Polish Government for the assistance provided to Jewish refugees. At the same time, Grünbaum declared that the Polish Government conceded that Jewish refugees from Poland who arrived in Palestine with certificates shall have the right to choose whether to join the Polish Army or the Jewish units in the British Army. Today, all newspapers have published Grünbaum's speech.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

⁹⁴ Not included in this publication.

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*3 November 1941. Cable from the Head of the MFA
to the Consulate General in Jerusalem:
instruction for Witold Okoński on the evacuation of refugees to Burma*

TO Polconsul Jerusalem
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

No. 358

To Okoński.

I wish to communicate to you the following instruction on the refugee affairs in Burma:

The Government of Burma issued 250 visas for our refugees. 50 visas were allocated to Jewish refugees from the Far East. 35 of them have already arrived in Burma, with 15 still on the way. Jewish refugees are provided for by the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, although formally it is we who are responsible for their maintenance. When you arrive, you will have to assess their living conditions and whether the Joint indeed transfers the money for their maintenance. I wish to indicate that in principle we want to find employment possibly for all refugees and eliminate the system of subsidies, even if they do not come from our Treasury.

The remaining 200 visas are reserved for the Poles in Russia. As soon as it is practicable for them to depart, I will notify you by telegraph. I request that you make arrangements to receive them in Rangoon, in conjunction with the authorities of Burma. We would like to direct a major number of Poles from Russia, depending on the possibility to arrange their departure and locate them in Burma. What I am expecting from you is the information, after your arrival in Rangoon, of the possibility to locate major groups of Poles from Russia there. We will commence our main efforts with the Foreign Office at an appropriate moment, concurrently informing you. In Bombay, please contact Banasiński as to the possibility to organise the passage of Poles from Russia to Burma, who would probably have to have their first stopover in India.

Upon arrival to Rangoon,⁹⁵ I ask you to notify Ambassador Romer in Shanghai⁹⁶ of your arrival and to maintain communication with him regarding

⁹⁵ Witold Okoński, despite having been appointed as the Consul in Rangoon in November 1941, never reached Burma and instead assumed the role of an official at the Legation in Tehran.

⁹⁶ In October 1941, Japan withdrew the recognition of the Polish Embassy in Tokyo, and on 11 December 1941, the state of war between Poland and Japan was officially announced. Tadeusz Romer together with the staff of the mission moved to Shanghai, at the time occupied by the Japanese troops, where he remained until August 1942 as the Ambassador on special mission to the Far East. See doc. 235.

the 50 refugees, Jews from Japan placed in Burma. Ambassador Romer made an agreement with a delegate of the Joint in Tokyo regarding the assistance for them.

Raczyński

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

142

11 November 1941. Letter from the Political Director at the MFA to the Envoy in Lisbon on the possibility of obtaining British visas for Jewish refugees

London, 11 November 1941

URGENT

To the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
in Lisbon

The Ministry of Foreign affairs sends enclosed—requesting that it be returned after use—the list of diamond traders,⁹⁷ sent in by Mr Kullmann, the High Commissioner for Refugees under League of Nations protection.

The relevant files in the possession of the Ministry suggest that people No. 2, 3, 5 and 15 are not even listed in the documents prepared by a Delegate of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare. The people No. 1, 9, 10, 13 and 14 were featured in the list enclosed by the Delegate with his letter from 14 March 1941, No. 305/41. The remaining people appear in previous lists.

With reference to the list recently received from the Delegate of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, which only features four names (6, 7, 8 and 12) of diamond traders for whom attempts could be made to obtain British visas, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—before it takes any measures with the local authorities towards that—requests your opinion of the respective people, potential beneficiaries of the Ministry's endeavours, as well as whether there are no special reservations with regard to the people listed in the enclosure.

POLITICAL DIRECTOR
M. Arciszewski

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36

⁹⁷ Not included in this publication.

143*14 November 1941. Order by the Commander of the Polish Army
in the USSR on the attitude towards people of Jewish descent*

Buzuluk, 14 Nov 1941

Participation of Jews in the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR

This order pertains to the Jewish matter and the participation of Jews in the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR.

Following the instructions issued heretofore, I send this order to be carried out strictly.

It is aimed to:

a) present a clear, coherent and unambiguous line of conduct, for commanders under me and for Polish soldiers, regarding the Jewish matter in our army;

b) put an end to all malicious insinuations and rumours bred behind our backs, most likely arising from sources hostile to us, of the alleged antisemitism in the army.

In connection with the above, and to avoid any ambiguity, I determine the following:

1. Jewish-Polish citizens have the same rights and obligations to serve in the Polish Army as other citizens of the Republic of Poland;

2. in the army, they are to be treated on an equal footing with others, sincerely and cordially, and endowed with the same trust as other soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces;

3. to avoid any misunderstandings, I would like to explain that at the current stage of enlistment to the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR, Jews are subject to the same restrictions to being drafted for active duty as Poles, that is, those to be immediately conscripted are: officers, professional NCOs, privates on active duty and volunteers who were trained in the Polish Army and will be accepted by the Draft Board.

All others shall be directed to the southern republics of the USSR, where their registration as additional military reserve force will be held.

I have announced the above so that commanders have grounds to deny rumours spread by our enemies of Jews wanting to join the Polish Army allegedly being discouraged;

4. I command all my subordinate Commanders to fight categorically against all manifestations of racial antisemitism and prevent any misconduct in that regard.

It must be explained to subordinates in a clear and explicit manner that Poland has always respected the principles of democracy and tolerance and that she will not deviate from that line now. Any incidents directed against a Polish-Jewish soldier merely because he is Jewish are unacceptable.

We will apply the same laws to a Jew in the army as to a Pole. We will act against him as strictly as possible only if he cannot wear the uniform of a soldier of the Republic of Poland with dignity and forgets that he is a Polish soldier.

I am communicating these guidelines to commanders so that they are carried out strictly.⁹⁸

Commander of the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR
Władysław Anders
 General

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.755/2

144

*22 November 1941. Letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs
 to a member of the National Council on the situation in occupied Poland
 (with enclosure)*

London, 22 Nov 1941

To *Dr I. Schwarzbart*

Please find enclosed a copy of reports sent from Poland, and at the same time I request that you do not publish any part of it without contacting me first. Please treat the instructions featured in the report as strictly confidential.

MINISTER
Stanisław Mikołajczyk

⁹⁸ See doc. 146.

[enclosure]

...⁹⁹

JEWISH AFFAIRS

Poznań.—10 August. On Sunday, 3 Jews were publicly hanged in a sports arena for an attempted escape from a labour camp.

The Eastern Lands.—Germans use ruthless terror against the Jewish population. Special units of German police murder Jews regardless of their age and sex. Groups of 100 Jews are gathered and then ordered to dig a pit. Every victim must lie down in the hole they dug. The Gendarmerie shoots them in the neck, head and back, and then—without checking whether the victim is still alive—covers up the pits. Terrifying scenes occur at the execution ground. Gendarmes drag their victims to the killing ground. Women beg for mercy, welter on the ground, cry, scream, scratch, and bite their tormentors.

Czyżew Szlachecki.—(Łomża region) 27 August. In Czyżew, Zaręby Kościelne and one more village, Germans announce that they would establish a ghetto and concentrate the Jewish population in one place. Then, approx. 6,000 Jews were driven to the anti-tank trenches near Czyżew, where they were all murdered: children were simply clubbed to death, adults were shot. The dead, the wounded, and the almost dead were buried together, with some being buried alive.

Warsaw. Mortality rate for June, July and August of this year, compiled in 22 tenement houses inhabited by the Jewish poor, indicates the percentage of deaths from 8.7% to 30.5% in 3 months. In the Main Shelter Home at 39 Dzielna St, there were 607 children in July. 155 of the children died. Of that, 121 children spent less than 4 weeks in the facility, having arrived there in a state of extreme starvation. Obstetric hospital (4 Tłomackie St). Two pregnant women are lying in a single bed. Water is leaking from the ceiling into the operation room. Patients receive black coffee with or without saccharin, thin soup for dinner, and at times there is not even that. Doctors say that patients are dying not from illness but from starvation. Nurses and staff are not provided food by the hospital, they stagger with hunger.

AYV, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/190

⁹⁹ The major part of the report on the entirety of the situation in occupied Poland was omitted.

145

*28 November 1941. Decree by the President on repealing
the Act on Revocation of Citizenship*

DECREE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
OF 28 NOVEMBER 1941

on repealing the Act of 31 March 1938 on Revocation of Citizenship

On the basis of Article 79, paragraph (2) of the Constitution Act I decree the following:

Article 1.

The Act of 31 March 1938 on Revocation of Citizenship (Journal of Laws No. 22, item 191) is hereby abrogated.

Article 2.

The execution of this decree is entrusted to the Minister of Internal Affairs in conjunction with the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Article 3.

This decree shall become effective as of the day of its announcement.

President of the Republic of Poland: Władysław Raczkiewicz
for the Prime Minister and the Minister of Internal Affairs: S. Mikołajczyk
Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: E. Raczyński

Dziennik Ustaw 1941, nr 8, poz. 22

146

*30 November 1941. Circular by the Commander of the Polish Army in the USSR
on the attitude towards people of Jewish descent*

Buzuluk, 30 November 1941

Deliver personally to the Commander

In connection to my order of 14 Nov 1941, L.dz.1730/Kanc.Sztab, on the participation of Jews in the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR,¹⁰⁰ which you will find enclosed, I wish to explain the following strictly for the information of my subordinate commanders:

The order in question explains categorically and officially the political 'creed' of the Commander of the Polish Armed Forces on the Jewish matter. However, I do

¹⁰⁰ Doc. 143.

not want to be misunderstood by the commanders. I am well aware of the reasons for antisemitic incidents in the army—these are the responses to the often hostile behaviour of Polish Jews in the Eastern Borderlands during our ordeal in the years 1939–1940. Therefore, I am not surprised that our soldiers, ardent patriots, often reacted harshly; however, they think that our Government and our army are going to gloss over these experiences.

From this point of view, then, our defence of the Jews may seem incomprehensible, historically unjust, and strange to them.

However, our present policy, as closely connected with English politics, must respond positively to the Jewish cause, whose influence in the Anglo-Saxon world is very significant and important. All soldiers must unconditionally understand that our reason of state demands that we do not irritate the Jews, which can now bring the most disastrous and incalculable consequences to the Polish cause.

I therefore recommend that we explain our position to the subordinate troops in an appropriate and discreet manner and clearly warn those who are too hot-headed that at present all signs of the fight against the Jews are unconditionally unacceptable, and those that clearly harm our cause will be severely punished by me. After winning the campaign, we will arrange the Jewish cause as required by the greatness and sovereignty of our Homeland and ordinary human justice.

Commander of the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR
/-/ Anders Władysław General

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 147 (previously published)

147

6 December 1941. Report by the Consul General in Ottawa on the possibility of Jewish emigration to Canada

OTTAWA, 6 December 1941

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In connection with the dispatches from the Ministry of 2 and 5 December,¹⁰¹ I refer to my claris No. 75, of 6 December, while I enclose a copy of a letter from the

¹⁰¹ This is most likely a reference to cables sent on 29 November and 3 December 1941. In the former, the Head of the MFA communicated: 'I have received another appeal from the Federation of Polish Jews in Canada, asking for an intervention with the Canadian

Head of the Canadian Department of Immigration I received today.¹⁰² The letter expresses the position adopted by the Government of Canada—as confirmed to me verbally this morning—that the local authorities had given no-one any assurances as to accepting an additional number of Jewish refugees.

Of the quota of 325 visas for Polish citizens in Portugal, over a third were allocated to Jews (including some who do not speak Polish among themselves, because in the past few years they had lived in Belgium, the Netherlands, or France). For the 200 visas for Polish citizens in Japan (79 plus 41 plus 80) granted to us by Canada, very reluctantly and exceptionally, 191 were allocated to Jews. My strenuous efforts to admit 80 rabbis and rabbinic students to be allowed to come here finally resulted in a successful outcome after several refusals but were met with criticism from other Jewish formations (the Bund especially). Even Minister Stańczyk was not particularly happy about it. These endeavours that cost me a lot of trouble, energy and time had stemmed from petitions and pressure from various sides and many countries, as well as two cables from the MFA.

Recently renewed pressure from various Jewish organisations has been exerted in various ways and with different methods. The World Jewish Congress (Dr Arieih Tartakower) and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada (Rabbi L. Seltzer), as well as the Rabbinical College of Mir (Rabbi A. Kalmanowitz) indicate that rabbis deserve special treatment due to their cultural and educational role, and due to the fact of their very significant percentage among the Jewish refugees in the Far East. The aforementioned organisations (all New York based) put pressure directly on me or send delegations, dispatches and letters to Minister Stańczyk, who is currently visiting the United States.

Meanwhile, the Federation of Polish Jews in Canada (Mr S. Pietruszka, and his own brother Mr Peters) is behaving unreasonably. As I have already explained, it is a fresh organisation, enjoying little respect among other Jews in Canada. By its various acquisitions, it is now trying to solidify its position among Canadian Jews (analogically to the Federation of Polish Jews in America). From influential Jews

Government on granting asylum to Jewish refugees in the Far East, with the Federation guaranteeing their maintenance. From your reports ... I infer that it is impossible to obtain Canada's consent. Please explain it appropriately to the Federation. Ambassador Romer informs that he has visas to Palestine for 250 people. Furthermore, we are continuing our efforts for more visas to Australia, New Zealand, as well as the Philippines and Nicaragua. At the same time, I have contacted Washington requesting that it obtain a number of visas to the United States and Cuba.' In the second telegram, he added: 'A delegation of Polish Jews here informed me today that the Canadian authorities were allegedly willing to accept a further group of Jewish refugees from Shanghai on the basis of guarantees from Jewish organisations and a re-guarantee from the Polish Government. Communicating the above, I ask you for a possible intervention.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 232.

¹⁰² Not included in this publication.

with whom I am in good relations (not only professionally, but also socially)—such as Rabbi of Ottawa Fasman; a well-known local philanthropist and a member of the Association of the Friends of Poland, Mr Freiman; as well as Director of the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies in Montreal, Mr Saul Hayes—I know that they regard the Federation as an association of ‘kikes,’ rather than Jews. They criticised the methods of conduct of the Federation, consisting in stretching or twisting the facts and at times even misrepresenting the situation. This occurred on several occasions, most recently in relation to Polish Jews in London who—based on a completely inaccurate account—presented a flawed picture of the state of affairs to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 5 December.

The Canadian Government, having already yielded to the direct and indirect pressure from Jewish organisations and individuals, does not intend to allow them to enter Canada any longer. Among the evacuees from Europe, there is a disproportionately large percentage of Jews, whom they tend to consider an undesirable element because:

1) while Slavs and Nordics settle down on farms or find employment in the industry and in the mines—which is beneficial to the war effort—Jews seek commercial interests, further complicating the already complex economic situation;

2) whereas the former category of people—albeit desired even as permanent immigrants—generally intend to return to their countries of origin after the end of the war, the great majority of the latter intend to stay in Canada or make their way to the United States (which is also unwilling to allow them to enter);

3) as stated in the enclosed letter from Director Blair, large numbers of Aryan refugees enlist in the allied armies or work for the military industry; meanwhile, only a very small proportion of Jews who have arrived or want to arrive here cooperate in these areas. Therefore, Canada is not going to shift the temporary or permanent ratio of immigrants to benefit the Jews.

Admittedly, the latter are guaranteed livelihood by the Jewish organisations in Canada and the United States. However, in practice many of them not only approach the Polish diplomatic posts to obtain letters of recommendation, to find employment or to bring members of their family or acquaintances (with which we are happy to help them as Polish citizens, without making any distinctions), but also appeal to various Canadian institutions, which in turn intervene with the local state institutions.

Recently, the Secretary of the Federation of Polish Jews in Canada, Mr M. Peters, sent out copies of an identical letter to the editorial boards of several newspapers, indicating the contribution of Polish troops to the cause of the Allied powers and appealing to the public that 1,500 Polish citizens stranded in Shanghai be allowed to enter Canada. With regard to that, Director Blair observed that the

Jewish element comprises an overwhelming minority of the former group, whereas it probably accounts for 99% of the latter.

Besides, the territory of the Far East, as well as that of Cuba, have been blacklisted here, because large numbers of Jews holding various passports have been concentrating there for quite some time, attempting to reach the United States either directly or via other countries. Additionally, there are many agents among them who turned mediation in the obtainment of visas into their own profitable business. For that purpose, they use diverse methods, not even refraining from offering presents to officials—which obviously exposes civil service to the risk of demoralisation.

Those are the reasons why the relevant Canadian authorities decided not to allow Jewish refugees to arrive here.¹⁰³

Wiktor Podoski

CONSUL GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND¹⁰⁴

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

¹⁰³ In the letter from 17 December 1941, the Consul General in Ottawa informed the Government Delegate for Relief Affairs in New York: 'In light of the fact that Canada has closed its borders for Jews completely, I do not even have the opportunity to raise the issue with the local Department of Immigration. Especially one of the initial reservations of that Department as regards Jews was the expectation that the people allowed to arrive here would subsequently attempt to bring members of their families here. The constant pressure, exercised by Jews in diverse ways and from various countries, on the Canadian authorities resulted in such a state of irritation in the Department of Immigration that I have recently received only refusals—even in the cases of Christians (the latter, such as the Rajchman family and many others, turned out to have obtained Canadian visas in bad faith, which they used as a back door to the United States) ... Despite being assured that every Jew to arrive in Canada would be provided for, the local Government does not even intend to consider any further applications of Jews to enter this Dominion. Canada has already granted 1,500 entry permits to Polish citizens (individual and collective of various categories); however, volunteers to the military and to the military industry—on request from the Command of the Polish Army or the local Ministry of Munitions—receive group visas (at times for 200 people at once) outside the quota for regular refugees. Besides, the latter has already been exhausted, with Polish citizens having been granted more visas than citizens of all other allied countries combined. Director Blair emphasises the fact that Jews comprise 90% of the visa quota allocated to Polish citizens, whereas among those volunteering for the army or the military industry they constitute only a negligible proportion. In light of the above, I recommend attempting to obtain US visas for all further Jewish candidates to come to the American continent. Particularly, as the United States have now also become the ally of Poland (and a neophyte at that)'. Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 36.

¹⁰⁴ A copy of the report was sent to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, as well as to the Embassy in Washington and the Consulate General in New York.

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*8 December 1941. Note by the Embassy in Kuybyshev
to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs
on the arrest of Wiktor Alter and Henryk Erlich by the NKVD*

To the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs

The Embassy of the Republic of Poland has the honour to inform the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the following:

On 4 December 1941 in Kuybyshev, the organs of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs arrested two Polish citizens, Wiktor Alter and Henryk Erlich.¹⁰⁵ The arrest was made in such a way that at 12.30 a.m. the men in question were called to the telephone from the restaurant room in the Grand Hotel. They told their friends with whom they were having dinner that they would return soon. However, they have not been seen since.

The Embassy was not informed of the arrest of Messrs Alter and Erlich by the Soviet authorities, and the official enquiry about their situation—made in the evening on 4 December by the Secretary of the Embassy, Mr Załęski, to Mr Pushkin—received the explanation only on the following afternoon that they had been arrested. It occurred 39 hours after their detainment.

This issue was the subject of the intervention by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Professor Kot, with the Deputy People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, Mr Vyshinsky, during the conversation on 6 Dec 1941. The explanation obtained at that point—namely, that the men in question were acting as spies for Germany—does not stand up to scrutiny for the following reasons:

1. Messrs Alter and Erlich are distinguished members of the Jewish socialist organisation, the Bund, known for its anti-Nazi attitude.
2. Both men in question held important positions in the life of social and political Jewish organisations in Poland. Furthermore, Mr Alter was a member of the City Council of Warsaw, and while he held that position there were never any reasons to suspect him of a pro-German let alone a pro-Hitler attitude.
3. Both the said men are known internationally as anti-Hitler and anti-Fascist political activists, with Mr Alter being a member of the executive of the Socialist International.

¹⁰⁵ The members of the Bund were arrested under the false charge of espionage for Germany. Erlich committed suicide in prison in May 1942 (according to other sources he was shot). Alter was shot by the NKVD in February 1943.

4. After their release from a Moscow prison, together with the organs of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs they were working on organising a Jewish Anti-Hitlerite Committee, the emergence of which was interrupted, as it seems, because of the evacuation of Moscow.

5. Both the arrested men, either in their conversations with Embassy officials or by their entire proceedings, did not once give any reason to suspect any crimes accused of them. On the contrary, they believed with great conviction the fight against Hitlerism to be their chief political objective and they established contacts with foreign (mainly American) organisations with a similar agenda.

Consequently, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland cannot accept the explanations provided by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs as to the reasons why Messrs Alter and Erlich had been arrested as sufficient or justifying for that fact and has the honour to point out the following circumstances of the case:

1. Messrs Alter and Erlich, having been released from prison by the organs of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, did not receive temporary certificates issued to all Polish citizens on release. This suggests that certain executives in the aforementioned Commissariat were already intended to exert pressure on the said men for some purpose unknown to the Embassy.

2. Since the moment they left prison both the arrested men were in constant close contact with the Embassy, with Mr Erlich intending to depart to London in order to take a seat at the National Council of Poland as a representative of the Bund, a plan the Soviet authorities had been informed of.

3. Both men in question were evacuated from Moscow together with the Embassy staff and went to live in Kuybyshev, after the Embassy filed a suitable motion with the competent Soviet authority.

4. Mr Alter was formally declared to the People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs as a visiting delegate of the Embassy, which informed the said official of the proposed route of Mr Alter's tour in the note No. D.794/41 from 18 Nov 1941. He was to accompany the Attaché of the Embassy, Mr Słowikowski. Albeit the Embassy received no answer to that note, the Soviet authorities were familiar with the semi-official position of Mr Alter.

5. The arrest of the two said men occurred during the visit of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, General Sikorski, to the USSR—precisely on the day he stayed in Moscow.¹⁰⁶ The Embassy by no means suggests that the organs of the Soviet authorities making the arrest realised that it would stir an international

¹⁰⁶ This is a reference to Sikorski's trip to the Middle East and the USSR, on which he embarked on 31 October 1941. He visited Malta, Egypt, Tobruk, Iran and the USSR. He returned to Great Britain on 6 January 1942, via Malta and Gibraltar. During his stay

backlash against the positive consequences of General Sikorski's visit to the USSR, stimulating a propaganda campaign of socialist, particularly Jewish, American and international organisations against the USSR and the cooperation with the Soviet Union; nevertheless, the Embassy cannot fail to point out the indubitably negative effect that the fact is going to have in the international arena.

Arresting them during General Sikorski's stay in the USSR, within the premises of the Embassy, without informing the latter that there had been major allegations against Mr Alter, appointed as the delegate of the Embassy, gives rise to major concerns, as it was impossible for them to travel abroad without the knowledge of the Soviet authorities, or to escape the responsibility should some of the charges pressed against them prove to be justified.

In view of the above, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland has the honour to request that the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs issue the instruction to release both men in question from arrest; furthermore, the Embassy would regard it as a mark of goodwill on the part of the Soviet authorities—at least in part compensating for the fact of their arrest during the visit of Prime Minister General Sikorski to the USSR—if they were released promptly, and in any case before General Sikorski's departure beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. Additionally, the Embassy has the honour to request that an official appointed by the Embassy be allowed to enter the prison where the detained men are held in order to talk to them, and lastly—to be informed as soon as possible where to deliver parcels with warm linen and food for the said men should their release occur not instantly, but at a slightly later moment.

The Embassy is convinced that the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, drawing the consequences from the spirit of cooperation and friendship pervading the relations between both countries, shall have the above requests by the Embassy completed as soon as possible, at the same time providing a swift conclusion to the unwanted and unpleasant discord caused—as the Embassy wishes to believe—by a misunderstanding of some sort.

Kuybyshev, 8 December 1941.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.41/2 (previously published)

in Moscow, he met with Stalin, with whom he signed the declaration of friendship and mutual assistance between the Governments of Poland and the Soviet Union.

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*9 December 1941. Note by the Embassy in Kuybyshev
to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs
on the matters of citizenship*

To the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs

Confirming the receipt of the note by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs from 1 December 1941,¹⁰⁷ the Embassy of the Republic of Poland has the honour to communicate the following to the People's Commissariat:

1. The Polish legislation is founded on the principle of equality before the law of all citizens, regardless of their nationality or race. Nor is the Embassy of the Republic of Poland aware of any regulations of Soviet law to introduce or sanction distinctions or differentiation of such kind.

The agreement of 30 July 1941 and the military agreement of 14 Aug 1941 do not introduce at any junction in their provisions related to Polish citizens (amnesty, military service) the notion of nationality or race; hence, these refer to all Polish citizens without exception.

Under such state of affairs, the Embassy does not see any possibility to alter the position it expressed in the note No. D.740/41 from 10 Nov 1941 that allowing only Polish citizens of Polish nationality to join the Polish Army and conscripting Polish citizens of Ukrainian, Belarusian and Jewish nationality to the Red Army by the War Commissary in Kazakhstan are both against the Agreement of 30 July 1941, and the military agreement of 14 Aug 1941.

2. The fact of a person having Polish citizenship is regulated by the Polish law, particularly the Act of 20 Jan 1920 on the citizenship of the Polish State. Because of that and for the reasons provided above, in point 1, the Embassy has the honour to state that it does not see it possible to accept the notification contained in the note by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs from 1 Dec 1941, that the Soviet Government is willing to recognise as Polish citizens—from among the people inhabiting as of 1–2 November 1939 the territory of the Republic of Poland, temporarily occupied by the Soviet military—exclusively people of Polish nationality.

¹⁰⁷ The note, referring to the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from 29 November 1939, stated that the inhabitants of the so-called Western Ukraine and Western Belarus were Soviet citizens. At the same time, it was emphasised therein that the willingness previously declared by the USSR to recognise the people of Polish descent living in these territories as Polish citizens cannot be decisive for the granting of Polish citizenship to people of Ukrainian, Belarusian or Jewish nationality.

3. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics citizenship act of 19 Aug 1938 cannot be applied to Polish citizens, for its implementation in the territory of the Republic of Poland, occupied by the Soviet Union from the second half of September 1939 to June or July 1941, would be contrary to the provisions of the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907.

4. The Embassy of the Republic of Poland does not relate the matter mentioned in the note No. D.740/41 from 10 Nov 1941 to the question of the Polish-Soviet border. The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs indicates in the said note that it does not recognise people of Ukrainian, Belarussian and Jewish nationality who had Polish citizenship before 1–2 November 1939 as Polish citizens, 'because the issue of the border between the USSR and Poland has not been resolved and is to be subject to consideration in the future.' The Embassy of the Republic of Poland is obliged to state that this argument is self-contradictory. Maintaining in its entirety the general standpoint, as presented above in points 1–3, the Embassy has the honour to indicate that such a point of view would involve a unilateral settlement—by the Soviet Union at the present moment—of an issue which, according to the position adopted by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, is to be subject to consideration in the future.

Kuybyshev, 9 December 1941

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.41/2 (previously published)

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10 December 1941. Statement by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare on the future status of the Jewish minority in free Poland

STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF JEWS IN FREE POLAND

By Mr. Jan Stancyk, Polish Minister of Labor and Social Welfare, delivered at the Meeting of the Executive Board of the JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE in New York, December 10th, 1941

A new world order, based on the principles of liberty and social justice, will emerge out of the present war. Already the war is bringing great changes into social relations. In the fact of common disaster, in the course of the common struggle against the common foe, the old prejudices and conflicts must rapidly disappear. In the future Poland—as I have stated on behalf of the Polish Government on November 3, 1940, in London—there will be no place for racial discrimination, and none for the social wrongs of pre-war Polish life. The war has wiped out the institutions and destroyed the power of groups which had striven to foment hatred

among the people of Poland. Their common fate has created a strong bond between Gentile and Jew. In the ranks of the Polish Army they fought and fight side by side. The Jewish underground movement is part of the great Polish underground army waging the struggle for the common cause of liberation.

The future relations between Gentiles and Jews in Liberated Poland will be built on entirely new foundations. Poland will guarantee all her citizens—including the Jews—full legal equality. This Poland will be a true democracy and every one of her citizens will enjoy equal rights irrespective of race, creed or origin.

The psychological and social changes taking place in Poland today are the best guarantee that this pledge will become a valid fact. The democratic forces of Poland have always fought against the policy of national discrimination and racial persecution. In the new Poland these forces will decide on the future of the country.

Jewish cultural life in Poland was rich and manifold. Poland has always been one of the centers of Jewish culture, and the Polish Jews have created a literature, an educational system and a press of their own. The right of the Jews to possess and to develop a culture of their own will be fully recognized. The system of cultural autonomy seems to be the best method towards the realization of full and unhindered development of the Jewish cultural life.

The question is often raised whether the Polish Jews who are not at present in Poland will be permitted to return to a liberated Poland. There must be no doubt whatever that every Polish citizen, irrespective of creed, race or nationality, will be free to return to his country. The Polish Government has clearly stated its position with regard to the political rights of the citizens of future Poland. The constitutional guarantee of legal equality and equal responsibility exclude any possibility of exceptions. The Polish Jew, like any other Polish citizen, will be able to return to Poland.

All this, of course, concerns the future solution of the Jewish problem in Poland. Today, with all of Poland under the Nazi yoke, the Polish Government has little opportunity to put its principles into practice. However, even now it does all in its power to redress all old wrongs against any group of citizens. A decree of the pre-war Polish Government depriving people, who had resided abroad for many years without maintaining contact with the home country, of their Polish nationality—was one such wrong. This vicious decree has already been revoked by the present Polish Government.

Democratic Poland, freed of the Nazi yoke, will give the Polish Jews, as well as all other national minorities, a home and an opportunity for constructive activity for their own good, for the sake of Poland and of mankind.

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 502 (previously published; ENG)

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*18 December 1941. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
on the difficulties in obtaining assistance from the United States*

Mr Korsak—Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 18 DEC 1941
RECEIVED ON 20 DEC 1941

No. 448

Receptus 379¹⁰⁸

The Jewish officials whom I contacted promised to obtain the assistance of American Jews, most of all from the Joint. However, they point out that Russia has thus far been unwilling to allow the entry of delegates of the Joint or of the congress, and they suggest a potential intervention of the Polish Government with regard to that matter; besides, they believe it would be more beneficial to obtain the possibility of and a route for sending in parcels with goods, for not much can be purchased in Russia for the money exchanged according to the official rate. They consider it necessary to involve in the relief committees in Russia some of the Zionists recognised in America, for instance, Lawyer Ringel, Sommerstein, Schorr, Halpern. They suggest to maybe send a joint delegate to Tehran, a Jew whose name they would announce, in order to seek the way to deliver the relief. The Jewish agency is requesting assistance concurrently from the congress and from the Joint. Rosmarin, for his part, promised to use his contacts here and in America to support the matter.

Korsak

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

¹⁰⁸ In the cable no. 379 of 22 November 1941 (also sent to the Ambassador in Washington and the Consulate General in Tel Aviv), the Head of the MFA communicated: 'Among the Polish citizens appointed by the Ambassador in the USSR to provide protection to the Polish population in Russia, there are the following Jews, who perform the function of visiting delegates or trusted representatives in major concentrations of people: Wiktor Alter and Henryk Schreiber, lawyer (Sverdlovsk), Otto Pehr (Komi Republic), Abraham Waldman (Novosibirsk), Michał Schuldenfrei, lawyer, Oswald Brühl, Wilhelm Kruger (Samarkand), Axel Seideman (Stalingrad), Julian Hochfeld, Juliusz Scharf and Leon Fall (Alma-Ata), Miron Szeskin, engineer (Farab), Jerzy Epstein and Leon Mantel, lawyers (Tashkent), Karol Einler (Tomsk). The large number of members of the Bund on this list is the result of the order of the sequence of their being released from prison. Nevertheless, Zionists are also represented among them. Despite a vigorous search, we have been unable to locate Schorr. Sommerstein imprisoned, near Saratov. The Embassy takes measures for him to be released. The fate of Rokah and Halberstamm unknown. The above data may be published.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 234.

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*20 December 1941. Cable from the Head of the MFA
to the Ambassador in Washington
on the plans to evacuate Jewish refugees to Jamaica and Cuba*

TO Polmission WASHINGTON

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 20 DEC 1941

No. 479

Receptus 325¹⁰⁹

For months, I have been making efforts to secure asylum in the British Commonwealth for approx. 200 Jewish refugees in Portugal. I have recently readdressed the issue at the Foreign Office with the help of the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The British authorities are considering whether to send refugees to Jamaica. The Joint issued a guarantee of their subsistence during the war. I also consider it advisable for the Joint to make efforts directly with the British authorities. I ask you to reinvestigate the possibility of obtaining visas to Cuba for those refugees.¹¹⁰

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518

¹⁰⁹ In the cable no. 325, the Ambassador in Washington communicated on 16 December 1941: 'The JOINT has learnt from its Delegate in Lisbon, Dr Schwartz, that 180 Jews were omitted in the Polish programme of the evacuation from Portugal. I urge you to accommodate the JOINT's demand, as their cooperation is currently extremely extensive.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 234.

¹¹⁰ In the letter from 10 November 1941, the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Lisbon, Stanisław Schimitzek, informed the MFA: 'I confirm with gratitude the receipt of the letter from 24 October, No. 738/Z/41, on the possibility of emigration to Cuba. The memorandum enclosed herewith, sent to London from the local Hicem, indicates the costs related to the obtainment of a visa to Cuba. Even though the actual costs are lower than specified in the memorandum, they, nevertheless, continue to be high enough that together with the exorbitant travel costs they will be prohibitive for the entirety of Jewish refugees. Only few individuals have thus far been able or will still be able to take advantage of that opportunity. For the cause of relocating the Polish refugees from Portugal, the above opportunity, with the costs currently associated therewith, proves almost completely insignificant.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 518.

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*2 January 1942. Cable from the Head of the MFA to the Embassy in Washington:
Information on Jewish refugees in Shanghai
from the Ambassador on special mission to the Far East*

TO Polmission WASHINGTON
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 2 JAN 1942

No. 6

Ambassador Romer requests that the Joint be notified of the need to organise aid for 939 Jewish refugees in Shanghai. In order to save them from starvation, in addition to local measures, \$9,000 per month is required, starting from January. The same amount is required once to provide opportunities for short-term employment.

I ask you to inform me of the results of your talks with the Joint.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 247

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*3 January 1942. Letter from the Honorary Consul in Havana
to the Embassy in Washington
on the potential evacuation of Jewish refugees to Cuba*

3 January 1942

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Washington

In response to the letter from 21 December 1941, No. 738/SZ-1341,¹ on the efforts to obtain Cuban visas for Jewish refugees—Polish citizens staying in

¹ In the aforementioned letter (dated 22 December 1941), the Ambassador in Washington communicated: 'According to the information received by telegraph from London, there are still approx. 200 Jewish refugees in Portugal. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has

Portugal, I kindly inform you that according to a new decree, which came out after Cuba entered the war,² regarding the arrival of foreigners to Cuba, the arrival of Polish citizens from neutral countries to Cuba is in principle still possible.

However, as you know, obtaining an entry visa to Cuba is associated with the need to make various deposits and payments for different costs, so that according to the previous practice, you had to have \$990 per person, of which \$650 was returned when that person left Cuba.

What the current requirements, after Cuba's entry into the war, will be, is not known, but at the beginning of this month the matter is to be clarified.

I do not know whether among the 200 refugees still remaining in Portugal there are people who are able and willing to make such sums to obtain the right of entry to Cuba.

If this is not the case, if they are all people who do not have the required resources, the situation will be virtually hopeless.

When in June 1941 we made efforts here to obtain at least 100 visas without making the abovementioned deposits, the matter lasted a few months; we received various promises in this matter from former influential people, but in the end, it came to nothing.

There are various reasons for this, which I will be able to communicate to you when an opportunity arises.

I very much doubt that it will be possible to do something about it now, but I will do everything that I can; however, please inform me whether I understand correctly that all these people do not have any money to pay for their visas.

Karol Sachs
Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Poselstwo Hawana, A.62/37

been making efforts for several months to secure asylum in the British territories for these refugees. This matter has not yet been settled. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also hopes to be able to obtain visas to Cuba. I ask you to investigate once again with the Cuban authorities the possibility to obtain visas for those refugees, enabling them to be granted asylum in Cuba.' IPMS, Poselstwo Hawana, A.62/37.

² Cuba declared war on Japan on 9 December 1941, following the attack of Japanese air force on the US naval base in Pearl Harbor.

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*5 January 1942. Note by the Press Attaché at the Embassy in Kuybyshev
on the coverage of the issue of Polish-Jewish relations
by foreign correspondents in the USSR*

*Foreign journalists on Polish-Jewish issues
(information from Ks. Pr.³ of 5 Jan 1942)*

Since the creation of the Polish Army, foreign journalists in the USSR have been very interested in the Jewish problem in this army. In September, Sulzberger and Jordan ('The New York Times' and 'News Chronicle') had tea with Anders, and before that they questioned Topolski and me several times about whether Polish Jews would be willing to serve in our army. Doubts in this matter certainly came from a Soviet source. I believe that putting them in touch with Alter and Erlich seems to have helped a lot. The response of General Anders about catering to the religious needs of the Jews, also made a good impression.

In October or November, Cholerton asked me whether the overrepresentation of Jews in the Polish Army resulted in antisemitism. As Sulzberger was present at that conversation, I commented: several weeks ago, someone here expressed his doubts whether Polish Jews would join our military, and I am now pleased to hear that according to you there are too many Jews. Foreign journalists had already received the information of antisemitism in the army; Jordan and Sulzberger were convinced that antisemitism was viewed kindly or leniently at the top (that is, in the Army Staff, not at the Embassy). Champenois and Shapiro rather denied this, arguing that Poles are generally antisemitic.⁴ As for me, I tried to persuade them that not all incidents between Jews and Poles can immediately be regarded as evidence of antisemitism; that people, after leaving the camps, tend to be bitter; that the early release of the Jews, and then later Poles, with the restriction of the formation of the Polish Army, causes bitterness, because Jews who had never been in the army have now entered the military, when Poles, often former soldiers, must go to Tashkent. These kinds of talks have been held more than once.

³ Ksawery Pruszyński.

⁴ In the cable of 26 April 1942, the Ambassador in Kuybyshev informed: 'Shapiro, a correspondent of the United Press who arrived in Tehran, has been saying that already in the first group of 12,000 men of the evacuated army, antisemitic policy came to the fore, that Jews were separated out, that they were ordered to perform the lowest tasks, such as cleaning toilets, that their pay had been cut in half, and that these symptoms resulted in notable Jewish figures in Tehran stepping down as members of the Committee for the reception of the Polish Army. The news spread at once and has been used by enemy agents. I request further information and possibly an intervention, wherefrom come such harmful news.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240.

It seemed to us all that in the first wave, the Soviet authorities decided to release the Jews in order to put us in the face of the sidelocked and bearded 'Poles' from Równe and Pińsk and to say 'here are your Poles from the Eastern Lands,' and to pit Jews against Poles, whom, judging by their reception of the Red Army in the Eastern Borderlands⁵ in September 1939, the former are unlikely to be fond of. The Soviet policy failed to acknowledge two things here: 1. That we intend to form as large an army as possible, while gathering non-Polish soldiers from the Eastern Borderlands will constitute a political argument with regard to the eastern borders. 2. That the sympathies of even the reddest Jews for the Soviet system had fallen below the zeroest of zeroes [sic]. 3. That making their way to the Polish Army gave those Jews the best living conditions available to them presently.

During General Sikorski's visit, Soviet correspondents were eager to inquire about Jews in the army. I put them in touch with many of them. I showed them Jews in the ranks. There was an article about Jews in the Polish military, very beneficial to us and very inconvenient for the Soviets, by Ilya Ehrenburg. It was issued in the American news service of the United Press. I republished it in the 'Polska' weekly.⁶

During the period of the revisionist project of a Jewish legion, Cholerton, Champenois, and Lovell asked me what the Polish Government would do about it. Lovell had already been informed that the Polish Government was against the idea. Shapiro claimed that Jewish troops in the Polish Army were mandatory and provided a body of evidence to prove it, which was unfortunately true, taken from Totskoye. He even referred to a statement by a Polish General from Buzuluk—not General Anders, as he explained—who said, 'let them command me what they want, I shall have as many Jews with me as I need, and I don't need them at all.' (It is a statement attributed in different variants to Tokarzewski.) American correspondents wanted to know whether Jewish Revisionists would not perhaps like to serve in the Soviet army. Kerr explained to them how far removed the Revisionists are from Bolshevism. He explained it so well that on the following day another American (I do not remember who at the moment) asked me why Anders tolerated Jewish fascists. I said that it is the first time that we had been accused of too much tolerance for the Jews instead of the opposite.

Nevertheless, foreign correspondents developed the conviction that

1. Polish Jews flock to our military en masse;

⁵ Eastern Borderlands—the name used during the war most frequently as a synonym of the eastern territories of the Republic of Poland occupied by the USSR in 1939–1941.

⁶ Ilya Ehrenburg was a member of the press team that accompanied General Sikorski on his visit to the troops of the Polish Army formed in the USSR, during the Prime Minister's trip to the Soviet Union. This is a reference to the article titled 'Do Warszawy!', *Polska. Tygodnik Polaków w ZSRR*, no. 1 (3), 1 January 1942.

2. with the exception of the communists they do not want to join the Soviet army;

3. antisemitism in the Polish Army is not a very common and great phenomenon.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 147

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9 January 1942. Minutes of an inter-ministerial meeting: coordination of activities in Jewish affairs

MINUTES FROM THE CONSULTATION MEETING ON JEWISH AFFAIRS

held on 9 Jan 1942

during a session of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers 851/2

Present: Director Romer, Consul General Poznański, Professor Górka, Colonel Wasilewski, Major Sadowski, Captain Gadomski, Engineer Ullmann, Counsellor Baliński and Counsellor Kraczkiewicz.

The meeting was opened by Director Romer, who pointed out the need to harmonise the activity of the individual offices and authorities on Jewish affairs and stressed that he had called that meeting in conjunction with or at the request of the Consul General Poznański and Engineer Ullmann from the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The purpose of the meeting is not to agree on views on the general policy of the Government towards the Jews. The guideline of this policy is determined by the Government, whose competent organ for Jewish affairs among Polish citizens is the Minister of Internal Affairs, and for relations with international Jewry— the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Minister of Information and Documentation, who has under him also the Nationalities Section, follows strictly the directives from the Minister of Internal Affairs in his information work on the Jewish matter in Poland. For the military authorities, Jewish affairs are in principle merely a matter of religion, or a subject for observation.

The immediate objective of the conference is to agree on the positions towards the loyal Jewish organisations that take advantage of the Polish Government staying here to approach each of the departments separately, which obviously threatens to cause undesirable confusion.

Local Jewish organisations, as far as Polish citizens are concerned, fall within the competence of the Consul General. The situation becomes much more complicated due to the division of the Polish Jewry on British soil. On the one hand, there is the Council of Polish Jews, bringing together a series of small organisational units of more recent Jewish emigrants, on the other—the Federation of Polish Jews, which has existed locally for a long time and comprises mainly persons who settled here permanently, to a large extent Jews already naturalised as British citizens. The Federation itself is also split in two, with a fraction belonging to the Council of Polish Jews. There are talks in progress, but they are going slowly. Meanwhile, we are dealing with a rivalry between these two groups for the favour of the Polish authorities, while the Federation represents rather Orthodox Jews, who are much more comfortable politically and undoubtedly have some support in the country, and the Council of Polish Jews which accepts the authoritative position of Mr Schwarzbart with no reservations, is supported by the international Zionist organisation; hence, it represents much more with regard to international influence.

Consul General Poznański emphasises that his office is merely an executive one and the body responsible for protecting Polish citizens in Great Britain. Hence, the local Jewish organisations fall within the competence of the Consulate General, with the obvious exception of political affairs, which have always been handled by the Embassy. The situation of the Consulate General has at times been very difficult, as the respective Polish institutions often decided independently of the Embassy and the Consulate General about speeches during Jewish meetings in London. There are countless Jewish groups, with each claiming to be the sole representative of all the Jewry. The Council of Polish Jews, rather closely related to the representation for Palestine and the international executive of the Zionists, is a highly political institution. The Federation of Polish Jews, not represented in the Council, has thus far been only involved in social and charity work, and in consultation with similar federations of other countries. It is at odds with the splinter group of the Federation controlled by the Council of Polish Jews, on the grounds of some 'ethical and financial' issues. 70% of its members are British citizens which makes relations with them very confusing, as the issue of relations with non-Polish Jews, whose most powerful organisation here in the Board of Deputies, does not fall within the competence of the Consulate General. Among Jews themselves, however, the lines between Polish and non-Polish Jews are very blurred, and at times difficult to determine, especially among those of Polish descent.

Mr Baliński, as the representative of the Embassy, opted for keeping the existing local division of competence in Jewish affairs between the Consulate General as regards the local organisations and the Embassy for all political matters.

Professor Górká stresses that as long as the Government remains outside Poland, it is forced to concentrate its attention mostly on the World Zionist Organisation. The influence of other Jewish organisations is minimal. The Jewish matter in Poland is entirely different, with the Bund being the largest Jewish organisation there, besides the Zionists. Hence, the project of a separate representation of the Bund in the National Council. The revisionists enjoyed some popularity among the youth, whereas Agudat and Orthodox Jews held some sway over the older, religious generation. As far as the situation in London is concerned, it was Mr Brodetsky who was supposed to act as the arbitrator between the two conflicting factions of the Federation, the all-powerful President of the Board of Deputies, but he does not seem to want to get involved and the matter is still up in the air. It is in the political interests of the Government to maintain friendly relations with all Jewish factions; however, the Council of Polish Jews, as the one exerting the greatest influence and with generally significant Polish figures within its ranks, should be given precedence. Hence the motion that it be granted governmental representation at ministerial level put forth during the last congress of the Council of Polish Jews. The composition of the Federation's board is even more primitive than that of the board of the Council of Polish Jews. For Mr Schwarzbart, the sole representative of the Jewry in the National Council thus far, the competent authority has to date been the representation for Palestine.

Colonel Wasilewski emphasised the need to maintain relations with Jewish organisations locally as appropriate as possible, in order to be protected against the recurring smear campaign focussing on the alleged antisemitism; he also indicates the results of friction between Jewish factions in the military. For the military authorities, the people competent in Jewish affairs are the army rabbis. The percentage of Jews evading military duty proves indeed relatively high, compared to other evaders, but that mainly concerns Jews who lost contact with Poland a long time ago.⁷

Engineer Ullmann, emphasising the very close cooperation on Jewish affairs between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Nationalities Section at the Ministry of Information and Documentation, considers it advisable to avoid any

⁷ In the order no. 152 of 25 January 1942, General Sikorski instructed: 'I. The number of military personnel recognised as the regular Polish Army must be immediately increased. II. Due to the lack of financial resources to form the Polish Army in Polish territories, all Polish citizens must be taxed promptly, regardless of their financial status. III. Polish citizens and industrialists who take advantage of the war for their own interests, at the same time evading the civic duty to pay the dues for the Polish Army Fund shall be declared saboteurs and enemies of the Polish Nation. IV. After the regaining of independence, the Military Tribunal shall be established to investigate the cases of citizens evading the performance of their civic duty. V. National minorities are not to be allowed in the ranks of the Polish Army, for these elements are not of much value but much hostile attitude.' AAN, AK, 203/I/4.

involvement in conflicts among Jews and to maintain more or less parallel relations with all Jewish organisations loyal to Poland. Therefore, we cannot 'recognise' one or another organisation at the expense of the others, as Jews themselves often urge us to; instead we must respect the actual state of affairs. Thus, in view of the fact that an association of rabbis was established locally, there are no reservations against maintaining contacts with them. He stresses the exclusive competence of the Minister of Internal Affairs regarding the general policy towards Polish-Jewish citizens.

Director Romer, summarising the results of the discussion, states that the minutes of this conference will be distributed to the offices concerned with the following conclusions:

1. All political matters related to Polish Jews fall within the exclusive competence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Therefore, it is there that, among other things, all matters related to the representation of Polish Jewry in the National Council are to be directed, as well as all issues associated with the situation of Jews in Poland.

2. The issues of the policy of the Government of the Republic of Poland towards international Jewry are within the competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its organs. It is there that all matters related to the interventions of international circles in our policy towards Jews are to be directed.

3. Within the military, Jewish affairs are above all a religious and pastoral issue.

4. The matters of the local Jewish organisations in Great Britain shall remain in the competence of the Consulate General, as the organ responsible for protecting and registering all Polish citizens in the British territory. Of course, the Consulate General refers all political matters of the said organisations to the Embassy, which handles those in conjunction with the competent departments.

5. The Polish authorities in Great Britain ought to maintain equally good relations with all loyal Jewish organisations approaching them, in constant liaison with the Consulate General as a consultative body providing opinions on the character of local organisations, avoiding all declarations not previously agreed upon or favouring any one organisation to the disadvantage of another; however, with the restriction of precedence of organisations officially supported by the representatives of Jewry in the National Council.

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A.42/239

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*14 January 1942. Letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs
to a member of the National Council on the situation in occupied Poland
(with enclosure)*

London, 14 Jan 1942

Secret!

*Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart
in London*

Please find enclosed a report of the Government Delegate for Poland; at the same time, I ask you not to disclose the names mentioned in the enclosed report and to treat the passages marked⁸ as strictly confidential.

I also request that you do not publish any other section of the report without consulting me first.

MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
S. Mikołajczyk

[enclosure]

...⁹

PRO MEMORIA ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN POLAND
in the period of 22 June–30 September 1941

...

JEWISH AFFAIRS:

Warsaw.—In August, the number of people who died was 5,560 (2,582 men, 2,249 women, 719 children) [sic], in September it was 4,454 (2,196 men, 1,907 women, 442 children). Due to the failure to receive a sufficient amount of products, the provision of meals from public food supplies was reduced by 120,000 rations.

Białystok. A ghetto is being established where Jews from neighbouring towns are imprisoned. Pogroms are provoked with the participation of the local population (Rajgród, the Szczuczyn district), and afterwards these excesses are filmed. Since September, mass executions of Jews have been taking place in

⁸ In the omitted table of contents, passages related to Jewish affairs were hand-marked.

⁹ The main parts of the two reports were omitted; they outlined the entirety of the situation in occupied Poland (the report no. 19 for the period of 22 June–30 September 1941; the report no. 20 for the period of 16–30 November 1941).

the region of Białystok, regardless of gender or age. These massacres are kept secret—Jews are allegedly transported in an unknown direction and the peasant population forced to dig trenches and bury the corpses tells details of the results of such ‘transports.’ On 1 September, 1,800 Jews were murdered in Łomża, in the town of...—640 [sic].

Lithuania. On the territory of ethnographic Lithuania, almost all Jews have already been murdered. In the region of Wilno, occupied by the Lithuanians, there are very few left of the population, which is constantly decreasing. They exterminated: 600 Jews in Niemenczyn, ...00 [sic] in Nowa Wilejka, 200 in Ejszyszki, over 1,000 in Troki. In Wilno, there were approx. 70,000 Jews in the ghetto; there are now approx. 40,000 of them. In the Ponary hills, the Lithuanians shot approx. ... [sic] persons. The executions are organised in the following manner: Jews are rounded up—men, women, and children—in a square. The Germans come, they demand to be given money and jewellery. The Lithuanians—Šauliai rush Jews to Ponary, line them up in rows of 8 at the edge of the pits dug out by the Soviet POWs; then, they open fire with machine guns. They push the layer into the pits, more often than not without killing them off, they throw in children after hitting them on the head with the butts of their rifles. In turn: layer by layer. Firing squads are composed of a mixed Lithuanian population, at times also including university and high school students. The property left by Jews is taken by Lithuanians. The Polish population does not participate in these crimes at all, on the contrary—it condemns them. Germans do not take an active part in these executions, but they often film them. Jews must take their seats and assume the poses directed by the Germans.

...

REPORT No. 20

for the period of 16–30 Nov 1941

...

JEWISH AFFAIRS

Warsaw. Death penalty. The decree issued by Governor-General Frank that came into effect on 25 Oct of this year threatens the death penalty of any Jew crossing the border of the ghetto without a pass. On the basis of that decree, Governor Fischer issued his own ordinance, dated 10 Nov, with similar provisions (a photograph attached).¹⁰ Already before that day, 8 fugitives from the ghetto were captured on the Aryan side. With the exception of a craftsman, they are said to have been beggars, 6 men and 2 women. A special court sentenced them to death. The propaganda rag (NKW),¹¹ while informing about the sentence, referred to it

¹⁰ There is no attachment.

¹¹ This is a reference to the German propaganda newspaper *Nowy Kurier Warszawski*, published in occupied Poland.

as 'harsh but just', at the same time underlining the convicts' low level of culture, their inability to read or write, and being louse-ridden and filthy. The sentence was carried out on 17 Nov, in the courtyard of the former military prison at Gęsia St. The firing squad was composed of Polish policemen.

Spotted Typhus. The epidemic of spotted typhus in the ghetto is becoming more and more threatening. While in January of this year, the number of cases recorded stood at 57, in October it was 3,429, while in total—for the period over 10 months—11,305. The actual number of infections is 3–4 times higher. It should be noted that before the war the number of cases in the whole of Poland stood at 3,000–5,000 annually. A makeshift infectious disease hospital has been established in school buildings, because the Jewish Community was deprived of the actual hospital. There are 1,500 beds for 3,500 patients. Two or three patients at various stages of the disease share one bed, often without any bedding or sheets. Nutrition is abysmal. As the ghetto has been cut off from electricity, disinfection machines have been out of order for several weeks. The Aryan part of the city recorded over 500 cases last month.

Homeless children. The ghetto has currently been plagued by packs of homeless children, who wander around, steal things and die en masse in the gates of houses, ruins and on the streets. These children—incredibly dirty and wild-like little animals—escape the ghetto in large numbers. In the latter half of October, a group of 30 Jewish children captured whilst sneaking out of the quarter were publicly drowned by German policemen in clay pits near Okopowa St.

EASTERN LANDS

Wilno: The number of Jews living here was 65,000–70,000. There are 12,000–15,000 left alive, almost exclusively craftsmen. The rest—merchants, property owners, liberal professionals—were gradually killed by Lithuanians in the Ponary hills.

Kaunas: No ghetto here anymore, all its inhabitants having been murdered by Lithuanians, who are now threatening to relocate Poles to the place previously occupied by the Jews.

Polesia, Volhynia, Pińsk. The Germans murdered approx. 8,000 Jews, aged between 16–60 years old. The SS men drove approx. 3,000 Jews out of their houses, rushed them between the villages of Halewo and Zapole, commanded them to dig pits and line up in front of them. Then, they massacred the Jews with machine guns. During the execution, the torturers took a break, had breakfast, and then calmly finished the massacre. The second time, 4,000–5,000 Jews were led out of the town, never to be heard of ever again. In Brześć, approx. 6,000 Jews were murdered, in Janów—300, in Homsk and Motol—the entire Jewish population, even children, which were simply beaten to death with sticks. In Kobryń, Jews were driven into

apartments, and the whole Jewish quarter was burned down. In those executions, the Germans were on more than one occasion helped by the local scum.

Włodzimierz: More than ten thousand Jews were murdered. The collective grave in which the murdered victims were buried is about a kilometre long and appropriately wide.

AYV, *Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart*, M.2/191

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*17 January 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
on providing Passover relief to Jewish refugees*

Polconsul—Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 17 JAN 1942
RECEIVED ON 17 JAN 1942

No. 13

The Jerusalem-based Rambam association that takes care of poor Orthodox Jews in Palestine, a large proportion of whom are Polish citizens, has approached me with a request for a one-time help during Passover. The Rambam used to benefit from the funds collected for that purpose among Jews in Poland. At present, due to all money transfers from abroad having stopped, the association is unable to be of any assistance to those in need. It should be noted that the Orthodox Jews are treated unfairly for political reasons when aid resources are distributed by official Jewish authorities in Palestine. I believe it advisable to allocate a one-time fund for this purpose.

Rambam asked for £500, which I consider rather unreasonable. Should it be possible to allocate the amount of £200–£300, I would ask you to inform me, and I will send a plan for the distribution of this amount among the Jewish citizens of Poland most in need of help.¹²

Korsak

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 238

¹² In the cable of 27 February 1942, the Secretary-General at the MFA, Kajetan Dzierżykraj-Morawski, responded: 'Faced with the need to confine our assistance to war refugees,

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*19 January 1942. Report by the Consul General in New York
on relations with Jewish organisations*

The Jewish Matter

My relations with Jewish organisations are very successful.

The visit of Minister Stańczyk, whom the Jewish circles trust, largely contributed to that result.¹³ However, without a doubt the key role in my friendly rapprochement with leading Jewish organisations and with their leaders was played by my consequent use of the principle indicated by General Sikorski: equal rights with equal duties.

This seemingly simple principle is the one that all others stem from. Among other things, the interpretation of that rule enabled me not only to present the argument, but also to obtain an understanding for it, that Jews cannot demand any international guarantees of their rights in Poland, for we find guarantees of that sort offensive, while in fact these are insignificant. We had evidence of that in the past, when Beck declared unilaterally in Geneva that Poland did not consider itself any longer bound by treaties as regards the protection of ethnic minorities,¹⁴ and there was no one to actively defend those rights.

In the United States, or rather in New York, there are numerous Jewish organisations. These organisations can be characterised as either American or international.¹⁵ Additionally, Polish Jews, or the Jews from Poland, are in a number of

for whom the Government provides major funds, regardless of their religion and nationality, we are unable to make a subvention to the Rambam association, especially in view of the fact that it is a Palestinian organisation, providing assistance not only to Polish citizens.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 238.

¹³ Minister Stańczyk visited the United States as a delegate to the session of the International Labour Organisation, which was held from 27 October to 6 November 1941. Afterwards, he stayed in the United States, where he made efforts to obtain assistance (mainly for the refugees in the USSR) and had a series of meetings and talks with representatives of American Jewish circles. See doc. 205.

¹⁴ In 1934, Minister of Foreign Affairs Józef Beck submitted a declaration in Geneva on the suspension of the implementation of some provisions of the Little Treaty of Versailles of 1919, refusing the League of Nations the right to control issues of national minorities in Poland and, at the same time, declaring that the actual situation of the Jewish minority in Poland would not change.

¹⁵ The Ambassador in Washington, Jan Ciechanowski, informed in the report of 28 May 1942: 'For some time now, there has been an increased activity of large international Jewish associations in the United States ... On 25 April in Washington, a general assembly was held to accompany the annual dinner of the American Palestine Committee, a young but very active Zionist organisation. Over six hundred people participated in that dinner, organised in the largest hotel here, The Mayflower ... During the evening,

self-help organisations. In my short time in office,¹⁶ I have already received a dozen or so various Polish-Jewish delegations, usually comprising some combination of the same group of persons who would like to play a more prominent role here. The large Jewish organisations treat those—in their majority very weak—organisations with much reserve, out of the belief that the latter emerge without any significant need, mainly for each of them to draw allowances from the American Jews. The American Jews regard the very fact of the formation of these organisations not as a proof of the organisational skills of Polish Jews, but, what I believe to be right, as evidence of their internal divisions and the inability of the individual activists to cooperate with one another normally. There are three main American and international Jewish organisations, the cooperation with which is decisive for the attitude of the Jewry:

1. The American and World Jewish Congress;
2. The Joint Distribution Committee;
3. The National Refugee Service.

The first—is the central political organisation of the Jewry.

The second—a committee for the relief of Jews worldwide, an institution collecting and distributing funds.

The third—an assistance organisation for Jews settling in the United States.

there was a radio broadcast addressed by Lord Wedgwood from London. His speech was quite unprecedented. It was a harsh criticism of Great Britain, which Wedgwood accused of lack of good will, and the failure to keep promises to Jews. In his address, Lord Wedgwood called for the United States to take over the Mandate of Palestine, as the honesty of Great Britain, a country which sacrifices Jews, cannot be relied upon, etc. Another person to speak from England was Greenwood, who, on the contrary, expressed his pride in the fact that owing to Great Britain Jews have their Homeland in Palestine ... The main address of the evening was delivered by Dr Chaim Weizmann; it was extremely political, very tactful, and at the same time presented with the usual subtlety. At the same time expressing his criticism of Great Britain misunderstanding the Palestinian question, he communicated his gratitude to Great Britain for what it had done for the Jewish cause. He expressed his hope that the British Government would come to consider possible the formation of a Palestinian army, as Jews were at least due the right to defend themselves militarily, instead of dying as rats, defenceless ... The relations that the Embassy was able to establish with the Jewish circles have been maintained and—as you know—there is the closest cooperation between the Embassy and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee as regards the relief campaign for Polish refugees in Russia.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 13.

¹⁶ Sylwin Strakacz assumed the office of Consul General in New York in November 1941. Before that he served as the representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in the United States.

However, the above differentiation is not entirely precise. For instance, it is the World Congress and not the Joint that provides financial assistance to Jews in South America.

Theoretically, the headquarters of the World Congress is in Palestine, and it has two main sections, the British and the American—their seats being in London and New York, respectively. However, that balance is gradually shifting, for the focus has indubitably moved to New York. It is perfectly understandable, considering it is almost exclusively from America that all funds are currently flowing. I have the best possible relations with Rabbi Stephen Wise, the President of the American Congress; I have recently received from him the warmest thanks for the message I sent to the Inter-American Jewish Council in Baltimore.

The headquarters of the Joint Distribution Committee is in New York. On Ambassador Ciechanowski's order, I have already had several talks with the full board of the Joint to discuss the issue of relief for our citizens in Russia.¹⁷ Starting from the position that the Government of the Republic of Poland is aiding Polish citizens regardless of their origin or religion, and that the help from the Polish American Council is also granted without any restrictions as to the above, we were able to have the Joint agree to provide assistance to be at the disposal of the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev without any reservations. The fact that the Ambassador could present to the Joint a list of Jewish relief delegates of the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev proved of great help and constituted our strong argument.

During the last session, we discussed what they should buy with the board of the Joint. Given that we have received clothes from Lend-Lease,¹⁸ and that the

¹⁷ In the cable of 15 January 1942, the Consul General in Jerusalem, Witold Korsak, forwarded the information from the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Tadeusz Lubaczewski: 'The Jewish Agency received a dispatch from the JOINT that the latter donates \$100,000 to the Polish Embassy in Washington to support exiles in Russia. The headquarters of World Jewish Congress initiated a collection in conjunction with Polish organisations and promised to transfer certain sums to Palestine. Similar help was promised by Kajser from London. The cooperation with Jewish organisations has produced good results. The principle adopted is that a single pool is created to be used by all exiles, regardless of their religion. Jewish organisations request that a representative for Jewish exiles be appointed for Mr Kwapiński, and they recommended a lawyer from Lwów, Mr Leder, currently staying in Semipalatinsk.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 238. In an earlier telegram (of 30 December 1941), Lubaczewski communicated: 'The relief for exiles in Russia that I initiated has been growing larger and larger. There is a great participation of emigrants and military men. We operate in close corporation with Jewish organisations. The first transport of warm clothes and underwear, 72 bags in total, was sent the other day via Tehran to Tashkent. Regarding the radio news of the money from Poles in America to exiles, I want to ask you to transfer a part of the said \$150,000, for it is the only remaining source to provide them with warm clothing.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 229.

¹⁸ The Lend Lease Act, passed by the Congress of the United States in March 1941, gave the US President authority to sell, lend and lease equipment and materials necessary for war.

Polish American Council is buying food for \$50,000, I suggested that the Joint should purchase necessary medical equipment. They were somewhat reluctant to make that decision for propaganda reasons, for they also intend to send food, as it appeals more to the imagination of the people asked for financial donations. Nevertheless, they promised to take medical supplies into consideration to the broadest extent possible. The Ambassador arranged with representatives of the Joint that their financial assistance will reach the same figure as that made by the Polish American Council. However, in view of the inertia of the Polish American Council, I believe we will be able to have the Joint agree not to observe that principle too strictly, especially considering that the Joint has at its disposal incomparably greater funds than the Polish American Council.

The National Refugee Service—receives money from the Joint; it currently stands at \$200,000 per month. On the surface, the institution has nothing to do with Polish affairs, apart from providing Polish Jews who emigrated to America with self-sufficient workplaces, and thus binding them to the United States. Several hundred families of Jewish refugees have already been sent to the United States, thereby lowering their chances of returning to Poland. In fact, this is a very influential institution, cooperating closely with the Federal Government and holding a powerful sway over public opinion.

I spoke at their annual Congress, and as a result, I received a letter from its Chairman, William Rosenwald, which I enclose a copy of.¹⁹

Of the Polish-Jewish organisations, the most important is the American Federation of Polish Jews, whose counterpart in the South American republics is the World Federation of Polish Jews. Their aim is to support Polish Jews and Poland. The president of this organisation, Mr Benjamin Winter, visited me together with a delegation and told me that they believed that if Poland would prosper, so would all its citizens. Winter is also a leading Jewish publicist, who has thus far constantly emphasised the demand that the rights of Jews in Poland be guaranteed internationally. I had a discussion with him on that topic, pointing out that his argument does not in fact help Jews in the least; that Jews shall find sufficient guarantees in a democratic system in Poland, whereas the very fact that these demands are made, claiming there is distrust and lack of good will on our side, must result in pointless irritations. The delegates accompanying Mr Winter and he himself assured me that they were strongly impressed by my arguments.

Post-war Jewish refugees organised the Association of Jewish Emigrants and Refugees from Poland here under the leadership of Dr. Tartakower, who is the president of the Council. The President of the Management Board is

It initially applied to Great Britain, subsequently to the USSR (from September 1941), and then to other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition.

¹⁹ Not included in this publication.

Mr J. Appenzlak. And with this organisation my relationship was as good as it could possibly be.

Special recognition is due to the Jewish Labour Committee, a workers—organisation, the first to send several dozen cases and bales of clothes from San Francisco to the address of our Embassy in Russia.

Sylwin Strakacz
Minister Plenipotentiary
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 3

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*23 January 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
about the Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army*

Polconsul—Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 23 JAN 1942
RECEIVED ON 24 JAN 1942

No. 20

I ask you to order the search in Russia for Major Boruch Steinberg, the Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army before the war.²⁰ His last known address was: Wegbelsk,²¹ PO Box 15.²²

The brother of S. is in Palestine.²³

Korsak

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 238

²⁰ Dzierżykraj-Morawski on 11 April 1942 instructed the Embassy in Kuybyshev 'to investigate the fate of Major Boruch Steinberg.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240.

²¹ This is a reference to Starobelsk.

²² After the aggression of the USSR against Poland in 1939, Rabbi Steinberg was captured by the Soviets, and on 12 April 1940 he was shot by the NKVD. He was a victim of the Katyn massacre—the murder of more than 21 thousand Polish citizens (mainly officers of the Polish Army and State Police), perpetrated pursuant to a decision of the Political Bureau of the AUCP(b) of 5 March 1940. The information of the discovery of mass graves in the territory of the USSR occupied by German troops was made public on 11 April 1943 by the German information agency Transocean.

²³ Mejer Steinberg—Head of the Mosaic Pastoral Care in the Polish Army in the East.

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*2 February 1942. Letter from the Interim Head of the Ministry
of Labour and Social Welfare to the MFA about a package
of typhus vaccines sent from Argentina to Poland*

62/64 BROOK STREET
LONDON W.1., 2 FEBRUARY 1942

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In reference to the correspondence with Dr Schwarzbart regarding Jewish organisations in Argentina providing typhus vaccines to Poland, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare—operating in conjunction with the Ministry of Internal Affairs—requests that half of these packages be directed to England for the purpose of being transferred to the Homeland by a route available to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. If direct referral to England is impossible or difficult, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that they be directed to Lisbon, to the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, from where they would be directed further.

The Legation of the Republic of Poland in Argentina can assure Jewish organisations that some of the vaccines will be delivered to the ghetto, for the Ministry of Internal Affairs has accepted such a commitment.²⁴

INTERIM HEAD OF THE MINISTRY
Grosfeld

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 577

²⁴ The Consul General in New York also informed about the transfer of vaccines, communicating in the letter from 28 April 1942: 'The World Jewish Congress and the OSE Organisation purchased in Mexico 6 packages of typhus vaccines and sent them to the address of the Consulate General in New York. Each of those is said to contain 1,000 shots. The organisations dispatching the vaccine expressed their intention for it to be delivered to the population in Poland, and particularly, if possible, to the Warsaw Ghetto. 3 packages of the vaccine had previously been sent by diplomatic mail from New York to London. The remaining 3 packages were sent aboard the SS CAIRNESK ... I kindly request that you deliver these parcels to the institution responsible for delivering goods to the country and inform me of the receipt of all these packages.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 577.

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*7 February 1942. Report by the Envoy in Madrid
on the situation at the Miranda de Ebro Camp*

Madrid, 7 February 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

On 6 February, the Delegate of the Department of Protection and Evacuation, Fr Dr Bernacki, returned from another visit at the concentration camp Miranda de Ebro.²⁵ He received a regular pass to visit the camp—that is, to see the interned Polish citizens—issued by the Minister of the Army on direct request from the Envoy of the Republic of Poland, already after the well-known development with the Polish Legation in Madrid.

On the basis of the reports of the Delegate of the Legation, it appears that the moral state of the camp showed a certain understandable nervousness after receiving information about the total liquidation of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Spain, about the departure of the Envoy and about entrusting the defence of Polish interests to the representative of Chile.²⁶ Currently, however, after adequate explanations were provided by the official delegate, the moods have improved completely. At the same time, this state of nervousness was influenced by the fact that at the end of January there were two German envoys in the camp, and with the signature of the camp commandant, the following announcement was

²⁵ At the camp in Miranda de Ebro, the Spanish authorities interned Polish refugees who had illegally crossed the Spanish-French border after the collapse of France in 1940.

²⁶ In the cable of 21 January 1942, the Envoy in Madrid, Marian Szumlakowski, informed: 'Today in the afternoon, I was visited by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who declared that it was with great regret that he must communicate to me the decision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to close the offices of the Polish Legation and Consulate as of that day. An appropriate note had been sent. That step had been motivated by the activity of the offices of the Polish Legation and its employees, which was not compliant with the standards of conduct accepted internationally, such as the issuance of false documents, etc. I vehemently protested such a unilateral imputation of unfounded charges against the Polish Legation and reserved the right of immediate reply on receipt of the note. Until the final and detailed settlement of the issue, I suspend, as of this dispatch, the operation of the radio communication station, requesting that instructions be sent to me by the English.' IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45/53/3. Ultimately, the liquidation of the Legation was not carried out and Marian Szumlakowski served as the Envoy in Madrid until 1944, when he was replaced by Józef Potocki.

published: 'Under the international agreements recently approved, all foreigners who are listed below and who wish to do so are to report to the office for foreigners to obtain the necessary visas to the following countries: North America, South America, colonies of warring countries.

The people who may apply for this permission are: 1) people of Jewish descent, 2) citizens of the warring countries who wish to travel to the free colonies.

Those interested will report with the greatest haste, because the ship "Marques de Comillas" intended for this purpose departs from the port of Vigo on 7 February and it is necessary to send the data immediately to Madrid in order to obtain the appropriate orders.'

As a result of that announcement, the hope dawned upon the camp of the possible departure for at least some of the detainees. However, the Spanish authorities acted in the following manner. From among the people who reported, forty-two internees were called in at around 5 p.m. on 3 February; they were of various nationalities, mostly Jews, among them three Polish Jews and three Poles—who in the hope of being able to leave sooner thanks to a false Jewish identity—claimed to be 'of Jewish descent', including Engineer Liskiewicz. This group was subjected to severe harassment from the Spanish camp authorities; namely, they were kept all night, that is, until 8 a.m., under guard, as they were to be ready to leave the camp any time. They had thorough searches, including ripping their underwear, clothes and shoes. However, nothing suspicious was found on anyone. This inhumane behaviour was accompanied by the fact that two interned Romanians were terribly beaten. When a Spanish NCO commanded the internee to join the group and the Romanian claimed to be ill, the Spaniard slapped him, and he returned the attack. The situation repeated itself with a Spanish officer. Finally, the Camp Commander arrived with a unit of soldiers, who took the Romanian and his compatriot who was defending him by force, beating them up in a horrific way; the Camp Commander smashed his face mercilessly with a crop. The incident resulted in a demonstration of the other detainees, in which the Polish group, the most numerous in the camp, also participated. This caused an understandable state of agitation. On the following day, the leaders of the Polish group tried to alleviate this matter as much as possible.

Regarding the food provision for the interned Polish citizens, it seems altogether sufficient; hence, if there are any complaints made at the camp, they should be treated as so unfounded that the Leaders of the Polish Group themselves ought to decide whether they perhaps should contribute a peseta to a common fund, in the sense of brotherly help. Food, cigarettes, Polish newspapers—unfortunately still provided irregularly, often from three weeks together—are delivered to the camp every Tuesday, thanks to regular dispatches of a truck either by the British or the United States Embassy.

Of course, the most urgent issue remains the release of at least some interned Poles. As you know, after the release of a total of 110 detainees in June of last year, the initiative—which had been well on its way—was terminated due to German pressure and political events and came to a standstill, despite the incessant written and personal interventions made by the Envoy of the Republic of Poland as well as the Apostolic Nuncio in Madrid. Despite the Polish Envoy having obtained permission at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have internees who are over 40 years old released, and despite his having submitted appropriate lists, this matter was suspended by the clearly hostile Spanish General Staff, and in particular its Second Department, which is under constant German pressure. That is why even cases approved by Minister Serrano Suñer and the Director of the Police are blocked either there or by the personal secretary of the Minister of War, Colonel Brinquis; these include individual releases, secured with a personal guarantee of the Envoy, of certain interned men. Also, the Ministry of Military Affairs has not yet arranged, despite the consent of the administrative authorities, the release of Dr Fethke and Mr Goliszewski, even though Nunio Cicognani also intervened on several occasions regarding this matter.

Admittedly, several months ago 9 Belgians did leave; however, they were subject to the repatriation clause to the Belgian Congo; meanwhile, every few weeks English and Canadian citizens are released, among the latter several Poles who at the moment of their arrest had claimed to be Canadian. In view of the above, let me return to the only project that could radically resolve the matter, namely the suggestion I made a long time ago that the English Government, via the British Embassy in Madrid, unofficially establish a certain conditionality between a gradual release of interned Poles and the issuance of a navicert to Spaniards if not for corn, then for other necessary products, such as petrol, cotton, etc. The interventions of the Nuncio, requested by the Holy See, have so far proved to no avail.

Of course, my suggestion does not preclude all other possible efforts. I have recently taken new measures via one of my Spanish friends and the matter appears to be on the right track; however, there is always the risk of the same German counteraction, with German trusted representatives placed in various Spanish institutions.²⁷

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
M. Szumlakowski

IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.763/6

²⁷ A copy of the report was delivered to the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare and the Military Attaché in Lisbon and Madrid, Colonel Fryderyk Mally.

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*12 February 1942. Note by the Consulate General in New York
on the conference of representatives of Jewish organisations in the USA*

NOTE
for Minister Strakacz

On 8 February, on the order from the Minister, I attended the Landsmanschaftn Conference, organised by the Federation of Polish Jews at the Hotel Pennsylvania.

There were approx. 500 people participating in the session; seated behind the executive table were, among others, Messrs:

1. Dr S. Margoshes;
2. Abraham Goldberg;
3. Rabbi Brodt (former member of the Sejm, recently Chief Rabbi of Antwerp);
Rabbi Lewin, the son of Rabbi Lewin, the distinguished member of the Agudat party;
4. Colonel Mendelsohn, armless disabled soldier (he fought in the American-Spanish war), a fervent activist particularly among the Zionists;
5. Mr Friede.

There were also people whose names I do not remember: a lady representing the War Relief for the USSR, a refugee—representative of Polish Jews in France, another refugee—representative of Polish Jews in Belgium.

The Chairman, Mr M., opened the meeting and announced the first speaker, Colonel Mendelsohn. Colonel Mendelsohn delivered a very good and timely speech. He called on all Jews to show solidarity and support for the American cause with all their might. He said that these are very trying times and the cause requires unity and universal effort for the triumph of the cause, so surely understood by every Jew. He also urged people to purchase war bonds.

This was followed by representatives of Polish-Jewish organisations from France and Belgium. Both speeches described the plight of Jews in the occupied countries, in summary. They emphasised the difficult situation of Poles, whose fate is perhaps a little better than that the fate Jews. At the same time, they expressed the solidarity that both Jews and Poles have for Jews.

In my speech at the beginning, I assured Colonel Mendelsohn that refugees—Polish-Jewish citizens—should buy bonds, as to show their gratitude for the hospitality they have received in this country at least in this form. Since the issue raised by the 'Trybuna' magazine caused some excitement, I drew attention to the distinctiveness of our concepts from the Nazi ones, i.e. not discriminating

against races, religions and origins. Reading out the report quoted by one of the daily newspapers, I observed that the representative of the Republic of Poland had not even once used the word Pole or Poles, but Poland. The word Poland, the Republic, i.e. the Commonwealth, includes all legal citizens, i.e. both Jews and Poles. Therefore, the report and the figures also applied to the Jews. The suffering of the Jews hurts us just as much, and we are proud of their heroism—as we are proud of the suffering and heroic deeds of all our fellow citizens of the Republic of Poland. We must follow the example of the solidarity of our fellow citizens in Poland and in other occupied territories, and not yield to the secret plots of our countries [enemies?], whose aim is to divide and break up societies at such a tragic moment.

In the second part of my speech, I expressed gratitude to the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Jewish Labour Committee for their assistance to exiles in the USSR. Lastly, to the American Government for facilitating that support by adopting the Lend Lease Act.

Mr Goldberg spoke after me, recognized by his entourage as a good speaker, probably because of his theatricality and demagogy. Mr Goldberg spoke for a very long time—in jargon, of course. Noteworthy are a few moments of his speech, namely:

1) Taking a stand against Minister Raczyński

He declared that nothing could justify the Minister of Foreign Affairs, for in the eyes of Jews their omission in the report is simply criminal. According to Mr Goldberg, Jews had done for Poland as much as Poles themselves, if not more.

2) Taking a stand against the National Democrats

In his speech, Mr Goldberg, as mostly all Jews do, mentioned almost only the bad sides of the attitude of Poles to Jews, of course remaining silent about the good sides and the bad attitude of Jews to the country. And so, in his rhetorical eagerness, he said that although we had among us individuals harming Jews such as Rydz-Śmigły, Beck and Grabski, we must clearly state that the Jews will never accept the fact that the National Democrats participate in the Government. ‘We hate the National Democrats as much as we hate all antisemites.’

Rabbis Lewin and Brodt spoke in a solemn and positive manner, calling for action. They focussed on the attitude of mutual respect and solidarity between Poles and Jews in all the occupied countries.

When they finished, time came for a speech by the lady representing the relief committee for the USSR, and that was the end of the official part.

NOTE:

I often participate in the meetings of the Federation of Polish Jews, and I can always observe a characteristic tinge of demagogy pushed to the forefront.

Insofar as my speech received a lot of applause, and I was frequently interrupted, every demagogical speech was always applauded.

I believe that demagoguery should be eliminated and future demagogic speeches prevented. If Jews know in advance that in case of such performances we will react by leaving the room, I am convinced that they will not be playing with criticisms of Polish parties or statesmen, just as we never do that with regard to their factions and people, regardless of our sympathies and convictions.

J. Kazimierz Krasicki
Consul of the Republic of Poland

New York, NY
12 February 1942

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 504

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*12 February 1942. Letter from the Interim Head of the MFA
to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
on assisting Jewish refugees on Rhodes*

London, 12 February 1942

SECRET

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes to communicate that it has received a telegraphic message from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland to the Vatican that a group of Polish-Jewish citizens, numbering 106 people, interned since 1940 on the island of Rhodes, is in a difficult position. The internees request your assistance, particularly clothing. The Embassy of the Republic of Poland to the Vatican suggests making an attempt to deliver relief to the internees with mediation through the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Ministry of

Foreign Affairs asks the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to give its opinion on providing assistance to these people.²⁸

FOR THE HEAD OF THE MINISTRY
F. Frankowski

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545*

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14 February 1942. Letter from the Consulate General in Istanbul to the Embassy in Ankara on the activity of the Turkish authorities

ISTANBUL, 14 February 1942

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Ankara

In response to the letter from the Embassy from 29 Jan 1942, No. 712/1/2/42, in conjunction with the intervention in the case of Mr Rozental, the Consulate General communicates that the instruction of the Turkish Minister of Internal Affairs mentioned in the letter of the Embassy is intended for the internal use of the Turkish authorities and for this reason its content could not be communicated to the Consulate General.

However, courtesy of Tevfik Bey, the director of the legal office, we were able to ascertain that the said regulation provides that only authoritative documents confirming the religion of foreigners are either birth or baptism certificates issued immediately after birth or a few years after birth, but also that they must be attached with a certificate from the parish register accompanied by the signature of a priest, the head of the Parish Office, confirming the authenticity of the certificate.

²⁸ In the letter from 26 February 1942, Ludwik Grosfeld responded that 'the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare accedes to the request to grant assistance to Polish refugees interned on the island of Rhodes. For the purpose of solving the matter in practice, the Ministry requests that Envoy Ładoś in Bern be instructed to negotiate with the International Red Cross on providing assistance to the internees. Should the International Red Cross be unable to cover the entire cost, efforts must be made that it covers it in part—with the rest to be disbursed by the Polish Government, in a single payment of £1,060, that is, £10 per person. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare informed Dr Schwarzbart about that group, asking him to intervene with Jewish organisations.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

In the case of Mr Rozental, there is no annotation on the baptism certificate that it is an extract from the parish register, and there is no signature of the priest or the name of godparents, so the Turkish authorities, based on the instructions of their Minister of Internal Affairs, cannot accept the document produced by Mr Rozental as authentic.

For the Head of the Consulate General
of the Republic of Poland
Aleksy Wdziękoński
Consul of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Ankara, 87

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*24 February 1942. Extract from the address by the Prime Minister
and Commander-in-Chief on Polish-Jewish relations delivered
during the inaugural session of the National Council*

ADDRESS OF THE PRIME MINISTER
GENERAL WŁADYSŁAW SIKORSKI
DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON
24 FEBRUARY 1942²⁹

...³⁰

Our declaration, adopted unanimously by the Government, was dictated by the general state of affairs, and it contains the most important principles by which we are and will be guided in our further, unwavering work for the benefit of Poland. It also leaves no doubt as to our position towards national and religious minorities whose suffering, such as that of the Jewish population, must evoke the compassion of every civilized person.

...

The future political and economic system of the Polish State will be decided by the Sejm of Free Poland, in whose hands the Government will transfer the legislative power immediately after the end of the hostilities. Today, however, when

²⁹ The address was delivered during the inaugural session of the Second National Council, formed on 3 February 1942 under Stanisław Grabski.

³⁰ The main part of the address, unrelated to Polish-Jewish relations, was omitted.

the moment of deciding on the post-war organisation of the world and of Europe is approaching, and the international opinion wants to know what the future Poland will be like in order to base its trust upon it, the Government of National Unity declares:

...

3. Poland will ensure that freedom of civic rights of all loyal citizens of the Republic of Poland is honoured, regardless of the differences of nationality, religion and race. For ethnic minorities fulfilling their civic duties towards the state Poland shall provide equal rights with equal obligations, and it will give them the opportunities for free political, cultural and social development. The freedom of religion, conscience and speech, association and assembly shall be fully ensured to all.

...

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 34 (previously published)

167

*2 March 1942. Cable from the Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Embassy in Kuybyshev on Jewish refugees in Shanghai*

TO Polmission KUYBYSHEV

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 2 MARCH 1942

No. 181

Refero 138³¹ and receptus claris from Romer

I ask you to quickly clarify with the Soviet authorities the issue of granting Soviet transit visas to Jewish refugees in Shanghai,³² both those who already have

³¹ In the cable no. 138 of 13 February 1942, the Secretary-General at the MFA, Kajetan Dzierżykraj-Morawski, instructed the Embassy in Kuybyshev: 'The World Jewish Congress from Geneva informs that there are allegedly several hundred Polish refugees-Jews in Shanghai, holding visas to Palestine and able to depart providing that the Russian and Iraqi authorities grant them transit visas ... I ask you to contact Ambassador Romer to establish the number of refugees who have visas to Palestine secured, and subsequently to take measures to obtain Soviet transit visas for them.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240.

³² In the cable of 22 January 1942, the Head of the MFA informed the Embassy in Washington: 'Ambassador R.[omer] communicates via Kuybyshev once more of the

their destination visas (approx. 100 people to Palestine) and those who are to get their destination visas only in Kuybyshev, where they would have to stop over. We have been discussing the matter with the Foreign Office, which has requested these explanations. The Foreign Office expects major difficulties, particularly for the people without visas.

Morawski
Polexterne

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 528

168

[Before 4 March 1942]. Dispatch from the Commander of the Polish Army in the USSR (from Tashkent) to the Ambassador in Kuybyshev on childminders evacuated from the USSR

ISPATCH No. 199 from TASHKENT
Received on 4 March 1942, at 12.00 p.m.

Ambassador KOT

I have learnt that Bussel and Skotnicka, the well-known Jewish women about whom I have informed you, are now in Ashgabat and are supposed to go to India as guardians of Polish children. I would consider it a slap in the face for Polishness. Please intervene immediately.³³

/-/ General Anders

IPMS, Ambasada Kujbyszew, A.7.53/7, cz. 1

desperate situation of Jewish refugees in Shanghai and asks about the results of the talks with the Joint. I request that the urgent information be sent to me. R. asks further whether the Embassy in Washington received the sum of \$37,500 which he transferred from Tokyo at the end of October via the Yokohama Specie Bank.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 528.

³³ In the cable of 4 March, Ambassador Kot responded: 'The list of guardians for children departing for India has not been submitted to me yet. I have appointed Dr Bussel as a medic for Jewish children, I consider her evacuation necessary also for other reasons. As for Skotnicka, I have not selected her; she must have joined the group by herself had someone interlope her in an unauthorised way.' IPMS, Ambasada Kujbyszew, A.7.53/7, cz. 1.

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*4 March 1942. Cable from the Ambassador to the Holy See
on the murdering of the Jewish population in occupied Poland*

POLMISSION—THE VATICAN
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 4 MARCH
RECEIVED ON 12 MARCH

No. 63

I have recently received information from Poland about Jews having been massacred by the Germans in Lwów, Stanisławów and Kutry. Several thousand are reported to have been murdered.³⁴ The executions are perpetrated by special units of the SS and the Ukrainians, who generally played a significant role in persecuting and murdering Jews.

Papée

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246

³⁴ In reference to the information received, the authorities in London sent a cipher dispatch to the Government Delegate for Poland on 31 March 1942 with the following question: 'Is it true that in Lwów, Stanisławów and Kutry, SS units and the Ukrainians murdered several thousand Jews in frightful massacres?' AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 203/I/2. Responding in the cable of 8 April 1942 (signed with the alias 'Wrzos' and delivered to London by a courier on 19 June 1942), the Government Delegate for Poland Cyryl Ratajski communicated: 'I report that the information of several thousand Jews having been murdered in Eastern Lesser Poland is true. Mass murders of Jews were also perpetrated in the Wilno region, Belarus, and in the Lublin region. In the city of Wilno alone, approx. 60,000 Jews were murdered. The entire country is currently plagued by blind terror, a sufficient obstacle for the idea of forming a pro-German government.' AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/I/6.

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*6 March 1942. Cable from the Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Embassy in Ankara and the Consulate General in Istanbul
on visas to Palestine*

TO Polconsul ISTANBUL
Polmission ANKARA
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 9 MARCH 1942

Receptus 393³⁵

In response to our intervention, the Foreign Office stated that the British passport office in Istanbul must each time contact the Palestinian Government regarding visas for people intending to settle in Palestine. This applies in equal terms to all citizens. Transit visas to Palestine are issued immediately if the petitioner has a destination visa. Different regulations apply to state officials and people travelling to the army.

For the attention of Ankara with reference to the cable No. 37³⁶, requesting the information as to how many and what number of refugees in Turkey should be evacuated to Palestine.

Morawski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 238

³⁵ Consul General in Istanbul Alfred Poniński informed in the cable no. 393 of 3 December 1941: 'The local head of the English passport office told me that from December on he would no longer accept requests for visas to Palestine for civilians, which henceforth are to be obtained via the Consulate General in Jerusalem. This complicates the procedure of refugee transit. Despite constant interventions, we have been unable to obtain visas for 9 refugees staying in Mersin. I submitted a motion to the Consulate General in Jerusalem to accelerate the case; I request your intervention with the English authorities.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 228.

³⁶ In the cable no. 37 of 23 February 1942, the Ambassador in Ankara, Michał Sokolnicki, informed: 'The Consulate General in Jerusalem in conjunction with the Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare agreed that it would appeal to the authorities of Palestine for settlement visas only for: 1) war refugees evacuated from Poland in mid-September 1939; 2) persons officially evacuated from the Balkans; 3) those who have means to provide for themselves in Palestine. Jews non-refugees must make attempts to obtain the certificates. Because currently visa applications can only be obtained via the Consulate General in Jerusalem, and because Polish emigrants in Turkey, including persons escaping from Poland or evacuated from the USSR, generally do not fall within the aforementioned—too rigid—categories, the Embassy requests that an instruction be issued for the Consulate General in Jerusalem towards less rigorous processing of requests for visas to Palestine made here.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

171

7 March 1942. Cable from the Secretary-General at the MFA to the Embassy in Washington on the abrogation of the Act on Revocation of Citizenship

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 7 MARCH 1942

No. 121

Receptus 75³⁷

The decree of 28 November 1941,³⁸ repealing the Act of 31 March 1938, constitutes the final position of the Government, which went further than the motions of the representatives of the Jewish minority in the National Council, which demanded only a partial repeal of the Act. The Government cannot agree to enact a new decree to annul the decisions issued on the basis of the 1938 Act, because the retroactive use of law and repeal of administrative decisions by a legislative act are contrary to the basic principles of law and are not practiced in any law-abiding system. However, with the incoming appeals, the Ministry of Internal Affairs carefully investigates the decisions on the revocation of citizenship and, provided there are sufficient grounds for that, these decisions are overturned.³⁹

Morawski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 247

³⁷ In the cable no. 75 of 20 February 1942, the Head of the MFA, at the time staying in Washington, communicated: 'Representatives of the World Jewish Congress request that all instances of Polish citizenship having been revoked on the basis of the 1938 ordinance be retroactively annulled. They are going to submit a memorandum regarding that issue before my departure. Please send elements of the answer explaining the negative position of the Polish Government in that regard.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 247. Edward Raczyński visited the United States between 12 February and 30 March 1942 in order to prepare the visit of Prime Minister Sikorski, among other things.

³⁸ Doc. 145.

³⁹ In an earlier circular of 12 January 1942, Dzierżykraj-Morawski informed: 'As the decree of 28 November 1941 has no retroactive effect, the decisions of revocation of Polish citizenship issued on the basis of the Act of 31 March 1938, and thus far not repealed—remain legally binding. Appeals to have citizenship restored are to be directed—as previously—with appropriate applications to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Decisions not delivered, held in the records of offices outside the country shall be officially annulled.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 510.

172

*11 March 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
on the evacuation of Jewish children from the USSR*

POLCONSUL—JERUSALEM
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 11 MARCH
RECEIVED ON 11 MARCH

No. 93

Receptus cable No. 75⁴⁰

The Jewish Agency is ready to accept Jewish children from Russia to the extent it can, depending on the number of certificates received from the Government of Palestine; Poland currently has 100–130 certificates for children of 14–18 years of age. However, it requests that Jewish children should continue to be sent to other countries in general transports of Polish children, and that the admission of children to Palestine at present should not reduce the number of Jewish children planned in general transports. At the same time, the Agency raised the issue of providing for them, and recommended that the same practice be adopted, known to the Ministry of Social Welfare, that has been used by the Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare with regard to distribution in general. The Agency is open for cooperation in every aspect. For your information I wish to note that the Agency has simultaneously approached Schwarzbart with the proposal to discuss with the Polish Government a large-scale campaign to evacuate children from Russia and locate them outside Palestine; furthermore, they promise the support of their people and organisations.

They find the participation of the Polish Government in that campaign indispensable, due to the fact that their organisations do not have any access to Russia.

KORSAK

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 552

⁴⁰ In the cable no. 75 of 27 February 1942, Dzierżykraj-Morawski inquired: 'I request to be informed of the number of Jewish children in Russia for whom the Agency can secure certificates and subsistence in Palestine, so that I may inform Ambassador Kot thereof. I do not consider it advisable to connect that issue with the departure of 500 Polish children from Russia to India.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 238.

173

*13 March 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
on the demands by Revisionist organisations*

POLCONSUL—JERUSALEM

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 13 MARCH
RECEIVED ON 14 MARCH

No. 98

In connection with the cipher reports on Revisionist postulates, I conclude that the lack of their arrangements, and especially the lack of a decision regarding the departure of Klarman as their representative, hinders my contacts recommended by the instruction of the Prime Minister. (receptus No. 217 of 1941).⁴¹ The Revisionists claim that Polish Jews in London created an atmosphere stopping the competent Polish circles from supporting them for fear of a backlash from American Jewry. I think that the situation of the Revisionists is getting more and more difficult. Their agenda, being somewhat extreme, has currently become rather unrealistic. Their popularity, founded on the opposition to the Jewish Agency that is submissive to the English, continues unabated, due to precisely that opposition. However, it does not translate to real results for their party. After the death of Jabotinsky, they lack a director, whereas with Eastern Europe having been cut off, the inflow of money stopped; apart from that, in order to increase their prestige they are seeking support to facilitate the propaganda of their programme. They seek this support from the Polish Government, believing that on the one hand we are interested in the realisation of their demands, and on the other that Poland will be among the decision-making countries at the peace conference and in post-war Europe. The Director of the New Zionist Organisation in Palestine, Altman, has recently presented to me a programme of their propaganda campaign in America, asking about possible significant financial support on our part to initiate this action. Altman is in contact with the local US Consulate General about these plans, but he has not yet received any real support from

⁴¹ In the cable no. 217 of 21 June 1941, Prime Minister Sikorski communicated: 'In line with the decree of the Council of Ministers of 6 May 1941, I instruct you to take a negative stance on the issue of the formation of Jewish units by the Revisionists. The refusal should be given in the most delicate terms; furthermore, it should be motivated by the negative position of the British Government on the projects of creating a Jewish army. Only the consent of the British side ... would allow for the change of our position. However, the maintenance of noncommittal contacts with the Revisionists is desirable.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 229.

them. I think that in order to maintain further relations with the Polish Revisionists, certain concessions would have to be made. First of all, facilitate the departure of their representative to London. Otherwise, I predict a cooling of relations with the Polish Consulate, and a tightening of contacts with the circles of the former Polish regime in Tel Aviv, which are striving for it.

In view of the above, I request information whether Marek Kahan, the lawyer, has indeed left Russia for America in agreement with the Polish Government as a representative of the Revisionists.⁴²

Korsak

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 238

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*23 March 1942. Cable from the Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Consul General in Tel Aviv
on the position of the Government on the Jewish matter*

TO Polconsul Tel Aviv
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 23 MARCH 1942

No. 13

In addition to the telegram from the Prime Minister,⁴³ I ask you to inform the Representation that:

⁴² In the cable of 1 April 1942, the MFA responded: 'Ambassador Kot reports that Kahan is living in Turkistan, having never gone anywhere because the Jews are unable to obtain exit visas from the Soviet Union. He has recently submitted at the Embassy a written declaration withdrawing his former demand for Jewish units to be established, as—considering that at present the Soviets forbid enlisting Jews to the Polish Army—they could use the formation of distinct Jewish units to support their argument.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 239. In the cable of 18 April, the Head of the MFA informed: 'The Revisionist activists, Engineer Szeskin and Lawyer Kahan, are said to have reached Persia together with the Polish Army; while in Russia, these men proposed a project to form separate Jewish units. They later withdrew that project, having learnt it was in sync with the Soviet policy of refusing Polish citizenship to ethnic minorities. At present, I consider all their calls for establishing a Jewish army or separate units—undesirable.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 239.

⁴³ This is probably a reference to the cable of 9 March 1942, in which Prime Minister Sikorski informed: 'The policy of my Government is, also regarding the Jewish matter,

1) Objections to the allegedly anti-democratic and antisemitic attitude of some members of the Government are unfounded in view of the unanimous adoption by all members of the Government of a declaration clearly expressing the Government's policy based on the principles of democracy and equality of minorities.

2) The Government is putting these principles in practice, as evidenced, among other things, by its equal and just treatment of all citizens, the repeal of the Act on Revocation of Citizenship, as well as its efforts to eliminate both in Poland and in Russia the symptoms of a critical attitude towards those minority groups that disturbed Polish society with their behaviour during the occupation.

3) The allegation of a disproportionate participation of Jews in the National Council cannot be acknowledged as valid in so far as the principle of proportionate participation has not been applied to major Polish political parties either, while its use would have to result in the dismissal of highly valuable non-party persons from the Council; furthermore, the participation of Jews has increased to two members.⁴⁴

For these reasons, the reservations expressed by the Representation cannot be accepted, as the clear position and policy of the Government—which implements, among other things, the theses of the memorandum of the Representation—allows the Government to demand the full support of the Representation, and not only in external-political moves.

Morawski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245

honest and clearly defined. Besides the declaration and my address at the inauguration of the National Council, I have nothing to add on the matter.' It was a response to a cable from Consul Rosmarin of 21 February 1942, in which the latter informed of the resolutions passed by the Representation of Polish Jewry, which, among other things, voiced 'a series of reservations of internal and political character.' The Representation emphasised that 'people with a past marked by antisemitic attitudes and anti-democratic positions had been appointed as members of the Government and the National Council in such a significant number that there is a real threat that the ideological principles upon which the system of the future Poland is to be based shall be undermined.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245. See doc. 166.

⁴⁴ This is a reference to the inclusion of Szmul Zygielbojm as a member of the National Council; see footnote 15 to doc. 12.

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*24 March 1942. Cable from the Ambassador in Kuybyshev
on the NKVD's arrest of Wiktor Alter and Henryk Erlich*

POLMISSION—KUYBYSHEV
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 24 MARCH 1942
RECEIVED ON 25 MARCH 1942

No. 237

Receptus cable No. 228⁴⁵

All efforts to release Alter and Erlich have failed. Recently, the Narkomindel has responded in a manner making any further discussion difficult, claiming they were citizens of the USSR in line with the general Soviet argument on the citizenship of ethnic minorities.

Of course, for fundamental reasons, the Embassy will continue to intervene, but today's situation does not allow us to expect a positive outcome of the matter without much pressure from the outside.⁴⁶

The copy of the correspondence by courier.

KOT

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545 (previously published)

⁴⁵ In the cable no. 228 of 20 March 1942, Dzierżykraj-Morawski communicated: 'The British Embassy in Kuybyshev has been authorised to issue visas to England for Alter and Erlich.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240.

⁴⁶ The information from Ambassador Kot was transferred to the Embassy in Washington in the cable of 2 April 1942. As a follow-up, Feliks Frankowski communicated: 'I wish to clarify that the Soviet Union has currently adopted the position that all Polish citizens who have remained within the territories occupied on 1–2 November 1939, received Soviet citizenship; the only exception being the person of Polish nationality. As regards Alter and Erlich, Minister Stańczyk has been in contact with the British Labour Party, and the American Federation of Labour to get them to intervene. I ask you to discreetly support his efforts with the appropriate American and Jewish figures.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

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*26 March 1942. Note by the Embassy in Kuybyshev
on the situation of Polish citizens of Jewish descent in the USSR*

Situation of Polish Citizens of Jewish Descent or of Mosaic Religion⁴⁷

Starting on 1 Dec 1941, that is, since the moment when the Soviet note on citizenship was sent to our Embassy, there has been a major shift in the treatment of Polish-Jewish citizens. On 27 January, the Soviet authorities returned Erlich's passport to the Embassy, justifying it by the claim that he was a citizen of the USSR, even though on no occasion in the previous notes had the Soviet Government questioned the citizenship of Erlich and Alter. On 7 March, the Embassy sent a note to the Narkomindel regarding Erlich and Alter, reminding it that in the note requesting the release of Polish citizens, Alter and Erlich had been listed as the first to be released, and that in no communication thus far had there been any reservations expressed as to the citizenship of Erlich and Alter. Despite that, on 16 March we received a response from the Narkomindel that the issue of the citizenship of Erlich and Alter was indisputable, that they were incontrovertibly Soviet citizens. Thus, the discussion on the illegal arrest of Erlich and Alter was unilaterally terminated. Allegations of a substantive nature have already been dropped, and the dispute has been closed regarding the issue of citizenship. From that time on, in the case of all interventions by the Embassy requesting the release of arrested people, the Narkomindel has responded with regard to Jews that they will not be released as they are not Polish citizens; however, their nationality is established not by way of their self-identification—the declaration of the interested parties—but on the basis of how their first name or surname sounds. Hence, starting from 1 December 1941, Polish citizens of Jewish nationality or of Mosaic religion, or even of Jewish background, have no longer benefitted from amnesty. On 28 December, the Narkomindel declared that it was unable to grant the request for Natan Rubner and Józef Dawidson to be released from prison, as both men were Soviet citizens. On 27 January 1942, the same answer was given in the case of Maurycy Weinstein. On 31 January, in an answer regarding Izaak Berman, Hersz Lejb Antopolski, Józef Schaf and Ber Sienkiewicz it was claimed that they were not Polish citizens. An identical response was given on 6 February about Majer

⁴⁷ On 18 May, the note was sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Information and Documentation, the Second Department of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff, the Embassies in London and Washington, as well as to the Consulate General in Tel Aviv. In the covering letter, Kajetan Dzierżykraj-Morawski stated: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends enclosed notes by an associate of the press section of the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev, Mr B. Singer, on the situation of Polish-Jewish citizens in the USSR.' AAN, Ambasada Waszyngton, 3196.

Rudal and Marek Orsz. On 12 February, the Narkomindel questioned the Polish citizenship of Eugenia Lewkowicz. On 21 February—the Polish citizenship of Wirtenberg, Tajchman and Frajn. On 23 February—of Zelmajster. On 10 March, the same answer was received in the cases of Ajzenstein and Silberstein.⁴⁸

The same thing is happening in the provinces as well. When the registration of Polish citizens was carried out in Andijan, a representative of the NKVD called the trusted representative and informed him that it was illegal to register people who, according to the local authorities, were Soviet citizens. According to this interpretation, all non-Poles who lived in the territory occupied by Soviet troops were Soviet citizens. If the trusted representative continued to register as Polish citizens the inhabitants of the territory captured by the Soviet troops, there would be dire consequences from the local authorities. The deputy of the representative, Mr Oler, a member of the Bund, who had been in charge of the registration, left the post under pressure and joined the army as a result of threats.

In February 1942, the Embassy nominated Rozenchwajg and Lustgarten as the trusted representatives of the Embassy. On 12 February, Novikov asked the Secretary of the Embassy, Mr Arlet, in a telephone conversation whether Rozenchwajg and Lustgarten were of Polish nationality. Arlet responded: 'Of Polish nationality.' Novikov: 'Not Jewish, perhaps?' Arlet: 'Surnames prove nothing.' In the evening, Novikov called for the second time, insisting that Rozenchwajg and Lustgarten were Jews. 'Smogorzewski is a Pole. Lustgarten and Rozenchwajg are Jews,' claimed Novikov. Arlet explained that a declaration of the citizen was sufficient, and that the Polish Embassy did not apply racial criteria. Novikov: 'Racial criteria are out of the question. You know our position on Polish citizenship. Please clarify the issue.'

On 4 March, Novikov informed Mr Arlet that Aszkenazy cannot be a Polish citizen, and hence could not be the Polish representative in Arkhangelsk, because he was a Jew.

The racial dispute continues and often takes a dramatic turn. On 11 March, the Polish Embassy inquired, via Mr Arlet, into the case of 16-year-old Mieczysław Wajzman, who had been sentenced to 8 years of forced labour for failure to show up at work. Pushkin begins the discussion on nationality and does not want to accept the intervention, claiming that by virtue of the sound of his surname—Wajzman Mieczysław is a Jew and therefore could not be a Polish citizen.

⁴⁸ In the cable of 8 January 1942 concerning mainly the issues related to individual people, the Ambassador in Kuybyshev informed: 'The Soviets ... have now started to do astonishing things with the Jews, treating even those from Cracow and Warsaw as Soviet citizens; therefore, someone has to immediately shoulder the unofficial burden of information and propaganda related to that issue.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.73/1.

On 21 February, the Embassy intervened concerning 11 Polish citizens arrested in Alma-Ata because they had turned to the Delegation there. The Embassy pointed out that even if the arrested people were the object of a controversy, they considered themselves to be Polish citizens, and if someone declares him or herself as Polish—they must be considered Poles. Responding to Mr Arlet's statement, a representative of the Narkomindel, Novikov, said that the entire dispute was the result of unregulated borders. At the same time, he explained that Rozenchwajg and Lustgarten, due to the lack of a clear answer, would not be appointed as trusted representatives. He asked that in the future the Embassy avoid appointing as its representatives people who may raise such doubts. Arlet retorted that the actions of the Embassy are guided by factual matters. The tragedy occurring in Alma-Ata was well-reflected in a letter from Halina Zylberblat, the wife of Leon Zylberblat, a doctor from Łódź. Her husband devoted all of his free time treating Polish citizens and was an assistant at the Medical Department of the University of Alma-Ata; he considered himself unquestionably as a Polish citizen; he had intended to join the Polish Army and was only persuaded by Delegate Więcek to remain in the city. He did not think for a moment that he could be treated as a Soviet citizen. There is no answer to the arrest; the Embassy was refused an explanation, because it concerns Soviet citizens, but a citizen who considered himself Polish was punished only because he provided medical assistance to Polish citizens, with the help of the Delegation.

It is therefore feared that as the notion of citizenship is treated literally, Jews will not be able to benefit from assistance or protection, contrary to the intentions of the Embassy and delegations. Already several months ago, the administrative authorities, during the evacuation of Kostanay, relocated Polish citizens of Jewish nationality to various parts of Russia, taking away their certificates, the so-called 'udostovereniya', officially stating their Polish citizenship. Since then, they have only had the rights of Soviet citizens. On 12 March, the Delegate in Samarkand reported that Jews from Łódź, Kalisz, Warsaw and Katowice are being conscripted into the Red Army; it should be noted that many of these citizens are treated on a special basis, that is, they do not join the ranks of soldiers, but distinct labour units, and thus are members of an inferior category in the Red Army as well.

The situation in the army is no better. When conscription was announced, the Soviet authorities warned the respective draft boards in advance that citizens of Jewish nationality could not be accepted to the Polish Army; meanwhile, the rules to determine nationality reached further than the notions of racism, for also based on someone's intuition or psychological feel. Thus, for instance in the report from Tashkent, we can read that the draft board accepted Jews into the army during the first three days of conscription; however, from the third day, having been instructed by their superior authorities, members of the Soviet draft board came to be categorically against allowing Polish citizens of Jewish, Ukrainian and Belarussian nationality to join the army, even if they had come from the territory

occupied by the Germans and had previously served in the Polish Army. To establish the nationality of a draftee, the Soviet members of draft boards resorted to investigating the draftee's religion—also that of his father, and even grandfather—and eventually to determining the nationality of a draftee by way of medical examination (circumcision). There were instances when candidates were rejected merely based on the sound of their names, or their conduct before the board. Furthermore, there were cases of rejecting draftees because of inconsistencies in their documents. Meanwhile, criminal offences, hooliganism, or drunkenness did not in principle constitute obstacles to joining the army. Jan Panczyszyn, the son of Jan, born 1904, had not served in the army and was questioned—the motive was given that he was certainly a Jew—because he had been 'intrusive' towards the board, and a Pole cannot be so intrusive, regardless of the fact that the man had documents undeniably confirming his Polish nationality. The above was indicated in the 25 February report by Major Dekański. Lieutenant Regini carried out an inspection and participated in the draft proceedings in Semipalatinsk. There were 340 men who reported for the draft. Among members of the draft board were the provincial military commissar (oblastnoy voyenkom) and the head of the local NKVD. They questioned the Polish nationality of the Jews, claiming that if someone is a Jew, they can be of no other nationality than Jewish. 'When I protested', states Lieutenant Regini, 'they went to the telephone, contacted Alma-Ata, and the republican authorities there confirmed their interpretation.' As a result of the interpellation of Jewish representatives, indicating that Jews are subject to additional medical examination in their units after being conscripted, General Anders declared that he was doing so under the pressure from the Soviet authorities, and that he preferred to dismiss them under the pretext of an illness, so that they would not end up in the Red Army.

Dr Roth explained to the Embassy Attaché, Mr Powierza, that he was the only one of seven medical doctors, Polish-Jewish citizens, who were taken by force to one of the Soviet divisions in June 1941. As a result of strained and long-term efforts, they were released from the Soviet army in the autumn of 1941, after which they travelled towards the area where the Polish Army was being formed. When they arrived in Dzhambyl, the Soviet authorities forbade them to contact the Polish posts, among other things, announcing they would any day be conscripted once again to the Soviet army, which has not happened yet.

The criterion of citizenship has been reduced to such a narrow nationalistic framework that when the correspondent of 'Dziennik dla Wszystkich' in Buffalo submitted a dispatch to the Narkomindel, writing that the delegations provide assistance regardless of nationality and religion, the words 'regardless of nationality and religion' were crossed out. This deletion has been repeated several times. When one of our associates, Mr Singer, was to deliver a radio address to Polish-Jewish citizens, Petrov, a representative of the Press Department of the Narkomindel, declared that he would only allow an address to those Jews who were under

German occupation, indicating that he could not allow that Polish-Jewish citizens here be spoken to, for there were no such people in the Soviet Union, or there are at most a handful of them and that this is part of a fundamental dispute over borders.

Certain aspects of these fights, perhaps understood differently at the top, bear a specific, but clearly antisemitic, character at the bottom. The local authorities treat the explanation of citizenship as a rejection of the Jewish population. It comes as no surprise that, when the Delegate in Novosibirsk, Mr Maliniak, struggled to transfer Polish citizens working in difficult conditions in Pushkino, the Troitsky District, to the Altai Krai, where the conditions are more bearable, what followed was an answer from the local head of the NKVD that the departure is prohibited until people of non-Polish nationality are excluded from the number of Polish citizens. However, the authorities do not pay attention to the amnesty certificates issued to them. These certificates clearly state the Polish citizenship of the persons concerned.

A few days ago, Ambassador Kot asked the Deputy People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, Mr Vyshinsky, to grant Polish citizens a leave from work on Easter Day. Deputy People's Commissar Vyshinsky agreed in principle with the Ambassador's request; however, he stipulated that it could not apply to Jewish holidays. Ambassador Kot indicated that his request was made for all Polish citizens regardless of their religion.

Thus, the dispute over the borders has, whether involuntarily or intentionally, turned into a discrimination of the Jewish population in terms of social welfare, self-identity and religion.

The Jewish population affected by the harassment does not realise that this is a one-sided, clear action of the Soviet authorities. All the more so because the authorities suggest through secret correspondents that it is all happening at the instigation of the Polish side.⁴⁹

It should be added that only in two cases the Soviet authorities did not respond by questioning citizenship. On 5 February, we received a response, following

⁴⁹ In the letter from 4 November 1942, Szmul Zygielbojm informed General Sikorski: 'With reference to the issue you raised during the last conversation with myself and Mr Schwarzbart, I enclose a copy of a letter from a group of the Bund activists who arrived in Tehran together with the Army. I wish to emphasise that these are serious people of high civic sense and the facts and evaluations they provide are indubitably honest and objective ... The material enclosed indisputably shows that the NKVD tried to convey to the interested parties the impression, by virtue of a special conduct, that the fundamental inability of Polish Jews to leave Russia had been caused by the Polish authorities. Unfortunately, the material enclosed also indicates that some of our military authorities took the bait of that ploy and contributed to its major success. I have never had any doubts that at the core of the issue is the ordinance of the Soviet Government, treating Polish Jews as Soviet citizens.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.73/1.

several notes, that Professor Schorr was buried in a hospital town of the 5th NKVD correction camp in Uzbekistan.⁵⁰

On 13 January, after repeated interventions, we received a response that on 19 November 1941, a former member of the Sejm from Lwów, Emil Sommerstein, was released from prison. To this day, however, no trace of his stay has been found, although it is known that he would have reported to the nearest Polish post, and that he would have telegraphed the Embassy.⁵¹ That is how the matter of these two people whose Polish citizenship had not been put in question after December were solved.

The only person to benefit from the advantages of national self-identification, contrary to all Soviet interpretations, is Goldberg-Borejsza, who was featured in the weekly issue of 'Literatura i isskustvo' of 21 March as a representative of the Polish nation, and—as is well known—the magazine, just like all other newspapers, is subject to strict censorship by the authorities, who could question him due to his appearance and surname, just as they do to unfortunate inhabitants of Kostanay, Alma-Ata, and Pushkino.

Nor was the nationality of Ważyk or Pasternak questioned. At the Slavic congress in Saratov, prof. Parnas's elaborate was read.

Kuybyshev, 26 March 1942

AAN, Ambasada Waszyngton, 3196

⁵⁰ Historian and orientalist Mojżesz Schorr, Professor of Lwów University and later of the University of Warsaw, was also a Senator of the Republic of Poland in the years 1935–1938. Following the aggression of the USSR against Poland, he was arrested by the NKVD and sent to a labour camp in the territory of Uzbekistan, where he died on 8 July 1941.

⁵¹ Emil Sommerstein was released from the labour camp only in 1944. Afterwards, he was involved in matters related to war reparations on behalf of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, which was dependent on the USSR, and was the Head of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland. See doc. 512.

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*31 March 1942. Report by the Consul General in Istanbul
on the situation of the Jewish population in Romania*

Istanbul, 31 March 1942

Secret

To the MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

Regarding persecution of Jews in Romania

Mr Ch. Barlas, the Delegate of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, temporarily staying in Istanbul, showed me a report he illegally received directly from Romania from a trusted representative of this organisation.

The report is dated to mid-March of this year. I have copied the following passages from it:

1) In 1940, during the Soviet occupation of Bukovina and Bessarabia, approx. 50,000 Jews were transported deep into Russia.⁵² At that time, the royal Romanian authorities transferred large numbers of Jews to the Soviet side, while the Soviet authorities deported these Jews deep into Russia. Jewish organisations in Romania do not yet know the fate of the deportees.

When the Soviet Union captured Chernivtsi, there were over 80,000 Jews in Bukovina. The Soviet authorities arrested all Zionist activists and sent them to Kharkiv, where they were usually sentenced to 6 years in prison. After the Romanian re-occupation, at the instigation of the Germans, every tenth Jew was shot on the charge of communism, as a repressive measure, or without any pretext whatsoever. 25,000 people were murdered that way. Currently, the population of the 'ghetto' in Chernivtsi, the only ghetto definitely established in Romania so far, stands at only 15,000 people.

⁵² Pursuant to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, in June 1940 the authorities of the USSR issued an ultimatum demanding that Romania immediately withdraw from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. After the entry of Soviet troops, Bukovina and a part of Bessarabia were incorporated into the USSR, whereas most of Bessarabia was united with the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the establishment of the Moldavian SSR was proclaimed in August 1940. After General Ion Antonescu seized power and had Romania join the Axis powers in November 1940, the Romanian army participated in the war against the USSR and retook Bessarabia and Bukovina in 1941.

2) The situation of Jews in Bucharest in that period was and remains much better. The Germans would constantly say that the 100,000 of Bucharest's Jews played too important a role in the economic life of the capital to allow for their primitive extermination. Bucharest's Jews are therefore generally treated as citizens; for instance, the Zionist organisation has not been disbanded and remains in contact with the authorities. Only the communists, profiteers and the genuinely suspect were taken from Bucharest to a concentration camp.

Besides terrifying outbursts of hatred and murder by the Iron Guard⁵³ during the famous unrest,⁵⁴ administrative persecution was of course enacted. For instance, Jews were forced to clear the snow from the streets, whereas people with university degrees, etc., had to buy themselves out of forced labour with the sum of 100,000 lei.

The Chairman of the Jewish Community in the capital is a convert, Mr Streitman, having replaced the well-known activist, Mr Fliedermann.

Despite the orders in this direction, not all factories and shops have been taken away from the Jews so far. As long as there is no ghetto established in Bucharest, the situation of the Jews in that city will always be more favourable than anywhere else, because anything can still be obtained with money.

3) North of the capital, there were approx. 250,000 Jews living in villages, towns, and settlements. The Romanian authorities attempted to smuggle them across to the Hungarian side when Hungarians had seized Transylvania.⁵⁵ As these efforts proved unsuccessful, approx. 25,000 people were executed by firing squads.

Another 100,000 Jewish from Bessarabia were also killed.

Only about 9 thousand Jews now live in Jassy, a few hundred in Constanța, and Chișinău has been completely cleansed of its Jewish population.

In Romanian-occupied Transnistria, the oppression of the Jews took on terrible proportions. In certain areas, only 3% remained alive after the pogroms. In some places, the authorities completely cut off the delivery of food to the Jewish communities, which could then only be obtained by smuggling, carried out by officers.

Balta and Moghilău are cities where Jews are isolated; there, thousands of people are destroyed simply by starvation.

⁵³ A Romanian fascist organisation, declared illegal in 1938 by Carol II; after the abdication of the king participated in General Antonescu's Government (1940–1941).

⁵⁴ This is probably a reference to a pogrom in Bucharest in January 1941, during which approx. 120 Jews were murdered.

⁵⁵ On 30 August 1940, Romania was forced to sign the so-called Second Vienna Award, as a result of which Hungary (supported by Germany) gained Transylvania.

Contrary to these relations, the situation of Jews in Transylvania (200 thousand) under Hungarian occupation has not changed much since before the war, as Hungarians have currently suspended the operation of anti-Jewish laws there.

A. Poniński
Minister Plenipotentiary

Hoover Institution, Michal Sokolnicki Papers, 2

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*[March 1942]. Letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs
to a member of the National Council on the situation of the Jewish
population in occupied Poland (with enclosure)*

London, March 1942

Secret
FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

*Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart
Member of the National Council of the Republic of Poland*

Please find enclosed the report by the Government Delegate for the period of 1 November 1941 to 15 [sic] January 1942, with a request not to publish it without contacting me first.

MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
S. Mikołajczyk

[enclosure]

MATERIAL ON THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY
IN THE PERIOD OF 1 NOVEMBER 1941 TO 1 JANUARY 1942

...⁵⁶

JEWISH AFFAIRS

The outbreak of the war with Germany made Jews believe that under the influence of the great events and struggle against the personification of

⁵⁶ The main section of this report, which describes the various aspects of the situation in occupied Poland unrelated to Jewish affairs, was omitted.

antisemitism, which is Nazi Germany today, the process of alienation from Polish life, which is dangerous for them, will be slowed down or even stopped. However, the result of the September campaign quickly put an end to all hopes, while the occupation of Poland delivered them into hands of their persecutors. The results were soon to follow, and the consequences are widely known.

Among the Polish Jews, there is a belief that in the period of the initial, most severe persecution they showed more psychological resistance than German, Czech, or Austrian Jews, the most obvious proof of that being the lack of any protest campaign in the form of, say, mass suicides, so loud some time ago in Vienna and Prague. This phenomenon may be interpreted in various ways. In Poland, Jews did not hold such distinguished positions and were not as connected with the rest of the population by linguistic and cultural assimilation as was the case in Germany or in Austria, or even in the Czech lands. Furthermore, a large percentage of Polish Jews experienced persecution when the country was a part of the former Russian Empire, hence they became hardened in this respect. Secondly, and most importantly, whereas the entry of Hitler's troops into Austria and Czechoslovakia occurred in a time of peace and threw the local Jews into the pit of despair, the march of these troops into Poland marked the first, unsuccessful stage of a worldwide military struggle, whose course—as it was believed—should be reversed with the progress of things. So, initially, it was a matter of surviving a certain period of time, which to many seemed to be short. And when the fall of France overthrew these expectations, the Jewish population became accustomed to its fate. Finally, in contrast to Germany and other countries, where the Jewish population was small, which increased the sense of loneliness, the great concentration of Jews in Poland became for them a moral and material refuge.

This comparative assessment, which shows that Polish Jews showed more steadfastness than their German, Czech and Austrian co-religionists, has no absolute value. Quite the contrary, compared with the Polish population it turns out, as the Jews themselves often admit, that they bear the blows that life had dealt them with too much timorousness and timidity. This applies, above all, to more powerful bourgeoisie and Jewish intelligentsia accustomed to fine living conditions, although admittedly the two strata have been subject to the most violent blows.

Polish-Jewish relations. A large part of the Polish Jewry put great hope in Soviet Russia. Before the war, the Soviet orientation already had numerous supporters among the Jewish population in Poland, especially among the intellectual and working class, but it became the orientation of the entire Jewish society when, in the face of the defeat of the Polish Army, the Jews recognized Soviet Russia as their only protection against the Nazi invasion.

17 September 1939 was the day of the transition of the entire Jewish community to the platform of this orientation and the binding of Jewish hopes with the march of the Soviet army into Polish territory. On that day, the already tenuous relations

between Jews and the Polish society finally broke down, as the latter saw the Soviet invasion as the spectre of another partition of Poland, whereas the former—their salvation. It was also in the last two weeks of September 1939, when Soviet troops were to also capture the territory between the Bug and Vistula rivers, that in all major towns and cities, such as Lublin, Siedlce, Mińsk Mazowiecki, and even in the Warsaw district of Praga, the Soviet organisation posts started to emerge out of nowhere, with all aspects of that campaign being concentrated in the hands of Jews. They immediately began rapid preparations to welcome the Soviet troops, they were already distributing offices and functions, selecting members of the 'revkoms', generously distributing money and propaganda.

Towards the end of 1939, when many witnesses from various social spheres returned from wandering, their stories about the behaviour not so much of the Soviet troops but of the Jews serving the Bolsheviks aroused outrage and hatred towards Jewry in the Polish society. It was revealed that the whole Jewish community in all townships, and particularly in Volhynia, Polesia, and Podlachia—even before the last Polish units withdrew—had hung red flags and set up triumphal arches to welcome the Bolshevik troops; that they had spontaneously organised 'revkoms' and red militias; that after the Bolsheviks entered, Jews rushed with great fury to the Polish institutions, organised mass lynchings of the officials of the Polish State and Polish activists, capturing them en masse as antisemites and delivering them as prey to lowlives decorated with red ribbons. Even more significant for the behaviour of Jewry is the fact that almost everywhere where Polish landowners, merchants, more affluent Polish citizens were persecuted—the instigators of the looting, arrests, as well as the people covering their tracks and frequent crimes turned out to be Jews. At the same time, they turned a blind eye to Jewish rich men, who—compared to their fellow tribesmen—were able to immediately turn their companies into cooperatives, and under that cover liquidate the assets held in these businesses.

In May and June 1940, a partial legal return organised for refugees from the territories occupied by the Soviet Union resulted in a new wave of information from Lwów, Łuck, Pińsk, and Białystok, and other cities about how the Soviet institutions were occupied by Jews in three quarters; how Polish schools were converted under Jewish control to the Soviet model; how the Soviet authorities took several hundred thousand members of the Polish intelligentsia deep into Russia, owing to the guidelines provided by the secret police composed of Jews; about Jews bossing Poles around, taking vengeance on them for every severe Nazi ordinance against Jews, while making groundless allegations against Polish organisations during meetings, accusing them of collaborating with the Germans and assisting them in the persecution of Jews. It was solely because of Jews cooperating with the NKVD that there could be no broader independence campaign in the territory occupied by the Soviet Union, to say nothing of the underground press being published.

No less characteristic was the behaviour of Jews on the eve of the German-Russian war and in its first stage. The Jews were simply in a frenzy. They suspended all transactions: the price of gold soared from one day to the next; goods were hidden and for quite a long time they refused to sell small amounts even at the highest prices. Only after a few weeks—under the influence of unfavourable news for the Soviets from the battlefield and the significant withdrawal of the front line from the border of the General Government—the run slowly ceased. A similar phenomenon may only be explained by the most profound conviction of the Jewish masses that breakthrough developments are about to take place, which will put an end to German power.

These events caused irreparable damage to the Polish society as far as the economy is concerned, having pushed people into the abyss of poverty through harmful speculation.

These facts and the like caused the attitude of Polish society towards Jews to become even more hostile than it had been before the war; perhaps with the reservation that the intelligentsia and often even the lower strata express their sympathy at the sight of the victims of Nazi violence and the destitution among the Jews.

The attitude of Jews towards Poles has been most unfriendly. Making unfounded generalisations, they blame Poles, especially the Polish intelligentsia, for causing Nazi persecutions; they accuse Poles of making efforts to further isolate the ghetto; they underscore the inhumanity of the blue policemen⁵⁷ and the unsympathetic conduct towards Jews tormented by the Germans, etc.

Although they are also keen to emphasise any evidence of compassion and kindness, with Jews being particularly sensitive, the negative evaluation decidedly prevails. One can frequently hear in the Jewish district that 'under no circumstances can we expect anything good here, in Poland.'

The more cultured Jewish circles, thus far more strongly rooted in the Polish society, do not go as far. However, even those who have Poles among their friends and acquaintances tend to express similar views.

AYV, *Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart*, M.2/192

⁵⁷ The Blue Police was a colloquial term used for the Polish Police of the General Government, which stemmed from the colour of their uniforms. It was a communal police established under the general order of Governor Hans Frank in December 1939. The Blue Police was controlled by the German Order Police (Ordnungspolizei, Orpo).

179

*2 April 1942. Unsigned note
on the situation of Polish-Jewish citizens in France*

NOTE

on the situation of Jewish refugees—Polish citizens in France

1. In the report by the Society for the Care of Poles in France on the action of caring for Poles in the period from March 1941 to January 1942, it is stated that help to Jews is carried out by French Red Cross and concerns the families of internees and others without means to live. The criterion for granting aid is either Polish military documents or a Polish passport. The aid is of ad hoc nature, and the sum spent for this purpose per month is about 50,000 francs.

2. Minister Jurkiewicz, in his letter from 4 February 1942, informs me that not a single Polish-Jewish citizen has thus far been removed from Polish shelters and that the issue has practically not been experienced.

The law forbidding Jews from living in certain places has so far been introduced in parts, gradually and without any malice. So far, Jews have been ordered to leave Nice, Cannes and other seaside towns, and they were assigned places of residence in the same department, but in locations further away from the sea, yet with much better provisioning conditions.

The letter from Minister Jurkiewicz suggests that the intention of the French authorities to establish Jewish shelters, regardless of their citizenship, is yet to enter the implementation phase. The Society for the Care of Poles in France recommended to the French authorities the establishment of a shelter exclusively for Polish-Jewish citizens to be released from camps for that purpose, as well as those from outside the camps. Minister Jurkiewicz believes that if the French authorities decide to create shelters regardless of citizenship, no interventions shall be of help, especially that the percentage of Jews holding Polish passports and speaking Polish is minimal against the total number of Jews.

Minister Jurkiewicz also believes that regarding the issue of assistance to Jews and Polish citizens, the following guidelines should be followed:

a) spare no efforts towards getting Polish-Jewish citizens out of the camps and into the shelters (as it is currently being done);

b) continue to use all available opportunities to provide them with assistance in the camps, apart from the assistance by the Quakers and the Jewish organisations;

c) apply strictly the principle of equal treatment of all Polish citizens (the application of that principle is to a certain extent obstructed by the inability to obtain the information from the Jewish organisations about the amounts and

forms of their assistance, and to find any connection with the Polish statehood in the case of people not holding Polish passports and those unable to speak Polish).

London, 2 April 1942

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 529

180

*3 April 1942. Note by the Interim Head of the MFA
from his conversation with the Ambassador of Great Britain*

London, 3 April 1942

Secret

Note

from the conversation between Minister Frankowski and Ambassador Dormer
on 30 March 1942

On 30 March, I had a long conversation with Ambassador Dormer. At the beginning, he raised the issue of the attitude of the Polish Government and the Polish Army towards the Jewish matter in view of the project of lodging for the Polish Army evacuated from Russia to Palestine.⁵⁸ He warned against patronising the formation of Jewish military units under the Polish banner and the development of propaganda in support of the Jewish state in Palestine. Referring to a memorandum submitted by our Prime Minister to Mr Churchill in January, he expressed his concern that in the Polish Army evacuated from Russia the number of Jews may be estimated at 30%. He also pointed out the overly active pro-Jewish campaign by the representatives of the Polish Consulates in Palestine, among others, during meetings in which a consular official, Mr Kański, is said to have delivered very explicit addresses.

In response, I explained to him the position of the Polish Government on the Jewish matter, noting in a humorous way that I was pleasantly surprised by those

⁵⁸ In March and April 1942, with Joseph Stalin's consent, a part of the Polish Army in the USSR was evacuated to Iran (approx. 33 thousand soldiers, and approx. 10 thousand civilians). The second and final stage of the evacuation took place in August and September 1942 (pursuant to the Anglo-Soviet agreements signed in July 1942). On completion of the evacuation, a new name was introduced—the Polish Army in the East.

remarks from the British side, from whom we had heard so many accusations with reference to our antisemitic attitude. I added that all things considered I did not estimate the percentage of Jews among the troops evacuated from Russia to be that high, particularly due to the fact that at present the Soviets are unwilling to acknowledge Jews as Polish citizens and do not allow them to join the Polish Army.⁵⁹

The conversation then turned to Soviet affairs. Ambassador Dormer told me that several days earlier he had received a visit from Ambassador Bogomolov, who had seemingly come to obtain information about the purposes of the trip of the Prime Minister and Ambassador Raczyński to America. He complained about the statements of the Polish press and pronouncements of Polish officials (the resolution of the National Council,⁶⁰ the address by Minister Stroński,⁶¹ etc.). Ambassador Dormer had the impression that Ambassador Bogomolov had been rather suspicious and poorly informed as to the actual line of the Polish Government, and that his contacts were insufficient.

⁵⁹ In the cable of 21 April 1942, addressed to the Consulate General in Jerusalem, the Head of the MFA informed: 'In conjunction with the transfer of the Polish Army from Russia to the Middle East, the British Government pointed out to us the possibility that on that occasion intensified Jewish activity may be directed towards the formation of a Jewish army, for instance, in the form of separate units within the Polish Army. Warning us against such projects, the British Government expressed the wish that our activity in Palestine be in line with the British policy founded on the mixed, Arab-Jewish character of the country. Lastly, the British Government warned us against expecting the possibility of a broader emigration of Jews to Palestine after the war. Responding, we assured them that the Polish Government would not allow Polish Jews to carry out a campaign against the interests of Great Britain in the territory of Palestine. I send the above to you for your confidential information, and as a guideline on the need to maintain a *certain appropriate* caution towards Jewish activists *political affairs*, especially as far as the future of Palestine is concerned. I also ask you to adequately instruct your associates, including Messrs Kański and Lubaczewski. The military authorities receive appropriate instructions in parallel.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

⁶⁰ This is a reference to the resolution of the National Council of 17 March 1942, regarding, among other things, the Eastern border of Poland, in which the following was stated: 'The Polish Nation does not acknowledge any of the allegedly legal and administrative acts introduced by the occupation authorities not only in Poland, but also in other countries, and deprives them of any legal and political validity in the future.' Referring to the Polish-Soviet relations, the Council also cited the Treaty of Riga (see the following footnote), emphasising: 'The first and indispensable condition not only of cooperation between two nations, but even of mere good neighbourly relations, must be their mutual trust that neither shall rekindle old conflicts, settled by treaties previously signed by both sides.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 606.

⁶¹ This is probably a reference to the address by Minister Stanisław Stroński of 18 March 1942, delivered on the anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Riga in 1921, which ended the Polish-Bolshevik war and, among other things, regulated the issue of the Polish-Soviet border.

For my part, emphasizing the sincere desire of the Polish Government to cooperate with Russia, I pointed out that when it comes to press polemics, they were caused by the publications by Cripps and the English press in general ('The Times'), with which Ambassador Dormer agreed; as for Ambassador Bogomolov, I said that if he did not have sufficient contacts, he had himself to blame, for not only had he never come (neither him nor his colleagues) to the MFA, but not even paid anyone a visit. I added that on our end we are keen to have more viable relations with the Soviet Embassy, and that we had undertaken some efforts with that in mind not long before (Counsellor Jankowski's inviting Chichaeu for breakfast—see the relevant note).

The day after this conversation, Ambassador Dormer visited me at the Ministry to submit an aide-mémoire on Jewish affairs.⁶² From the conversation we had, I gauged that Ambassador Dormer had not been informed about the submission four days before by Chargé d'Affaires Kulski of a memorandum regarding the Anglo-Soviet talks on the borders.

F. Frankowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 44

⁶² The submitted aide-mémoire stated: 'It is now hoped that within the near future about 77,000 Polish troops will be transferred from the USSR to the Middle East. This large-scale evacuation at very short notice naturally creates great difficulties for His Majesty's Government, who are however determined to do their best to overcome them. In these circumstances they feel sure that they can count on the Polish Government, on their side, taking all possible measures to prevent any further difficulties arising from the concentration of Polish units in Palestine—the area in which for military reasons it has been found necessary to establish the Polish Middle East depot. The Polish troops to be transferred from the USSR to Palestine will perhaps contain a percentage of persons of Jewish race and it is probable that attempts will be made to take advantage of this fact in order to renew, in a somewhat different form, the campaign for the creation of a Jewish army in Palestine—this time under camouflage of the Polish Army. His Majesty's Government earnestly hope that the Polish Government will take this possibility into serious consideration and will continue to bear in mind the broader political aspects of the Palestine question which cannot be treated exclusively from the Jewish point of view. In this connection they feel it their duty to repeat the warning already given by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to General Sikorski on January 19th that it would be very unsafe to count on any possibility of large-scale Jewish immigration into Palestine after the war.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 68 (ENG).

181

*26 April 1942. Letter from Bund politicians
to the Polish authorities in London
on the situation of Jews in occupied Poland*

Since the outbreak of the German-Russian war, the Germans began to physically exterminate the Jewish population in the Polish territories, using Ukrainians and Šauliai-Lithuanians for this task. It began in the summer months of 1941, predominantly in Eastern Galicia. The following course of action was adopted everywhere. Men between 14 and 60 years of age were rushed into a single area—to a square, a cemetery, where they were slaughtered, shot or killed with grenades. They had to dig their own graves. Children in orphanages, residents in old people's homes, patients in hospitals were all shot, women were killed in the streets. In many cities, Jews were deported in an 'unknown direction' and murdered in the neighbouring forests. In Lwów, 30,000 Jews were murdered, in Stanisławów—15,000, in Tarnopol—5,000, in Złoczów—2,000, in Brzeżany—4,000 (the city had a Jewish population of 18,000; it currently stands at 1,700). The same thing occurred in Zborów, Kołomyja, Stryj, Sambor, Drohobycz, Zbaraż, Przemyślany, Kutry, Śniatyn, Zaleszczyki, Brody, Przemyśl, Rawa Ruska, and others.

The extermination actions were repeated multiple times in those towns and cities. In many (Lwów), it is still ongoing.

In October and November, the same thing began in Wilno, in the Wilno region and in the territory of the Lithuanian Republic. In Wilno, 50,000 Jews were murdered in November. There are currently 12,000 Jews in Wilno. According to various estimates, the total number of brutally murdered Jews in the Wilno region and in the territory of the Lithuanian Republic stands at 300,000 people.⁶³

⁶³ In an undated 'Note on the attempts to clear Lithuanians of a charge of participating in the massacre of Jews' (from July 1942), most likely prepared by the Embassy in Washington, it was stated: 'The bulletin of the Lithuanian Legation in Washington of 20 June 1942 makes an attempt to clear Lithuanians of the charge of participation in the massacre of Jews. A. The bulletin features the information by the former Head of the Berlin Office of the United Press, Grigg, according to whom: (1) "about 30,000 Jews, according to most reliable estimates, were killed by special 'cleanup' squads brought from Poland (emphasis added)"; (2) "In Kaunas, the executions were not so sweeping, owing to the militant opposition of the Catholic Church." B. The bulletin also features a note of the following wording: "the International News Service on June 16, 1942, circulated from London additional information concerning 'Vilna Massacre of Jews', in which 60,000 supposedly suffered from 'German controlled Lithuanian police force composed of local Germans and Quislings.' The story was related by a Polish refugee, whose name is unknown, and picked up in Stockholm by reporters who stated, however, that the

In September, the murder of Jews in the vicinity of Słonim began. Almost all the Jews were murdered in Żyrowicze, Lachowicze, Mir, Kosów, and other towns. On 15 October, the action began in Słonim. Over 9,000 Jews were murdered.—In Równie, the slaughter started in the first days of November. Within three days, more than 15,000 people were shot—men, women, and children.—In Hancewicze (near Baranowicze) 6,000 Jews were shot.—The action of murdering Jews covered all the Polish territories on the eastern banks of the San and Bug rivers. We have mentioned only some places.

In November-December, the murder of the Jews in the Polish territories annexed into the Reich, in the so-called Warthegau, also began. The murders were carried out by gassing, which was organised in the village of Chełmno, 12 km from Koło. A special car (gas chamber) was used for gassing, into which 90 people were loaded. The victims were buried in special graves in the Ladorudz forrest. These graves were dug by Jews and the gassed people were also buried by Jews, whom the SS men shot with machine guns at the end of each day. On average, 1,000 people were gassed daily. In Chełmno, between November 1941 and March 1942, Jews from Koło, Dąbie, Bugaj, and Izbica Kujawska were gassed—5,000 people in total, 35,000 Jews from the Łódź ghetto, and a number of Gypsies.

In February 1942, the extermination of Jews began in the territory of the so-called General Government. Beginning in: Tarnów and Radom, where the Gestapo and SS men began visiting the Jewish quarters, systematically murdering Jews in the streets, in the courtyards, and in their apartments.—In March, a mass operation of expelling Jews from Lublin began. At the same time, children from orphanages and residents from old people's homes were savagely slaughtered, and so were the patients of a general and epidemic diseases hospital, as well as numerous inhabitants in the streets and in their homes. The total number of victims reached over 2,000. Another approx. 25,000 Jews were transported from Lublin 'in an unknown direction', in sealed carriages; there has been no sign of them since. About 3,000 Jews were placed in barracks in Majdanek Tatarowy, a suburb of Lublin. There is not a single Jew left in Lublin.—In the last days of March, in Cracow, over 50,000 Jews were captured according to a list and shot outside of the city.—In Warsaw, on 17–18 April, the Gestapo organised a night

information could not be confirmed". Note. "The Lithuanian Legation in Washington, D.C., deeply concerned over such shocking news, has taken steps to ascertain, if possible, the veracity of the report, and stated, that such rather vague reports should not lead to immediate conclusions and should be taken with considerable dose of doubt and, in any case, Nazi misdeeds should not be attributed to Lithuanians whose traditional friendship for the Jews remain a proven fact" ... It should be additionally pointed out that the bulletin, mentioning the execution of 400 persons in Lithuania, glosses over their nationality.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529 (ENG).

of bloodbath in the ghetto. They dragged over 50,000 Jews from their homes, according to a list, men and women who were cruelly murdered in front of the gates. Many were not at home at the time. Since 18 April, Germans have been killing daily, in broad daylight now, a couple of Jews in their apartments and in the streets. The action proceeds according to a previously prepared list and encompasses all Jewish circles in the Warsaw Ghetto. Further nights of bloodbath are said to be continued.—It has been estimated that the Germans have so far murdered 700,000 Polish Jews.⁶⁴

The above facts clearly indicate that the criminal German Government proceeded to carry out Hitler's announcement that 5 minutes before the end of the war, however it ends, he would murder all Jews in Europe. We firmly believe that Hitler's Germany will be presented with an appropriate account in due course for its monstrosities and bestialities. For the Jewish population, who are going through an unprecedented ordeal, it is not consolation enough. Millions of Polish citizens of Jewish nationality face immediate annihilation.

Therefore, we demand that the Polish Government, as the protector and representative of the entire population inhabiting the Polish territories, immediately take the necessary steps to prevent the extermination of the Polish Jewry. For that purpose, the Polish Government should exert pressure on the Governments of the Allied Powers and the competent authorities in those countries to immediately adopt the policy of retaliation against German citizens and the fifth columnists inhabiting the territories of the Allied powers and their allies. The Polish Government and the Governments of the Allied Powers should inform the German Government of the implementation of the policy of retaliation. They must know that the Germans in the USA and in other countries shall already at present answer for that savage extermination of the Jewish population.

⁶⁴ In the letter from 10 May 1942, the Government Delegate for Poland informed the Polish authorities in London that 'mass shooting of Poles and Jews throughout the country has become such a common phenomenon that it no longer causes terror and sympathy, instead being accepted in some social spheres as an everyday occurrence; that indicates the atrophy of the most basic human instincts in a part of the Polish society. If the Polish reports from the country are not considered entirely trustworthy in the Anglo-Saxon nations as implausible, their governments must have also received the Jewish reports, for instance, of the sort indicating that in various cities in Poland, Germans murdered the entire Jewish population, that in Wilno they murdered approx. 50–60,000 Jews, in Lwów—12,000; that in the Warsaw Ghetto 5,000–6,000 Jews dies monthly of famine and exhaustion, to say nothing of those who are shot under any pretext, without an investigation or a trial—defenceless men, women, and children. It is said that Germans have so far murdered approx. 200,000 Jews in the territory of Poland.' AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/I/30.

We are aware that we are demanding from the Polish Government to undertake extraordinary measures. It is the only possibility to save millions of Jews from inevitable extermination.⁶⁵

26 April 1942⁶⁶

AAN, *Ogólno-Żydowski Związek Robotniczy 'Bund' w Polsce, 1214/0/3.1/30/III/1 (previously published)*

⁶⁵ In the previous—so-called first—letter from Bund politicians (from 16 March 1942), the following was reported: 'Jews are closed in ghettos. Due to famine and epidemics, the mortality rate is frightful. In 1941, 10% of the Jewish population of our city (45,000 persons) died. The mortality rate is rising, having recently reached 15%. Mortality due to famine oedema, typhus, and tuberculosis is spreading. The uncertainty of life is what weighs on Jews most heavily. In a number of cities, from time to time mass shootings of Jews are held, regardless of their sex and age, and without any reasons. Jews leaving the indicated place of residence are liable to capital punishment, carried out without even a court verdict, right on the spot ... In a series of smaller towns, the entire Jewish population has been murdered ... Mass killings were also organised in Polesia, Vohlynia and in Eastern Galicia. The peak of bestiality was reached during the operation to exterminate Jews in the territories incorporated into the Reich; for instance, in the Kutno region, the Jewish population of several townships was poisoned to death using gases. In a dreadful manner, people in groups of 50 were loaded into hermetically closed cars turned into gas chambers, entire families—completely naked; 15 minutes later, no one in the cars was alive anymore.' AYV, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/269.

⁶⁶ In this publication the letter from the Bund is published with the date of 26 April 1942, according to the date hand-written below the text of the document. There are, however, several other versions of it, at times dated 11 May 1942 or simply May 1942. The copies are kept, among other places, in Yad Vashem Archives, the Hoover Institution, as well as in the Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw (AAN), in the collection Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV-2, where a hand-written annotation can be found on the document: 'Letter from the Bund from 11 May 42 on the persecution of Jews, sent with the correspondence of 21 May, No. 37.'

182

*29 April 1942. Letter from the Head of the Care Department
at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Embassy in Kuybyshev
on transferring funds from the USA for Jewish refugees*

29 April 1942

Courier!
Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Kuybyshev

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was approached by the New York-based organisation American Representation Jewish Labour Bund which requested that a group of Jewish labour activists from Poland deported from the country be subsidised with 3,000 roubles per month. The group has already received 12,000 roubles monthly from the Embassy, an equivalent of the \$1,000 paid by the Jewish Labour Bund to the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York.

By covering the cost of assistance for that group of Polish citizens in Russia, the Jewish Labour Bund relieves the pressure on the funds of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare allocated to the entirety of the relief activity; furthermore, by paying \$1,000 in New York, the organisations enables us to operate in dollars, which is beneficial for us.

However, as the organisation is unable to sufficiently provide for the group under its care, which *allegedly* requires assistance in the amount of 15,000 roubles per month, the Ministry considers it advisable to grant its request and asks for that group of Jewish activists to be paid an additional sum of 3,000 roubles per month.

FOR THE MINISTER
HEAD OF THE CARE DEPARTMENT
Grosfeld

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/1

183

*30 April 1942. Letter from the MFA to the Prime Minister:
paraphrase of a cable from the Ambassador in Kuybyshev
on the Polish-Jewish relations in the Polish Army in the USSR*

London, 30 April 1942

To the Prime Minister

Kuybyshev, No. 346

On 27 April, Mr Tabaczyński returned from his tour. Based on his detailed observations, I ask you to put emphasis on the following during your conversation with General Anders:

It is necessary for our military bodies in Russia to maintain a demeanour concerning Jewish affairs that is as appropriate as possible. Too often, antisemitism manifests itself in military bodies in relation to Jewish citizens. Regarding the issue of conscription and transportation of troops, the argument that these restrictions were imposed upon us by the Soviet Union against the [wishes of] Polish authorities has not been taken advantage of in contacts with Jews. Consequently, Jews share a common conviction that these limitations resulted from the instructions of the Polish Government. The Soviet authorities systematically record any antisemitic incidents in the army in order to use them in their propaganda and political games around the issue of borders. On the basis of such information, there are instigations to send dispatches to Palestine and America on the antisemitism of the Polish Army. At the same time, the NKVD is recruiting Jews to record all instances of prejudice against Jews in the army. Unfortunately, the Staff has not sent orders explaining the situation yet.

It is absolutely necessary that we reinforce and unify the propaganda campaign in the army in the direction of promoting a unified effort of the country, army and government within the framework of national unity, explaining the Government's policy with regard to Russia and the role that the Polish Army must play in the Soviet Union. The same applies to the suppression of frantic evacuation and unrestrained anti-Soviet chatter, and the harmful effects of antisemitic incidents in view of the issue of the Polish borders and the publication of anti-German brochures.

So far, each division has had its own propaganda department, filled with figures unsuitable politically and under no central supervision. The efforts to eradicate the tendency to contrast the Russians with the Germans favourably for the latter, as more cultured than Russians, lacked resolution. The sense of connection with the entirety of the Polish political and military effort is absent. This state of affairs can

be largely put down to the scarcity of materials from London. Czapski, the new Chief of army propaganda, inspires trust, but he needs to be provided with factual and personal influence on all units of the army.⁶⁷

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.73/1

184

*2 May 1942. Cable from the Head of the MFA
to the Consulate General in Istanbul on granting aid to
the delegate of a Jewish organisation in Turkey*

TO Polconsul Istanbul
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 2 MAY 1942

No. 89

The representative of Jews in the National Council requested that all necessary aid be granted to the delegate of the Jewish Agency from Jerusalem, currently staying in Istanbul, a Polish citizen—Melech Neustadt, who is making efforts to transfer from Turkey to Palestine a group of Jewish refugees, among whom there are also Polish citizens.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ In the letter of 11 May 1942 to Ambassador Kot, General Sikorski responded: 'Dear Stach, I am using the departure of General Anders to communicate several pieces of information to you. I have discussed the matters mentioned in your dispatch No. 346 with General Anders. He promised not to allow antisemitism to spread in the army. He will also provide Czapski with genuine influence, as far as the latter's propaganda work is concerned.' *IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.73/1*.

⁶⁸ In the letter from 4 May 1942, the Head of the MFA informed Ignacy Schwarzbart: 'I confirm the receipt of your letter from 1 May and inform you that I have instructed the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Istanbul to contact Mr Neustadt regarding the transfer of Polish-Jewish citizens currently staying in Istanbul to Palestine. I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that upon the request of the Consul General in Istanbul the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made efforts towards all Polish citizens who have arrived from various territories to Istanbul being accepted in Palestine. The British authorities and the Government of Palestine declared that they were unable to authorise the British Consulate in Istanbul to issue visas to Palestine to all Polish citizens in Istanbul, and that each case must be considered individually. For that purpose, it is necessary that the Polish citizens interested in travelling to Palestine submit an appropriate application to the British Consulate in Istanbul, which will forward it to Palestine for the decision.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529*.

I ask you for a kind attitude towards N. as a delegate of the Agency acting, among other things, in the interest of Polish citizens. However, considering the position of the British authorities on Jewish immigration to Palestine, caution is necessary.

Raczyński

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 238

185

*4 May 1942. Cable from the Legation in Tehran:
request by a representative of the Jewish Agency for information
on organising aid for Jewish refugees*

POLMISSION—TEHRAN
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 4 MAY 1942
RECEIVED ON 4 MAY 1942

No. 144

Rafael Szafar, a representative of the Jewish Agency, currently in Tehran, requests that the following international Jewish organisations be informed by a coded message:

Locker, Schwarzbart in London, Rajner in London, THE JOINT in New York, Goldmann, Tartakower in New York—Kirshner in Africa—THE FEDERATION OF POLISH JEWS in MONTREAL—Canada—THE JEWISH IMMIGRANT SOCIETY in MONTREAL—Canada.

‘The number of civilian refugees having arrived from Russia stands at a total of 11,000 people, comprising: 6,500 women, 3,000 children, 1,500 men. The number of Jews among them has not been precisely established; it stands at about 800 people.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ In the cipher telegram of 23 April 1942, the Envoy in Tehran, Jan Karszo-Siedlewski, informed: ‘With the Polish Army that had crossed Persia, there were approx. 1,500 Jews. Jews arrived among civilians and left the camps before we started to register them; therefore, we will only be able to establish their number when we commence to issue individual passports to persons staying in the city. Based on the information from persons who had already been dealing with evacuation in the local territory, I calculate

Refugees are staying in makeshift barracks and receive food supplies at the expense of the Polish Government. However, there are not enough clothes, beds, or medical supplies. The medical condition is very worrying and the mortality rate is high. Approx. 1,000 are ill; half of them fell ill with spotted typhus. With summer coming, we are certain to have epidemics of typhoid fever, dysentery and scarlet fever.

Huge sums of money are needed to supplement government aid, which cannot be sufficient. Steps have been taken to evacuate these people from Tehran, so far to no avail.

We should expect even more refugees in the near future, far exceeding the current number. We must be prepared for it.

According to informed people, soon there will be 200,000 concentrated at the coast of the Caspian Sea, attempting to reach Tehran, and from there further east. It is to be expected that Jews will account for a large number of them. The population of Polish refugees in Russia is estimated to stand at 1,800,000, of which Jews make up more than half. To alleviate the enormous, indescribable misery of these people; to feed them, to clothe them, to place them provisionally; and then to enable travel to the countries of destination, colossal amounts of money must be raised.

The local Jewry is collaborating on this action in Tehran, and there is every hope that assistance will indeed be provided; however, the possibilities are limited. We would be willing to provide that aid through the Polish Red Cross, whose representative in the Middle East is also staying in Tehran. In this case, the money assigned for that purpose by Jewish organisations would be at the disposal of the PRC and of the representative of these organisations; moreover, the PRC and the mentioned representative in conjunction with the officials of the Polish Government on-site would jointly decide on all the matters related to the aid for refugees.⁷⁰

We also intend to launch an organised operation to search for relatives and to send parcels and financial assistance.

In the places where refugees from Russia are concentrated, there will be Polish-Jewish citizens appointed at the delegations or appropriate bodies to facilitate closer cooperation with the Polish authorities on granting aid to refugees from Russia.

I request that you inform me immediately whether and in what amount you intend to participate in that great aid campaign to help the unfortunate, whose

roughly that they account for 10% of the newcomers.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 244; see doc. 199.

⁷⁰ In the letter from 8 July 1942, the Consul General in New York, Sylwin Strakacz, informed the local Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has informed me that Minister Stańczyk requested that 20,000 sleeping bags be ordered for the Poles evacuated from Russia to Persia, for the winter period.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 5.

situation cannot be imagined if you have not seen it with your own eyes. I am awaiting your telegraphic answer at the address of the Polish Legation in Tehran, by official route. Rafael Szafar.'

Polmission

With a request to provide it for the information of: Lejb Jaffe—Federacion Sionista, in Argentina, Buenos Aires.

Polmission

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 244

186

*19 May 1942. Cable from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Consulate General in Istanbul
on the assistance for the Delegate of the Ministry in Hungary*

TO Polconsul ISTANBUL
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 26 MAY 1942

No. 97

A very distinguished Upper Silesian activist and the Chairman of the Committee for Refugees in Hungary, Henryk Sławik, has been released from prison and from the camp, suffering from a serious heart condition. Please inform whether it is possible to make contact with S., establish his address and pull him out of Hungary, by virtue of a visa to Turkey or some South American country, which I would attempt to secure.⁷¹ Please stop the search for Florkow in Romania; I have received information about him.

Stańczyk
Polexterne
J. Marlewski 19 May 1942

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 238

⁷¹ In the cable of 8 June 1942, Consul Poniński responded: 'It is possible to establish the address and details of Sławik via the post of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The matter is already in progress. However, withdrawing S. from Hungary in view of his position there, the intensified invigilation kept on him and the general situation, causes major difficulties and does not seem currently possible.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 238.

187

*21 May 1942. Cable from the Ambassador to the Holy See:
account on the persecution in occupied Poland*

POLMISSION THE VATICAN CITY
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 21 MAY
RECEIVED ON 29 MAY

No. 165

Information from a person who has recently arrived from Poland:

I) Since Himmler's visit in the General Government,⁷² there has been another wave of terror, arrests, mass executions, and hostage taking from intelligentsia. The public is demanding retaliation from the Allies.

II) The extermination of Jews has reached astonishing proportions. Lwów, Wilno, Lublin, Rzeszów, Stanisławów, Kołomyja, Miechów and other towns and cities witness murders of tens of thousands, sometimes supposedly of all the local Jews. In Warsaw and Cracow, daily executions are held in the ghettos; meanwhile, the moods of Germans returning from Germany are chaotic; they have no confidence in their leaders nor hope for the triumphant future of the Germans.

III) Our informer has not heard of any proposal of cooperation addressed towards Poles, even though he talked with Ronikier and others.

Papée

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246

⁷² Heinrich Himmler stayed in Lublin and Cracow on 13–14 March 1942. Subsequently, he went to Łódź (incorporated into Germany) and Warsaw. In mid-July 1942, he returned for a second visit in the General Government.

188

*26 May 1942. Letter from the Ministry of Internal Affairs
to the Civil Chancellery of the President on obstructions
in food transfers to people in ghettos*

26 MAY 1942

To the Head of the Civil Chancellery
of the President of the Republic of Poland

In reference to the content of the dispatch from the representation of Polish Rabbis in Palestine to the President regarding aid to the Jewish population in the ghettos, which we received with the letter from 19 May, No. 270/42, the Ministry of Internal Affairs provides below a roundup of facts to be used in a prospective answer, agreed upon with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

The efforts undertaken by the Government to provide food to the Jews confined in the ghettos have thus far been unsuccessful due to the fundamental position of Great Britain and the United States that supplying food to the continent would constitute a breach of the blockade.

The Government nevertheless continues to seek opportunities to come to the aid of the unfortunate population; to this end, the Prime Minister has recently had a conversation with the British Minister, Dalton, and then with the American Ambassador, Drexel Biddle.

Regardless of these efforts and talks, the Government has already obtained the permission of the British and American authorities to send medical supplies to Poland. Currently, the Red Cross in Geneva is in talks with the occupation authorities, requesting that a delegate of the International Red Cross be present at the distribution of the medical supplies in the country, where it is highly doubtful whether these supplies will be appropriately used without supervision.

For the Minister
T. ULLMANN
Head of the Department

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A

189

*27 May 1942. Note by an official at
the Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in New York
on coordinating the dispatch of relief to Poland*

Selection of goods for shipment to Poland

Based on conversations with people who involved in the shipment of parcels to Poland in Lisbon, and after reviewing a significant amount of correspondence from the country, I conclude the following:

I. The ratio of the food and clothing dispatched

Especially in the first shipments, much greater tonnage should be allocated for food than for clothes. I would recommend that the ratio should be 2/3 food and 1/3 clothes. Justification:

a. Undoubtedly, the entire Polish population is threatened with hunger; in this respect, the Jewish population is in a much worse situation than the non-Jewish population, and hunger is a more immediate danger to health and life than the lack of clothing.

b. In the vast majority of letters from the country, families predominantly ask for food parcels to be sent, which often are their last resort.

c. The risk of confiscation by the German authorities is indubitably lower for food products than for clothing. Even providing that the International Red Cross, which undertakes the distribution, guarantees that the German authorities in the warehouses will not confiscate the goods, there is no guarantee that these garments will not be confiscated from the recipients. There is constant information from Poland of confiscation of all kinds of woollen clothes and all underwear (allegedly, for hospitals). The German authorities would be able to seize food only in the distribution warehouses.

d. In contrast to the situation that currently prevails in Russia, in Poland for the last 20 years the production of clothing goods has been at a high level, in sufficient sizes; undoubtedly there are significant buried stocks of clothing in the country at the moment.

II. Food

The food sent to the country can be used for two purposes: it may be allocated to public kitchens and increase the value of meals distributed there, or it may be handed out directly to the people in small rations. Depending on the objective, different type of packaging must be used. The food for direct distribution must be sent in the form facilitating exchange (letters from the country contain requests for small packets of tea in commercial packaging, small cans of cooking oil, etc.).

We should select food products with a very high nutritional and material value (coffee, tea), while also taking into consideration the special needs of children and the youth as the most endangered groups.

Fats of all kinds (lard, pork fat) should be provided mainly to public kitchens.

For individual distribution, above all: condensed milk (cans), cooking oil (cans), honey, porridge ('Quaker'), bouillon cubes, bouillon, tea (small packets), Ovomaltine (widely requested in letters as a product extremely valuable for children), or other local baby foods (there is a wide variety of very good powders, etc.), powdered eggs, etc.

III. Medical supplies and soap

The choice of medicines must, of course, be drawn up according to the opinion of doctors. Based on available materials, I find that all kinds of injections for heart disease are very much needed, all vitamin supplements, health tonics; many people ask for insulin; vaccines against typhus are, obviously, also necessary. I want to recommend cod liver oil or some processed version for children.

Soap should also be sent in small bars (when it is divided into smaller pieces, the losses are relatively large).

IV. Clothes

In the first shipments, only second-hand items should be sent. All the individual shipments of clothes so far—at the express request from the country—have contained only used or intentionally worn-out clothes (for instance, new underwear was washed, the soles of shoes were dirtied, etc.).

When selecting clothes, special care should be given to all woollen clothes in good condition and to clothes for infants and children. The risk of these things being confiscated is also relatively lower, due to their smaller size.

Zofia Wojciechowska
Official at the Delegation
of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

27 May 1942

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 5

190*2 June 1942 [?]. Draft of a Government note
on the situation in occupied Poland*DRAFTOF A NOTE ON THE PERSECUTION IN POLAND

The unyielding position of the Polish Nation, which refused to collaborate in any way with the German occupiers and has recently opposed the attempts made to draw it into the so-called anti-Bolshevik crusade, has resulted in a new, violent wave of persecution. In the name of the Government of the Republic of Poland, I wish to communicate the following to the Governments of the Allied powers:

– Under the pretext of construction and economic service, the Germans introduced a mass-scale conscription of Polish citizens. From the region of Pomerania and from Poznań, 70,000 Polish recruits were drafted into the German Army, using terror against anyone who defied them.

In this way, the Germans, facing a heavy crisis of manpower, want to replace their casualties.

– Cases of indictment of Polish officers in captivity are multiplying. As a rule, death sentences or life imprisonment are used.

– New mass deportations of the Polish population from larger cities, carried out by force, are to provide greater security to the immigrant population from western Germany. Organisations of military emergency are being created among the Germans in Poland. These organisations are granted impunity in their actions towards the Polish population.

– The campaign of taking captives from among the Polish intelligentsia has been increased; at the same time, the prisoners in concentration camps are shot.

– The extermination of the Jewish population is occurring on a scale that is hard to believe. In cities such as Wilno, Lwów, Kołomyja, Stanisławów, Lublin, Rzeszów, Miechów, tens of thousands of Jews are slaughtered. In the ghettos of Warsaw and Cracow, the Gestapo carries out mass executions daily. Jews suffering from typhus are shot. The Jews in Poland suffer the most terrible persecutions ever heard of throughout their history.

This new wave of terror dictated by fear, of strength exceeding all the previous ones, began from the moment of Himmler's visit in Poland in the spring of this year. It is, therefore, an organised and planned action. It aims to satisfy the anarchist sentiment that is growing in the German army and police, and to divert the attention of German society from the discontent growing inside Germany.

The Polish Government communicates these facts to the Governments of the Allied powers and states that they constitute breaches of international law and of the Hague Conventions. The perpetrators of these atrocities must be held accountable, and this principle should become the guiding principle of the Allied war policy. All authorities in the Allied countries founded on law and morality ought to lend their strong support to the struggle against the German terror. The public opinion of free nations must be alarmed anew by the German terror in Europe, while the retaliation on the part of the Allies should be once again brought to the fore and immediately applied, wherever possible.

When the hour of justice is at hand, the judgment of history and the wrath of the tormented peoples shall catch up with the perpetrators. The Germans and the Axis powers infected with their frenzy of terror must learn that their crimes shall not go unpunished. Otherwise, they are going to intensify the terror in the occupied countries. The awareness of the punishment for the crimes of terror must penetrate the opinion of the German people and their allies.

2 May 1942⁷³

/-/ SIKORSKI

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/47a (previously published)

191

*9 June 1942. Speech by the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief
on the German crimes committed in occupied Poland*

GENERAL SIKORSKI'S RADIO SPEECH PROTESTING AGAINST GERMAN ATROCITIES

Mass shootings, the torture of tens of thousands in concentration camps, the confiscation of property and of all means of production and trade, the deportation of over one and a half million people, the systematic starvation of the Polish

⁷³ It should probably be dated 2 June 1942. The draft of the note was subject to discussion by the Council of Ministers on 6 June 1942, as they decided to 'convey to the Governments of the Allied and neutral countries by way of a diplomatic note the speech that the Prime Minister shall deliver on that issue in the form of the Government's declaration.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/47. The Prime Minister's address was delivered on 9 June 1942, while its text, accompanied by the resolution of the National Council of 10 June 1942, was conveyed to the Allied powers in the form of diplomatic notes. See doc. 191 and 192.

nation, the banning of any assistance to the sick and feeble, the methodical and unrelenting destruction of Polish culture, the ruthless attempt at the extermination of everything Polish in lands inhabited for a thousand years by Poles—all this continues without respite.

For some time we refrained from recalling the appalling conditions in Poland to the world, but confined ourselves to note the facts and their perpetrators so that the hour of victory should also be the hour of stern retribution.

However, when under the influence of growing fear, the terror wave assumed, after Himmler's visit in Cracow in the spring of this year, almost unprecedented dimensions, the Polish Government decided again to bring to the notice of the Allied Nations these new series of crimes unique in history. This new terror wave began in the month of March with mass arrests in Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin and other Polish towns. The prisoners thus seized, including large numbers of women, were deported to concentration camps known for their cruelty. The professors of the Lwów University, who were imprisoned after the Germans entered the city in July 1941, were deported to unknown destinations and could not be traced by their families. The same happened in Wilno, where Archbishop Jałbrzykowski, a great patriot beloved by his community, was arrested with the Canons of the Cathedral and the professors and students of the Wilno Seminary.

In the prisons of Poznań a number of prominent local citizens were recently tortured to death. Other victims await execution.

To break the resistance of railwaymen in Upper Silesian yards, gallows have been erected in eighteen Silesian towns. Intellectuals, railwaymen and industrial workers were hanged indiscriminately, while school children of Upper Silesia were compelled to watch this cruel spectacle.

New concentration camps have been set up in which peasants are herded for refusal to supply their quotas of agricultural produce.

In fear of a Polish rising, twelve hundred reserve officers were sent to concentration camps in the month of April alone. Polish war prisoners are charged with imaginary crimes, tried, and as a rule sentenced to death or life-long imprisonment.

Hostages are seized en masse from amongst social and political leaders of every class. Some three months ago, in Warsaw, a hundred of these hostages were shot as a reprisal for the shooting of one German, and in the Lublin district, four hundred were executed for the killing of one Gestapo henchman.

The Jewish population in Poland is treated in accordance with the slogan: 'All Jews should have their throats cut, no matter what the outcome of the war may be.' Accordingly, new massacres of tens of thousands of Jews in Lublin, Wilno, Lwów,

Stanisławów, Rzeszów, and Miechów, have been carried out in the course of this year. Hundreds of thousands are being starved to death in ghettos. Mass executions are held, and often people suffering from typhus and other invalids are among the victims.⁷⁴

Threatened by man-power shortage, the German Reich committed the vilest international crime: in Western Poland, 'incorporated' into the Reich against International Law, the Germans are forcibly enrolling Poles in their army. The number of Poles thus enrolled already amounts to 70,000 in Pomerania, and about 100,000 in Silesia. In the 'General Government', Poles are forced to serve in auxiliary formations of the German army. Both these measures constitute not only a clear violation of the Hague Convention of 1907 and are contrary to elementary international usage. But it is simply criminal to compel the citizens of an occupied country by brute force to serve the cause of a hated invader, when this means that they have to fight against their own brothers. The determined resistance to, and the mass desertions from this press-gang conscription, unbelievable in the twentieth century, have already led to numerous death sentences in Poland.

The Polish Government is bringing all these facts to the cognisance of the Allied Government, and to the public opinion of the world.

German terror is also raging in other countries in Europe today. The perpetrators of these crimes must be brought to account, and this ought to become a guiding principle of the policy of the Allies: Only the announcement of retribution and the application of reprisals wherever possible can stop the rising tide of the madness of the German assassins and save hundreds of thousands of innocent victims from certain death.

While paying my deepest homage to the memory of the murdered and tortured men, women and children, I wish to assure my Country, on behalf of the Polish Government, that the latter are fully aware of all these crimes and will not forget even one of them when the final reckoning comes. Be certain of victory, endure, do not allow yourselves to be guided by despair, do not let yourselves be provoked by lies, maintain discipline and determination as heretofore—the qualities which evoked admiration and respect for the Polish Nation throughout the world. Germany has always worshipped brute force, and stained her path with blood. The Germans will certainly not overthrow the Nazi regime of their own free

⁷⁴ In the cable of 20 June, the Consul General in Tel Aviv informed: 'I wish to communicate that the radio speech by the Prime Minister with the passage about the atrocities perpetrated by the Germans on Jews in occupied Poland and the exposé by the Prime Minister delivered to the National Council made a powerful impression here. All of the Hebrew and English press emphatically underscore the momentous nature of both pronouncements.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

will, as this regime is well suited to their national character and gives full play to their innate characteristics. Therefore 1918 must not be repeated after this war. The abyss into which Germany will fall after the power of the German army and the Nazi party has been broken must correspond to the heights to which, in Göring's words, it has been raised by the Führer's genius. Germany cannot escape defeat—as is clearly shown by the events on the war fronts and by the gigantic raids of the Allied Air Force. These raids give the Germans only a foretaste of the just and well-merited retribution which they will suffer.

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 2 (ENG)

192

10 June 1942. Resolution of the National Council on the situation in occupied Poland

In Western provinces of Poland, illegally incorporated in the Reich, Germany has enforced military conscription whilst in Central and East provinces of Poland conscription for auxiliary military labour has been introduced.

From the very moment of the occupation of Poland by German armed forces Germany has never ceased to commit crimes and injustices. The number of civilians shot or hanged for their fidelity to the State and Nation has already exceeded 140,000. A much higher number of Poles of both sexes endures most terrible sufferings in German goals and concentration camps. About million and a half young and able-bodied persons have been deported to the interior of Germany for compulsory labour in factories and mines. Almost two million Poles have been deprived of their agricultural property, houses, factories, shops and works, and have been deported from Western Polish provinces to the East. Food rations of the Polish population are being diminished every day. Those in authority of the occupation publicly and cynically declare that the Poles are condemned for ever to a permanent slave labour for the benefit of the German 'Herrenvolk.'

These terrible persecutions have, however, not broken the strength of resistance offered to the German invader by the Polish Nation. Futile were the exertions of the German Government to find a Polish 'quisling'; they were unable to discover in Poland a single political group of whatever extent willing to cooperate with them. In their heart and spirit the population of Poland is in unity with the Polish Government in London, Polish Armed Forces in Great Britain, in the Middle East, in the USSR, and with their Commander-in-Chief General Sikorski.

No greater pain or injustice could, therefore, be inflicted upon the Poles than to enforce upon them labour for the benefit of the German army or, still more, incorporation in that army.

To this order of recruitment the Polish Nation will oppose a most determined resistance. Once again masses of the Polish people and its glorious and valiant youth will have to make sacrifice of their sufferings and lives.

The Polish Government have already brought these facts to the attention of the Allied Governments and of the world opinion.

In defiance of the unequal struggle Poland will resist. She is entitled to the assistance of all civilised nations wishing for a victory of the good over the evil, of right over violence, of liberty over oppression.

The Polish National Council, representing the Polish Parliament in exile, hereby appeals to the parliaments of all free countries and ask them for help. It is not a matter of material assistance, it is a matter for support of the moral strength of the martyred population of our country. We ask that voices of protest against new crimes committed by Germany on our nation should be raised. We wish that Poles, who risk their life and personal liberty in resisting compulsory labour directed against the military effort of the Allies and in fighting the German invader and its satellites, know that their sacrifice is not in vain. We ask for assurances that the right of every human being and every nation to live in freedom—right which has so brutally been downtrodden in all countries under occupation of the totalitarian powers of the Axis—in Poland in particular—should be restored and crimes committed be adequately punished.⁷⁵

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Konsulat Generalny Dublin, 11 (ENG)

⁷⁵ The resolution, dispatched in the form of a note, was sent with the following introduction: 'At its sitting of 10th June, 1942, with members of the Government present, the Polish National Council unanimously voted the following resolution addressed to all parliaments of the free countries as a protest against German crimes committed on Polish citizens.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Konsulat Generalny Dublin, 11 (ENG).

193

*11 June 1942. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern
on the activities of Polish and Jewish organisations in Switzerland (extracts)*

Bern, 11 June 1942

Pursuant to my report No. 297/tj/2 (on the original document mislabeled as 140-e/23) of 10 April of this year—below, I wish to illustrate for the Ministry the life of the Polish diaspora in Switzerland:

I. Religiously mixed organisations for general purposes

1) The Polish Association in Bern—an organisation that has existed for several decades, in the final years before the war almost entirely stagnant—was revived in the years 1939–1940. It brings together almost all the Polish citizens in Bern, regardless of their religion or profession. Roughly half of the members are Jews who have been settled in Switzerland for some 20–30 years. Among Christian members, the personnel of the Legation accounts for the majority. The members regularly gather for a chat; once a week they hold a choir rehearsal, about once a month there are Artistic Soirees (also see below the Polish Artistic Ensemble); additionally, mandated by the Legation, the Association organises the Third of May celebrations, and every year, towards the end of October, makes a pilgrimage to Solothurn to commemorate Tadeusz Kościuszko. The Association currently has approx. 60 members; it is headed by Dr Ignacy Doński (physician—as the Chairman), and Mr Nahlik (Attaché at the Legation—as the Deputy Chairman).

...⁷⁶

II. Single religion organisations for general purposes

...

b) Jewish:

4) The Polish Union (Polnische Landsmannschaft), with headquarters in Zürich (approx. 150 members), and branches in Basel (approx. 50), St. Gallen (approx. 30) and Lausanne (also approx. 30 members); it is the organisation boasting the largest number of members, Polish citizens, in Switzerland, which reflects the general proportion of the Polish diaspora, where Jews account for 90%. The Union generally brings together Polish Jews, settled here quite some time ago and in the great majority not even Polish-speaking at all. In fact, it was only established not long before the war, the initial motive having been administrative considerations: the Polish Act on Revocation of Citizenship and the difficulties related from the Swiss police. The Union was established to provide its members with legal

⁷⁶ Extracts unrelated to Jewish affairs were omitted.

advice on matters of citizenship, residence permits, etc. It is another thing that, once organised, the Polish Jews started to hold social and cultural events (balls, concerts) from time to time. That activity increased when the Polish Committee for Aid to War Victims issued a call for cooperation addressed to all Polish citizens. The Union, forgetting their past grudges against the Legation and other Polish organisations, came to its help and provides a major financial assistance to the Committee, both with individual donations of its members and with the funds raised during various events they hold (reaching at times the amount of several thousand of Swiss francs). The sections in Basel, Lausanne, and St. Gallen were only established last year—the Union intends to set up more sections, wishing to become a general organisation for all Polish Jews in Switzerland. It is chaired by Mr Szymon Gutglück in Zürich, with the Heads of Sections being Messrs Freimann (Basel), Herz (St. Gallen), and Goldmann (Lausanne).

5) The Polish Settlement in Chaux-de-Fonds, a group of approx. 20 Polish Jews—predominantly wealthy, merchants and watch manufacturers—not very active by itself, save for its cooperation with the Polish Committee for Aid to War Victims. The Chairman and the mentor here is Mr Gelbfisz.

III. Organisations for specific purposes

...

9) The Polish Committee for Aid to War Victims. Listing this organisation as last, I nevertheless wish to point out that it is in many respects the most important of all the Polish organisations in Switzerland. Furthermore, at the outset of the war, it initiated a relief campaign for war victims, becoming the basis for rapprochement for all Polish organisations in Switzerland, that had not been in contact before, and as there is no other central organisation, practically speaking it serves as a kind of secretariat general for Polish associations. They all actively cooperate with the Committee. The Committee has chosen as a rule that it collects money among Polish citizens in Switzerland and that Poles should first of all contribute to their compatriots in need, and although in practice the increasingly growing expenditure budget of the Committee did not allow it to limit itself to this only source, the Committee always manages to extract from its compatriots a few thousand francs a month, mainly through other organisations, the Committee manages to extract from its compatriots. The other (in fact, more important today) sources of the Committee's income include regular subsidies from the Legation (from the Social Care fund) and from the Polish Red Cross—2,000 francs per month each, as well as the allowances from the Nuncio of the so-called Episcopal Committee in America (roughly another 1,000–2,000 francs per month). The Committee distributes allowances among Polish citizens in Switzerland, its budget of expenditures currently standing at approx. 8,000 francs per month, with the maximum allowance for a healthy person standing at 130 francs, whereas for an ill person—at 150 francs per month. The Committee operates in the country via its

three Sections: in Bern (Chairman Dr I. Doński), in Geneva (Chairman Mr Celiński, an official of the Secretariat of the League of Nations), and in Zürich (Chairman: Mr Paweł Minkowski, Director of the Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego). Its central bodies are: the Secretariat General, operating at the Legation (Secretary-General: Attaché at the Legation, Mr Nahlik; Treasurer: First Secretary of the Legation, Mr Ryniewicz), and the Central Board, convening once a quarter and comprising representatives of the three Sections and the Secretary-General.

(The Polish Committee for Aid to War Victims is the only Polish charity organisation. Pro-Polonia, based in Freiburg with branches in over a dozen other Swiss cities, is a Swiss organisation raising funds among Swiss citizens and does not deal with the situation of Polish civilian refugees in Switzerland, which is, therefore, the Committee's exclusive domain of activity. Pro-Polonia and the Committee established a joint technical Bureau in Bern to support Polish POWs in Germany, named Aide Suisse de secours aux prisonniers de guerre polonais, headed by a retired colonel of the Swiss Army, Ernest Ceresole. The Bureau, as far as it can, sends parcels to Polish POWs in Germany, first from Switzerland, then, in view of the Swiss export ban, from Portugal; today, due to the increasing limitations of Portuguese exports, too, the activity of the Bureau has become very modest).

...

ENVOY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

Aleksander Ładoś

IPMS, Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy, A.17/1A

194

12 June 1942. Report by the Ambassador in Kuybyshev on Jewish affairs

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Kuybyshev, 12 June 1942

Only for your exclusive information, possibly also for indirect use (perhaps via Washington); however, under no circumstances is the source to be revealed.

It is necessary to direct the journalistic and information activity of the Jewish organisations towards the interest of public opinion in England and the United States [in the situation] which has now arisen as a result of the Soviet Government's desire to unilaterally resolve the question of the Eastern Borderlands.

What must be made distinctly clear is the position of the Soviet Government on the citizenship of (non-Polish) ethnic minorities, with an explanation of the connection introduced between this issue and that of the borders, which has not been universally understood so far.

It is necessary to try and ensure that the whole public opinion, including those unwilling to get involved in the fundamental dispute over the Eastern Borderlands, to take a stand towards the Soviet Union applying to Polish-Jewish citizens, deported from Poland to the USSR, the individual consequences of the political problem thus far unresolved, at least until that issue has been settled.

In particular, it must be pointed out that this different treatment of the Jewish population is manifested by: I) not applying amnesty to Polish-Jewish citizens still remaining in prisons, camps, and in exile; II) not allowing Jews to leave the USSR, even to visit their closest relatives and family; III) making it impossible for Jews to join the Polish Armed Forces, and consequently, to use the protection for servicemen and their families, which would partly solve many of their difficulties in surviving; IV) hindering Jews from working in the Embassy's social welfare apparatus; V) depriving Jews—by repressing those issuing Polish passports to them and by the ban to issue passports to Jews—of the possibility to benefit from the aid provided by the Social Welfare apparatus of the Embassy.

It is worth emphasising that in doubtful cases, contrary to the principle of self-determination proclaimed so far by the Soviet legislation, the racial criterion is applied. For example, the information provided to the press could be summed up as follows: Polish citizens were released from prisons, camps and exile by the Soviet Government in September and October 1941, and each released person received at the same time a certificate of release establishing at the same time his Polish citizenship. Still, many more Polish citizens were not discharged. In December 1941, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed that Polish citizens—Jews, Ukrainians, and Belarusians—were deprived of Polish citizenship, although it was strictly as Polish citizens that they had been sent to prisons, camps, and to exile, and they were unwilling to accept Soviet citizenship.

What was initially a formal proclamation has currently transformed into actual persecution. First, Jews were not issued exit visas; then, the Soviet Government declared that Jews still remaining in prisons, camps and in exile would not be released, as they were not Polish citizens. To deprive them of the evidence of their Polish citizenship, the people discharged from prisons, camps, or exile had their amnesty certificates taken away. When questioning the right of Jews to Polish citizenship, the Soviet authorities use the methods condemned by all those fighting against Hitler, which forces those interested to hide their nationality, which is not enough. Their origin is investigated up to three generations back; their rights to benefit from the social care provided by the Embassy are revoked.

In one of the oblasts, where all Polish citizens have been successfully relocated from the worse areas to the better ones, the NKVD excluded Jews from this benefit. In Samarkand, the Soviet authorities deprive Jews of their recently issued Polish passports; if they assert their Polish citizenship, Jews face fines accompanied by threats of deportation and labour camps. In many cases, it is even forbidden for Jews to contact the Embassy delegations. In Alma-Ata, for example, over a dozen Polish-Jewish citizens were arrested for contact with the Embassy Delegation.

For issuing Polish passports to Jews, the Narkomindel requested dismissal of the Delegate.

The Soviet authorities issued a formal ban on accepting Jews into the Polish Armed Forces; meanwhile, there are instances of Jews being forced to serve in the emerging Lithuanian division.

It would be necessary to develop a discreet campaign in order to obtain:

firstly, the release of those still detained in prisons, labour camps, and in exile;

secondly, full equal rights of citizens;

thirdly, the withdrawal by the Soviet authorities of the ban on admitting Jews to the Polish Armed Forces;

fourthly, equal rights in terms of being able to leave the USSR; and

lastly, the ability to benefit from the support of the Welfare Department of the Embassy on equal basis with other Polish citizens.

/-/ KOT

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 147 (previously published)

195

*13 June 1942. Cable from the Ambassador in Kuybyshev:
 explanation regarding the distribution of relief goods to Polish citizens
 in the Soviet Union*

Polmission—Kuybyshev
 TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
 SENT ON 13 JUNE 1942
 RECEIVED ON 16 JUNE 1942

No. 495

Sent to: the MFA, for the information of Washington and Jerusalem
 Receptus 421⁷⁷

I categorically declare that the information of the Agency does not correspond to the reality. Aid arriving in Russia is directed, as planned, by the Embassy's transport section to the respective regions. The distribution is performed by Embassy delegates, who are guided solely by the actual needs of the population, treating all Polish citizens equally. Before the distribution, the delegate summons regional trusted representatives, whose duty it is to gauge the opinion of people representing all groups of Polish citizens. The protocol of distribution is signed by a trusted representative and the people appointed to provide their opinions on the distribution. The principles of the distribution were established in an instruction for delegates and trusted representatives at the beginning of this year. Our posts employ many Jews; in the Delegation in Pavlodar (?) there are 17% Jewish employees, with Jews accounting for 7% of the population; in Kirghizia, there are 65% of Jews, whereas 60% of the employees of the post are Jewish. Poles keep complaining of favouritism towards Jews. I wish to indicate that, regretfully, the contribution of Jewish organisations comprises a modest fraction of all donations. An exhaustive report with the nearest courier.

Kot

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ 240 (previously published)

⁷⁷ In the cable no. 421 of 27 May 1942, the Head of the MFA conveyed: 'Jerusalem reports that the Jewish Agency has been complaining of Jews being overlooked during the distribution of relief goods among the exiles in Russia, of which I wish to inform the Ambassador.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240. In the cable of 19 June to the Consul General in Jerusalem, the Prime Minister informed; 'Please note the telegram of Ambassador Kot of 13 May, sent to Jerusalem. I have nothing further to add, save for a categorical appeal to the Representation of Polish Jewry not to escalate the situation. At the same time, I wish to indicate that Polish Jews are favoured by the Ambassador.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

196

*15 June 1942. Bulletin by the Polish Information Center in New York:
the situation in ghettos in occupied Poland (extract)*

15 June 1942

...⁷⁸WHAT DO EYEWITNESSES SAY?V. Jewish ghettos in Warsaw and in the provinces

The ghettos in occupied Poland have become a cause of fear for Jews throughout Europe. In Vienna or Prague, the order of resettlement into the ghetto in Warsaw or to Izbica, near Lublin, is regarded almost as a death sentence. Hardly surprising if one considers the mortality rate among Jews in those crowded ghettos.

Only the Jews in Germany consider it a gracious choice of fate when instead of Minsk, Riga or Kaunas, they are deported to Warsaw. Officially they are said to be sent to occupied Lithuania, Latvia, or Ukraine. However, German soldiers who have recently taken leave to visit their hometowns convey secret messages to Jewish families from their loved ones. They are located on the front near Kharkiv, where they serve as cannon fodder, rushed as the first to face the Russian artillery or to clear minefields. Thus, even being sent to a ghetto in Poland appears to German Jews as a sign of Providence.

American women of Jewish descent, who have recently arrived aboard the ship SS Drottningholm from Germany, Czechoslovakia and Austria together with a group of Poles, describe the procedure of such resettlements of Jews to the ghettos in Poland.

Such journeys from Munich or Prague take four, five days. In overcrowded freight carriages, there are often accidents of death of elderly or sick people who cannot stand the inhumane conditions of travel. The bodies of the dead often remain in the car for a day or two, and desperate cries can be heard in the vicinity of the rushing train. According to reports from the Czech territories, more than 30 thousand Jews from Prague and Brno were displaced to Poland. This year, 6,000 Jews have been sent there.

The worst conditions exist in the Warsaw ghetto. There are 600,000 Jews living there in an indescribable cramped environment, and according to Governor Frank's orders, this number is to be maintained at all times. Hunger, unsanitary conditions and consequently typhus decimate the population of the ghetto. Every

⁷⁸ Extracts unrelated to Jewish affairs were omitted.

month, 3,000 to 5,000 Jews die and exactly the same number of Jews are brought from Poland or other countries.

Communication with the outside world is very difficult in the Warsaw Ghetto. Germans have dubbed it 'Friedhof' (cemetery). Even medical support of any kind is hampered, as if the Germans had already sentenced all Jews there to death.

Today, it is almost impossible for a Pole to infiltrate the ghetto. It can only be seen through the windows of a tram which crosses through the ghetto, travelling from one part of Warsaw to another. Poles secretly throw parcels of food from the windows of those trams into the ghetto. One of the newly arrived Poles speaks of entire quarters of the ghetto fenced with barbed wire, an indication that these buildings have been infected with typhus. Behind the wire stand the healthy residents of those buildings, looking at the street with faded eyes, waiting for someone from the outside to bring food and other necessities.

Another 'cemetery' is the ghetto in Lublin, recently relocated to Izbica. In this small town, with a pre-war population of merely several thousand people, the Germans set up a ghetto for 100 thousand Jews from Poland, Austria and the Czech territories. Newcomers are often left in the empty fields near Izbica, as the town itself is overcrowded beyond measure. The newly displaced people are forced to put roofs over their heads through their own industriousness, with the help of the Jewish Community. The mortality rate there is no less than in Warsaw.

Compared with the ghettos in Warsaw or in Lublin, the conditions in provincial ghettos are slightly better. One of the arriving Poles lived for a time in Płońsk (currently Plenau). He lived in a house whose windows overlooked the ghetto. It is mainly situated in the town square and in Warszawaska St. Before the war, there were only 3,000 Jews in Płońsk, while currently more than 10 thousand have been crammed in there. Płońsk is among the few cities in the territories incorporated into the Reich where Jews are still allowed to remain. They were to be removed from there on several occasions, but they bought themselves out, paying high tributes.

At the end of 1941, Jews in Płońsk were able to obtain passes to the city rather easily. They have not been deprived of their tailoring workshops, quite numerous in the city, and they continue to work on orders also from the Poles. There is a two-facade house in the ghetto, inhabited by the only Jewish hairdresser and the only photographer in the city, visited also by Poles, and even some German soldiers.

Jews and Poles in Płońsk are taken for forced labour, digging peat. For their labour from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Poles received 3 marks per day, whereas Jews—only one mark, not enough to buy even a pound of bread.

Mass murders of Jews are carried out by the Germans without as much as a pretext. In some towns, the entire Jewish population has been murdered, for instance in Wyszaków. In Goworowo, the Germans, having set the town on fire,

chased all Jews to the town square. They were going to shoot all of them, but at the last moment a German general arrived with an army and, informed of the Gestapo's intention, he ordered every tenth Jew to be shot and the rest to be released.

Such incidents occurred in other towns, where the military authorities turned out to be less cruel than the Gestapo.

...

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 504

197

*15 June 1942. Cable from the Commander-in-Chief
to the Consulate General in Jerusalem
on allegations of discrimination against persons of Jewish descent*

TO Polconsul Jerusalem
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 15 JUNE 1942

No. 219

*Receptus 209*⁷⁹

The information received by Jewish circles of the alleged discrimination against Jews by the Polish military authorities in Russia is inaccurate. There may have been individual instances of not entirely proper conduct by some officers. However, why is it that the official Jewish circles are yet to condemn the blatant treason and other misdemeanours towards Poland and Poles on the part of Polish Jews during the Soviet occupation?

It is true that the Soviets do not recognise Jews as Polish citizens, against which the Polish Ambassador in Kuybyshev has been actively protesting, and that

⁷⁹ In the cable no. 209 of 3 June 1942, the Consul General in Jerusalem, Witold Korsak, informed: 'Grünbaum and Schmorak of the Jewish Agency declared to me, asking for the Prime Minister to be notified: The official Jewish circles received consistent information ... that there is discrimination applied by the Polish military authorities ... with regard to accepting Jews from the USSR to the Polish Army. These circles consider these facts to be harmful for the interests both of Poles and Jews. The local Jewish opinion is very much concerned therewith, especially that it resulted in the inability to evacuate the families together with the soldiers, which was the only way to save them from death. Consequently, those Jews are enlisted into the Soviet Army.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239. See doc. 209 and 213.

according to the Soviets—the military authorities illegally drafted and deported the Jews who had initially joined the army. The leaders of the world Jewry have been informed in detail of this state of affairs. *Therefore*, Messrs Grünbaum and Schmorak should ~~direct their allegations against someone else and not not direct their allegations against~~ the Polish authorities.⁸⁰

Sikorski

Please inform Tel Aviv.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239

198

*16 June 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
about the Prime Minister's statement on the evacuation of Jews to Palestine*

POLCONSUL—JERUSALEM
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 16 JUNE
RECEIVED ON 18 JUNE

No. 234

In Arab political circles, a conversation has been circulated which High Commissioner (surname illegible) is supposed to have had with the Prime

⁸⁰ In the cable of 13 June 1942, addressed to the Prime Minister, the Consul General in New York informed: "Today (11 June), Doctor Tartakower delivered to me the text of a telegram received from Palestine, which I quote below: "To Nahum Goldmann, the President of the World Jewish Congress in New York. According to the incoming information, only a small number of Jews were accepted to the Polish Army leaving Russia, not only because the Russian authorities consider them to be Russian citizens, but also because the Polish authorities had rejected them under various pretexts. For the same reasons, the number of Polish Jews, civilian refugees, leaving Russia together with the Polish Army is very limited, even though the desperate situation and hunger make them die by thousands. Discrimination against Jews is also apparent during the distribution of relief goods from abroad, even though the latter is largely sent by Jewish sources. /Signed/ Grünbaum", the end of dispatch. I declared that the facts presented in the message do not seem probable and are contrary to your intention and instructions." AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 243.

Minister during his stay in London. M.⁸¹ is alleged to have requested that the Prime Minister prevent the flow of Polish-Jewish citizens from Soviet Russia to Palestine. According to this version, the Prime Minister was to respond: 'I am not bound by the Nuremberg Laws.' I request information.⁸²

KORSAK

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239

199

18 June 1942. Note by the Refugee Section at the MFA on the situation of Polish and Jewish population evacuated from the USSR to Iran

The Population of Polish Jews in Persia evacuated from Russia

According to the information from Tehran, there were approx. 1,500 Jews with the Polish Army evacuated from Russia to Persia. Among the civilian population that arrived with the army to Persia, there were approx. 800 Jews. The civilian Jews have now separated themselves and settled with the local Jewish community. Tehran informed that for that reason the Jewish population could not be registered.

In a telegram of 9 May, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare ordered to maintain contact regarding assistance for the Jewish population with Mr Szafar and the Military Rabbi, recommending their care and their right to equal assistance.

In a telegram of 19 May, Tehran responded that the cooperation with Mr Szafar and Rabbi Bromberg had been very harmonious, and that Jews benefitted from the relief equally with all other Polish citizens. However, there are very few Jews in the camp where civilians evacuated from Russia are staying, as most of them use the help of the relatively large Jewish settlement in Tehran. The telegram stated that the support from that settlement for the Government Delegation was as of then very modest. The Delegation of the Ministry of Social Welfare respected the strictly equal treatment of all citizens in terms of care.⁸³

⁸¹ Probably Harold MacMichael, the High Commissioner for Palestine.

⁸² Responding in the cable of 20 June 1942, the Head of the MFA conveyed: 'The Prime Minister did not meet M. during his stay in London.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

⁸³ In the cable of 5 May 1942, the Envoy in Tehran informed: 'All instances of antisemitism have been fabricated and are unknown to the local Jewish diaspora, which cooperates

That the cooperation between the Legation and the Delegation for the care of the representatives of Jewish organisations in Persia has been going very well is demonstrated in the dispatch via the Legation of Raphael Szafar's telegram to Jewish organisations in England, the United States, Canada, Argentina, and South Africa.⁸⁴ The telegrams intended for the Joint and Messrs Goldmann and Tartakower in New York were delivered to the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington with the letter from the Ministry from 16 May of this year, No. 738/Ż.P./42.

Recently—at the beginning of this month—we received via the Consulate in Tel Aviv a telegram from Mr Loch to the Friends Service Council, indicating the need of vitamins, fats and clothes for the people in Persia. The telegram was sent via the MFA, due to Mr Loch's claris having been censored by the British authorities. This is another indication of a harmonious cooperation of our offices with the representatives of Jewish organisations on matters related to aid for the Jewish population in Persia.

I cite an excerpt from the response of the Friends Service Council of 12 June, which states clearly that they are aware that the care and relief are provided to Polish citizens in Persia.

‘...We are informed that the American Red Cross and the Polish Red Cross together with the British Military Authorities are looking after these refugees, and that all that can be done is being done for them.’

London, 18 June 1942

Józef Marlewski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

with us in solidarity. This was also recognised by the representative of the Jewish Agency who arrived from Jerusalem, Szafar.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 244.

⁸⁴ Doc. 185.

200

*19 June 1942. Note by the Embassy in Kuybyshev
on the situation of Polish citizens of Jewish descent in the USSR*

NOTE

on the intervention of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
regarding Polish citizens of Jewish descent and the attitude of the Soviet
authorities towards them

Introduction

Intervening on behalf of the persons detained in prisons, camps and in exile by the Soviet authorities, in breach of the provisions of the additional protocol to the agreement of 30 July 1941, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in the USSR, in line with the fundamental principles of the system of the Republic, is not interested in the nationality, religion or racial origin of the people it recognises as Polish citizens on the basis of the information available. Therefore, although the calculations presented below are founded on uncertain and imprecise data (the sound of first names and surnames), they nevertheless provide an approximated image defining the policy of the Polish and Soviet authorities regarding the Jewish matter.

Activity of the Embassy

In view of the position consistently maintained by the Soviet authorities contrary to obvious facts—formulated for the first time in Molotov's note from 8 November 1941—that all Polish citizens had already been released from confinement, the Polish Embassy was forced to indicate specifically in intervention notes: by first name, surname, and often even more personal data, where and which Polish citizens were being detained. In total 55 notes, the Embassy indicated the names and surnames of 5,100 people, including 745 with Jewish sounding surnames. It accounts for approx. 14.5% of the total number of people for whom the Embassy intervened by name. In the case of 450 people, the interventions were repeated by the Embassy two and more (up to 5) times. The number of Jewish sounding names among those stood at 45, that is, 10%.

The relatively low percentage of Jewish names among the people for whom the Embassy was forced to intervene by name is explained by the fact that among the first groups of people released from imprisonment, following the signing of the agreement of 30 July 1941, the percentage of Jews was relatively high and in individual cases reached 75% of the total number of those released at the initial stage. News of that sort came from various camps, often far removed from one another (Arkhangelsk Oblast, Komi Republic, Krasnoyarsk Krai, etc.), which would indicate the action was intentional and organised on a central instruction of the Soviet authorities. The relatively high proportion of Jews among the people holding

certificates of release from prisons, camps and exile pursuant to the agreement of 30 July 1941 fully confirms this statement.

The change in the policy of the Soviet authorities on Polish citizens of Jewish nationality occurred somewhere between December 1941 and January 1942 (vide the note from 1 December 1942). Therefore, the intervention action of the Embassy, discussed in this note, occurred at a later period.

Responses of the Soviet authorities

To the interventions made by the Embassy by name, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs responded ~~heretofore~~ *by June 1942* about 1,350 people, which accounts for 26.5% of the total number of people about whom the Embassy had intervened. These responses covered 180 people with Jewish sounding surnames, which comprises 13.3% of the 745 people that the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs responded about, and 24.2% of the people with Jewish sounding surnames about whom the Embassy had intervened in its notes. Thus, in 75.8% of inquiries about the fates of people with Jewish sounding names, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs did not give the Embassy an answer, despite having been provided with the addresses where they were held captive.

In its responses, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs declared that the people in question:

- 1) had been released or were free—837 people, which accounts for 62% of the people about whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs provided an answer, and 16.4% of the people about whom the Embassy had inquired;
- 2) were held as suspected of espionage or pro-Hitler sympathies – 28 “ 2.1% “ 0.5%;
- 3) were detained as criminal offenders – 10 “ 0.7% “ 0.2%;
- 4) were not Polish citizens – 285 “ 21.5% “ 5.6%;
- 5) had not been found – 190 “ 14% “ 3.2%;

Jews among released people

Among the 837 people referred to in the notes of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs as exercising freedom, there were 25 with Jewish sounding surnames. This accounts for 3% of people about the release of whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs gave the Embassy an answer; approx. 14% of people with Jewish sounding surnames about whose fates the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs provided the Embassy with an answer; and 3.3% of people with Jewish sounding names about whom the Embassy had intervened.

Jews among 'spies and Hitler's agents'

In the number of 28 people detained by the Soviet authorities because of their pro-Hitler sympathies or the suspicion of espionage were Wiktor ALTER and Ludwik [sic] ERLICH, who had been charged with offences of that sort by Deputy People's Commissar Vyshinsky during the verbal intervention by the Ambassador

of the Republic of Poland about their arrest. That comprises 7% of people about whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs gave an answer, providing that reason for their having been detained; 1% of people with Jewish sounding surname about whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs provided the Embassy with a response; and 0.3% of people with Jewish sounding name about whom the Embassy had inquired.

Jews among criminal offenders

Of the ten people detained on this account by the Soviet authorities, one has a Jewish surname and first name.

Jews among people not found

Among the 190 people about whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy that it had been unable to locate, there are 12 with Jewish sounding surnames. This accounts for 6.3% of the people not found that the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy; 6.7% of people with Jewish sounding surnames about the fates of whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs provided the Embassy with an answer; and 1.6% of people with Jewish sounding surnames about whom the Embassy had intervened.

Jews among non-Polish citizens

Of the 285 surnames of people whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs does not recognise as Polish citizens, there are 140 that sound Jewish. This accounts for 50% whose Polish citizenship had been put in question, as the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy; approx. 78% of people with Jewish sounding surnames about the fates of whom the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs provided the Embassy with an answer; and approx. 19% of people with Jewish sounding surnames about whom the Embassy had intervened.

The policy of the Soviet authorities regarding Polish citizens of Jewish nationality:

a) according to the statistical data;

The Embassy intervened in total about: 745 people with Jewish sounding surnames;

the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs gave no response about: 565, which accounts for: 76%

the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs answered that they:

– were spies or Hitler's agents	2	“	0.3%
– were criminal offenders	1	“	0.1%
– had not been found	12	“	1.6%
– were not Polish citizens	140	“	19%
– were exercising freedom	25	“	3%
	745	=	100%.

b) according to the statements given by the Soviet authorities to the interested people.

Instead of statements discussing the policy of the Soviet authorities on Polish citizens of Jewish nationality outlined in the above statistical data, the following passages should be cited:

a) from the memorandum of Mr Roman FAJANS, titled 'On the citizens of the Republic of Poland heretofore imprisoned in Uhtizhemlag': 'at every step, the lower-rank camp authorities make the detained citizens of the Republic of Poland feel that they are simply the scum of society, that the Polish side does not want to recognise them, while the Soviet side isolates them as useless for everyone. "If you really were full-fledged Polish citizens", they are told again and again, "you would have been liberated long ago, just as thousands of Poles who have been free for several months now..."'

b) from the memorandum of Mr Wiktor BRANDES on that issue, which was submitted to the Ambassador yesterday.

Kuybyshev, 19 June 1942

W. Sukiennicki

IPMS, Kolekcja Stanisława Kota, Kol.25/24

201

*21 June 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Consulate General in Jerusalem on counteracting the accusations
of antisemitism against the Polish Government*

TO Polconsul Jerusalem
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 21 JUNE 1942

No. 227

As a result of the accusations directed by some Jewish circles against our authorities in the USSR, a paradoxical situation may arise that the Polish Government will be unjustly blamed for the conscious Soviet policy of discrimination towards Polish Jews, with which, despite enormous difficulties, we are vigorously fighting. Due to the sensitivity of Polish-Soviet relations, the Government is constrained to effectively defend itself against these allegations.

Under such circumstances, I ask you to contact Consul Rosmarin for the purpose of providing the leading representatives of Polish and Palestinian Jewry with the following confidential clarifications:

1) the accusations against our authorities are entirely groundless (see the telegram by Ambassador Kot of 13 June on that issue⁸⁵ and other available materials),

2) the difficulties experienced by Polish Jews in the USSR are solely the result of the conduct of the Soviet authorities, which by refusing to recognise the Polish citizenship of Jews and non-Poles from the territories under Soviet occupation are striving to unilaterally create *faits accomplis* regarding the borders. The following discriminations arise from this Soviet position: not applying amnesty to imprisoned or exiled Jews, preventing them from joining the Polish Army, preventing them from leaving Russia, removing them from social welfare by prohibiting them from being issued Polish passports, objections to Jews being employed at the Embassy. I would like to point out that the travel ban undoubtedly results from the fear of a wider disclosure of the actual situation of Polish Jews in Russia. I request that you take advantage of the materials provided in the already-delivered report by Singer.⁸⁶ Other examples: in Samarkand, the authorities seize Polish passports from Jews and threaten to punish them for declaring their Polish citizenship. In Alma-Ata, Jews were arrested for contacting the Embassy delegates, and the demand was made that the delegates be dismissed for granting Polish passports to Jews. In a series of towns, Jews were prohibited from contacting the delegates. In one oblast, Jews were excluded from the transfer of Polish citizens to better regions. The investigation of nationality goes three generations back or is based on physical examination. There were numerous instances of Jews being forced to join the Soviet Army. In addition is the case of Alter and Erlich.

3) Considering that the goals pursued by the Government and by Jews with regard to that issue are identical, it would be desirable if Jewish activists could prevent these accusations from spreading, as groundless, harmful for our mutual interests and intended solely as subversion; instead, they should develop an independent campaign to oppose the Soviet discrimination of Polish Jews, and especially to obtain the equal rights of Jews and Poles, particularly as regards their release from imprisonment, the right to be drafted to the Polish Army, to leave Russia and to receive social welfare. For obvious reasons, that operation should under no circumstances refer to us, and for the time being should rather be confined to instructing Jewish political circles, without being raised in the press.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239

⁸⁵ Doc. 195.

⁸⁶ Probably doc. 176.

202

*22 June 1942. Note by the Prime Minister to the US President
on the implementation of retaliation against Germany*

June 22nd, 1942

The President,
The White House

Mr. President,

I have the honour to submit to you the following urgent matter.

A new wave of indescribable terrorism is spreading in German-occupied Poland regardless of all protests collectively voiced by the Governments of the occupied countries. This terrorism is manifested by mass arrests, mass executions like that which recently took place in Warsaw, and the compulsory recruiting of Poles for the German army and auxiliary military service, in flagrant violation of international law.

Undoubtedly such methods are part of Germany's war tactics. The Germans are out to break the spirit of resistance of the subjugated population and prove to them that further resistance to the German rule is useless. At the same time the German military authorities of occupation are desirous to create the illusion that some at least among the oppressed population are willing to serve under their colours.

The longer the war lasts, the greater Germany's difficulties, the more barbaric are the methods of extermination applied by Germany in Poland. The present system obviously aims at the extermination of the Polish nation.

In view of this appalling situation and of the fact that the Hitler régime has always steadily disregarded international law, I venture to suggest that it is indeed urgent that in your conversations with Prime Minister Winston Churchill⁸⁷ you would kindly consider means for the application of retaliatory measures.

May I suggest the following measures:

⁸⁷ Winston Churchill stayed in the United States on 19–25 June 1942. He met President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (in Hyde Park) and participated in the so-called Second Washington Conference. Prime Minister Sikorski sent a similar note also to Prime Minister Churchill.

1) That the Inter-Allied Declaration of January 13, 1942, signed at St. James' Palace, London, by the Representatives of nine countries under Axis occupation, should be adopted by Great Britain and the United States;⁸⁸

2) that stringent measures be taken in regard to property of German nationals;

3) that drastic measures be applied to German citizens residing in the Allied countries, who, though considered enemy aliens, are enjoying full freedom and whose daily life in fact did not undergo any marked change since the beginning of the war;

4) that bombing on a large scale of non-military objectives in Germany, should be undertaken in retaliation for German savagery. This would undoubtedly restrain the Germans from pursuing their present policy of terrorism.

Since all protests and threats of possible future retaliation have hitherto remained without effect upon the Germans, it seems that the point has been reached when the United Nations should show their determination to stop the German atrocities by every possible means at their disposal. Strict adherence by the United Nations to the rules of international law has unfortunately always been interpreted by the Germans as a sign of weakness. It appears to be indispensable that the United Nations, in their dealings with Germany should now show their solidarity in action and their firm determination to carry out their warnings of retaliation.

Signed:
GENERAL W. SIKORSKI
Prime Minister of Poland

NACP, RG 59 CDF 1940-44, 860c48, M 1197, roll 73 (ENG)

⁸⁸ This is a reference to the declaration condemning the German crimes in occupied countries and envisaging the punishment of the persons responsible for them. The declaration was adopted during the third meeting of the representatives of Governments-in-Exile, which took place in St. James's Palace and was chaired by Prime Minister Sikorski. The meeting was also attended by representatives of Great Britain, the United States, the USSR, and China, as observers; however, they did not endorse the joint final declaration. The Polish side used the opportunity presented by the conference to promote the so-called Second Black Book. It was a volume titled *The German New Order in Poland*, published at the outset of 1942 by the Ministry of Information and Documentation. It was a collection of almost 600 pages of reports, testimonies, and nearly 200 photographs presenting the German crimes in occupied Poland. Chapter III thereof is titled "The Persecution of the Jews, and the Ghettoes."

203

*23 June 1942. Cable from the Ambassador in Kuybyshev
on the situation of Jews in the USSR*

POLMISSION—KUYBYSHEV
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 23 JUNE
RECEIVED ON 25 JUNE

No. 537

Receptus cable No. 480⁸⁹

Draft of a response to Rosmarin (surname)

The situation of Polish-Jewish citizens, which is no doubt getting worse, is caused by the position of the Soviet authorities, who consider them to be Soviet citizens, and the consequences of that position. In view of the lack of objective criteria for national identity and the rejection of the principle of self-determination of the interested persons, the Soviet authorities in fact use racial principles. Hence, the rejection or silence regarding 97 per cent of interventions about Jews and the increasingly frequent arrests of Jews applying for relief or a passport. On 16 June, the Soviet authorities demanded that the issuance of passports to Jews be stopped, threatening with repression by the Soviet Government. Regarding that, the Soviets take advantage of Jews tending to accept Soviet passports. The evacuation of the army to Persia was sudden. It only encompassed a part of military and civilian families transported by the Army. Even though General Zhukov had demanded that Jews be excluded from the evacuation, General Anders, in conjunction with me, extracted 800 Jews to Persia. Currently, only individual departures on the basis of Palestinian certificates are still possible.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ In the cable no. 480, the Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy in Kuybyshev: 'Rosmarin has sent the following telegram to the Government from the Representation of Polish Jewry: "In view of the constant inflow of information on the negative attitude of the Polish authorities in the USSR towards the evacuation of Jews to Persia and enlisting them in the army, as well as in view of the complaints of unequal treatment of Jews as regards aid, we request that clear and categorical instructions be issued to improve that state of affairs, and that our representatives be appointed as managing associates for relief." I request materials for response from you: AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240.

⁹⁰ In the cable of 2 April 1942, the Interim Head of the MFA, Feliks Frankowski, informed the Embassy in Kuybyshev: 'Representatives of major Jewish organisations are inquiring whether the Polish Government has reservations against intervening with the Soviet Ambassadors in Washington and London, with the aim to obtain exit visas for Jews from the territory of the former Soviet occupation. I request the Ambassador's opinion on the issue, as well as on whether it would be desirable that public declarations of the

The Embassy handled all passport and visa formalities, including the Iranian visa, for all those who have received them to date, that is for 150 people. For 6 months, the Soviet authorities have not been issuing exit visas, without a doubt seizing passports of the applicants. Only a small group of people left together with the army without a visa; some were able to obtain visas by paying bribes, defying the interdiction of the central Soviet authorities.

As for social welfare and the distribution of aid—there are 40 Jews employed in managerial positions cooperating with the Embassy, besides their extremely numerous representation among the executive personnel of the Embassy's posts. There can be no question of harm, as by concentrating in the cities, they are in practice privileged in comparison with the Poles scattered on the kolkhozes.⁹¹ By grouping in the cities, they have much closer contacts with posts of the Embassy, and therefore with the supplies; they are able to check whether aid has arrived and what can be obtained.

KOT

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240*

international organisations of Jews be obtained in defence of the citizenship of Polish Jews in the Soviet Union.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ 240.

⁹¹ In the cable of 13 May 1942, the Consulate General in Jerusalem stated: 'The Jewish Agency has been complaining that Jews are omitted during the distribution of relief goods among the exiles in Russia.' In a response of 21 May, the MFA informed: 'Please notify us what relief goods these are. As for the aid from the Government, all Polish citizens in Russia benefit from it equally, and the Embassy in Kuybyshev does not make any differentiations.' The Consulate reacted with a cable of 22 May, explaining: 'The complaints of Jews in Russia are also about the distribution of food and the allegedly negative general attitude of the local delegates to Jewish exiles; besides, the local Jewish circles are in great agitation.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

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*24 June 1942. Cable from the Ambassador in Kuybyshev
on the conditions of providing aid to Jewish refugees in the USSR*

Polmission—Kuybyshev
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 24 JUNE 1942
RECEIVED ON 27 JUNE 1942

No. 538

Continuation of the cable No. 535⁹²

The Embassy has been receiving letters from Poles complaining of favouritism being shown to Jews during the distribution of goods. Of the individual financial allowances disbursed by the Embassy, Jews receive more than Poles, manifesting greater initiative in soliciting them. The ban on drafting Jews to the Polish Army has been issued by the Soviet authorities. They made it a condition for General Anders to resign from the conscription at all or to agree to it being carried out by the Soviet Commissions, which rejected Jews, Ukrainians and Belarusians. Despite that, a number of Jews were smuggled by the Polish authorities, which on many occasions accepted them, bypassing the Soviet draft boards. Currently, it is no longer possible, as for the same purpose (1 illegible word) local military authorities make it impossible for non-Poles to travel to the army. The information of the representation of Jewry must have had its source in the bitterness of the Jewish population, increasingly fuelled and taken advantage of by Soviet agents informing Jews that all that was happening was at the request of the Polish authorities (5 illegible words).

Kot

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240

⁹² This is probably a reference to the cable no. 537 (previous document); the telegram no. 535 concerned technical matters related to the telegraphic communication between posts.

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*25 June 1942. Speech by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
on Polish-Jewish relations*

Address by Mr Jan Stańczyk to the Federation of Polish Jews
in Great Britain and Ireland, London on June 25th 1942

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very glad that by the kindness of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Polish Jews in Great Britain I have this opportunity of speaking in a series of lectures devoted to Polish-Jewish questions.⁹³

I have no intention of making any detailed analysis of Racism and antisemitism, its origins and objects and shall confine myself to a few remarks on this question. Racism elevated to the status of a 'scientific' conception has its origin in Germany. The doctrine was necessary in order that Prussian militarists, the junkers, industrial and financial magnates should recover their power of the German nation and State, a power which had been greatly reduced in consequence of the German defeat in the last war and the disintegration of capitalistic economy in Germany and the world. For Hitler and the Nazi party are nothing but an organised movement of reactionary forces, subjected to iron discipline, and following the traditional course of Prussian militarism in their endeavour to impose the rule of the German nation of 'masters' on all the world.

In order to understand why Hitler succeeded so easily in defeating the democratic movements in Germany, it is necessary to know the psychology of the German nation as well as we Poles know it. In point of fact the Germans were never a nation of free men. You will not find in German history any such tremendous revolutionary movements in the name of freedom and other ideals as you will find in abundance in the history of France, Poland, Russia and other nations. The Germans are always ready to wage wars of conquest, to die on the battlefield for German rule over other nations, but they can never rise to the shedding of their blood for the sake of the ideal of liberty in their own fatherland. We Poles, know the Germans better than do any other nations, and we are seriously disturbed by

⁹³ Among the most famous addresses by Minister Jan Stańczyk on Jewish affairs was his speech of 3 November 1940 (see doc. 72). An unsigned note from 11 May 1941, titled 'The Jewish matter and Belgian affairs—report for the use of Dr Retinger', stated: 'On 20 April 1941, Minister Stańczyk delivered a lecture on the Jewish matter in Poland in the Anglo-Palestine Club. The speech of Minister Stańczyk, as usual very favourable to the Jews, received very vigorous coverage in the Jewish and English press.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.57.

the unjustified hopes which certain political circles entertain as to a revolution of the German nation against Hitler.

For by their very spirit and all their psychological make-up the Germans are an anti-revolutionary nation. Revolution is essentially a storm sweeping away the existing and outmoded systems, breaking down their organisational forms and removing the classes ruling the conditions prevailing. On the other hand, every German is fanatically attached to organised order. Not only that, but he is in a sense the product of organisation. A German readily agrees to any form of democratic or totalitarian system, on condition that it is a perfect organisation worked out to its tiniest details. For the German has a panic fear of being shaken out of the organisational forms of existence to which he is accustomed. That is why militarism agrees so well with German psychology, because it provides him with a power of operation organised with the utmost precision. Consequently the German regards the army, as an organisation in which everything is provided for in advance from the first order to the last execution of orders, as the ideal organisational form for the States, this being aptly expressed in the German saying: 'A nation under arms.'

But for the job of conquering the world an army is not sufficient. The creators of Nazi Germany fully realised that. So it was also necessary to provide an ideological justification for their conquests and to inspire the souls of the German with hatred for other nations. In the initial state of their preparations for war the Germans could not openly say that they were out to destroy the Poles, the French, the Russians and the British. For they knew that so brutally frank an expression of their intentions might have united the menaced nations and have nipped all the plans of the leaders of the Third Reich in the bud. So they at first confined the application of their racist theory of the Jews, and encouraged hatred against the Jews.

They began by arguing not only to their own people, but to the peoples of the whole world that all the responsibility for the economic breakdown and the need of the masses not only in Germany but all the world over fell upon the Jews; so it was only necessary to destroy the Jews to secure the disappearance of the economic crisis, unemployment, and the need of the masses.

Provided with this economic justification, anti-semitism gave the Nazi movement and German militarism a perfect, and, as it transpired, a very effective propaganda weapon. It deflected the attention of the working masses, the proletarianised intellectuals and unemployed youth not only in Germany, but elsewhere from the real causes of unemployment and want, which are to be found in the defective and disintegrating economic system of capitalism, and directed their hatred against the Jews.

Thus in the hands of Germans ideology of the anti-semitic racial theory became a perfect weapon of propaganda not only at home, but also for the disintegration from within of the nations whom the Germans were intending to destroy and for

which purpose they were building up a powerful machine. For everywhere the defective capitalistic system had proletarianised the human masses, had increased unemployment and want, and had intensified the general social disintegration of national life.

But the feeling of racial hatred has always been alien to the Polish nation. For long periods of history Poles have been compelled to fight for their own freedom, and they understood as perhaps no other nation does, the aspirations of other peoples to freedom. I hardly need cite to you instances from Polish history, of how Tsarist Russia wanted to direct the Polish nation's desire for freedom along the lines of hatred against the Jews, and of how the Polish people, and especially the Polish workers actively resisted that plan. And the archi-Christian Austria did not despise the policy of exploiting the want of the Polish peasants in Galicia as a weapon against the Jews. Yet nowhere did anyone succeed in instilling the barbarous feelings of racial hatred into the souls of the Polish people.

And so I am happy that as a Pole I can declare to all the world that the Polish people, the nearest neighbour of the hitlerized, racist Germans, have in their great mass been preserved from the poison of racism, which the Germans endeavoured to instil into Poland not only with the aid of ideological arguments, but also by financially supporting anti-semitic propaganda. When we remember the general poverty of the Polish people, with their some six million unemployed in town and villages, the excessively low salaries of employees and recall that there are some 3 1/2 million Jews in Poland, occupied mainly in trade and small handicrafts, we must admit that the Poles as a people have shown an amazing power of resisting the anti-semitic poison.

I have no intention of concealing the fact that a section of our Polish students, in higher education, who saw no hope of getting work on the completion of their studies succumbed to the baleful influence of anti-semitic propaganda. Nor do I intend to conceal the fact that certain Polish societies and organisations without, however, any great importance, attempted prior to the outbreak of war to introduce practical restrictions of Jews, and also that the administrative authorities were not energetic enough to oppose such tendencies. But this movement did not extend to the wider masses of the Polish people, but was restricted to students' circles, as is proved by the fact that the attempts made to bring anti-semitism into the Polish villages and into the working masses were not only unsuccessful, but were actively opposed by the Polish peasants and workers, in other words, by eighty per cent of the population.

How profoundly irreconcilable antisemitism is with the psychology and sentiments of the Polish people, is shown also by the fact, which is frequently overlooked, that in Poland no really serious attempt has ever been made to create an ideological justification for antisemitism. The few antisemitic Poles have tried to do so, but even they had completely to avoid arguments based on Rosenberg's

barbarous doctrines, and sought to persuade the impoverished Polish people that if the Jews were eliminated from Poland the Polish unemployed peasant, worker, craftsman and employee would be assured of work and prosperity. Economic, and only economic arguments were resorted to in order to justify anti-semitism to the Polish people.

All over the world Jews are attached in their feelings to Poland as they are to no other country. When recently I was in the United States I was able to confirm that the great mass of American citizens of Jewish extraction had forebears in Poland, or even today have close relations in Poland. I had an opportunity of ascertaining the feelings which animate the Jews of the United States and Canada for Poland. At many meetings and in conversations with prominent Jewish leaders I discovered that the Jews in the Western hemispheres had a profound and universal attachment for Poland, which they call 'our old country.'

The help collected in the United States and Canada for Polish citizens in Soviet Russia by Jewish organisations such widely differing political and social views as the Jewish World Congress, the Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish American Committee and the Jewish Labour Committee, also testify to the profound sentiment felt by Jews for Poland. And it was testified to by the many declarations made by Jews at various times during my visit to the new world.

I have no intention of ignoring here certain questions which many Jews asked me over there—namely, will the future Poland, in whose resurgence they profoundly believe, be democratic, and will all her citizens, including the Jews, be guaranteed equal civil rights.

I was in the very pleasant position of being able, in harmony with the will of the Polish Government and of the Polish people also, to answer this question with the one word: 'Yes.'

For I firmly believe that not only will the Poland which will arise after the defeat of Hitlerism and Fascism and after the consequent elimination of the barbarous racial theory, be a land of freedom and equality in civic rights and social justice for all her citizens. I also firmly believe that all the world will be dominated by the rights, principles and ideals for which the freedom-loving peoples are fighting the Hitleric and Fascist tyranny.

In that Poland, towards which we are moving through the torture of concentration camps, the shame of ghettos, mass murders of our people by the firing squads, and the heroic struggle of the common people at home, as well as of our soldiers, airmen and sailors outside the country, side by side with our mighty allies—in that Poland there will be no place for any political, economic or social injustice.

I know that we shall return to a free Poland and one with justice for all. But we shall return to a Poland terribly devastated by the enemy. We shall return to

a people who have survived a hell of persecutions. In that new Poland we shall have to rebuild not only the burnt out and destroyed towns, but also we shall have to rebuild our economic life almost out of ruins. We shall need not only raw materials, machinery and financial assistance, but also human hands and brains for work. So if we desire every man and woman in that Poland to have a guarantee not only of freedom, but work, wages and well-being, all we who are living beyond the reach of the enemy's hatred and of the hell which he has prepared for the people at home must be ready to do all that is in our power not only to mobilise the means requisite to the restoration of the country, but also to convince the richer nations that it is in their interest to make those means available to us. For it is true that we shall be unable to assure lasting peace to the world and liberty and wellbeing to mankind, so long as side by side with the richer nations you have poorer ones, and side by side with the man who possesses in superfluity, the man who is deprived of work, wages and the means of existence.⁹⁴

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 42 (ENG)

⁹⁴ The text of the address was sent to the Embassy in Washington and (for the information of) the Legation in Lisbon. In the covering letter, Jan Wszelaki informed: 'Enclosed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends 6 copies of the address by Minister Stańczyk at the meeting of the Federation of Polish Jews in Great Britain and Ireland, kindly requesting that it be passed on to other posts in the United States possibly for use of the press.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 42.

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*[After 26 June 1942]. Note by the Delegation
of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in New York:
information on the aid sent to Polish citizens in the USSR*

Overview of the amount, value and weight of the goods sent
from 13 Jan to 26 June 42

LEND LEASE ACT⁹⁵

In total, 133 shipments were sent, worth \$1,748,479.93, weighing 6,844,095 lbs (3,055 tonnes)

CLOTHES, BLANKETS, SOAP, etc. (Treasury Department)			
I. Used clothes	I. amount	value (\$)	gross weight (lbs)
Army coats	38,075	114,605.75	bills of lading feature only the combined weight of goods
Army uniforms	31,110	32,976.60	
Army trousers	30,210	33,835.20	
Shirts and long underwear (set)	26,500	22,950.00	
Men's overcoats	181,510	174,249.60	
Women's overcoats	105,305	101,092.80	
Army wool blouses	50,520	51,025.20	
Woollen gloves	5,000	1,550.00	
Army socks	10,000	900.00	
Woollen sweaters	2,500	1,125.00	
Half-woollen sweaters	2,750	605.00	
in total		541,645.15	
II. New items			
Woollen blankets	92,500	197,761.65	415,711
Cotton blankets	134,700	150,886.65	345,186

⁹⁵ The note was sent to the Consul General in New York. In the covering letter, the Deputy Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Zofia Wojciechowska, informed: 'The Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare sends enclosed an overview of the amount, value and weight of relief goods sent by 26 June 1942 within the Lend-Lease and from the donations of social organisations. At the same time, the Delegation wishes to communicate that such overviews shall be prepared monthly and sent to the interested parties.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 5.

Men's shoes (pairs)	122,648	193,056.48	
Women's shoes (pairs)	16,846	22,555.32	
Shoes for boys (pairs)	24,688	35,038.10	502,176
Shoes for girls (pairs)	8,909	8,463.55	
Shoes for little children (pairs)	5,000	5,634.75	
Jackets (mackinaws)	24,994	85,478.04	86,580
Men's forage caps	25,000	13,500.00	18,778
Women's forage caps	5,049	2,629.52	
Boys' forage caps	20,009	10,836.87	
Leather for soles (lbs)	4,473	1,923.39	4,483
Gingham (percal, yard)	20,776	4,051.47	5,110
Soap, yellow for washing clothes (lbs)	300,000	16,800.00	330,000
in total		748,615.79	1,708,094 (763 tonnes)
FOOD (Department of Agriculture) net			
Edible oil	112 tonnes	41,236.00	287,977
Dried beans	351 "	43,308.00	789,375
Condensed milk	100 "	21,100.00	268,126
Pork fat	50 "	22,610.00	133,581
Cocoa	100 "	41,500.00	246,400
Powdered soup	600 "	275,000.00	1,601,116
	1,313	444,754.00 (value calculated acc. to requisition, receipts not provided)	3,326,515 (1.485 tonnes)
MEDICAL SUPPLY (War Department)			
Typhus vaccine	50,000 cc	3,605.00	421
Typhoid fever vaccine	270,000 cc	9,062.64	1,999
Syringes	1,000 pcs.	797.35	235
Injection needles	3,000 pcs.		
in total		13,464.99	2,655 (1.18 tonnes)

Overview of the amount, value and weight of donated goods sent
before 26 April 42

DONATIONS FROM SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS

52 shipments sent, weighing 1,058,834 lbs (approx. 600 tonnes), worth \$1,026,305 according to the estimates of the Social Organisations

CLOTHES	gross weight (lbs)	value (\$)
Polish American Council	436,492	611,268
Jewish Labor Committee	365,750	265,585
American Federation of Polish Jews	12,622	12,600
Imperial Order Daughters Canada	28,730	50,200
Polish Legation in Chile	150	200
Individual parcels	21,950	30,325
in total	765,694 (approx. 344 tonnes)	970,178
FOOD		
Polish American Council (condensed milk)	104,481	10,681
Jewish Labor Committee (cocoa)	58,457	2,000
Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (matzo)	114,970	14,000
in total	277,908 (approx. 145 tonnes)	32,681
Medicines		
Jewish Joint Distribution Committee	25,232 (approx. 11 tonnes)	23,446

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (New York), 5

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*30 June 1942. Letter from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Minister of Information and Documentation
on the manner of informing about relief activity*

30 June 1942

The Minister of Information and Documentation
in London

On 22 June, the Polish Telegraphic Agency released to the press a démenti on the unfair distribution of relief goods among the deportees in Russia. The

denial also featured a statement about donations of Jewish organisations, which in the communication of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of 23 June received the following wording:

‘It should be added that gifts from specially Jewish organisations represent only a small percentage of the whole amount of gifts.’

I believe that making such remark public was unnecessary, harmful even, as it belittles the significance of an operation carried out by organisations manifesting much good will and effort. We wish to indicate, for instance, that the first three shipments of clothes which left the United States for Russia last October were sent by the Jewish Labour Committee. Another organisation—the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee—disburses relatively large funds (\$50,000 on two occasions) specifically to purchase medicines and first-aid kits for Russia.

The statement could be featured, but it should read as follows: ‘collections and donations made to help Polish citizens in Russia by Polish and Jewish organisations and individuals constitute a small percentage of these assets, which the Polish Government allocates from its own funds, and especially from the millions of funds that the Polish Government receives for the action of helping Polish citizens in Russia with the Lease and Lend Act.’

I kindly request that you have an additional correction made in this spirit.

At the same time, I request that you issue an order for the Ministry of Information and Documentation to consult with the institution of which I am in charge the contents of press releases on matters of social welfare and others within its purview.

MINISTER
Stańczyk

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/1

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*1 July 1942. Report by the Consul General in London
on the refugees in Trinidad*

London, 1 July 1942

In reference to the letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs No. 738/Z/42 from 26 May of this year on the refugees staying on the island of Trinidad,⁹⁶ the Consulate General wishes to explain that before it is able to make an intervention with the competent British authorities in order for the refugees in question to be released from police restrictions and granted the same rights as those exercised by the citizens of the Allied countries, it is vital to establish whether the respective refugees hold Polish citizenship.

Since the data submitted by the Jewish Association of Trinidad regarding Polish citizenship of the refugees in question does not constitute sufficient evidence of their citizenship, the Consulate General requests that the Association deliver individual applications with appropriate documents, or photocopies thereof, allowing for the decision about their Polish citizenship to be made in each individual case.

Dr Karol Poznański
Consul General

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 528

⁹⁶ The said letter informed: 'Enclosed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends, in line with the competences, the letters from the Jewish Association of Trinidad ... In the first of those, 16 people claiming to be Polish citizens requested that the Ministry clarify with the appropriate British authorities (which regard them as "uncertain" foreigners, due to the fact that they had lived for some time in Danzig) that they are indeed Polish citizens, and that the fact of their residence in Danzig had not deprived them of Polish citizenship. The second letter features the information on the documents held by the respective people ... In reference to the above letters, the Ministry requests that the Consulate General ... provide suitable consular protection to those people, who are Polish citizens.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529.

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*5 July 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
about a conversation with representatives of Jewish organisations*

Polconsul—Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 5 JULY 1942
RECEIVED ON 7 JULY 1942

No. 267

During a conference held in my office in the presence of Consul General Rosmarin with the representatives of the Jewish Agency, Grünbaum and Schmorak, after they were acquainted with the materials received from the MFA and Kuybyshev and due to the information in possession by the Agency—the representatives of the Agency suggested the following measures to appease Jewish public opinion:

I. Appointing Mr Rednerer, who was officially promised the nomination, as an assistant to the main delegate for refugee affairs, the latter position formerly held by Minister Kwapiński.

II. Establishing commissions to perform inspections, with the participation of representatives of Jewish organisations, aimed at supervising whether the instructions of the Head Office are carried out precisely.

III. Taking into consideration a larger number of Jewish children and youth among the Junaks⁹⁷—when evacuating children and youth who on their arrival in Tehran shall be instantly taken by the Agency for their subsistence and upbringing.

IV. The representatives of the Agency expressed the belief that in line with the intention of the materials presented to them, the participation of Jews in the army would be significantly increased, appropriately to the actual state of affairs at a given moment. They are of the opinion that some individual actions known to the Agency and carried out by certain circles help the Soviet propaganda on the eastern borders and make it impossible for them to take a stand in defence of the civic rights of Jews from the territory of the former Soviet occupation.

V. They expressed the belief that in line with the intention of the Government the number of Jews among the evacuated population would be fair and would be increased.

⁹⁷ This is a reference to youth troops formed as a part of the Polish Army in the USSR, in which young people at the age of 14–18 years served.

The above proposals were ultimately put forth by the representatives of the Agency, following a long deliberation, with us influencing their limitation; however, they expressed the belief that that way x... (12 illegible words) there was a demand to repeat... the accusations made.

The representatives of the Agency made a declaration that as of then, nothing on their part had been made publicly known.⁹⁸

Sent to London, for the information of—Kuybyshev.

Korsak

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239

210

7 July 1942. Resolution of the National Council on the German activity in occupied territories

RESOLUTION

of the National Council of the Republic of Poland
adopted during the plenary session of 7 July 1942

The National Council of the Republic of Poland, having heard the report of the Minister of Internal Affairs on the further intensified crimes perpetrated by the German occupiers in Poland:

1) instructs the Presidium to complement the declaration of the National Council of the Republic of Poland of 10 June 1942⁹⁹ to all parliaments of the free nations with the newly revealed facts of the systematic destruction of the vital forces of the Polish nation and the planned murder of almost the entire Jewish population;

2) expresses its solidarity with the Government in all its actions aimed at raising an even stronger interest of governments and nations allied with the

⁹⁸ In the cable of 6 July 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs instructed the Consul General in Jerusalem: 'The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported on 6 July that during a conference attended by you and Consul Rosmarin, Jewish delegates were assured that no limitations with regard to Polish Jews in Russia would be applied by the Polish authorities, that Jews would be allowed to cooperate in the distribution of relief goods, and that there would be no discrimination in the draft to the army. Such phrasing gives the impression that the Polish authorities in Russia have thus far treated Jews unequally. Please protest against such a statement which is unacceptable in view of the utter groundlessness of the allegations against the operation of the civilian and military Polish authorities in Russia, and request a démenti.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239. See also doc. 197 and 213.

⁹⁹ Doc. 192.

suffering of the entire population of the Republic of Poland without distinction and the assurance of due punishment for all these crimes;

3) requests that the Government, together with the Governments of the co-belligerent countries, particularly Great Britain and the United States, investigate the possibility and methods to effectively counteract the terror applied by the Germans with appropriate retaliatory measures taken while the war is in progress;

4) pays the deepest homage to the Polish society for its unwavering stance, in spite of such cruel persecution, in the fight against the invader and for its solidarity in the joint effort to survive the current immense misfortunes, rising above all differences of religion and nationality;

5) assures the society in the country that the Polish Government together with the Chief Command of the Polish Armed Forces and the National Council are striving to harmonise as effectively as possible their tasks and efforts with the command of Allied powers over war activity in order to liberate Poland from the German occupation forces and regain full independence for the Republic of Poland;

6) sends to the Polish society in the country words of faith in the unquestionable victory of the Allied countries, which will fully compensate the whole population of liberated Poland for all the suffering it experiences at the present hour.¹⁰⁰

London, 7 July 1942

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.18

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10 July 1942. Report by the Intelligence of the Home Army on the Bełżec extermination camp

Special report of 10 July 1942 on the place of extermination of Jews in Bełżec¹⁰¹

According to the information from a German employed at the place of extermination, it is situated in Bełżec, next to the railway station, and it is fenced

¹⁰⁰ On the same day, the National Council made the following appeal in a subsequent resolution: 'The National Council, acknowledging the efforts thus far made by the Government regarding relief for the country, calls for the Government to continue the efforts aimed at obtaining from the Allied Governments the opportunity to expand the relief operation, in particular to increase the supply of medicines, clothes, coffee, and tea.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.18.

¹⁰¹ The report was sent to the Government-in-Exile in London as one of the enclosures to the report by the Department of Information of the Bureau of Information and

with lines of barbed wire. Behind and outside the wires, there are Ukrainian guards. The extermination takes place in the following way: A train carrying Jews arrives at the station in Bełżec—on a siding, it approaches the wires surrounding the place of extermination, where the train personnel is replaced. From the wires, the train is led by German drivers to the unloading point, where the track ends. After unloading, the men are directed to a barrack on the right, women to a barrack on the left, where they undress, allegedly to bathe. After undressing, both groups are taken to a third barrack with an electric plate, where the extermination takes place. Then, the corpses are transported by train to a pit, located outside the wires, approx. 30 m deep. The pit was dug out by Jews who were then all executed. The Ukrainian guards, currently in service, are to be executed on completion of the operation. The Ukrainians standing guard are stocked with money and looted valuables; they pay 400 zlotys for a liter of vodka, and 2,000 zlotys plus jewellery for an intercourse with a woman.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.73/4

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10 July 1942. Report by the Legation in Stockholm on the extermination of Jews in the territories occupied by Germany

Stockholm, 10 July 1942

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The pieces of news that have been coming to Stockholm for several weeks and confirming one another seem to indicate that in the Baltic countries and the occupied Soviet territories the Germans began a very radical anti-Jewish action, which in some cases led to mass executions. There are both deportations for forced labour combined with confiscation of property as well as pogroms-massacres typical for western Russian territories, in which, apart from SS troops, certain local elements also take part.

As is usually the case with such events, it is difficult to precisely estimate the figures. However, there seems to be no doubt that we are dealing with a broader and well-thought-out action aimed at a peculiar and bloody 'solution of the Jewish question' in these areas.

Propaganda of the High Command of the Home Army (BIP KG AK) on the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto (doc. 237).

The information provided below has been taken partly from the German occupation press, arriving here late, partly—as far as Wilno is concerned—from a Polish fugitive, and lastly from Baltic informers of the Legation.

The ‘*Krakauer Zeitung*,’¹⁰² in its 11 June issue, at the end of an article entitled ‘Polish and Bolshevik Jewry’ (‘*Polnisches und bolschewistisches Judentum*’), wrote literally: ‘You who greeted Stalin with flowers, you will now place your heads under the feet of the Führer.’ The same newspaper in a June 18 issue concluded its article on the role of Jews in Poland with the words: ‘One must know this chapter of the classical domination of the Jews in Eastern Europe to understand why a radical “cleansing” of Europe of Jewish parasitism is impossible until the “General Gouvernement” and neighbouring areas have been cleansed of the last Jew.’

So much about the ‘programme’; the practice, reflected in the figures provided below, quoted here under the responsibility of the informants, is simply unbelievable.

In Wilno, pogrom squads were allegedly organised from the elements of the Lithuanian youth, whose members, apart from the auxiliary functions of perpetrators, also dealt with the sale of clothing of their victims on the streets of Wilno. It is noteworthy that the Polish population, despite their decidedly hostile attitude towards the great majority of Jews from Wilno during the Bolshevik occupation, is now standing up for them, and sometimes trying to protect their lives with all their might, often bringing upon themselves the retaliation of Germans and some Lithuanian groups.

Near Wilno, according to our informer who was there as late as on 24 May, approx. 60 thousand Jews were allegedly shot. Men naked, women in their underwear.

According to the information of an eyewitness of an execution provided by an Estonian shipowner currently staying in Helsinki, an Estonian officer, who had been ordered by the German authorities to transport the Jews from Tallin to Riga, *during 3 months* in the fields near Riga approx. 60 thousand Estonian and Latvian Jews were shot with machine guns, in a manner similar as in Wilno. The officer was in Riga in the second half of April.

According to information not published in the press, originating from the circles of local foreign correspondents, in the last few months the population of Jews in Wilno was to fall from 70 to 6 thousand, in Riga—from 25,000 to 300, in Minsk the number of Jews was to be reduced by 84 thousand, whereas in Kiev—by more than 100 thousand.

These figures should not, of course, be equated with the number of people shot. The decline of the Jewish population in these cities was undoubtedly also

¹⁰² This is a reference to the German propaganda newspaper published in occupied Poland.

influenced by forced resettlements, widely used in the occupied territory by the German authorities, and deportations to forced labour.

The Legation continues to pay close attention to these events and, should we acquire new source information, we will not fail to instantly communicate it to the Ministry.

For the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Wiesław Patek
Second Secretary at the Legation

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 74

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*11 July 1942. Letter from the Consul General in New York
to a representative of a Jewish organisation
on the attitude of the Polish authorities towards Jewish refugees in the USSR*

11 July 1942

Dr Arieh Tartakower
The Chairman of the Council
The Association of Jewish Refugees and Immigrants from Poland
216 West 100th Street
New York, NY

Dear Mr Chairman,

In reference to the text of a dispatch delivered to me and originally sent to the President of the World Jewish Congress, Mr Nahum Goldmann, from Messrs Grünbaum and Schmorak, on the alleged discrimination in accepting Polish-Jewish citizens in the territory of the USSR to the army and in providing aid to Polish citizens in the territory of the USSR,¹⁰³ I wish to kindly inform you of the following:

Having received the aforementioned text, I declared to you that:

a. I would telegraph the text of this dispatch to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs;

¹⁰³ See doc. 197 and 209.

b. in view of the vague form of the allegations made in the telegram which does not even specify the place where the criminal acts were to be committed, I warned you that it might be difficult to establish the facts;

c. I stated that if the facts in question at all took place in any particular case, they could only happen contrary to the clear instructions of the Government of the Republic of Poland to treat Polish citizens equally, regardless of religion or origin;

d. a statement of non-compliance with these instructions would be treated by the Government of the Republic of Poland as an official crime;

e. until I have received appropriate explanations from the Government of the Republic of Poland, I asked you to use your influence, and in particular to obtain the permission from President Nahum Goldmann, for the issue of these allegations to not be raised in the press.

I have now obtained reliable explanations via the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington. The Polish Ambassador in Kuybyshev has categorically declared that the information received by Jewish circles of the lack of coordination in the distribution of aid to the Polish population in Russia does not correspond to reality. Aid arriving in Russia is directed, as planned, by the Embassy to the respective regions. The distribution is performed by delegates of the Embassy, who are guided solely by the actual needs of the population, treating all Polish citizens equally.

The distribution rules were set out in the Embassy's instructions to delegates and trusted representatives at the beginning of this year. The delegations of the Embassy employ a great number of delegates-Jews. In some regions, the participation of Polish-Jewish citizens reaches 60%.

According to the instruction, local delegates and trusted representatives gather detailed opinions on the needs of all Polish citizens, with no exceptions. The protocol of distribution is signed by a trusted representative and by the people appointed to provide their opinions on the distribution.

The information received by Jewish circles of the alleged discrimination against Jews by the Polish military authorities in Russia is inaccurate. There may have been individual instances of not entirely proper conduct of some officers; however, these would be treated as an official crime.

I wish to inform you in confidence that it is true that the Government of the USSR does not recognise Jews as Polish citizens. The matter is subject to further negotiations between the Polish and the Soviet Governments, carried out with much energy by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Kuybyshev.

In an initial phase, the Command of the Polish Army in the USSR recruited a certain number of Jews for military service. These Jews, approx. 1,500 people, were evacuated to Persia with the Polish Army, in which they (illegally, according

to the Soviet Government) served. On that occasion, it was possible to evacuate more than 800 Jewish civilians.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Kuybyshev declares that he has thus far not received a single complaint over the alleged discrimination of Polish-Jewish citizens during the distribution of aid.

I take the liberty of expressing the hope that these authoritative explanations completely refute all grounds for making vague allegations of discrimination against Polish-Jewish citizens both by the Polish Administration of the distribution of aid and by the Command of the Polish Army in the USSR.

I do not need to assure you that should any specific complaints be made, namely persons or locations and the failure to follow the strict instructions of the Government of the Republic of Poland in this area, the Government of the Republic of Poland will implement an investigation and draw consequences from its results.

Please accept my deepest regards,

Sylwin Strakacz
Minister Plenipotentiary
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.69

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*12 July 1942. Note by the Embassy to the Holy See to the Secretary of State
on the situation in occupied Poland (extract)*

Vatican, July 12, 1942

THE SITUATION IN OCCUPIED POLAND (Continuation of the Aide-Memoire of April 27, 1942)

...¹⁰⁴

V. The Jews are especially persecuted. In Western Poland where the number was always limited, the Polish Jews, like the German Jews moreover, are deported into other ghettos, especially in Central and Eastern Poland.

¹⁰⁴ Extracts unrelated to people of Jewish descent were omitted. The note was also delivered to the US Embassy to the Holy See, and—via the latter—to the US Department of State.

In Central Poland, in the large cities they are shut up in the ghettos and thanks to this dumping the ghettos contain an excessive number of Jews. Thus the ghetto at Warsaw includes almost one half million Jews. Terrible poverty prevails there and the population is decimated by epidemics. Those who leave the ghettos are punished with death (recently eight Jews were executed for leaving the Warsaw ghetto). Moreover, from time to time Germans enter the ghettos to organize mass massacres.

In the provincial cities the Jews are also massacred. 'We are forbidden to go to Tarnów, for there are Jewish days—a correspondent from near that city said to us—but very soon the city will be empty and we can go there again.' It is undeniable that great numbers of Jews, whose number cannot be expressed except in tens of thousands, have been shot or killed in 'gas chambers' in the city of Rzeszów, Stanisławów, Dębica, Przemyśl. At Mikołajów, about 5,000 Jews were killed. At Lublin several thousand (among them several 'tens' of children of Jewish orphanages that they assembled, in order, in the empty pond of a public park and drowned by opening the water intakes). At Mielec an execution squad arrived in the town and then withdrew for a ransom of 400,000 zlotys; another execution squad then came along and put the whole Jewish population to death.

In Eastern Poland and in the 'General Government', in the district of Lwów, the same methods are applied on a large scale. At Wilno where according the first reports 25,000 have been killed, more recent reports, coming from various sources, increase this number: the number of Jews killed is 60,000. At Lwów—55,000.

The total number of Jews put to death in Poland is estimated, according to the data of responsible Jewish lists, at near 700,000. There is no reason to doubt this figure; on the other hand, private data seem to confirm it.

NACP, RG 59 CDF 1940-44, 860c, box 5395 (ENG)

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*16 July 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem
on the situation in Libya*

Polconsul—Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 16 JULY 1942
RECEIVED ON 17 JULY 1942

No. 286

The situation in Libya, particularly from 28 June, has caused panic among the Jewish population of Palestine.¹⁰⁵ The population fears the terror of the occupiers as much as the local Arabs. An echo of these sentiments has caused an influx of Polish-Jewish citizens to the Consulat; they are trying to ensure their safety in various ways. Immediately after the Germans were stopped in Egypt, there was some tranquility. The official English circles were consistent in their optimistic attitude, ruling out, in conversations, the possibility of ceding Palestine. The panic of the local population is to a certain extent spreading to the refugees, who have been calmed down by the position of the Consulate General, the Polish posts, the press campaign of the 'Gazeta Polska' daily, and the Polish broadcasts in Jerusalem. The arrival of Minister Zażuliński on 2 July, accompanied by some employees of the Legation in Cairo, a group of refugees, and two trucks was widely commented on, making a depressing impression.¹⁰⁶

Today, Minister Zażuliński left for Cairo. The archive and radio station of the Legation remain at the Consulate General. Over a dozen refugees from Egypt were taken care of by the Delegation of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Korsak

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹⁰⁵ This is a reference to the defeat of the Allied forces by the German Army in the Battle of Mersa Matruh and the consequent temporary threat to the safety of Cairo.

¹⁰⁶ In the cable of 2 July 1942, the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Cairo, Tadeusz Zażuliński, informed: 'I thank you for the permission to carry out the evacuation ... I am evacuating the Legation to Palestine today and sending a note to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to inform them of the grounds for the evacuation, and entrust the building of the Legation to the Egyptian Government.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 111.

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*16 July 1942. Report by the Ambassador in Washington
on the talks regarding the attitude of the Polish authorities
towards persons of Jewish descent in the USSR*

16 July 1942

SECRET

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding the alleged discrimination against Jews
by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kuybyshev

In view of the interventions of Jewish organisations and frequent inquiries regarding the alleged discrimination against Jews during the distribution of aid by our Embassy in Kuybyshev, and on the basis of the information received from you and the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Kuybyshev, on 24 June of this year I held a strictly confidential conversation with the Board of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, requesting that they keep it strictly confidential, for, as I pointed out, any indiscretion at the moment could negatively influence the treatment of the Jewish population in the Soviet Union. I explained the bias of these allegations, assuring them that there is no differentiation when distributing the relief; I also explained that the Soviets have a policy of denying Polish Jews deported to Russia the right to Polish citizenship, and undoubtedly through their propaganda they are spreading this tendentious news of alleged discrimination in order to come between the Jewish circles and the Polish Government.

Our close associates of the Joint, who seem to me to have complete confidence in our fair treatment of Polish citizens of Jewish descent, have assured me that they believed in the truth of my arguments, and that, for their part, they are also of the same opinion that it is not necessary to speak openly at the moment in order not to facilitate the Soviet game; however, they will have to, quite carefully, for their part, explain the matter to their group, without mentioning the Embassy as a source of information.

Because of the rather widespread doubts in the Jewish circles, I saw it advisable to prepare a more comprehensive memorandum, without specifying its source; then, I invited Mr Morris D. Waldman, the Secretary-General of the American Jewish Committee, to the Embassy. As you are well aware, the American Jewish Committee is in fact the most powerful and reliable of Jewish organisations, and their confidential instructions are followed by all Jewish factions.

Mr Waldman very kindly travelled all the way from New York to meet with me. On 30 June, I had a more than one-hour long conversation with him, in which

I informed him in complete confidentiality of all the details of the current Soviet policy towards Polish Jews. Mr Waldman was familiar with certain details of the matter and told me that we should avoid communicating any details of the case to other Jewish organisations, which are unable to keep a secret. According to him, it was vital not to anger Soviet Russia and to only, via competent Jewish figures, elicit the Soviet statement as to their position—entirely outside Poland. It is only with regard to the answer provided by the Soviets to the question—why they were preventing Jews from leaving and not treating Jews equally like other Polish citizens—that the Jewish circles will consider a further action, which may either take the form of an open standpoint adopted in America, or of an intervention on the part of the American Government in defence of the rights of Jews. He promised to be in contact with me on that issue.

I enclose a copy of the memorandum I handed to Mr Waldman.¹⁰⁷

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹⁰⁷ Not included in this publication.

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*18 July 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Washington:
instruction on conveying the Government's declaration
to the protest rally of the American Jewish Congress*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 18 July 1942

No. 447

Receptus 299¹⁰⁸

I ask you to send a declaration to the Jewish rally on behalf of the Government, based on the following points:

I. The Polish Government ~~solemnly confirms~~ *has adopted the position it expressed in* a declaration made by the Prime Minister ~~in his address of~~ on 9 June¹⁰⁹ that no crime committed by Germans in Poland shall be forgotten in the final count. This obviously refers in equal measure to the vile crimes committed against Polish-Jewish citizens, against which the Government has issued public protests on numerous occasions. These crimes are well-known to the Government and are carefully recorded.

II. ~~The Government pays tribute to~~ *The Polish Government receives constant reports of* the heroic stance of the population in the country, who at the cost of immense sacrifices put up unyielding resistance against the German invaders, thus, contributing greatly to the war effort of the Allied powers. ~~The Jewish population also takes a distinguished part, a fact that the Government wishes to indicate~~ *All citizens participate, regardless of their religion and descent, in the resistance against our mutual enemy.*

¹⁰⁸ In the cable no. 299 of 16 July 1942, Ambassador Ciechanowski communicated: 'Rabbi Wise, the President of the American Jewish Congress, has informed us that on 21 July a mass protest rally against the Nazi terror against all nations, Jews in particular, will be held in the largest hall in New York by a major Jewish organisation. He asked me to obtain a declaration from the Polish Government to be read during the session, stating: I) that the Jewish victims of Hitler shall be avenged; 2) that Jews participate alongside Poles in the resistance against Germans; III) an expression of the trust that the civilised world will enable the Jews in Palestine to actively defend themselves. I believe that latter point to be directed against the British policy. I request a potential text in English by telegram in claris.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 247.

¹⁰⁹ Doc. 191.

III. Polish-Jewish citizens fighting against the German aggression either inside the country or in the ranks of the Polish Army abroad not only fulfil their civic duty towards their country, but also exercise the natural right of every Jew to participate in the fight against the merciless enemy of the Jewish nation.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 247

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20 July 1942. Note by the Legal Counsellor at the MFA from his conversation with the Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress

Note

On 18 July, I was invited to a breakfast by Mr Easterman, the Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress. The conversation shows:

(1) The World Jewish Congress demands to have an observer in the Inter-Allied Commission for the punishment of war crimes, due to the growing interest of the Jewish world in this issue.

I replied that we would be ready to discuss cooperation in exchange for mutual information on the atrocities; however, it does not seem possible to allow a non-state, and international organisation, all the more as the British Joint Foreign Committee and Agudat Israel have recently made the same demand.

Therefore, Mr Easterman will discuss the possibility of establishing closer information collaboration with the Inter-Allied Commission.

(2) I left the conversation with the impression that Mr Easterman, who is a close friend of V. Gollancz, is negative towards the Germans; he is critical of the activity of German Jews-emigrants, whom he accuses of even greater nationalism than that of Jews from other countries.

And speaking of Gollancz, whom he often sees, he told me that the former did not even himself believe in what he had been writing about the 'good' Germans, but that it was a difficult for him to withdraw from a position that he had held for a long time. He said that through a slow presentation of factual arguments one could influence such people in England, as they themselves had succumbed to the Weimar doctrine, etc. Therefore, I am sending him a range of available materials from 'Fight for Freedom', Borkenau, etc., which Easterman does not know of, and

he would like to delve deeper into the arguments of the Allies regarding the policy of the Second Weimar Republic in the period preceding Hitler's régime.

(3) As for the figures given of 700,000 Jews murdered in Poland, data originating from Mr Zygielbojm, Mr Easterman stated that the World Jewish Congress considered these to be grossly exaggerated, but that it would be difficult for him to withdraw from them, if for no other reason than because they were published in the press.

I stressed in response that this figure did not come from the Polish Government and that closer contact between us for the future would also have the advantage of preventing similar 'discrepancies in figures,' which in effect undermine the credibility of anti-German propaganda and are water to the mill of hostile propaganda, which is unnecessarily given the material to refute claims of atrocities committed in the occupied territories.

London, 20 July 1942

Dr Michał Potulicki

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 131

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*22 July 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Bombay
on Jewish refugees in India*

Polconsul—Bombay
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 22 JUL. 1942
RECEIVED ON 23 JUL. 1942

No. 78

Among the many Jewish families that had arrived in India last year in transit to Palestine, 11 families—altogether 21 persons—evaded departure under one pretext or another, usually as a result of trade relationships, in spite of numerous requests of the local government; therefore, the government issued an order for their compulsory eviction. However, it presented an alternative solution to the Consulate General: it would allow them to stay if the Polish Government included

them in the quota of 330 visas. The same goes for the remaining 21 persons out of the Burma group of 35. Please specify your position and instructions.¹¹⁰

Banasiński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

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[July 1942?]. Report by the former Head of the Delegation in Alma-Ata [?] to the Ambassador in Kuybyshev on the situation of the Jewish population in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

The Jewish matter in southern Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan¹¹¹

In the first post-amnesty period, many Jews began to leave places of their exile and moved from the north to the south, settling mainly in regional cities (Dzhambul, Chimkent), in district cities or, at worst, in settlements located next to railway stations. Their largest group in southern Kazakhstan settled in Dzhambul. In the Alma-Ata Region, the largest group is in Ily (over 500 persons). There are over 700 persons in the Frunze Region in the city of Stalinsk, over 1,900 persons in Osh alone in the Osh Region, and over 1,300 persons in the Jalal-Abad Region in the city of Bazar-Kurgan.

Up to 20% of Jews work in their learnt or related professions, mainly as doctors, dentists, feldshers, engineers, accountants, food store managers, salesmen, drivers, locksmiths, mechanics, joiners, barbers, tailors and seamstresses.

Up to 15% of Jews are manual workers in various factories, around 10% work as labourers in kolkhozes, and around 5% are manual workers in stores and harbours.

Up to 30% make a living from occasional trade (speculating).

¹¹⁰ In the cable of 5 August, the Minister of Foreign Affairs replied: 'We reserve a quota of 330 visas for Poles from Russia, and we would not like to diminish it by including Jewish families staying there. The Burma group found themselves in India through no fault of their own, and I request you to strive for their right to stay separately. Maybe the local authorities will also allow the Palestinian group to stay in addition to the quota. We are intervening at the Foreign Office along this line.' Then the MFA informed in the cable of 11 November 1942: 'The British authorities communicated that Jewish refugees with Palestinian visas have to leave India. The Burma group is allowed to stay as a part of the quota for India. Please inform whom it may concern.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 237.

¹¹¹ The report was probably written in July 1942 by Kazimierz Więcek, who was the Head of the Delegation in Alma-Ata until June 1942.

Others do not work, living on their own cash resources, selling their things or obtaining benefits from the Social Welfare.

I have heard about a settlement where only 3 out of over 100 Jewish people work and they have begun living on benefits only recently—until then, they made a living only from the food trade.

Speaking of the Jews' material situation, we must distinguish between three kinds of Jews:

- a) Jews evacuated due to the Soviet-German war in 1941,
- b) Jews released under amnesty from administrative exile and from settlements,
- c) Jews released under amnesty from Soviet camps and prisons.

Group a) is quite well-to-do—most importantly, 100% of these citizens received a job immediately, as they got to the South at the earliest date, when many jobs vacated by employees conscripted to the Army became available after the outbreak of the war.

These Jews, being in possession of Soviet passports and evacuation documents, regarded themselves as Soviet citizens at that time and enjoyed all rights and privileges available to the evacuated.

Group b) are Jewish citizens who arrived from exile in settlements—they are adequately protected in at least 70%. They even have material resources, often a stash of foreign currencies and possess many things that will enable them to survive the coming winter. Others from poor classes have already sold out their possessions and have no resources of this kind. They are forced to obtain means of subsistence through their wit. From among this population, only some of them have got a job or work, depending on local conditions, as manual workers or occasional traders. Part of the population does not work at all.

Group c), consisting of former prisoners (including camp prisoners), is in the same condition as Poles—they usually have no material resources. Some of them engage in physical labour, whereas others have no occupation—until quite recently, they wandered and speculated.

In some regions, the percentage ratio of Polish manual workers reaches 130%, as we must also include children older than 15 who usually work in kolkhozes. All of them usually fill their quotas or even seriously exceed them, e.g. in the Stalinsk or Kalininsk regions. On the other hand, not more than 30% of Jews living in kolkhozes work—but they do not fill the quota almost anywhere.

Material support from Social Welfare reaches Jews much faster than Poles. This must be attributed primarily to the fact that Jewish citizens settle usually in seats of Delegations or regional institutions or in kolkhozes most directly adjacent to the capital of the region or the railway station.

Thus, the percentage ratio of financial aid is almost always more favourable for Jewish citizens—the rates of benefits in cities are usually higher than in kolkhozes and are paid regularly, as it is easier to get the cash necessary for payments. The communication with kolkhozes, particularly more remote ones, is obstructed, so payments are made at a later date and it is often difficult to secure cash.

It is also worth mentioning that there is a large group of Jewish citizens among the personnel of delegations and institutions of trusted representatives.

They try to ensure that material support reaches Jewish citizens as quickly as possible.

From my own practice, I must report that the distribution of charity clothes brought to a region inhabited largely by Jewish citizens lasts not longer than 3 days; in a region inhabited by Poles, such distribution is much slower. This is caused also by the fact that Jewish citizens are more concerned about such matters—they visit institutions more frequently, because they can, and they are better at organising the distribution of charity gifts. The staffing of sanitary facilities in the south is almost entirely in the hands of Jewish citizens—both medical and auxiliary personnel—and medical aid and medicines are given to Jews in the first place because they are easier to reach. For example, organised outpatient dentist clinics serve only Jews almost everywhere, because they cannot reach kolkhozes.

When it comes to the distribution of charity clothes or food, we cannot say that the Jewish population is underprivileged; we could find it easier to prove that the Polish population is treated unjustly.

Distribution quotas are determined according to percentage, depending on the number of citizens living in the region concerned. This rule is usually followed strictly by Delegations. Aid is provided to working people in the first place. Here we can talk about some alleged injustice, as most of the working people are actually Poles. And then dissatisfied Jewish citizens able to work begin to strive for a departure from the rule and to prove that there are no jobs for them, or they obtain medical certificates of permanent or temporary disability for work and receive aid on this basis.

Apart from that, every requirement is easy to get around if you are smart or have proper connections, and Jewish citizens usually have these qualities.

If charity clothes recipient lists were to be collected from the Alma-Ata region alone, all complaints about the alleged injustice of Jewish citizens would cease immediately. I know, for example, that during the distribution of footwear in June, each woman received a pair of English shoes—none of the Jewish women were omitted.

The attitudes of Polish citizens of Jewish nationality towards Poland have changed fundamentally. In the initial period, all Jews from the group of Soviet passport holders without exception reported themselves as Polish citizens and

applied for registration in Polish institutions in order to receive a Polish passport as soon as possible. As a result of the delay in passport issuing and, in particular, repressions started against them by the NKVD, this group of Jewish citizens backed away from Delegations and institutions. They only try to obtain material support if possible—for the time being, they renounce Polish passports to avoid repressions. Only a small proportion of these people (around 10%) maintain their position and defend their citizenship and affiliation with Poland even at the risk of bearing consequences.

The remaining Jewish citizens hold on to the Polish state. Even their exclusion from service in the Polish Army did not affect their patriotism.

They are Polish citizens and emphasise this at every opportunity.

Even those who did not declare themselves as Polish citizens in settlements or prisons are currently Polish citizens.

This sometimes happens out of calculation, but I also had a lot of proof that some of them are driven by sentiment or really deep conviction. Is it true that the latter are few, but, after returning from the Soviet Union, I believe that many undecided people will change into dedicated citizens. Among some Jewish citizens, particularly from the working class, there is a large group working in Jewish circles as constant or occasional informers for the NKVD. They are not only informers, but also propagators among their tribesmates.

They disseminate various unproven information about antisemitic actions of the Polish Government, frequently talking about the renouncing of the Eastern Borderlands by Poland and about its resignation from national minorities from these territories in favour of the USSR.

At the same time, fulfilling the NKVD's instruction, others among them complain to foreign states about the unfair distribution of aid by Polish institutions. I have also heard about some cases when the NKVD acts as defenders of rights of our Jewish citizens. For example, when I talked to the NKVD of Kyrgyzstan, he pointed out several times that 'you do not take enough care of Jews', but that was said only to inform Jews that Delegations take care of Jews only thanks to the NKVD's intervention and pressure. There were also similar cases in local areas where heads of the NKVD summoned trusted representatives and warned that they would be repressed if they did not take care of the Jewish population. These interventions had a clear purpose!

When transports of Polish citizens of Jewish nationality not accepted by the Polish Army rolled through southern Kazakhstan, I was often informed that they had been interrogated by the NKVD, being ordered to repeat accurately the contents of conversations held with Jews by officers or NCOs of the Polish Army and the reasons for their non-admission to the Army that they had heard from them.

Did the NVKD not use such information subsequently for the dissemination of slogans about the 'antisemitism of the Polish Army' by means of propagators? They certainly did!¹¹²

During my work in the South, in comparison to last year and the first months of this year, I have noticed a significant increase of antisemitic attitudes among locals, particularly in the Osh Region in south-western Kyrgyzstan, where the Uzbeks live.

In April and May 1942, there were often situations when all Jews were removed from kolkhozes by force, being regarded as unwelcome elements who were reluctant to work and raised the prices, particularly of food products, by speculating.

This last argument is the most widespread one and undoubtedly contributed to the fact that in some kolkhozes, e.g. in the Jangy-Nookat district, in the Osh Region, the Uzbeks went to such lengths as attacking Jews and wounding them with knives. But, in such cases, the NKVD's intervention failed. My intervention as well the intervention of a trusted representative at the local NKVD did not help, if only because the Uzbeks are ruthless and do not care about the NKVD and the consequences. If Jewish families were removed from the kolkhoz, the NKVD's interventions did not help, because the kolkhoz did not accept them back!

In this context, during April, the Jewish population located in kolkhozes in the Frunze and Molotov districts diminished from the total number of over 2,000 persons to 700, as it was forced by the local Uzbeks to emigrate and settled in seats of these districts or in the neighbouring district of Fergana and Gorchakova. The NKVD even wanted to use repressions towards the Uzbeks, threatening to arrest many of them, but that was all, because the NKVD did not want to antagonise those locals whom the Soviet government had fought very recently, and in a very bloody manner.

Do delegations and trusted representatives in the South fulfil their obligations towards Polish citizens of Jewish nationality?

I assure you that they do. The Delegation in Alma-Ata often received collective gratitude from Polish citizens of Jewish nationality for aid granted to them. This gratitude was expressed to you for the Commander-in-Chief, General Sikorski—I brought one such letter and delivered it to the Social Welfare Department.

¹¹² In the cable of 28 April 1942, Ambassador Kot reported: 'A prominent American journalist warns that Soviet censors have approved information about the antisemitism of Poles for a few days now. Please keep a close eye on this and, should such reports be published, pass some truth about the treatment of Jews here and their despair. This will indirectly suppress this new tactic.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 240.

These letters had not been written on the Delegate's order or for winning his favour—those were real acts of gratitude from those who were satisfied with the way of organising aid for them, as I will not be wrong to say that it 'surpassed their expectations', as they often received much more than they had expected to.

And taking care of the sick Polish citizens of Jewish nationality staying in hospitals—sending food or medicine to them, ensuring even medical aid if our doctor was a specialist—efforts to ensure timely operations, etc.—did we not deserve letters of gratitude for this, even some written in half-jargon, but no less evidence that no Delegation of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland differentiates between anyone—just the opposite, it takes good care of all Polish citizens regardless of their nationality. Your instructions were not a dead letter, pigeonholed or kept in the desk. The Delegate kept them in his heart! And, in turn, he passed them to a trusted representative and required the same from him. And, therefore, the social welfare campaign was really effective.

Accidentally, among the records brought with me, I found a letter from a Polish citizen of Jewish nationality addressed to me. I enclose it as one of the pieces of evidence that relations between Delegations and our Polish citizens of Jewish nationality have been the best possible.¹¹³ Jews have received comprehensive care. They benefit from material aid at least as much as Poles do and they have no grounds for complaining about injustice.

In this respect, it would be necessary to publish periodic reports on the percentage of aid granted to Polish citizens of Jewish nationality in 'POLSKA.'

Such mentions, based on accurate statistical data that can be delivered by Delegations, will reassure the opinion of Polish citizens of Jewish nationality and may prove useful as a counter-argument against the campaign recently developing among Jews—and which the NKVD skilfully and deliberately foments—that aid does not reach Jews.

IPMS, Kolekcja Stanisława Kota, Kol.25/24

¹¹³ There is no attachment.

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*[July 1942]. Letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs
to a member of the National Council on the situation
of the Jewish population in occupied Poland (with enclosures)*

London, July 1942

Secret
ONLY FOR INTERNAL USE

Dr I. Schwarzbart

I would like to send you Part II of the report by the Government Delegate for the 1st quarter of 1942, with a request not to publish it without contacting me.

MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
S. Mikołajczyk

[enclosures]

...¹¹⁴

A N N E X

for the period from 16 till 21 March 1942

...

Jewish Matters.

Warsaw. In February this year, there were 4,618 deaths. The treatment of Jews in the General Government is getting harsher.

Kazimierz on Vistula. 17 Jewish men and women were executed for the production of counterfeit money.

Radom. On the night of 19 February, Jews were arrested in the ghetto due to the detection of a communist organisation. 17 Jews were executed on the spot, and 30 were taken away in an unknown direction.

¹¹⁴ The essential part of the report by the Government Delegate for Poland, describing the general situation in Poland under occupation, was omitted. The report included, among others, the 'Annex for the period from 16 till 21 March 1942' and the 'Annex for the period from 1 April 1942', whose extracts concerning the extermination of Jewish population are published in this document.

Lublin. Jews are transported in groups in an unknown direction, probably for execution. Savage things were done to a group of Jews brought to Puławy: for example, they were ordered to jump from the bridge into the Vistula (ice floes were floating down the river). Jews from nearby towns (Rembertów) are forced to go to Warsaw on foot. Those unable to keep up with the others on the march are killed on the spot. In early March, 18 Jews were killed near Warsaw for collecting wood in state forests. There are a number of incidents of Jews being killed on the spot if encountered outside of the ghetto area. On 26 March, in the backyard of the house at 15 Emilia Plater St., two gendarmes shot dead with a pistol one of the residents—19-year-old Włodzimierz Berson—as a Jew who does not live in the ghetto. When it later turned out that the victim's mother was German, the police told her it had been a misunderstanding and expressed their regret, but it was too late.

Mielec. In March, 1,400 Jews were deported.

Eastern Territories. Additional information.

In the last year, 2,000 Jews were murdered in Mir, 2,500 in Nowogródek, 1,800 in Wołożyn, 4,000 in Kojdanów. In December, 30,000 Jews were brought from Hamburg to Mińsk and all of them were executed.

And here is what we found out at the last minute: The slaughter of Jews in the Lublin region. In Lublin there were two ghettos: Jews working for Germans lived in the first ghetto, and non-working Jews lived in the second one. On the night of 24 March, at 11 p.m., the ghetto inhabited by non-working Jews was surrounded by Ukrainian troops—Soviet POWs who had gone over to the German side. Electric lamps were lit. The German police started pushing all the Jews towards the centre of the ghetto. All sick, infirm and lingering Jews were killed on the spot. The herded Jews remained in one place all day and night of 24 March. On the night of 25 March, they were herded to Kalinowszczyzna, the suburbs of Lublin, and loaded into wagons; after this, the wagons were sealed. Some of the Jews were transported to the Trawniki camp, and the rest were sent to the Bełżec camp. In camps, Jews are put to death by means of toxic gases. All 108 children from the orphanage, aged between 2–7, and all the patients from the epidemic and general hospital were either expelled or taken out of the city and executed. In total, 2,500 persons were killed on the spot (this number was reported by Germans to the Jewish Community Council). Altogether, around 26,000 persons were deported and murdered. The ghetto with working Jews is also at risk. For the time being, Jews staying in the infirmary were shot dead. In the same way, Jews are liquidated in cities in the Lublin region (Opole, Wąwolnica, Nałęczów, Biłgoraj). At the moment, the Warsaw Ghetto is under great threat; all local ghettos have already been liquidated, people were deported to Warsaw, where the intense activity of Ukrainian militia officers can be noticed, usually serving as a harbinger of new executions.

Mass executions of Jews in the Koło district.

In October 1941, the entire Jewish population of Konin district (around 3,000 people) was concentrated in Zagórow (Hinterberg). Previously, they had to pay the 'head tax' of 4 RM per person and submit to a medical examination. The examination covered men between the age of 14–60 and women between the age of 14–50, apparently being aimed at determining their disability of work, after which the 'eviction' phase started. Jews were taken away on trucks in groups of 60 people; everyone was allowed to take a parcel of 1 kg. The journey ended near the 'Kazimierz' forests¹¹⁵ in the area of Zagórow, where the Jews got off and were brought into the forest. From that time on, nothing was heard or seen of them anymore, and all searches by letter and messengers, both in the Reich and the General Government, gave no results. In the middle of December, similar displacements took place in the Koło (Warthebrücke) district. The point of concentration was Chełmno (Kulmhof). The whole Jewish population of Koło (2,000 people) and Dąbie on the Ner (1,000 people) was sent there (also upon collection of the head tax of 4 RM and medical examination); later, at the beginning of January, they were followed successively by Jews from Kłodawa (46—on 2 and 4 Jan), from Izbica Kujawska (45—on 6 and 9 Jan) and from Bugaj (16—on 9 Jan). From 15 January, groups of 'deportees' from the Łódź ghetto started to arrive in Chełmno; the first one comprised 750 families (around 3,000 persons). In this way, thousands of people of all ages and sex, including infants and old people, the sick and the healthy, passed through Chełmno. This village is situated 12 km away from Koło on the road to Dąbie on the Ner. The purpose of this deportation was officially not disclosed to deportees, but the Germans privately endorsed various versions: that a Jewish centre for the entire district will be created in Chełmno, that it is a stage of the resettlement operation to the Pińsk area or to Galicia, etc. However, the gendarmerie surely knew the actual purpose. The fate of people sent to Chełmno was completely unknown—there were only rumours of them being put in the local 'palace', transported in groups to the nearby Ladorudz forests and presumably executed there. However, in spite of the meticulous preparation and coordination of the entire operation by the Germans and precise conspiracy, the details of the operation are known today. The arriving groups were first directed to the church in Chełmno, where the Jews put their luggage, and then to the 'palace'—a single-floor dilapidated palace destroyed during the Great War. The whole area around the church was occupied only by uniformed and civilian Gestapo, and the surroundings of the palace were completely covered with gendarmerie in great force. There was no situation when two groups of victims would meet or when anyone else apart from the transported victims would be present on the premises. The arriving people were usually treated very kindly and

¹¹⁵ This is probably a reference to the Krązel forest, a place of execution of several thousands of Jews.

gently—others helped them get off the cart; one elderly German civilian (around 60 years old) appeared to be particularly friendly. The Jews were brought into a large, heated room laid with ladders like a bath. Stairs from this room led down to a corridor ending in a sort of ramp. Near this underground corridor, there is a group of cellar rooms. In this room, an SS officer and this elderly German gave a speech to the Jews. They announced that the entire group would be sent to the ghetto in Łódź, where men would work in industry, craft and trade, women in households and children in schools. However, they would have to undergo a bath and have their bodies and clothes disinfected before departure. Then they were ordered to get undressed—women down to their underwear and men to their undershirts and underwear—and to surrender their identity documents, valuables and money, because they might get destroyed. Eventually, all were led downstairs to the 'bath', or actually through the frosty corridor to the ramp. There the Germans started to behave differently; they drove the Jews into an execution vehicle with whips and the butts of their rifles. Scenes of extreme despair and wild fear began; Jews said their prayers, while screaming. The vehicle (there were two of them) was a big grey truck; tightly lockable rear doors closed them in hermetically. Inside the vehicle, walls were padded with sheet metal, the floor was laid with ladders, in the floor there were 15 cm pipe holes covered with a sieve. These pipes stretched out from a gas apparatus placed and operated in the driver's cab. After forcing the victims in and closing the vehicle hermetically, it went off to the forest located 7 km away towards Koło (driving distance of 15 minutes). On the left-hand side of the road, after 200 m of the cleared path, there was the place of execution: a glade surrounded by gendarmes with machine guns. Perpendicular to the path there was a 5 m deep pit; its width varied from 1.5 m at the bottom to 5 m at the top. On the ground there were around 30 Germans (gendarmes, SS officers and civilians) and 20–30 Jewish gravediggers stripped down to their shirts. The vehicle stood around 100 m away from the grave, the driver (being also the executioner) turned on the gas apparatus and left the vehicle. Both drivers were uniformed SS officers. There were stifled screams, cries and punches to the walls, but after a quarter of an hour, it was silent. Then the driver went into the driver's cab and, lighting a torch, looked inside the gas chamber through the glass. Upon ensuring that all victims were dead, he drove nearer to the grave and waited for 5 minutes. Then the SS officer managing the place of execution, characterised by wild sadism and nicknamed 'Bullwhip', because he always flaunted a bullwhip, ordered that the vehicle be opened. The pungent smell of gas was stinging. Eight Jewish gravediggers started to work: four threw the corpses out, two threw them into the pit, and two arranged them there. The interior of the vehicle was a terrible sight, although the dead looked natural, as if asleep, but everything was immersed in faeces, presumably as a result of the gas operation and wild fear. The burial was very brutal. Two German civilians checked each corpse for the remaining valuables. They tore rings from hands, chains from necks, pulled golden teeth out with pincers, checked if nothing had been hidden in the recta or sex organs (of women). Such desecrated and

plundered bodies were put side by side in the pit according to the instruction of an SS officer directing with a pine-tree branch. Each head was situated near the legs of the other corpse, and children were laid in free spaces. One layer comprised of around 200 corpses; when it was covered up, another layer was placed. From the middle of January, chlorine was also used for removing putrefying odours. 6–9 vehicles were buried every day. After thorough cleaning, the vehicle drove off. The Ladorudz forest was thickly surrounded by gendarmes, so the unfortunate gravediggers were the only witnesses. The latter stayed in the cellars of the ‘palace.’ At 7 a.m., they got barely-warm bitter black coffee and dry bread taken from packages left behind by transported Jews. Afterwards, the door locked with three locks was opened and the SS officer gave an order: ‘Juden raus,’ but he never entered the cellar, being afraid of acts of desperation. After checking the list several times, they were loaded into vehicles in the courtyard and carried to the place of execution. There they worked from 8.30 a.m. till dinner at 12.00 p.m. or 1.00 p.m. Then they got cold bitter coffee and frozen bread. Only eight occupied the grave and were not allowed to leave; they got only coffee there. Those eight were ordered to lie down in the grave with their faces towards corpses and one of the SS officers shot them in their heads with a machine gun. The rest backfilled the grave and returned to the cellar around 5 p.m. Sometimes, however, they worked in spotlights till late night (for example, during the burial of large transport groups from Łódź). From leaving the dungeon until returning, these gravediggers were uninterruptedly watched over by gendarmes and SS officers with loaded guns, and all signs of exhaustion were immediately punished with death or by flogging the naked body. Gravediggers often had to bury the corpses of their loved ones—for example, Ajzensztab from Kłodawa buried his wife and 15-year-old only daughter, Chrzastowski from Kłodawa buried his 14-year-old son, Wiener from Izbica Kujawska buried his parents and brother, Podchlebnik buried his parents, wife and two children, and Rozenthal buried his 60-year-old father. ‘Bullwhip’ (often drunk) tortured the gravediggers mercilessly. SS officers who came almost every day to watch the executions loudly expressed their appreciation and satisfaction to him. On 13 January, it happened that an infant in a pillow survived the gassing; it was killed immediately with shots from a machine gun. On the following day (14 January), a German cook got into the chamber by accident. In spite of his desperate cries, the door was not opened; only he was buried alone. Actually, it cannot be ruled out that he was deliberately executed as a witness; gravediggers say that all of them will be liquidated. In this cellar for gravediggers, in the darkness, frost and stench, there was a horrible mood filled with loud cries, despair and helpless rage. On top of that, guards forced them to sing and shout together, e.g. ‘Wir, Juden, danken Adolf Hitler für das Essen.’ There were countless attempts to escape, break windows and, primarily, pass information about what was happening in Chełmno. Letters were thrown into the chimney, out of the vehicle, etc. Eventually, three gravediggers managed to escape and tell the story. On the route of their escape, they received much heart and support from the Polish population.

The local Poles seem to understand that such a horrible fate may await them also. They say: 'They waste Jews and Gypsies in Chełmno—when they are finished with them, they will turn to us.' The group of Gypsies (around 2,000) brought from the Łódź ghetto were executed between 2 and 9 January. They were not stripped after death but buried immediately. There is a justified opinion that political prisoners from Yugoslavia executed as Gypsies were in Chełmno.

...

ANNEX

for the period from 1 April 1942

...

Jewish Matters. Murders of Jews.

...¹¹⁶

Izbica Lubelska. 19 March. SS officers and gendarmes arrived in the town and deported 1,000 Jews in an unknown direction. One week later, the rest of the Jewish population was deported (around 7,000 persons—altogether, more than 8,000 people). There is no doubt that the Jews from Izbica were also transported to the camp in Bełżec.

Rawa Ruska, Biłgoraj. Similar news about the mass extermination of Jews arrives from the towns where Jewish Communities simply ceased to exist.

Wąwolnica near Kazimierz on Vistula. On 22 March, cars with SS officers arrived. The Jews were assembled on the market square, and the execution began. 120 Jews died on the spot. The rest were moved outside the town and killed there.

Opole [Lubelskie]. 30 March. The Jews were driven to Nałęczów. 350 people were killed along the way. The rest were packed into wagons which were later sealed.

Mielec. (See Annex No. 28¹¹⁷—see details here). On 9 March, at 5 a.m., organised gangs led by local Germans started to throw all Jews out of their apartments. Many of them were shot dead on the street, and the rest were brought to aircraft hangars. Several hundred of them were transported to Chorzelów, 2 km away from Mielec, and executed. Around 80 were held as workers in the aircraft factory, around 480 were imprisoned in a penal camp in Pustkowie, and the rest were deported—supposedly, some of them to Polesia and some of them somewhere near Kyiv. Altogether, around 1,300 persons were killed. The liquidation of ghettos in towns

¹¹⁶ The 'Annex for the period from 1 April 1942' repeats a part of information (omitted here) about the liquidation of the ghetto in Lublin, which was included in the earlier 'Annex for the period from 16 till 21 March 1942.'

¹¹⁷ This is a reference to the 'Annex for the period from 16 till 21 March 1942' (published earlier in this document).

near Warsaw continues. The Jews are usually brought to the Warsaw Ghetto, but the Germans always take the opportunity to kill those who are elderly, crippled, sick, infirm, etc. The Jews are usually forced to go on foot; those who cannot keep up with others are killed. This is how Jews were liquidated in Rembertów, Miłosna, Zielonka, Okuniew or Pustelnik.

Marki. 26 March. 48 German and 24 Polish policemen surrounded the ghetto consisting of around 800 inhabitants. Around 10 sick or infirm persons were shot dead. In the presence of assembled Jews, the chairman of the Community granted 5,000 zlotys to the commanding German. The Jews were told to put their items in a pile, which was later set on fire. Then all of them were made to run to Grochów, and those who fell exhausted along the way were shot. There the rest of the items were taken away from the Jews and burned, and the Jews were packed into a tram that carried them to the ghetto. The Jews captured outside the ghetto without a pass are killed on the spot by the police.

Warsaw. 10 April. On 6 Sierpnia street, the German police captured a Jewish woman, dragged her to the backyard and shot her dead.

Sandomierz Region. The gendarmerie acts here in the same way as the Warsaw police does.

...

AYV, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/195

222

*1 August 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Embassy in Kuybyshev on the evacuation of Jewish political activists*

TO Polmission Kuybyshev
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 1 AUG 1942

No. 631

Caused by the Soviet position, the impossibility of military evacuation of Jews will presumably result in new Jewish attacks on us. ~~In order to keep them in check~~ The Prime Minister ordered General Anders to make efforts to include *at least* a small group of well-known Jewish activists and sent a list of endangered Bund activists.¹¹⁸ We will send this list separately to you, as well as indicative lists of other Jewish groups.

¹¹⁸ In the report of 6 August 1942, the Counsellor at the Embassy in London, Antoni Balański, stated: 'A member of the National Council, Mr Zygielbojm, once requested the

I request you to communicate with General Anders in order to help him arrange the evacuation of a few dozen prominent well-known Jews; please remember that it would be necessary to consider Zionists, Bundists, Orthodox Jews and revisionists. Please send me a return opinion if the implementation of this project is possible.¹¹⁹

Raczyński

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 241*

223

4 August 1942. Note by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the meeting of a member of the National Council with Jewish soldiers in Scotland

London, 4 August 1942

Note

Regarding Dr Schwarzbart's visit to the army

I requested Dr Schwarzbart to inform me about his observations from his stay with Jewish soldiers in Scotland.

Dr Schwarzbart's stay lasted five days, encompassing Falkirk, Dundee, Edinburgh and General Maczek's Brigade. In the military branches where he was

Embassy to obtain visas for one of the British possessions for a group of nine Bundists currently staying in the territory of Soviet Russia. The Embassy sent a relevant request to the Foreign Office, backing up its intervention with extensive explanations. In this matter, the Embassy received a reply from the Foreign Office indicating that the British Government finds it difficult to grant visas to this group of persons, particularly due to the difficulty in obtaining a Soviet exit visa by them. The Foreign Office suggests that they apply for American visas due to the interest shown in them by the Jewish Labour Committee in New York. The Embassy thinks that the Ministry will want to inform Mr Zygielbojm about the above state of affairs.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529*.

¹¹⁹ In another cable of 8 August 1942, addressed also to Henryk Sokolnicki at the Embassy in Kuybyshev, Minister Raczyński stated: 'In the current situation, I do not consider it worthwhile to submit a protest, particularly because it would be ineffective. However, the Government is even more concerned about the limited evacuation of endangered Jewish activists and children from nurseries. I send lists of Zionists, revisionists and Agudat via Staff to the Embassy and General Anders, to whom I also request that you communicate the list of Bundists already received by him. For the time being, I pass imprecise information about evacuation difficulties to Jewish organisations.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 241*.

a guest, Dr Schwarzbart delivered speeches about the situation in Poland and Poles in the USSR to Jewish soldiers and discussed the activities of the National Council and the Government. He stressed that he had been warmly received by the military authorities, which assigned an officer (Captain Skłodowski) to accompany him virtually anywhere for the period of his stay. As I concluded from our conversation, this captain controlled every move of Dr S. with his constant presence, thus restricting the freedom of conversation.

On the basis of his observations and conversations, Dr S. believes that antisemitism in the army does exist, although, as he stresses, flagrant antisemitic reactions are very rare. Taking the opportunity to ask questions, Jewish soldiers expressed their discomfort because of those individual antisemitic reactions in the army, which Dr S. observed particularly among Jewish volunteers who had arrived from South America. For example, he mentioned that when he was reading Dr Lachs's brochure about the ghetto,¹²⁰ one of Polish officers expressed his satisfaction with the situation of Jews in Poland presented in this brochure, or, in another part, one of the soldiers demanded the erection of a monument to Hitler for the extermination of Jews after the war. He said that relations are better in some formations and worse in others, but antisemitism exists in all of them, and the military leadership turns a blind eye to this.

He also noticed individual antisemitic reactions for which the army command is responsible. He told me about an officer's secret order indicating that masses of Jews join the Polish Army in Russia, manifesting excessive loyalty, and that they do this because they want the army to be their refuge. He also remarked that the leadership did not promote any Jew to the rank of second lieutenant, even though some Jews were entitled to this. He added that some military formations are completely inaccessible to Jews (e.g. communications). The command would like Jews to join the British army—otherwise, official military structures make it clear to Jews at every step that they are undesirable in the army.

Talking about the Government's overall policy in the Jewish matter, he said that he was losing the remnants of his illusions for the improvement of relations, as, despite its liberal facade, the Government's policy is aimed at a revisionist solution of which the Jews are well aware. He made it clear that he would attack in public the official signs of the command's antisemitism that he had observed in the form of a memorial to the authorities and on the forum of the National Council.

A. Serafiński

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A

¹²⁰ This is a reference to the brochure written by Manfred Lachs *Ghetto Warszawy. Fragmenty i cyfry*, issued in London in 1942.

224

*8 August 1942. Letter from the Prime Minister to the Adviser
to the US President on the situation of Polish citizens
of Jewish descent in the USSR*

August 8th, 1942

Mr. Averell Harriman

I receive most alarming telegrams from the American Jewry referring to the non-recognition of Polish citizens of Jewish origin residing in the USSR by the Soviet Government. The Jews properly appeal to me to defend their rights as Polish citizens. I never ceased to do it. But my interventions are of no avail in view of the negative attitude of the Soviet authorities, sometimes having all the aspects of deliberate sabotage.

I would be most obliged to you if, among other matters, you mentioned it in your conversation with M. Stalin. Knowing the extent of your mission, I attach to it the utmost importance and I would be grateful for your help in this problem, as part of the Polish-Soviet questions you are going to discuss. I am also asking the Polish Chargé d'Affaires to inform you as soon as possible of the actual position of Polish affairs in the USSR.¹²¹

SIKORSKI

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.69 (ENG)

¹²¹ The letter was sent in connection with Averell Harriman's trip to the USSR and his participation in the Second Moscow Conference (negotiations conducted between Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin and Harriman on 12-17 August 1942).

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*11 August 1942. Account by a policeman
on the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto*

11 August 1942

POLICEMAN'S ACCOUNT¹²²

The horrendous liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto is quickly advancing.¹²³ Out of the total number of Jews, amounting to approx. 400,000, altogether approx. 180,000 were deported by the 11th day of this month. On the 10th day of this month, the Jewish Community officially reported the number of deportees (160,000). (The normally reported ghetto population count—over 500,000 inhabitants—is fictitious and results from the fact that the Jewish Community reported a bigger number of Jews than is actually in the Ghetto in order to acquire extra food stamps: there would be approx. 150,000–200,000 such stamps in circulation).

It was said that the Jews employed in factories on the ghetto premises and living with families within the walls surrounding factory buildings and a certain number of houses inhabited only by workers and their families would not be liquidated. However, half of the Jews have already been taken away from one such 'factory ghetto.' Even the Board of the Jewish Community was notified by the German authorities that it had too many officers and half of them would have to report for 'deportation.'

¹²² The policeman's account was sent to the Government-in-Exile in London as one of the attachments to the report of the Department of Information of the BIP KG AK regarding the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto (doc. 237).

¹²³ The note by Antoni Szymanowski from 13 August 1942, entitled 'Materials for the BBC', a part of which concerned the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, informed: 'It has lasted at an increasing pace since 22 July. Until now, several thousand persons have been killed on the spot, and more than 150,000 have been deported to the extermination camp. The quota of the deportees has been increased to 15,000 a day since 6 August. Old and disabled people are subject to ruthless liquidation—80 corpses a day; on 4 August, all children from orphanages were deported. Transport groups are divided outside Warsaw; some of them, consisting of men, are directed eastwards to perform minefield cleaning and earth works, whereas others (most of them), consisting of women, children and old people, are exterminated in four places: Czerwony Bór near Ostrołęka, Bełżec, Sobibór on the Bug and Treblinka. In Warsaw, only employees of workshops operating for the Germans and—for the time being—the personnel of the Jewish Community and its agencies remain. During street shootings, no evidence of employment is respected. The grim slaughter of a few hundred thousand people has lasted for three weeks—not only without any hope for the end, but also with the complete silence of the BBC and the opinion of the world.' AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/III/28, t. 5.

The 'small ghetto', inhabited by around 40,000 Jews, was almost entirely liquidated on 10 August at 6 p.m.

Approx. 8,000—10,000 Jews a day have recently been deported from the ghetto. Even children from poorhouses are deported; they are often unable to walk by themselves, so they are loaded onto carts. Conditions are so horrible that many of those children do not reach the railway wagons alive.

Street 'hunting' also accelerates the liquidation of the Jews. Whenever Gestapo men and 'White Guards' (i.e. Bolshevik POWs who have gone over to the German side) notice larger groups of people on the streets, they run them down using vehicles such as rickshaws driven by Jews and then shoot at them with light machine guns. During the day, 30–40 Jewish corpses often lie on one street.

Jews are designated for deportation by the Jewish Community, and the delivery of this 'quota' to the Germans is carried out by the Jewish police (not having any armament except rubber truncheons), which displays great zeal in this horrendous action. There is a genuine case when a Jewish policeman brought his own mother, explaining to her that the quota must be filled and if she did not go, he would have to report for deportation himself and it would be better for her to meet her fate more quickly.

The activity of the Jewish police is supervised by the Gestapo (there should be only around 10 in the ghetto) and the White Guards (50 of them). Outside the ghetto, the walls are guarded by Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians, who shoot at the windows of Jewish houses if anyone appears there. They are not allowed to enter the ghetto premises under the penalty of death. In the ghetto there is also a Polish Police Station, but Polish policemen have nothing to do with the liquidation of the ghetto. The fact that the invader did not use the Polish Police for this purpose certainly proves their lack of trust in the Polish Police, resulting from the attitude of the entire Polish society.

What is striking, is the total, almost pathological passivity of all Jews, the lack of any desperate reactions whatsoever. The mental breakdown has become so deep that while many Jews tried to hide in the beginning, now many of them report for deportation voluntarily, wanting death to come as quickly as possible. None of the Jews doubt that the ultimate goal is to exterminate the deportees. Cases of suicides among the Jews are numerous. So, for example, in one of the 'emptied' houses, the door of one of the apartments was closed and you could feel the light gas flowing from inside there. Inside there are the corpses of those who committed suicide. In one of the apartments, a dead Jewish woman lies on the bed, with a tube of barbital beside her.

Many Jews have lost their senses. One Jewish woman walks around day and night (obviously without having a pass) and... looks for her child, cursing Germans out loud. The Germans 'generously' spared a bullet for this woman.

Due to the total prevention of illegal trade, there is hunger in the ghetto. The price of one kilogram of bread costs approx. 70 zlotys, but they often offer a watch for a loaf and a top-class gold watch for two loaves. On the other hand, in houses of deported affluent Jews, there is butter and cold cuts in cupboards, and wardrobes are full of expensive underwear and clothes—everything left to its fate.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.73/4, cz. 2

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*11 August 1942. Protest by Zofia Kossak-Szczucka
regarding the extermination of the Jewish population in occupied Poland*

PROTEST!

In the Warsaw Ghetto, behind the wall separating them from the world, a few hundred thousand condemned are awaiting death. There is no hope of rescue for them, no one comes to help them. Torturers run through the streets, shooting at anyone who dares to leave the house. They also shoot at anyone who is standing by the window. Unburied corpses lie scattered in the streets.

The daily required number of victims is 8,000–10,000. Jewish policemen are required to deliver them to the German executioners. If they fail to do this, they will die themselves. Children unable to walk by themselves are loaded onto carts. The loading is done so brutally that hardly any child reaches the ramp alive. Mothers watching this go mad. The number of those mad with despair and horror equals the number of the executed.

On the ramp, railway wagons are waiting. The tormentors push the condemned into them, with 150 people per wagon. The floor is covered with a thick layer of lime and chlorine covered with water. The wagon door is sealed. Sometimes a train starts immediately after loading, sometimes it stands on the siding for a day or two... No one cares about them anymore. The people are packed in so densely that the dead cannot fall and still stand arm to arm with the living, the people dying slowly in the fumes of lime and chlorine, deprived of air, drops of water and food—and so no one will remain alive. Wherever and whenever the deadly trains arrive, they will contain only corpses...

A quick death would be a liberation from this suffering. The torturers took this into account. All pharmacies in the ghetto were closed so as not to supply poison. There are no weapons. The only thing that remains is to leap from a window onto

the cobblestones. Actually, many of the imprisoned escape from their executioners in this way.

The same things as in the Warsaw Ghetto have been happening in a hundred other smaller and larger towns and cities. The total number of Jews killed has exceeded one million and increases every day. Everyone is dying. The rich and the poor, the elderly, women, men, youth, infants, Catholics dying with the Name of Jesus and Mary as well as Old Believers. Their fault was that they were born into the Jewish nation which was doomed to annihilation by Hitler.

The world looks at this crime, more horrendous than anything that history has seen—and says nothing. The slaughter of millions of defenceless people takes place amidst general, sinister silence. The executioners remain silent and do not boast what they do. Neither England nor America speaks up; even the influential international Jewry, which used to be so sensitive to every injustice done to their people, remains silent. And so do Poles. All that is done by Polish political friends of Jews is to publish journalistic notes, and Polish enemies of Jews show no interest in a matter alien to them. The perishing Jews are surrounded only by Pilates washing their hands.

This silence cannot be tolerated any longer. No matter what the reasons for it are, this silence is a disgrace. We cannot remain passive towards crime. Whoever is silent about crime, becomes an accomplice of the murderer. Whoever does not condemn crime, allows it to happen.

Therefore, we, Catholic Poles, speak up. Our feelings towards Jews have not changed. We still regard them as political, economic and ideological enemies of Poland. Moreover, we realise that they hate us more than the Germans, that they hold us responsible for their misfortune. Why, on what basis—this remains the mystery of the Jewish soul, but it is a constantly confirmed fact. However, the awareness of these feelings does not release us from the duty of condemning this crime.

We do not want to be Pilates. We have no chance to act against the German crimes, we cannot help or save anybody, but we protest from the depths of our hearts, filled with compassion, indignation and dread. This is what God, God who did not allow people to kill, demands from us. And what Christian conscience demands. Any being calling itself a human has the right to brotherly love. The blood of the innocent cries out to heaven for vengeance. Whoever does not support this protest with us, is not a Catholic.

We also protest as Poles. We do not believe Poland could benefit from German atrocities. Just the opposite. In the stubborn silence of the international Jewry, in efforts of German propaganda trying to put the odium on the slaughter of the Jews on Lithuanians and... Poles, we feel that a plot is being planned against us. We also know how poisoning the seeds of crime can be. The compulsory participation of

the Polish nation in this bloody show, which is taking place on Polish soil, can breed indifference to the wrongs, the sadism and above all the sinister conviction that one can kill one's neighbours and go unpunished.

Whoever does not understand this, whoever would dare to combine the proud, free future of Poland with the despicable joy over the misfortune of his neighbours, is therefore neither a Catholic, nor a Pole!¹²⁴

FRONT FOR THE REBIRTH OF POLAND

www.polona.pl (previously published)

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*14 August 1942. Letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Embassy in Kuybyshev on granting aid
to rabbis and students of rabbinical schools in the USSR*

14 August [194]2

Mr Stefan Gacki
Head of the Care Department
Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Kuybyshev

The Union of the Rabbis from Canada and the United States and representatives of rabbis from Poland wrote to the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in the matter of granting aid to rabbis and students of rabbinical schools deported to Russia.

They provided the following addresses:

- 1) Naftoli Lejbowicz and 80 persons, Obiatchewo Priluskago Raiona, Molotov Kolkhoz, 106 Kmoy ASSR,
- 2) Izrael Mowszowicz and 65 persons, Merke Djambulski Oblast,

¹²⁴ The protest was issued in conspiracy and distributed in the form of a brochure-poster in occupied Poland. It was also communicated to the Government-in-Exile (in post brought across the border by Polish couriers in November 1942). Its extracts were used in the speech by Deputy Prime Minister Mikołajczyk on 27 November 1942 (see doc. 286); it was also published in a censored version in the Polish emigrant press.

3) Jacob Zaretski, Josel Lenczewski and 15 persons, Merke Djambulski Oblast, Kolchoz Djambul KSSR,

4) Abraham Trop, Józef Niewinianski and 30 persons, Djizak Samarkand, poste restante,

5) Berish Weidenfeld, Solim Lejbowicz and 30 persons, Bukhara USSR, c/o Zelman Rozenfeld Urickoho 7,

6) Jochel Michel Joselewski and 30 persons, Tchimkent Kazakhstan, poste restante.

Organisations of the rabbis are concerned about the fate of the aforementioned persons, and state that they are loyal Polish citizens and ask for continued assistance to them and for granting a monthly benefit to them.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that this matter be handled and remarks that it is politically significant. For the same reasons, the Ministry requests that a telegraphic reply be sent upon receipt of this letter for the purpose of passing it to organisations in America.¹²⁵

FOR THE MINISTER
HEAD OF THE CARE DEPARTMENT

...¹²⁶

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/1

¹²⁵ In the cable of 29 September 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs requested of the Consulate General in Jerusalem: 'In connection with the telegram of the Union of Polish Rabbis to the Prime Minister concerning the small number of rabbis evacuated from Russia, I request that you explain the well-known differences on a confidential basis, assuring that the Government is making all possible efforts for the further evacuation of rabbis.' In the cable of 24 November 1942, he added: 'The Union of the Rabbis in America asked the Polish Government for help in obtaining Palestinian visas for rabbis and rabbinical students from Russia. Please communicate with the Jewish Agency in this matter and support its potential efforts.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239. See doc. 311.

¹²⁶ Illegible signature.

228

*15 August 1942. Cable from the Government Representative in Vichy
on the deportation of persons of Jewish descent from France*

Polmission—Vichy¹²⁷

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 15 AUG. 1942

RECEIVED ON 5 SEP. 1942

Secret

No. 76

Refero No. 75¹²⁸.

They inform me that the French Government would agree to the release of 10,000 foreign Jews from the free zone, allegedly to be taken from isolation camps for work in Germany. In practice, these should be particularly Polish and stateless Jews. I energetically intervened with Bressy in this matter, particularly stressing that this would be a breach of the previously observed principle of non-release of any foreigners against their will to the Germans, and I pointed out the consequences of this kind of situation among the Polish masses, so loyal and calm until then. B. told me frankly that the Quai d'Orsay had currently no influence on the decision of the French Government and that it learnt about similar orders post factum. He personally heard only about the decision on internment in camps, resulting from German demands, of all Jews who had arrived in France after 1936. The relevant

¹²⁷ After the liquidation of the Polish Bureaux in France (transformed into Polish Administration Bureaux in France, forming a part of the French administration), Stanisław Zabięło remained as an unofficial representative of the Polish Government in Vichy. In December 1942, Zabięło was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in a concentration camp.

¹²⁸ In the cable no. 75 of 15 August 1942, the Government Representative in Vichy wrote: 'The intensity of the antisemitic action being conducted in the zone occupied by the French police upon the Germans' demand is increasing. There are mass arrests and deportations for work to Germany ... During manhunts, children were taken away from their mothers in many police stations in Paris, which led to very frequent suicide cases. Virtually all Jews are required to wear special badges. The persecutions so far do not encompass Belgian, Dutch, Soviet and American Jews and, in general, all those Jews who are legally protected by neutral states. The number of Polish Jews and stateless persons deported from the arrondissement of Paris is estimated at 40,000. Merciless treatment and persecutions arouse common indignation among the population directed both against the Government and against the invaders. We can still observe the mass escape of the Jews to the free zone, where they are directed to isolation camps by the police.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246.

decree was formally issued in 1940, but in practice, those who were interned in camps as a result of its implementation have recently been released for controlled stay. Apart from that, the Germans demanded the release of Jews from the former German Reich and Austria staying in France, which was probably carried out.

They inform me that Lowrie, the President of the American YMCA, intervened in the matter of the threat to Jews in the free zone with Pétain, who would say that he could do nothing about that, and with Laval, who said that he intended to save French Jews from additional German demands through an action aimed against foreign Jews.

Zabiełło

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246*

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21 August 1942. Report by the Government Representative in Vichy on the deportation of Jews from the territory of France

Châtel-Guyon, 21 August 1942

SECRET

TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

To complete the information communicated in telegrams No. 75 and 76¹²⁹ on the operation of deportation of persons of Jewish descent from the occupied zone that has started here, I report that on the 23rd inst. they are to be concentrated in assembly points, from where they should depart to the east. According to current information, the deportation of Jews should encompass men from the age group of 18–55 of German, Polish, Czechoslovak, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Danzig, Soviet nationality, and White Russians and stateless persons in general. Women and children are to stay, at least for the time being. The deportation covers basically everyone who arrived in France after 1 January 1936, regardless of whether they have retained their former citizenship or the status of a stateless person, or they have been naturalised in the meantime; according to the latest supplementary information, I learn that the criterion of the date of arrival in France has become stricter and has been shifted to 1 January 1933.

¹²⁹ Previous document.

The technical aspects of preparations, the selection and elaboration of relevant lists have been entrusted to the Service Social des Etrangers, and the whole matter is handled by the local Ministry of Internal Affairs. During the arrangement of the rules of the preparatory operations, heads of administrative units in question showed a clear tendency to the limitative treatment of this issue as a whole, which is harshly and almost openly criticised by a number of senior clerks of central administrative departments. First of all, it was agreed that the deportation would cover basically Jews grouped in civil camps under the administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and foreign labour battalions (Groupes des Travailleurs Etrangers); at the same time, a list of categories of Jews from both the aforementioned groups to be automatically excluded from deportation was determined. These include, e.g. former soldiers fighting in the years 1914–1918 or 1939–1940, if they spent at least three months on the front or were wounded. Some professional categories, e.g. miners or doctors, as well as fathers of more than two children born in France, intellectuals or sick people, are also included.

SSE officials are to compile two lists at each point, the first: all Jews of a particular camp or centre by category, some of which, such as the aforementioned ones, are not subject to automatic deportation, and a second list of Jews leaving their families in camps. It is envisaged that, at the time of transport, the latter should be placed in a separate compartment or car at the end of the convoy, as it is said that attempts are being made to exclude them from release, and we can also presume that these arrangements are supposed to make it easier for them to escape.

As far as I know, apart from registration clerks, the SSE's management intends to send trusted clerks to the camp with the task of ensuring that deportation orders are implemented in practice in a limitative manner as far as possible and that relevant instructions are strictly followed in favour of persons concerned.

Those selected for deportation will receive food for 5 days, and they are allowed to take their personal belongings as well as work clothes and shoes that they received from the camp or company authorities. They may also take any amount of cash or deposit it against receipt with the SSE's employees.

I also know that, irrespective of this operation being scheduled for the end of August, around 3,500 Jews, foreigners or naturalised persons who escaped from the occupied zone to avoid persecutions have already been referred to assembly points and are to be deported soon. It is believed and said here—although this information is unverified—that these Jews, both from the occupied zone and the free zone, were to be deported not to Silesia, where only distribution points are located, but farther towards the east; namely, their ultimate destination would be

Bessarabia, where large numbers of Jews from various European countries are said to have been gathered recently.¹³⁰

As I have briefly mentioned above, the whole issue of releasing Jews to the Germans has caused a great deal of agitation and a number of senior clerks of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the SSE openly manifest their critical attitude by claiming that if they are not resigning, this is because they intend to sabotage the authorities' orders; I have also heard about similar signals and declarations from some provincial prefects and sub-prefects. Moreover, this state of sentiment in this particular case is linked to the general attitude that is beginning to spread in a number of ministries: the obvious dislike for the Presidium of the Council of Ministers. These clerical circles have recently been questioning more and more often the current course of internal policy by Laval and his closest collaborators, whom they consider to be approaching strict totalitarianism more and more explicitly. Anyway, we can objectively say that the *Présidence du Conseil* quickly begins to play an increasingly outstanding role on a supra-department scale in political life. It is becoming the relevant decision centre to an increasing extent, which obviously reduces other ministerial departments to a purely executive role.

REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND IN FRANCE
S. Zabiełło

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹³⁰ In the cable of 3 September 1942, the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern, Aleksander Ładoś, reported: 'From a representative of the YMCA in France, we received a report on planned deportations of foreign Jewish citizens (usually Polish ones) to Poland. Until 20 September, 20,000 persons, including a large group of former soldiers, are to be deported, against which Y. is organising a protest addressed to French military authorities and asks us to support it—report by courier.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 236.*

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*24 August 1942. Petition of Jewish refugees in Jamaica
to the Prime Minister of Great Britain*

Gibraltar Camp 2, 24th August 1942

To The Honourable Prime Minister
Sir Winston CHURCHILL
LONDON

Excellency,

Owing to an agreement between the British and Polish Governments a group of Polish refugees of Lisbon, coming from all parts of Europe, fleeing before the invader, was brought to Jamaica, into Gibraltar Camp Kingston.¹³¹

While a world war rages and hecatombs of victims fall, we young people, wanting to fight and to work and able to be useful through our technical and branch knowledges are here in complete spirit- and health-killing inactivity, in Gibraltar Camp.

After three years, fleeing from the terrors of the flaming Europe, trying to save ourselves and ours from Nazis and Fascist concentration camps we are now on the English territory, where we wish to give all our possible efforts of our technical and branch knowledges for our common cause.

We would have considered ourselves as parasitical individuals if we were not conscious that we are leading these camp-lives absolutely against our own will.

¹³¹ In the letter from 5 June 1942, the Deputy Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Waclaw Babiński, informed the Consul General in London Karol Poznański: 'As you know, a hundred and a few dozen Polish refugees were evacuated from Portugal to Jamaica at the beginning of this year. In April this year, the Ministry received a letter from one of these refugees (Mr Szyja Rosenbaum, 2 Camp Gibraltar, Kingston), who informed on behalf of the refugees that they were making efforts to leave Jamaica and had all data indicating that these efforts would be successfully accomplished. At the same time, Mr Rosenbaum, stating that a number of the aforementioned persons had passports that would become invalid soon, requested us to specify which foreign post of the Republic of Poland would prolong the validity of these passports. ... In agreement with the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Washington, the Ministry entrusted the fulfilment of the aforementioned functions with regard to Polish citizens in Jamaica to the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Havana. The Ministry also informs that the issue of taking care of Polish citizens in Jamaica has been arranged with the Foreign Office in such a way that the Governor of Jamaica will submit reports in this matter to the British Government, which will communicate them to the Government of Poland.' IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A 42/364.

But our conscience do not leave us in peace; others fight and die; others work and help, and we live in uselessness.

We feel very depressed, particularly now, as the war seems to reach crisis point and when useful strength is more and more necessary.

In our despair and helplessness, we decided to address ourselves to you and through your Excellency to the Canadian Government, to deliver us and our families Canadian visas. In Canada we will put ourselves at the governments disposal, some for active service, others for warwork.

Awaiting your soonest favorable answer, we thank you in anticipation and remain

Yours faithfully¹³².

TNA, CO 323/1846/6 (ENG)

¹³² The names of signed persons were omitted. In the cable of 11 November 1942, the Legation of Great Britain in Lisbon informed the Foreign Office: 'Polish Legation have once again appealed for assistance in evacuation of Jewish refugees. Of the 250 Poles at present in Portugal, some 120 are Jews, some 50 having entered the country illegally. These Jews have nearly all come to Portugal since the departure of the last batch for Jamaica. Arrangements for evacuation of other Poles are, apparently, proceeding fairly satisfactorily, but the Jews present a problem because of lack of destination. Polish Legation enquire whether there is any possibility of providing asylum for those 120 Jews, in Jamaica or elsewhere, and others who may arrive in due course, legally or illegally, up to a total of about 250 souls. Polish Legation attach importance to the matter, as they anticipate that considerable number of Poles will now try to escape illegally from France to Portugal and they consider that attitude of Portuguese Government towards such illegal refugees will be affected by number of Polish refugees already in Portugal, of whom Jewish refugees constitute the hard core.' TNA, CO 323/1846/6 (ENG).

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*25 August 1942. Letter from the Head of the Office
for Military Families' Affairs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on giving aid
to persons of Jewish descent in France (extracts)*

London, 25 August 1942

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
to Director J. MARLEWSKI
at the same address

In non-occupied France, there are seven military families of Jewish descent, namely:

1) OSIUK Szajna ...;¹³³ 2) BREGMAN Emilia ...; 3) KURLAND Fajga ...; 4) EPSTEIN Estera ...; 5) SZENWALD Balbina with her grandson Krymer Marek ...; 6) HANDEL Estera Rebeka ...; 7) FINDER Gizela ...

Since the aforementioned persons may be surrendered to the Germans because of their descent, I request that you use all of your influence so that the aforementioned persons could receive Portuguese visas out of turn and get to Lisbon as soon as possible.

All of the aforementioned persons already have British entry visas and paid tickets for a flight from Lisbon to Great Britain.¹³⁴

Acting as HEAD OF THE MILITARY FAMILIES BUREAU
SIKORSKI
Lieutenant Colonel

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹³³ The address data was omitted.

¹³⁴ The MFA handed over this case to the Envoy in Lisbon, who replied in the letter from 10 November 1942: 'In connection with the letter from the Ministry from 3 September 1942, No. 738/Z.F./42 regarding seven military families of Jewish descent and further to its letter from 18 October 1942, No. 755/70, the Legation reports as follows: Mrs SZENWALD, Balbina with her grandson KRYMER, Marek have already arrived in Lisbon. Mrs FINDER, Gizela is still making efforts to obtain a French exit visa. The Legation has no information about the result of these efforts. Mses BREGMAN Emilia, HANDEL Estera Rebeka, KURLAND Fajga and OSIUK Szajna have received Portuguese visas. However, the Legation does not know why they have not arrived in Portugal yet. Only in the case of Mrs EPSTEIN, Estera did all efforts of the Legation to get in touch with her fail, because her reported address turned out to be incomplete.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529.

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*26 August 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs:
the statement of the Prime Minister
on the anniversary of the outbreak of the war*

TO Polconsul JERUSALEM
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

No. 343

Receptus 61 from Tel Aviv¹³⁵

I report the statement of the Prime Minister for 1 September:

‘It is right that, on the third anniversary of the treacherous invasion of Poland by the Germans, the Polish Jews in Palestine are gathering to protest against unprecedented German atrocities in Poland that affect also Polish citizens of Jewish descent on such a huge scale.

Only the joint decisive victory of the united nations over Germans will resurrect a huge and democratic Poland in which all citizens will have equal obligations and equal rights and which will ensure bread and work to the broadest masses.’¹³⁶

Sikorski
Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239

¹³⁵ In the cable no. 61 of 14 August 1942, Consul Rosmarin reported: ‘I request that you ask the Prime Minister to send me a telegraphic statement for the 1st day of September 1942, in connection with the proclamatory demonstrations, and in Palestine—as the “Day of Polish Jews”. These demonstrations will be a protest against German atrocities in Poland and a demand for a great, powerful and democratic Poland.’ He then reported in the cable of 3 September: ‘The statement of the Prime Minister sent to me ... had a huge resonance here. The whole English and Hebrew press without exception quoted the statement in its full wording ... and the assembly of many thousand people in Tel Aviv, upon reading the statement, passed unanimously a resolution expressing sincere thanks to the Prime Minister and unfailing faith in the victory of Poland.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

¹³⁶ Also on 31 August 1942, the Prime Minister sent a dispatch ‘for the NEW JEWISH YEAR’ to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency with the following message: ‘Every day we receive information about the terrible persecutions of Jews in Poland. Tens of thousands die in ghettos, and tens of thousands are massacred by the invader. We are waging the current war against the Axis powers so that similar crimes could never occur again in the future. So that the human being would be free of the threat of war and have adequate conditions for a peaceful and fair life. In line with its tradition, Poland takes on active part in this fight. Sending best wishes to the World Jewry on the occasion of New Year’s Day, I express my deep faith in the complete victory of the Allies and in the ultimate triumph of justice and order over violence.’ IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A.

233

*27 August 1942. Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Washington
on the situation of Jewish refugees in Jamaica*

London, 27 August 1942

Confidential Urgent

To the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
in Washington

I confirm the receipt of your telegram regarding the Joint's complaints about the inadequate treatment of Polish-Jewish refugees in Jamaica¹³⁷ and state the following:

A few weeks ago, both the MFA and other ministries received petitions from Jewish refugees from Jamaica for their transfer to other countries, particularly the United States. The Jewish refugees complained that they had no freedom of movement, that they could not take up any employment and that those who have target visas are prevented from leaving Jamaica. Jewish organisations also intervened at the Ministry in this matter.

I notified the Foreign Office about complaints made by Jewish refugees in Jamaica, proposing that they be given more freedom of movement and allowed to take up employment, and that those who had obtained target visas could leave the country more easily. The FO replied that Jewish refugees had been accepted by Jamaica on condition that they would be put in a camp with a limited freedom of movement and that they would not seek employment on the spot, which is consistent with reality. Nevertheless, the Foreign Office requested the Governor of Jamaica to consider kindly the proposal for more freedom of movement for Polish citizens and for allowing them to work. As far as individuals having further target visas are concerned, the Governor of Jamaica will not make it difficult for them to leave the country, and the British authorities requested that names of these persons be disclosed to them. Until now, Jewish organisations could not provide

¹³⁷ In the cable of 21 August 1942, Ambassador Ciechanowski reported: 'The Joint points out the dissatisfaction of refugees staying under guarantee in Jamaica. There are around 160 of them. They complain about the lack of the freedom of movement, the prohibition to perform paid work, unfriendly treatment by the camp commander—a black officer. They make it difficult to leave, even for those with visas to the United States. The Joint suggests that the Polish Government should arrange their transfer to Canada.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529.

the Ministry with any name of a person holding an entry visa to the USA or Latin American countries.

According to the information provided by the MFA, the refugee element in Jamaica, apart from a few people, is not positive. This may be the cause of their claims and complaints. They found it difficult to obtain any visas during their stay in Portugal, so the Polish authorities felt forced to seek an asylum in British territories for them in order to create the possibility of obtaining Portuguese visas for valuable groups from France. This whole group lived outside Poland before the war, and most of them do not speak Polish and were loosely connected to Poland. For these reasons, it would be quite difficult for me to follow the Joint's suggestion for seeking an asylum for the whole group in Canada, particularly in view of the absolutely negative attitude of the Government of Canada towards the acceptance of further groups of Polish-Jewish refugees.

I wish to stress that complaints and exaggerated claims of Jewish refugees in Jamaica discourage the local authorities from accepting further groups of Polish citizens and make it difficult for us to put a batch of Jewish refugees from Tangier in J., which is currently valid due to the concern that the Spanish authorities may surrender them to the Germans. Currently, their registration in Tangier is under way. The MFA notified Jewish authorities about these instances, and they promised to try to put a hold on complaints from Jewish refugees in Jamaica.

I leave the decision to communicate these instances to the Joint in confidence up to you.

However, in connection with the Joint's intervention with you, I will contact the FO again in the matter of the position of Jewish refugees in Jamaica.

MINISTER
/-/ *E. Raczyński*

Please request that the Envoy in Cuba travel to Jamaica in order to check this situation. In the case of a positive decision, the trip would have to be agreed upon with the FO.¹³⁸

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹³⁸ See doc. 387.

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31 August 1942. Letter from the Counsellor at the Embassy in Washington to the Consul General in New York on information from the Legation in Bern about the extermination of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto

31 August 1942

SECRET

To Minister Sylwin Strakacz,
Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

The Embassy gives below the content of the dispatch received from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern:

From Sternbuch for Jacob Rosenheim, 817 West End Avenue, New York City.

'According to numerous reliable information recently received, the German authorities recently emptied the Ghetto in Warsaw, brutally murdering some 100,000 Jews. Mass murders continue.¹³⁹ Corpses of the victims are used for making soap and artificial fertilisers. Deportees from other occupied countries will meet the same fate. We should presume that only aggressive response from the Americans can stop these persecutions. Do what is possible to quickly provoke such a reaction by moving statesmen, the press and society.

Please notify this to: Wise, Silver, Lubawicz, Einstein, Klatskin, Goldmann, Thomas Mann and others.

Please do not mention my name. Please confirm the receipt of this dispatch.'

¹³⁹ In an encrypted dispatch of 19 August 1942, the Commander of the Home Army, General Stefan Rowecki, reported: 'Since 22 July, the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto (400,000 inhabitants) has been carried on with enormous cruelty by German and auxiliary Latvian police troops. 5,000–6,000 people were deported every day, and now this number has reached 15,000; most of the people are said to be killed in Bełżec and Treblinka, and some of them may be set aside for work on the front. The deportations are accompanied by mass murders and plunders. There is a plan to leave only a few dozen thousand people in the ghetto—skilled craftsmen working for the military and their families (over 150,000 people have been deported until now): AAN, AK, 203/I/22. In the letter from 15 September 1942, Ignacy Schwarzbart informed Minister Raczyński: 'I have again received indirectly from Poland such horrible news about the mass extermination of Jews by Germans that my blood virtually curdles when I read this news.' AYW, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/61.

The Embassy kindly requests that the above be communicated to Mr Rosenheim at the address stated below.

For the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
M. Kwapiszewski
 Minister Plenipotentiary
 Counsellor at the Embassy

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 503

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31 August 1942. Report by the Ambassador on special mission to the Far East regarding assistance to Jewish refugees (extracts)

31 August 1942

On the evacuation vessel M/S Kamakura Maru in the Indian Ocean

Confidential

To the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 in London

Regarding cash assistance for war refugees from Poland in the Far East

The burden of material care for war refugees from Poland, almost exclusively Jews, was borne mainly by the Joint Distribution Committee in New York, both during their stay in Japan, that is until October 1941, and after they were resettled to Shanghai pending further emigration. The outbreak of the Pacific War on 7/8 December 1941,¹⁴⁰ which had halted 972 refugees in Shanghai, did not stop the Joint's assistance for the time being. The latter only changed its form and now, instead of the thwarted inflow of funds directly from America, Shanghai representatives of the Joint, with the consent of the Japanese occupying authorities, took guaranteed loans in Chinese currency, from the local capitalists, repayable after the war, on favourable terms in American currency, and thus covered the most urgent needs of the group of 6,000 refugees from Europe. The funds gathered this way totalled about 180,000 US dollars in the first six months and were allocated to 20% of the needs of Polish citizens.

¹⁴⁰ This is a reference to the attack of the Japanese air force on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor.

However, when in April 1942 the Joint was forced, under the influence of the new American orders, not only to refuse all further loans and financial guarantees in the territories under control of the enemy states, but even to cease correspondence with their own representatives in those territories, the situation in Shanghai became extremely critical for all the victims of war and for war refugees from Poland in particular.¹⁴¹ The latter, with very few exceptions, deprived of their own means, exhausted by long-term exile—surprised by being cut off from the countries that had already agreed to give them aid during the war, unable to compete with the Chinese crowd on the local labour market, and not adapted to the Shanghai climate—were suddenly handed to the sole care of the local Jewish society, which in war time conditions and facing the enormous burden of general needs due to the economic stagnation under the Japanese occupation was by no means capable of meeting its new responsibilities.

Firmly convinced that only by clearly distinguishing Polish citizens as beneficiaries of the protection of their own Government and having the right to exchange evacuation from other victims of the war in Shanghai, mostly German and Austrian Jews, we can obtain separate treatment for them and save their lives, I then appealed to the Government of the Republic of Poland. In the cable No. 9 of 18 May 1942 to the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev, assigned to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I mentioned:

...EXTREMELY PRESSING PROBLEM RESERVE RELIEF FUND SPECIFIED MY TWENTY, COULD FACILITATE ITS SOLUTION BY RAISING HERE CIRCA EIGHT THOUSAND AM DOLLARS IF OBTAIN YOUR ASSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT NEEDED NOT BEFORE MIDJULY THROUGH ŻÓŁTOWSKI OR DIRECTLY MIN TREASURY AT MY CHOICE...

My cable No. 12 of 28 May 1942 regarding that subject further specified the following:

LAST REGULATIONS DEPRIVED JOINT CONTACT WITH OWN REPRESENTATIVES SHANGHAI AND FORBIDE RENEWAL ITS GUARANTEE FOR RELIEF CREDITS RAISED HERE FOR MAINTENANCE CIRCA SIX THOUSAND WAR REFUGEES OF WHICH 968 POLISH CITIZENS. THEIR SITUATION IMMEDIATELY ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL AVAILABLE FUNDS HARDLY COVERING MAY. COULD YOU URGENTLY OBTAIN THROUGH CIECHANOWSKI EXCEPTIONAL TREATMENT POLISH REFUGEES EMPHASIZING PROBABILITY THEIR EVACUATION. HELP DESTINED THEM

¹⁴¹ In a cable of 10 August 1942, Minister Raczyński conveyed to Stanisław Radziwiłł, the PRC Delegate in Switzerland: 'The press in the United States published information about the Japanese atrocities committed on the Polish refugees in Shanghai. Please obtain information on that matter from the International Red Cross and investigate on the fate of the editor Ignacy Klibański.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ 236.

CONTROLLABLE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS DELEGATE SHANGHAI. MEANWHILE PLEASE AUTHORIZE ME RAISE HERE IMMEDIATELY UNDER YOUR GUARANTEE FIVE THOUSAND AM DOLLARS FOR POLISH REFUGEES JUNE EXISTENCE AND POSSIBLY FIVE THOUSAND MORE FOR JULY. AWAITING URGENT ANSWER...

I received from Kuybyshev the following reply to the above cable, signed by Ambassador Kot and dated 27 June 1942:

YOURS TWELVE. RACZYŃSKI AUTHORIZES YOU RAISE SHANGHAI TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS FIVE FOR JUNE, FIVE FOR JULY. UPTONOW NO ANSWER JOINT. HE ALSO STUDIES POSSIBILITY TRANSFER.

On this basis, I conducted credit operations in July, which are mentioned below and which provided assistance to refugees for June and July. At the beginning of August, when my departure from Shanghai was approaching, and the issue of refugee aid for August was still pending clarification, I took it upon myself to take advantage of the opportunity to borrow the equivalent of 5,000 US dollars for August, as notified to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by my cable No. 3 of 6 August 1942 sent to the address of the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev:

...EXTENDING YOUR AUTHORIZATION OF END JUNE HAVE SECURED LOCALLY ALSO FOR AUGUST ASSISTANCE POLREFUGEES SHANGHAI. JOINTS OR YOUR FURTHER REMITTANCES SHOULD BE SENT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS TO POLISH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION SHANGHAI FOR POLREFUGEES ASSISTANCE.

On this day, 6 August, the Shanghai Delegate of the International Red Cross received from its Geneva headquarters a cable with the following information:

DUE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSFERRING AID FOR 970 POLISH EMIGRANTS, PLEASE RESPOND URGENTLY WHETHER DISTRIBUTION IS POSSIBLE WITH OR WITHOUT THE COLLABORATION OF AMBASSADOR ROMER.

According to my previous dispatches, I had the following reply sent on 9 August 1942:

...AMBASSADOR ROMER IS LEAVING SHANGHAI ON THE SIXTEENTH OF AUGUST, HE MADE POLISH AID SOCIETY ACTING BY THE MAIN COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF POLISH RESIDENTS IN CHINA CONTINUE THE PROGRAMME ESTABLISHED BY THE AMBASSADOR CONSISTING OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF AID TO POLISH REFUGEES IN SHANGHAI ON WHICH HE WILL REPORT; POLISH AID SOCIETY IS INSTRUCTED TO SUBMIT TO OUR CONTROL THE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL FUNDS THAT IT MAY LATER GET BY OUR INTERMEDIARY; MONTHLY NEEDS OF POLISH REFUGEES NOT COVERED HERE ESTIMATED AT TWENTY THOUSAND SWISS FRANCS FROM THE FIRST OF SEPTEMBER

UNTIL EVACUATION WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BEGIN ON A LARGER SCALE FROM OCTOBER.

The acquisition of transfer credits in the Shanghai market became increasingly difficult and increasingly less advantageous as the Japanese occupational authorities banned, in mid-July 1942, all transactions in currencies other than the local CRB currency and the Japanese war currency. Therefore, I asked for the necessary funds almost exclusively for Poles who are subject to evacuation, i.e. who are interested in leaving with their savings, which is unattainable in any other way. I recommended that the sums coming in American banknotes be exchanged, with all caution, on the black market based on variable but rather decreasing rates, while the payments made in the local currency were accounted based on the variable exchange rate of the secret transfer on the Shanghai market, in general with a correction for the benefit of the State Treasury. The loans thus incurred, as detailed in the 10 evidence receipts attached to this report, come from the following sources: ...¹⁴²

This report includes, as Annex No. 11,¹⁴³ the receipt of the Polish Aid Committee in Shanghai confirming that the amount of CRB 330,109.20 was transferred by me—the equivalent of \$15,000.00, intended to aid war refugees from Poland in Shanghai in the months of June, July and August 1942.

Detailed information on the destination and the manner of distribution of this aid is provided in Annex No. 12, which consists of a copy of my instructions to the Chairman of the Polish Aid Committee in Shanghai, Aleksander Rodkin, dated 15 August 1942. As part of my thoroughly thought-out and developed organisation of refugees in Shanghai, the activities of the Polish Aid Committee, both in terms of its personal composition and working methods, deserve our full confidence.

In the light of the above, I ask the Ministry to grant me a vote of acceptance of the management of aid in favour of Polish war refugees in Shanghai reflecting the total amount of \$15,000.00.¹⁴⁴

Tadeusz Romer
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

¹⁴² The table with 10 names was omitted.

¹⁴³ There are no annexes no. 1–11; annex no. 12 is not included in this publication.

¹⁴⁴ The report was sent on 27 October 1942 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Treasury. The covering letter informed: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends attached a copy of the report by the Polish Ambassador on special mission to the Far East No. R.123/42 of 31 August 1942 regarding the care of Polish citizens in Shanghai and on loans taken for this purpose. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks for \$15,000 to be refunded and transferred based on the distribution list. Originals of the receipts are attached for the Ministry of Treasury.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.

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31 August 1942. Letter from the Bund to a member of the National Council on the extermination of the Jewish population in occupied Poland

To Mr Zygielbojm, a member of the National Council in London

One of the most urgent and shocking matters that has occurred on a daily basis for a number of months not only in our life and the life of Poland, but also the life of nations on an international scale, is the annihilation by the Nazi regime of the entire Jewish population in Europe, consisting of millions of souls, most of which (3.5 million) lived in Poland. Because of its size and the method of organised mass extermination, this matter comes to the forefront of international life. This issue, as well as conclusions and proposals arising from its presentation, is the content of this letter addressed to you, apart from several cable messages sent to you.

One of the war goals of the Nazi regime, which has often been announced from the highest throne by the Führer himself and Goebbels, is the total physical extermination of the Jewish population wherever the bloody predatory fist of German fascism reaches. While its remaining war goals will ultimately turn into their opposite and the defeat of German fascism is inevitable, this goal—the total annihilation of the Jewish population—has fully materialised. In this section, the cruel Nazi regime achieves total and easy victory. And, despite its defeat, nobody will be able to take this victory away from this regime, even when it is shattered. Until that happens, the Jewish population will have been, as the Nazis announced, ‘ausgerottet’—it will have ceased to exist. An irrefutable proof of this are horrendous facts and figures that contain the mass tragedy of the Jewish population living under Nazi power, particularly in the General Government.

Because the storm that broke out over the Jewish community in the GG is extremely forceful and rages on with increasing intensity. One thunder strikes after another. One city after another is haunted by this Nazi monster. Not hundreds, thousands and dozens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands fall down. The whole society is being executed. Children, women and adult men are dying. The flower of the intelligentsia—scholars, literary men, lawyers, engineers, doctors. Talents, energies—institutions and all kinds of works perish. Masses of production elements—manual workers and office workers—perish, too.

Atrocities committed by Nazi torturers in various countries occupied by them look pale when compared to what these brown beasts do with the Jewish population. Blood curdles in our veins—we stand bewildered and stunned in the face of this massacre—its massiveness and sophistication of its cruel forms and methods.

In this context, blows dealt to the Jewish society from various sides over its centuries-long history seem smaller. Even those infamous atrocities of Genghis Khan, Attila or ancient Romans, the fanaticism of the Middle Ages and other bloody periods of the history of nations are overshadowed. The pogroms of Jews organised by the Tsarist government, though horrible in their own right, seem almost idyllic. What Nazism does towards Jews exceeds the boundaries of most vivid bloody fantasy in terms of methods and extent of atrocities. In a word, a massive terrible mystery of death has occurred for several months—in forms and to an extent previously unknown in human history. The whole nation is dying. New, alarming, woeful news still come from this or the other city. The operation still lasts here or there—in a permanent, systematic and deliberately organised manner.

Until the German–Soviet war, the situation of the Jewish population under the Nazi thumb was also worse than that of other nations subdued to German fascism. This period abounded in various, most unimaginable anti-Jewish orders. Extermination on a large scale in terms of food supply, economy, culture etc. and concentration camps and dozens, hundreds of victims—this was the daily bread of the Jewish population in those days, which was treated more cruelly in the territories of Poland annexed to the Reich, particularly in Łódź. After the outbreak of the Soviet–German war, the second stage began. Mass executions of Jews in territories abandoned by the Soviets—in the Wilno region, the Borderlands, Eastern Lesser Poland, in large and small cities and the smallest settlements—followed one after another and flowed in a continuous stream. Wilno, Stanisławów, Tarnopol, Kołomyja, Stryj, Lwów and a large number of smaller centres were the areas of unprecedented mass murders that had not been committed even by Nazi hordes until then. And they continued systematically and permanently, with higher or lower intensity.—This period consumed hundreds of thousands of victims.—Finally came the third period, in which this massive liquidation of further already decimated parts of Jewish society covered also the territories being occupied since the German–Polish war and the rest of the eastern stretches of the country. This destructive operation, started with the total liquidation of a few dozen thousand Jews in Lublin, is under way and staggers ever-new circles. The most powerful link in this horrible chain of massacre is the Warsaw Ghetto of 400,000 people, from which Nazi tormentors have torn around a quarter million victims so far.—The ‘operation’ still lasts. The scythe of death works relentlessly.—Still, incessantly. On a mass scale.

Messages with detailed figures concerning the extent and forms of slaughter of Jews in dozens of big and small cities of Eastern Lesser Poland and the

former Congress Kingdom of Poland¹⁴⁵ were sent some time ago. On the basis of approximate detailed lists of recent times along with data for the previous periods of the operation, we can come up with the following general tragic figures. Out of 3.5 million Jews in the Republic of Poland, some 0.5 million were deported by the Soviets into Russia during the deportation operation in 1940. Out of the remaining number of approx. 3 million, which subsequently found themselves under the yoke of the Nazis (along with those who had fallen in the grip of the Nazis earlier), a few hundred thousand Jews died as a result of many epidemics, typhoid, dysentery, tuberculosis and hunger (in particularly severe sanitary and hygienic conditions deliberately created by the Nazi regime, such as the placement of thousands and dozens of thousands of people within a hundred times smaller housing section). Moreover, around 5 quarters of a million of Jews fell victim to a mass slaughter organised by the Nazi regime. Thus, 1 million to 5 quarters of a million of Jews are still alive.

Based on descriptions from individual towns and cities and, primarily, the progress of the operation in various cities, particularly in the Warsaw Ghetto, the 'operation' and its methods look as follows:

The operation is conducted by a special annihilation column ('Vernichtungskolonno'), allegedly independent of local authorities and directed straight from Berlin by means of the SS, Gestapo, SD and Šauliai, Latvians and Lithuanians and, in particular, the Jewish police. The borders of closed or still open ghettos are surrounded with armed policemen or soldiers. Inside ghettos, armed thugs riding in trucks shoot with rifles and machine guns at people and houses. The streets are still covered with corpses.—The operation is called 'resettlement' ('Umsiedlung') of the non-productive population from ghettos to allegedly other places, labour camps, etc. This is, however, a sophisticated trick, aimed at lulling vigilance and eradicating any sign of active resistance. In fact, it is sending people to die in the most literal sense of the word. The deportation (being tantamount to death) would exclude only productive elements and their families, members and clerks of Councils and their families and the Jewish police and their families. This is aimed at getting others involved in the 'resettlement' of others (i.e. sending them to die).—However, this is followed by an 'operation' against the previous ones, etc., etc., until the circle of those to remain alive is getting narrower. In this way, the population of the Warsaw Ghetto is to be reduced from the original figure of 400,000 and the last figure of 150,000 left after the four-week resettlement operation merely to 25,000—30,000 Jewish workers employed in big Többens and Schultz German plants and for the Wehrmacht. Similarly, only around 4,000 workers

¹⁴⁵ This is a reference to the territory of Congress Kingdom of Poland (also called Congress Poland), a state created in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna and ruled by Russian tsars.

without families who live in Majdanek near Lublin have remained out of 60,000—80,000 Jewish people in Lublin. But these remaining productive elements for the German authorities are also doomed to perish.

Thus, orphanages, dormitories, old people's homes, hospitals and prisons were 'resettled' in the first place; then whole houses and streets were blocked in order to gather human material for slaughter at the assembly point. From there, these convicts are packed into freight wagons. They are so crowded and it is so stuffy and stenchy there (people relieve themselves in wagons) that at least several or even a few hundred corpses are always thrown out at the time of unloading in the place of execution. At first, the elderly, the sick, the crippled and children up to 12 years of age were shot dead in the nearby Jewish cemetery or other places. Later all of them were simply loaded into wagons and executed on the spot.—One day, the Nazi tormentors ordered that all remaining children in the Warsaw Ghetto be delivered for 'resettlement' to the assembly point.—At the time of packing resettlers into wagons, young people of either sex are selected; the healthy ones able to work are sent to labour camps, where their life quickly ends in death amongst terrible working conditions, hunger and tortures. It is a minimal fraction of the entire population, amounting to only a few per cent, that do not go to their death immediately. Trains depart to camps in Treblinka, Bełżec, Sobibór (near Włodawa) and others. On the way, Ukrainian, Lithuanian or German guards rob these 'resettlers' of valuables and things that they are allowed to take under an official order. In these camps, mass executions take place after the convicts strip down naked. They are executed by shooting, by being put in gas chambers or chambers without air, or by electrocution, and corpses are thrown into huge pits dug by convicts or by mechanical diggers, which also backfill these pits. The living also are buried in these pits when the human material is too large. In many cases, convicts—resettlers were packed into chlorinated wagons, in which they choked to death even before arrival to their destination, i.e. the place of execution. Upon disinfection, clothes are stored for the German authorities. In Sobibór, where the Polish State railway sleeper impregnation plants were located, corpses are used for rendering down fat and their bones are ground into mill for industrial purposes.—In some areas, dental technicians are ordered by the authorities to tear gold crowns and teeth from corpses.—In ghettos, where people starve due to the limited delivery of food and draconian orders, foodstuffs are much more expensive than in other, non-Jewish districts. In the Warsaw Ghetto, the price of one loaf of bread reached 80–100 zlotys, 1 kg of potatoes—30–40 zlotys and butter—250 zlotys, whereas outside the ghetto bread costs 12–15 zlotys, potatoes 3–4 zlotys and butter 120 zlotys.—Anyway, this food is impossible to get.—Therefore, ghettos are permeated by a mood of nervous tension and fear beyond description—hopeless despair. Consequently, people often go insane or commit

suicide. Sometimes parents poison their children or children poison their parents in order not to fall into the mouth of the angry Nazi beast. There were cases of active resistance here and there. People barricaded themselves in houses. In some towns, e.g. Nieśwież, there was also armed resistance. Obviously, these signs of resistance ended in immediate complete execution on the spot. However, these were occasional cases. There has been no mass active resistance. This results from convicts' illusions that they are only being resettled; illusions that are consciously, deliberately and deceitfully maintained by the authorities for the purpose of killing any will of resistance. This is also a consequence of the conviction of other strata (clerks and members of the Council, their families, Jewish policemen and people working in plants for Germans) that they are not subject to this 'resettlement.' Moreover, this results from the awareness of the masses that German thugs apply the principle of collective responsibility, which would result in the immediate execution of everyone, and those who wanted to put up active resistance face the tragic dilemma whether to risk the lives of others who could survive. And, lastly, the awareness of the lack of response from foreign allies in the first place and the lack of hope for help from outside the ghetto walls during the potential active struggle of the Jewish population fills up this cup of mass departure from this world without mass resistance.—Ill-treated, oppressed, crushed by various cruel German orders operating for 3 years, closed in ghetto prison walls, surrounded by the police, army and gendarmerie, surrounded by machine guns, surrounded with the atmosphere of bloody lawlessness, terror and death, devoid of hope for help from anywhere, they perish completely in such a tragic way. The enlightened part of the Jewish working class and the intelligentsia realised the need for active resistance, even though such resistance would not be effective on a larger scale as a result of the atmosphere and situation created by the German authorities deliberately and consciously in and around the ghetto. However, the conservative Jewish faction flatly rejected this idea, referring to the immediate bloody reaction of the German authorities and, therefore, disastrous effects for the whole environment. Therefore, the only possible centres of resistance became paralysed due to the reluctance to take on the odium of bringing about the immediate slaughter of the entire population that Nazi hordes would carry out, and there would be no proof that such slaughter would nevertheless occur even without this resistance, although in different forms and at a different pace, as it actually happens in the Warsaw Ghetto and in other cities.

At the last moment, I received news from Lwów and other cities where the 'resettlement' operation is taking place, so I hereby record it for a fuller view of the current situation:

Lwów. Three weeks ago, after a longer period of several successive 'operations' of Nazi ruffians in the Jewish quarter in Lwów, which consequently involved

the total loss of around 35,000 Jews (particularly during the 'under the bridge operation,' when mainly old people were captured), the central SS Gestapo elements commenced the radical extermination of Jews. If the principle of catching elements considered unproductive by Nazis with their families had been followed at least ostensibly, it was almost completely ignored this time and around 55,000–60,000 Jews working predominantly in various institutions or directly or indirectly for the army were evicted. Under the Wehrmacht's pressure, workers absolutely indispensable to the German army were temporarily not taken into account. The operating City Workshops, organised on a large scale in an American fashion and subordinated directly to the Stadthauptmann, lost 2,800 persons out of their crew of 3,500, including the most excellent experts, organisers and almost the entire medical and sanitary staff. Children from all existing orphanages were kidnapped; most of them had been orphaned by people murdered in previous operations. The three hospitals were emptied of all patients, even the most seriously ill; even patients from the Infectious Disease Hospital suffering from spotted typhus and other infectious diseases were deported... into the unknown, together with almost all doctors, nurses, orderlies, directors, etc. The medical staff of both polyclinics, amounting to around 30 persons, was also captured (some doctors have already seen one another on roads in the role of manual workers in labour battalions). The rest of the intellectuals and other professions were obviously treated even more harshly. If doctors are mentioned in this statement (only around 200 have been captured so far), this is mainly because the utility value of the medical profession (previously enjoying certain kinds of privileges) was regarded as equal to other Jews for the first time.—As far as the fate of the deported is concerned, the only thing we could determine is that men in the prime of life are sent to forced labour camps, where they die of starvation and exhaustion in conditions of draconian discipline and bestial torture or are executed for the most trivial offences or due to illness. For example, in the Janów camp in Lwów (where around 5,000—6,000 persons are kept), such camp commanders as Rokita, Willhaus or Gebauer execute around 15–30 people every day. The dentists working here mainly pull the dead people's teeth with gold crowns. Some strongly-built women are allegedly sent to work in the field, whereas the rest—particularly children, old people and a majority of women—are sent for execution (by shooting with machine guns or poisoning) after being stripped down naked. Not to mention multiple contributions that precede operations of this kind; at the end of each operation (particularly the last one), the remaining (usually modest) property and movables of deported Jews are regularly looted. Jewish militiamen—even members of the Judenrat, who may enjoy a longer 'Galgenfrist' for this reason—are forced to fulfil auxiliary functions.—For the remaining $\pm 20,000$ Jews—and there had been around 120,000 of them (when the Germans entered Lwów), a small neglected unhygienic area was set aside in the suburbs of Lwów.

Even more horribly, even more brutally—by executing the deported Jewish population directly on the street, in the backyard, at home (6,000 in Tarnów!) most often on the market square or in the cemetery (for example, in Stanisławów, qahal clerks were ordered to build and arrange a booth with a bar for execution troops on the eve of mass execution). Around 3,000 Jews were executed.

Mszana Dolna. From the community of around 2,000 Jews, only 150 persons have remained alive. The rest (including 2 doctors) were executed after the digging of a deep pit by the victims. All of this happened within merely 4–6 hours.

Similar massacres took place in Sambor, Mielec, Rabka, Rohatyn and many other places of Lesser Poland.

Wieliczka has recently witnessed similar scenes.

In Bochnia, City Workshops, the pride of western Lesser Poland were burned down shortly before the operation—even the Nazi press wrote about that, just as it had written about even larger production plants in Warsaw and in other cities of the former Congress Poland.

During the ‘resettlement’ operation in the Warsaw Ghetto, the ghettos of Otwock, Falenica and Miedzeszyn were liquidated within a few hours, and the popular Medem sanatorium for children, enjoying a good reputation in the broad pedagogical circle, was also utterly liquidated, where the victims included 250 children and most of the medical, nursing and teaching profession.

A similar ‘resettlement’ operation has recently happened in Radom, Mińsk Mazowiecki, Siedlce, etc., for a few hours.

Only small groups managed to escape from this huge fire of mass slaughters, but they also face a tragic fate, as the lack of livelihood and work opportunities will push them into the embrace of death sooner or later.

Painting the dreadful picture of the current reality of the Jewish population of the GG, we cannot ignore acts of sympathy, support and help that are encountered among the Polish population.

On the other hand, we have seen such symptoms as various kinds of blackmail or the plundering and theft of property left by ‘resettlers’ in their houses; therefore, the German authorities summoned the local population to return the plundered Jewish property under the pain of death, e.g. recently in towns close to Warsaw, apparently assuming that only they—masters from the Herrenvolk—are entitled to plunder property, particularly the Jewish one.

However, numerous cases of blackmail and mass plunders and thefts took place also in the ghetto itself, being committed not only by the SS, Gestapo and Lithuanian hordes, but also by dark Jewish elements as well as the Jewish police;

the latter, with some exceptions, has played a very sad part in this horrendous 'resettlement operation', which was largely carried out with their own hands as a result of the diabolical manner of performing the 'resettlement' plan imposed by the criminal German authorities.

Nevertheless, alongside these tragically sad and negative aspects, numerous signs of nobleness, mutual help and silent heroism were even more conspicuous. The mothers who were separated from their children went to death together with them. Children went after their parents. Although activists in orphanages, dormitories, etc. (for example, Janusz Korczak and the prevailing part of the educational and medical personnel in the Medem sanatorium in Miedzeszyn) could rescue their own lives, they preferred to sacrifice their lives and to accompany their children till the end.

But now it is not time to talk more broadly about these matters.—The most urgent, most burning and most significant matter is coming to the fore. The matter of rescuing the lives of the remaining Jews scattered among various towns and cities, who are targeted by the organised exterminatory Nazi 'operation' being carried out regularly every day.

It is about rescuing 1 to 1.5 million Jews who are still alive. About saving them from inevitable death. The dead, the murdered and those tortured to death cannot be revived. We must rescue the living. And this is the strongest imperative emerging from the heart of those who are still alive. And this is what those hundreds of thousands of Jews, around one and a half million victims torn out of the Jewish community by Nazi fascism call for from mass graves!

All existing resolutions and decisions to punish Nazi murderers after the war are void and meaningless. Before this happens, the whole living part of the Jewish community and even Jewish elements that are exceptionally productive and useful from the perspective of the Wehrmacht's interests will be wiped out without a trace and the only thing left will be one gigantic cemetery, in which a few million members of the Jewish community will rest.

What is needed, are immediate and effective actions!

We are perfectly aware, and we are confident and steadfast in our confidence, that the Nazi regime and its satellites will be completely shattered and we will build a new world—ours—in their place, and the rage with which Nazi hordes act in all occupied countries, particularly in the Jewish section, is actually one of the unmistakable signs of the decline of fighting Nazism, and these words are dictated not by an act of despair or resignation, but—irrespective of purely human aspects—the will, a strong and steadfast will, that the Jewish community, in particular its creative and productive elements, could cooperate in the creation of a new world and a new life.

Focusing mainly on the matter of extermination of the Jewish population is not dictated by any kind of nationalism—which is strange to us anyway, as we keep our eyes open to the world's problems with an immense social, political and economic reach and the need to solve them according to the present concepts coming to mind—but by the fact that this slaughter of Jews is unprecedented even in comparison to great atrocities committed against all occupied countries and against history, and in consideration of the need for the immediate rescue of those surviving hundreds of thousands who are doomed to death by Nazi fascism.

As a consequence of the above sketch of the mass tragedy of the Jewish community happening in our eyes, the following conclusions come to mind:

1) The need for immediate retaliation against German citizens living in territories of all allied countries, with the threat of immediate further retaliations¹⁴⁶ in the case of continuation of the slaughter of the Jewish population.—This act of retaliation must be regarded as a strategic rather than political action, because what the German authorities do with the Jewish population, is a war *sui generis* where one side—the Nazi horde—is armed from head to toe, and the other side—the Jewish population—was overwhelmed by it in a sophisticated, perfidious and deceptive manner and, being entirely disarmed and helpless, became subject to unprecedented, cruel and deceptive actions of Hitler's war knights. The Jewish community as one of the small elements of the great family of the allies has the right to demand immediate and effective help from the rest of the allies in this uneven war.

2) An appeal by the Government of the Republic of Poland and the National Council to all free societies of the world, depicting the Nazi atrocities committed against the Jewish population under the yoke of Nazi fascism and summoning

¹⁴⁶ In the cable no. 803, sent in several parts on 3 October 1942, General Rowecki reported: 'German crimes are committed on a horrible scale on a daily basis and allow us to guess even more horrendous intentions: that is, Himmler's orders issued in March and July this year provide for the ultimate liquidation of the Jewish problem in Eastern Europe and the pacification of Poles by exterminating the leaders of the nation in a similar manner. On the example of Jews, with the whole world remaining silent, Poles observed the quick and effective mass killing of a few million people, waiting for their turn ... All Polish political parties demanded retaliation based on the principle of joint responsibility of the entire German nation ... The lack of retaliation results in serious discouragement to engage in underground fighting and in moods of panic and despair ... The population is starting to look at the German terror as the beginning of our extermination using the "Jewish method"; particularly as, despite the almost complete destruction of Jews, formations of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Ukrainian auxiliary police station in Poland.' AAN, AK, 203/I/22.

relevant governments to undertake an immediate retaliatory action (in accordance with item 1).¹⁴⁷

3) An appeal by the Government of the Republic of Poland and the National Council, addressed to the Polish society in the Polish territory to provide all kinds of aid to the Jewish population.

4) An appeal to the working class (both manual and non-manual workers) and the working intelligentsia around the world, depicting slaughters being committed against the Jewish population and summoning them to exert pressure on their governments with regard to the proposal No. 1. In particular, an appeal for this purpose must also be made to the working class of the Soviet Union, in which a large number of German military and civil POWs are kept.

5) The provision of considerable material aid by the Official Authorities to the remaining Jewish population, which is totally pauperised and doomed to starvation.

6) Requesting the Bund Central Committee in N.Y. and the agency of the Bund in the Soviet Union, if it exists, and to agencies of the Bund in other states, if they exist, to act according to the above indications and to provide material aid.

7) Keeping in touch with us, informing us immediately what has been done and what must be put into effect in the matters listed above and informing us about any other matters of outstanding importance on a national and international scale. (Any letters, documents, etc., and considerable material aid should be sent in a similar manner). Everything should be addressed to the member of the Central Committee remaining here.

This letter must be immediately communicated to the Central Committee in New York and its receipt by it must be notified here.

War., 31 August 1942

/-/ L. Berezowski¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ In his radio speech delivered on 3 September 1942 in connection with the third anniversary of the outbreak of the war, Stanisław Mikołajczyk (on the basis of information received from Stefan Korboński, the head of the Directorate of Civil Resistance of the Home Army) stressed: 'The fate of the Jews closed in ghettos is horrible. The Germans have recently started the mass extermination of Jews in gas chambers, deporting seven thousand persons per day from the Warsaw Ghetto for this purpose.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 56.

¹⁴⁸ Leon Feiner. In the cable of 29 December 1942 (sent by the MFA via the Consulate General in New York), Szmul Zygielbojm informed the representative of the Bund Emanuel Nowogródzki: 'I received the dispatch sent by Berezowski on 2 October, which reads as follows: "Since 22 July, around 300,000 Jews have been annihilated in Warsaw.

P.S. The content of the interview given to the sender of this letter may be communicated by him to Officials only after it is read by you and the Central Committee and handed over to the sender.

AAN, *Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2 (previously published)*

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[After 1 September 1942]. Report by the Department of Information of BIP
KG AK on the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto

Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto¹⁴⁹

The liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, which is becoming one of the most painful cards of history in respect of the number of victims and the intensity of cruelty, has been going on for over a month and is coming to an end. Before it is possible to attempt an accurate and complete study for the purposes of current information, we present the most objective recapitulation of the gathered authentic material supplemented with selected accounts of the ghetto escapees—the most typical ones, devoid of personal or spectacular information, accounts filled least intensely with emotional overtones. They were written by reliable people, whom we know personally. The data contained in them have been frequently checked in other accounts and news coming from the ghetto day after day. The picture emerging from these materials is one-sided—they come only from one stratum of the ghetto population: the assimilated intelligentsia, with a Christian person among them (attachment 3); from people who have lost their loved ones, escaped death by accident and, uncertain of their further fate, are still depressed at the time of writing. They do not go beyond the doorstep of the ‘displacement’ wagon; they lack

Others are awaiting the same fate. Only a few members of our family have survived. A similar operation is under way in the entire General Government. The sanatorium in Miedzeszyn was destroyed ... No response from you. Keeping silent about the massacre of Jews in England, America and other states is worse for us than Hitler's operation. Nobody helps us. We have no money. Please send us money by paying it to the government. We will perish without your help". I have already paid the third amount of 5,000. Now I have only 2,000. Please pay the higher sum immediately. AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 243.

¹⁴⁹ The authors of the report were Henryk Woliński, Stanisław Herbst and Ludwik Widerszal from the BIP KG AK. Moreover, in November 1942, the BIP published, in conspiracy, 2,000 copies of *Likwidacja getta warszawskiego. Reportaż*—an over 50-page brochure prepared by Antoni Szymanowski (signed with initials M.B.).

the last worst act, which the authors managed to avoid. In addition, the escapees' accounts are supplemented with a secret service report from Bełżec, the text of the announcement of the Jewish Council of 22 July 1942 as well as a fragment of the account of a Blue Police officer allowed to enter the ghetto premises (his rank, function and name are known to us—we omit them for conspiratorial reasons).¹⁵⁰

Chronicle of the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto

I. The Germans opened the Warsaw Ghetto in October 1940. By 1 November 1940, all Jews had to resettle to the quarter designated for them and the Aryans had to leave it. The Jews were allowed to take only their personal effects, but taking furniture was prohibited (actually, this prohibition was not complied with). All Jewish commercial and industrial enterprises in the Aryan district were closed down and sealed. The original deadline for the resettlement of Jews was postponed till 15 November 1940. From that date on, the Jews were not allowed to leave the ghetto, but the Aryans could enter it without permits until 25 November 1940. The ghetto has been closed since then; only holders of permits issued by a special German office have the right to enter and leave the ghetto. The whole district is surrounded with walls. Leaving the ghetto without a permit is prohibited under penalty of death, which is often administered by German courts. Although the ghetto is closed off, many Aryan commercial and industrial enterprises remained there. Aryan commercial enterprises were removed by the spring of 1941, whereas industrial plants still remain in the ghetto, employing both Aryans and Jews.

After the ghetto had been closed off, official trade with the Aryan quarter took place via a special German office—Transferstelle. In the spring of 1942, when relations between quarters were stabilised, it amounted to 13 groszy per capita a *day*, when the price of one kg of bread was 10 zlotys, and one kg of potatoes cost around 5 zlotys. From the first moment, trade with the ghetto was based on large-scale smuggling with the participation of Germans, who obtained huge income from it in the form of commercial profit and bribes. In terms of economy, this trade consisted in the sellout of Jewish property and the purchase of food items. The provisioning of the ghetto was based on smuggling, as food rations in much lower norms than those for Poles were absolutely insufficient (the weekly ration was around 0.5 kg of bread per person and almost nothing else). In the course of time, craft and small industry was restored in the ghetto for the needs of the Polish population, and huge craft workshops (*szop*)¹⁵¹ were created to work for

¹⁵⁰ The announcement of the Jewish Council is not included in this publication. Concerning the report about the camp in Bełżec and the police officer's account, see doc. 211 and 225.

¹⁵¹ *Szop*—the term originating from English (*shop*) used for defining production plants functioning in the Warsaw Ghetto during the German occupation.

the needs of Germans. Always, however, the basic form of trade was smuggling; when it ceased during the liquidation of the ghetto, the price difference between the Jewish and the Aryan quarters was as follows: bread 60–85 zlotys (8–12 zlotys), sugar 400–450 zlotys (38–70 zlotys), potatoes 18–30 zlotys (3.50 zlotys).

After the ghetto had been closed off, the death rate rose immediately. Reasons: poverty, the winter of 1940/1941 and 1941/1942, typhoid fever and spotted typhus epidemic, tuberculosis. Streets were covered with several or even a few dozen corpses every day. The death rate for the year 1941 was approximately 13% and exceeded 15% for the first quarter of 1942 on an annual basis. The number of births dropped almost to null.

In spite of this, the population of the Warsaw Ghetto remained almost on the same level all the time (officially around 433,000, actually decreased to 370,000), as new groups of Jews from abroad (German and Dutch Jews) and from the close and distant vicinity of Warsaw were constantly pushed inside for the purpose of maintaining or even magnifying the natural death rate.

The occupier constantly used forms of terror that became more and more effective, absorbing several, a dozen or a few dozen victims inside the ghetto every day (excluding daily executions on its borders). At night, uniformed Germans burst into houses, took chosen victims outside and killed them on the street. The Jews encountered outside the ghetto borders were executed on the spot, and Jewish children were drowned in flooded clay pits or thrown into city canals.

II. From the autumn of 1941, news came from across the Bug River about the mass execution of Jews by means of machine guns in cities and towns of the Eastern Borderlands. This news was received with fear and disbelief. However, it was frequently confirmed by eyewitnesses. In the winter and towards the spring of 1942, the killing of many thousands of Jews became increasingly systematic. In the Wilno region, only one Jewish centre in Wilno consisting of 12,000 people was left. Over 60,000 Jews were killed in Wilno, 14,000 in Równe, 50% in Lwów and 10,000 in Kowel. Later, similar news came from Stanisławów, Tarnopol, Stryj and many other places. It became clear that the operation was moving towards the West. In western lands, Jews were wiped out completely, with only barracked craftsmen-specialists working for the army left alive. On that occasion, new methods were used: gas poisoning attempts (10,000 persons) carried out in Chełmno and Kuyavia, and a camp in Bełżec was created for putting to death by electrocution (attachment 1), in which 80,000 Jews from the Lublin region (only 2,500 out of 30,000 Jews, including 70 women, were left in Lublin), the Lwów province and a part of the Kielce province were executed in March and April 1942 (within around one month). An auxiliary operation for this purpose was the concentration and resettlement of Jews from small to larger localities, during which 10% were murdered.

In March this year, after ~~Hitler's~~ *Himmler's* visit to the General Government and his order concerning the liquidation of 50% of the Jews by the end of 1942, it was already beyond doubt that these huge mass murders could be stopped only by events on a huge military and political scale, which are awaited in vain to this day.

In spring, the news came about the creation of a new extermination camp in Sobibór (Włodawa district). The liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto was expected to start in the middle of April, later at the end of May. In June, word was spread that it had been suspended for some time. The visit of ~~Hitler~~ *Himmler* to the General Government in the middle of July this year accelerated the liquidation and made the orders stricter in this respect.

III. The beginning of the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto was preceded by measures aimed at eliminating foreign Jews on that occasion. For this purpose, they were registered on 17 July 1942 and interned at Pawiak.¹⁵² From Monday 20 July 1942, thick cordons of 'Junaks' (security battalions consisting of Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians and Bolshevik POWs) kept watch on the ghetto borders. From that time on, the Blue Police performed only auxiliary service at exit gates. Also, as of that moment, 'smuggling' to the ghetto was interrupted and more persons were shot dead on its borders. The 'Junaks' started shooting at windows of houses adjacent to the ghetto borders. Apart from that, posts of the German police armed with machine guns at exit points were reinforced, and the function of post commander (an SS officer) was introduced at each exit point. German police patrols on motorcycles uninterruptedly cruised around the ghetto borders all day and night. Watched by the ghetto population, these preparations created an atmosphere of anticipation filled with terror and fear.

On 21 July 1942, at 11.00 a.m., police trucks with SS officers arrived at the building of the Jewish Community at Grzybowska St.; Czerniakow, the chairman of the Jewish Council, was ordered to summon members of the Council. Upon arrival, all were arrested and carried in police trucks to Pawiak. After being held for a short time, most of them were released. Roughly at the same time, police trucks rode out on the ghetto streets. The uniformed Germans burst into houses, looking mainly for Jewish intellectuals and killing them on the spot in their apartments without checking their identity. In this way, as a result of an unfortunate coincidence, they killed Professor Raszeja, who had been performing his medical duties in the ghetto with a valid permit that day. Also at the same time, a roundup started on

¹⁵² Pawiak was a prison built in Warsaw in the first half of the 19th century. During the German occupation, it was one of the main interrogation prisons of the German order police located in the territory of the General Government. During the occupation, a total number of approx. 100,000 persons were imprisoned there, of which approx. 37,000 were murdered and over 60,000 were deported to concentration camps and for forced labour to Germany.

the streets; it is worth remarking that only better-dressed persons were held. As it would later turn out, both the detained part of members of the Jewish Council and accidentally captured passers-by were to be hostages.

That is how the day of 21 July passed, on which neither Engineer Czerniakow nor anyone else from the Jewish Council were told what these incidents meant and what was intended.

On 22 July 1942, after 10.00 a.m., police trucks arrived at the building of the Jewish Council again, and a large order on the 'resettlement' of the Jewish population of Warsaw was dictated to the summoned members of the Jewish Council remaining free. The announcement distributed on posters (attachment 2) contains important information, and other provisions of this order concerned technical details: a) determination of the number of daily deportees at 6,000 persons, b) these persons would be assembled in the building of the hospital at Stawki, which was immediately liquidated, and then brought to the reloading yard at Stawki, where railway sidings for handling the commodity trade of the ghetto are located, c) persons to be displaced would be delivered by the Jewish security service by 4.00 p.m. every day, and the first transport would be delivered on the same day—22 July 1942. Failure to perform this order strictly would result in the execution of members of the Jewish Council and captured hostages. On that day, persons staying in the Jewish arrest, poorhouses, etc., went first upon express German demand.

On 23 July 1942, around 7.00 p.m., two uniformed Germans came into the building of the Council again and demanded to see Czerniakow; soon after they left the room, he committed suicide. We do not know exactly what they were talking about, as Czerniakow did not tell anyone before his death, but the note left by him and his letter to his wife suggest that he was ordered to deliver 10,000 instead of 6,000 people for resettlement and 7,000 people a day on the following days. After Czerniakow's death, Engineer Lichtenbaum became the chairman of the Jewish Council.

On the following day, 10,000 persons were actually brought to the reloading yard, and groups of 7,000 were delivered on further days. The quota was fulfilled by taking people out of their houses and through a street roundup. In order to stimulate the zealotry of Jewish policemen, the Germans visibly favoured them at that time; for example, they gave them safe conduct passes stamped by the German police, which exempted from deportation not only the family members who were entitled to such exemption according to the order (wives and children), but also other relatives.

Because the order of 22 July 1942 excluded employees of German-owned enterprises (and their families) from displacement, a formal race for employment

in these enterprises, or rather for obtaining a certificate of such employment, started in the ghetto. Four-digit sums were paid for such certificates to German entrepreneurs. As it would turn out later, both safe conduct passes issued to families of the Jewish militia and certificates of employment in German enterprises were worthless, as the Germans did not respect them, contrary to their own order, and took everyone regardless of documents.

The resettlement operation became harsher every day; after a few days, the Germans started to carry it out by themselves with the help of the 'Junaks', irrespective of the operation of the Jewish police. The Germans closed blocks of houses, entered backyards and started to shoot. In this way, they ordered inhabitants to leave their apartments and gather on backyards; anyone who did not go out quickly enough or tried to hide was killed on the spot. Disabled, elderly and crippled persons were killed in their apartments. The integrity of the family was not cared about; wives were separated from their husbands, and children—even the little ones—were separated from their parents.

On the reloading yard, amongst continuous shootings, the Germans fish the elderly and the crippled out of the crowd, carry them directly onto the Jewish cemetery and kill them there (60–100 persons every day); the rest are loaded into freight wagons—their capacity is for 40 persons, but they push up to 120 inside), people choke, wagons are sealed and the train takes off. Wagons are poured with quicklime. The route of such a train is marked by corpses along the tracks. People are transported to three extermination camps: to Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibór, where wagons are unloaded; convicts are stripped and executed, probably by means of gas. Out of a quarter of million deported people, only 2 small transports (altogether 4,000 people) were sent to work in the area of the front (towards Brześć and Małachowice).

The extermination actually omits young and healthy people, which can be a valuable working force; it includes primarily the elderly, the disabled and children. Orphanages and children shelters were carried away; one of them was the orphanage directed by Janusz Korczak, who did not leave his children, even though he was advised to stay. Together with children and the female head of the dormitory, he went onto the yard.

This operation has lasted continuously since 22 July 1942—3,000–10,000 persons are taken away every day. Others remaining alive for over a month hold on to the faint hope that they might survive, and they still escape their fate.

Until now (1 September), 250,000 have already been 'resettled.' 120,000 food coupons were printed for September and only 40,000 were printed for October. At the same time, the extermination of Jews living near Warsaw started. The killings took place in the eyes of the deeply shocked Polish population. Shooting at children,

killing pregnant women, hunting escapees in surrounding areas and hundreds of corpses in the streets along railway tracks were seen by masses of Poles.

The liquidation of the ghettos in Falenica, Rembertów, Nowy Dwór, Kałuszyn and Mińsk Mazowiecki involves a break in the resettlement operation in the Warsaw Ghetto from 20 till 24 August. On 25 August, this operation was resumed.

According to information from the Arbeitsamt, confirmed by the number of food coupons prepared for October, only 40,000 barracked skilled employees useful for German war production are to remain in the ghetto.

The number of those remaining in the ghetto is estimated at 140,000 persons.

IV. It is impossible to finish this short overview of the history of the Warsaw Ghetto coming to an end without trying to present the scale and intensity of the killings, that took the lives of around 250,000 Jews on 1 September 1942 and continue to take place, to a person from outside the scope of German oppression. The attempt to present the progress of this unprecedented slaughter must start with a call to a man in England or America: believe in the unbelievable. Believe that what reaches your consciousness is primarily the truth with which we are doomed to live and die. The facts that you receive from us are not chosen or selected. These are everyday facts. They are not all the facts, and they are—neither individual nor typical ones. And, last, they are not isolated facts; each of them has dozens and hundreds of counterparts every day. What we would like to tell you is that a few dozen or even a few hundred Jews have been killed with guns on the streets and in houses of Warsaw every day since 22 July 1942. These killings happen every day as people who are captured and carried away for execution. From among those caught within the scope of daily resettlement quotas (6, 7, 10 thousand persons), 50–100 elderly, crippled and disabled persons are brought to a cemetery every day, where they are executed and buried. Railway transports of deportees are usually carried away to the Treblinka camp (4 km away from Małkinia), where a few thousand of them are executed and buried every day. For the purpose of burying the killed Jews, large dredgers were brought to Treblinka, where they operate continuously. The stench of decaying corpses makes local peasants within a radius of 5 km retch and escape. Besides Treblinka, the same camps are active in Bełżec and Sobibór. It is not known whether any groups of the deported are still alive. All we could find out was annihilation.

If anyone has doubts whether it is possible to exterminate 5, 6 or 10 thousand people, he should be convinced by thousands of witnesses from Otwock, Rembertów, Siedlce, Mińsk Mazowiecki, Łomża and many other places. 2-10 thousand Jews were murdered in front of these people's eyes in every of those places.

This is the scale of massiveness, and the scale of cruelty is equal to it. These people, doomed to die, are subjected to extreme suffering. First, they are loaded in

numbers of at least 100 into wagons having a capacity of 40 persons. The wagon is sealed, and the floor is thickly covered with quicklime. Sometimes, in order to make the slaking lime even more effective, convicts are told to take their shoes off.

In order to inflict moral suffering upon mothers, they are separated from their children. Whole orphanages were carried away. Their personnel do not abandon children. However, the act of loading puts an end to this. Children are loaded separately, whereas the personnel travels in another transport group.

Shooting someone dead on the spot is regarded as a humanitarian act, and so is throwing someone out through the window from the 6th floor. If the oppressor throws a mother with a child through the window onto the pavement, he must have a very tender heart. Dozens of such facts are noted every day.

There are cases of horrifying cruelty: a pregnant Jewish woman escaped from the ghetto. She hid in a house in Grochów and gave birth to a child, receiving care from the Poles. However, a German gendarme caught her and shot her on the spot and trampled down the child.

It is difficult to quote more cases. Let this serve as a measure of atrocities to you.

Let suicides serve as a scale of despair and resignation. Suicides are committed by individuals and whole families. Gas or potassium cyanide. Every day someone poisons himself in one or another house, and even up to several persons in one building commit suicide. To prevent suicides by poisoning, pharmacies in the ghetto were closed down. There are also cases of mass madness. Some people ask 'Junaks' to shoot them dead. Nothing happens for free. If someone wishes to be shot dead, 'Junaks' demand the payment of 100 zlotys for doing this.

It is difficult to finish this description and to continue writing. But this is sufficient to illustrate the scale of events going on here.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Władysława Andersa, 76

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*3 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Information
and Documentation to the Minister of State in the Middle East (in Tehran)
on the opinion of the Jewish community on future Polish borders*

TO POLMISSION—TEHRAN
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED ON 3 SEPT 1942

No. 426.

To Minister Kot¹⁵³

In Tel Aviv Kiersnowski stated—through Kleinbaum and Reiss from the Representation—that Jews from our Eastern territories wish that these territories belong to Poland and their readiness to perpetuate this idea on an international scale. I think that it is in their interest, but it is also compatible with ours. We should not treat this as a favour to us, but we should not ignore it, either. We do not seek their support, but we can support them. The work would have to be very cautious and performed by them as Jews without explicit cooperation with us. They are ready to send a delegation to America in the matter of helping Jews, and the very dissemination of this view by them there could be very useful. Apparently, the president of Wilno Zionists, Rudnicki, whom Kiersnowski knows and who is currently in Tehran, would be good for a delegation that should include Jews from these territories. Without your thorough examination of the actual readiness and confidence in this matter on the spot, no conclusions can be reached here. It is said that Kański himself would not be a good intermediary for them, so I would strongly ask that you consider my request.

STROŃSKI

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245

¹⁵³ Having ceased to perform the function of Ambassador in Kuybyshev, Stanisław Kot went to Iran as Minister of State in the Middle East.

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*5 September 1942. Note by the Embassy in Kuybyshev
to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR
regarding Jewish holidays*

The Polish Embassy has the honour to inform the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the following:

Two of the most important holidays of the Jewish Faith, that is the Jewish New Year and the Day of Judgment fall on Saturday September 12th and on Monday September 21st.

In connection with the above mentioned fact, and referring to precedents for the same kind of things, the Embassy has the honour to request the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to give the necessary instructions through the proper channels of the Soviet authorities that all Polish citizens of the Jewish faith working in Soviet institutions and establishments should be except from working on these days and that any of the above mentioned Polish citizens who do not report to work on these days should not be held responsible for it.¹⁵⁴

Kuibyshev, September 5th, 1942

TNA, FO 371/31088 (ENG)

¹⁵⁴ In reply, the Soviet side sent a note on 11 September 1942: 'With reference to the question raised in the note by the Embassy No. D 3920/42 of the 5th of September of this year the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs has the honour to state that in view of the considerations set forth by the People's Commissariat in their note of the 1st of December, 1941, it sees no ground for the consideration of the question indicated by the Embassy in its note.' TNA, FO 371/31088 (ENG). The Polish note and the reply from the USSR were sent to the British.

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*9 September 1942. Cable from the Government Representative in Vichy
on the need to submit a protest note regarding the deportation
of Jews from France*

ZABIEŁŁO—VICHY
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 9 SEPT 1942
RECEIVED ON 21 SEPT 1942

No. 88

SECRET

The surrender of foreign Jews, including Polish ones, to the Germans is almost completed, refero report No. 983. Verbal protests by myself and the Americans against this plan brought no results. In my view, the release of Polish citizens, including combatants, to the enemy requires a harsh reaction, particularly as this violation of fundamental rules poses an analogous threat to all Poles in France in the future. I suggest submitting a protest note by the Polish Government to one of the French diplomatic posts in the neutral states. For tactical reasons, my direct intervention could not be too harsh, particularly in writing, as, due to the general outline of Polish matters, I need to retain the possibility of contact and cooperation with the Quai d'Orsay. Please let me know about the decision and, if possible, communicate the text of the protest to me.

ZABIEŁŁO

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

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*11 September 1942. Letter from the Representation in Casablanca
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Morocco*

11 September 1942

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In reply to the letter by the Ministry No. 738/Z/42 of 23 July 1942,¹⁵⁵ I am honoured to inform as follows:

On its way to New York, the SS Guinée stopped in Casablanca, from where it sailed farther on 20 May 1942. Among its passengers, there was a large number of Polish citizens, mostly Jews, who had boarded the ship in Lisbon. In Casablanca, this ship was also boarded by a certain number of Jewish refugees, including some Polish citizens, who had already obtained American entry visas. The Office obtained information from the local representative of the Joint, which had contracted this ship that none of the Polish citizens having required visas had been prohibited to leave Casablanca, and none of them contacted the Office in the matter of such prohibition. Therefore, the news reported by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the Ministry communicates is not true and I find it difficult to comprehend the explanations of the ship passengers on which it is allegedly based.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE
E. Przesmycki

AAN, Konsulat Casablanca, 188

¹⁵⁵ In the aforementioned letter, the MFA stated: 'In the bulletin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of 19 July 1942, in the correspondence from New York entitled 'Grynspan's lawyer among refugees arriving in New York', paragraph 3 contains the following sentence: "60 Polish Jews who had been planned to depart by the SS Guine ship were not allowed to leave Casablanca at the last moment. This news was reported by other refugees being passengers on this ship. This action was not motivated by anything". According to the note, the SS Guine contracted by the Joint Distribution Committee departed from Lisbon and then from Casablanca with 415 refugees. In view of the above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks the Office if this matter is known to it and requests it to provide explanations to the extent possible.' AAN, Konsulat Casablanca, 188.

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*12 September 1942. Letter from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs regarding
the need to help Jews in France*

London, 12 September 1942

Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

The news coming from unoccupied France about the arrest and intended surrender of the Jewish citizens of Poland to the Germans, forces us to undertake any measures that, despite some delay and the undoubtedly difficult situation, give even the slightest hope of protecting those Polish citizens, or at least some of them, from the massacre awaiting them in Germany.

In particular, I request that you consider submitting a protest, on behalf of the Polish Government, against the conduct of the French Government to the Government of the United States, the Vatican and governments of all neutral states. I also think that the obligation of the Polish Government would be to ask the Government of the United States and the Vatican for the intervention of those, after all, influential factors in unoccupied France in defence of the right of asylum for Polish citizens.

I attach greater importance to the most urgent and fastest action in this matter, as I am afraid that the surrender of the Jewish citizens of Poland to the Germans may be a precedent that will consequently lead to the surrender of all Polish citizens.

In my opinion, the state of affairs existing in unoccupied France justifies asking the British, American and possibly Belgian (Congo) governments, as well as South American governments, to grant a certain number of residence visas to persons not covered by categories established so far (the military, technicians, persons summoned by the Government). Among the Jewish citizens of Poland there are former combatants, their families, state officials and an array of valuable intellectual forces. It is possible that some of these people can be got out of France in the case of obtaining foreign visas.

The cable No. 76 by Mr Zabiełło¹⁵⁶ suggests that repressions were used only against Polish Jews and stateless persons, and they do not refer to Belgian and Dutch Jews and, in general, all Jews being legally protected by neutral states. This fact means that, under certain circumstances, there is an essential difference

¹⁵⁶ Doc. 228

between citizens of occupied states who are legally protected by neutral states and Polish citizens who are devoid of such protection. Because in the cable No. 80 Mr Zabiełło does not exclude the possibility that the displacement practice will be used also towards Polish workers¹⁵⁷ staying in unoccupied France, I request that you consider whether it would be appropriate to make every effort to ensure the legal protection of Polish citizens in unoccupied France in one of the neutral states.

In particular, I request you to consider whether it would be currently possible to obtain the consent of the United States to the legal protection of Polish citizens in France. I think that it is essential to make every effort to protect Polish citizens unaffected by repressions so far against consequences of the lack of legal protection from some neutral states.

MINISTER
Staćczyk

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

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*13 September 1942. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires
at the Legation in Bern on the influx of Jewish refugees to Switzerland*

No. 208 of 13 Sept 1942

As a result of recent deportations, large numbers of Jewish refugees from occupied and unoccupied Netherlands, Belgium and France, including many Polish citizens, arrive in Switzerland. Leaving them in Switzerland meets with the strong reluctance of the Swiss authorities, which is motivated by the fear of their permanent stay and supply-related difficulties. There are numerous cases of returning them from the border, and it is even feared that those who managed to cross the border may be deported.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ In the cable no. 80 of 15 August 1942, Stanisław Zabiełło informed: 'until now, the French authorities have stated categorically that there is no question of sending Polish workers from France compulsorily to work in Germany. However, in the context of the total failure of the voluntary recruitment of French workers, we theoretically have to reckon with such danger in the future.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246.

¹⁵⁸ In the cable of 18 September 1942 (addressed to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern notified: 'The influx of Polish Jews from the Netherlands, Belgium and both Frances to Switzerland continues. Everybody is penniless and I must provide them with full maintenance, which costs around 150 Swiss

Apart from financial aid provided, I tried to persuade Swiss authorities to letting Polish citizens stay. Judging from our conversations, these efforts can be fully successful if the Swiss Government receives:

- I. assurance from all the Allied governments or any one of them that refugees will obtain the right to enter any of the countries or any of the Allies' colonies;¹⁵⁹
- II. additional navicerts for their maintenance during stay in Switzerland.

Please undertake action in this respect and notify as soon as possible if and on what we can count on.

/-/ ŁADOŚ

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 326

francs per person each month. Their number has already exceeded one hundred, and a few persons arrive every day. Now I can cover expenses only thanks to savings (refero report sent by courier), but this source will soon become exhausted. The number of students whom I must provide with maintenance also increases. In agreement with Swiss authorities, I establish a shelter for refugees, which will result in a one-off expense of several thousand Swiss francs but will decrease the monthly maintenance cost per person to around 100 Swiss francs. I am trying to obtain help from Jewish organisations, but it is impossible to count on more support from them due to their enormous burden towards stateless and German Jews. I stress that the provision of full maintenance is a condition for leaving refugees in Switzerland. Please give me instructions and secure financial resources.' AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 326; see doc. 248.

¹⁵⁹ In the cable of 25 September 1942, Ładoś added: 'Without the Allies' assurance that Jewish emigrants will be allowed to travel farther, it will not be possible to obtain the quota of visas. I am in constant touch with Jewish organisations. The maximum of what I have managed to achieve so far was the suspension of the deportation of those who have managed to cross the border illegally from Switzerland. To obtain more, I would have to give assurances in matters presented in my cable No. 208.' AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 326.

244

*14 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Government Representative in Vichy
on the protest concerning the deportation of Jewish refugees from France*

TO Zabięłło, Vichy
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 14 SEPT 1942

No. 86

Receptus 83¹⁶⁰ and previous ones.

We ask the numerous neutral governments and the Vatican to submit a *démarche* to Vichy about the deportation of Polish Jews.¹⁶¹ We would also like to ask you for an instruction for the American Chargé d'Affaires in Vichy so that he could submit a *formal* protest on behalf of the Polish Government in agreement with you.

For the time being, we do not intend to give much publicity to these measures.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246

¹⁶⁰ In the cable no. 83 of 31 August 1942, Zabięłło reported: 'Surrendering Jews from the so-called Great Germany and occupied Eastern countries, including all Polish Jews, from the free zone to the Germans has already begun. This is preceded by manhunts of Jews and the placement of separated men, women and children in a camp. ... There is huge panic and despair among the Jews, and cases of mass suicides are reported, for example in the Rivesaltes camp. The society and even the French administration are generally filled with indignation. Faced with numerous external and internal interventions, the French Government finds justification in the alleged impossibility of suspending the operation. I consider it necessary to launch a wide foreign campaign condemning France's conduct towards Jews; on the other hand, I maintain my previous opinion on the non-dissemination of information about the special Polish situation in the press and propaganda in France. The details are in the report.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 246.

¹⁶¹ In the cable of 15 September 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs requested the Legation in Lisbon: 'Since Polish Jews from France are surrendered to the Germans, I request that you make every effort to obtain urgently Portuguese visas for families of Jewish soldiers and to notify all concerned parties by cable immediately upon receipt of visas so that they could strive for departure from France *at least* by themselves.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 242.

245

*16 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of State
in the Middle East (from Tehran) to the Prime Minister
on arrests of Polish citizens in the USSR*

Polmission—Tehran
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 16 SEPT
RECEIVED ON 17 SEPT

Very urgent

No. 454

To the Prime Minister

During my one-hour conversation with Willkie,¹⁶² I presented the situation and the most urgent needs of Polish citizens in the USSR; my referring to your order was warmly received by W., who sends his best regards to you. I asked him to intervene for the purpose of:

- I) setting the prisoners free and ceasing to arrest other people,
- II) taking an interest in the provision of aid to Poles,
- III) evacuating children, at least the mentioned group of 10,000,
- IV) bringing up the matter of religious care and arrest of the remaining priests.

I described these proposals in detail and handed in two notes in writing. He asked with great emphasis whether we were harming the Jews, adding that, in this case, the friendliest x... (one illegible fragment) and would have to keep silent for us. I answered that if he found at least one Jew who would complain about the Embassy's antisemitism, he is then allowed not to believe all the information coming from me. I sent him an exhaustive memorial about the citizenship of Jews by Professor Sukiennicki from Kuybyshev,¹⁶³ translated into English by Sapieha here, and I told him about my measures regarding the matter of Alter and Erlich. I described all kinds of accusations that he might hear against our work. He assured that he would undertake all matters, but he obviously had to hear the Soviet stance. The conversation was held in the presence of his two secretaries: editors Barnes

¹⁶² The American politician Wendell Lewis Willkie stayed in the Middle East and in the USSR as a special envoy of President Roosevelt.

¹⁶³ It may refer to doc. 200.

and Cowles and Minister Dreyfus. B. asked about the number of the Poles and minorities.¹⁶⁴

Sent to London and Moscow.

KOT

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245

246

*22 September 1942. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs:
instruction on obtaining aid for Jews in France*

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 22 SEPT 1942

Following previous instructions¹⁶⁵ regarding the anti-Jewish operation in France, I request that you ask the government to which you are accredited, to grant a *certain* quota of visas to Polish citizens in France, which may make it easier for

¹⁶⁴ In the letter from 19 September 1942, the MFA communicated the content of the cable of the Minister of State in the Middle East to the President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Welfare. 'General Anders talked to Willkie. He explained everything that he was asked about with regard to the military situation of Russia. Anders spoke very cautiously, reckoning with the General's comments after his conversation with Churchill. He discussed the difficulties encountered by the Polish Army and stressed the need for further conscription in Russia. He quoted the number of captured soldiers: 60,000 native Poles and 80,000 minorities, mainly Jews. Willkie listened very kindly and promised to do everything he could to support these justified proposals. The conversation took place without witnesses. As a result of my encouragement, on 17 September, the delegation of recently evacuated Jews, including 1 rabbi and 1 Bund member—or actually two delegations—submitted Jewish proposals to Secretary Willkie. These proposals concerned refraining from the imposition of Soviet citizenship upon them, allowing them to leave the Soviets freely as well as the restoration of the Embassy's care system; they also informed about the fate of Erlich and Alter.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/1.

¹⁶⁵ In a circular of 11 September 1942, Minister Raczyński requested: 'In reference to the received messages about the surrender of a large number of *Jewish* citizens of Poland from the unoccupied zone to the Germans by Vichy and the danger of this operation continuing, I request that you get in touch with the government to which you are accredited and *suggest* that it make an active *démarche* in this matter in the name of humanitarian slogans to the French Government.' Then he added in a circular of 14 September 1942: 'Please stress that the French authorities refuse to give Jews

us to persuade the French authorities into allowing them to leave and to providing temporary asylum in Switzerland and Portugal. Please get in touch with local Jewish organisations, which should actively support our action.

Raczyński

Washington: To be performed only in the case of obtaining active support from Jews. Please notify Havana.

Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Lima, Bogota: Please perform only with regard to Uruguay, Bolivia and Paraguay. *Please forward to Lima and Bogota.*

For the attention of Lisbon: take appropriate steps in the case of obtaining quotas in other countries.

For the attention of Bern—receptus 208.¹⁶⁶

Ottawa.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 235

247

22 September 1942. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington to the Honorary Consul in Havana on the obtaining of Cuban visas for Jewish refugees from France

22 September 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

To Mr Karol Sachs,
Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in Havana

I would like to notify you that, in connection with the antisemitic operation of the Government of unoccupied France, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests an intervention with the Government of the Cuban Republic to grant a certain quota of visas to Jewish citizens of Poland who are currently in the unoccupied part of France. Obtaining such a quota of visas may facilitate our efforts to convince the

permissions to leave the country, making it impossible for us to rescue them before they are surrendered to the Germans.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 235.

¹⁶⁶ Doc. 243

French authorities to make the refugees' departure possible and to provide them with a temporary asylum in Switzerland and Portugal.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests prior agreement with local Jewish organisations in this matter. The Ministry requests that the aforementioned request towards the Cuban Government should depend on obtaining active support from these Jewish organisations.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Poselstwo Hawana, A.62/37

248

*25 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Embassy in Washington on obtaining financial aid
for Jewish refugees in Switzerland*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 25 SEPT 1942

No. 575

In connection with the influx of Polish Jews from France to Switzerland (over 100 of them have already arrived), financial aid is urgently needed. The monthly cost of maintenance is 150 Swiss francs per person, and the arrangement of shelter will cost approx. 15,000 Swiss francs on a one-off basis. The establishment of the shelter will reduce the individual cost of maintenance to 100 Swiss francs.

In this matter, please contact the Joint, which should cover all costs as far as possible.¹⁶⁷

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹⁶⁷ In the letter from 15 October 1942, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requested the MFA to pass the following information to the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern: 'According to the wish of Envoy Ładoś, at the request of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Treasury remitted the amount of 50,000 Swiss francs for care purposes to Switzerland. Given the amount of the remittance and serious transfer difficulties, this sum should be sufficient for a longer period of time. The Minister of

249

25 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Ambassadors in Washington and to the Holy See regarding the persecution of the Polish and Jewish population in Lithuania

TO Polmission Washington and Vatican¹⁶⁸
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 25 SEPT 1942

According to reliable information, the persecution of the Polish and Jewish population is reaching horrific proportions.

1. In the autumn of 1941, the Lithuanian police and voluntary formations shot 600 Jews in Niemenczyn, 1,000 in Nowowilejka, 200 in Ejszyski and several thousand in Szawle.

Labour and Social Welfare requests you to submit, as fast as possible, a detailed report on the current state of the charity, that is, how many people got out of France, how many of them are taken care of, whether the shelter is already in operation, whether the influx of further refugees is expected and, finally, what position is adopted by the Swiss authorities.' Later it was communicated in the letter from 18 November: 'The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare suggested to its Delegate in New York that he should talk to the Joint on the matter of Jewish refugees—Polish citizens who got through to Switzerland from unoccupied France. As a result of this conversation, the Vice-President of the Joint, Joseph C. Hyman, stated that the Joint could not share granted assistance between groups of Jews from various countries, but it continued to direct its subsidy, which had considerably increased recently, to the Schweizerisch-Izraelitische Gemeinde, the president of which is Saly Mayer, 26, Tigerbergstrasse, St. Gallen. As Mr Hyman assures, the request made by the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern to Mr Mayer for help to Jews—Polish citizens will be received "warmly and effectively"' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529.

¹⁶⁸ The Ambassadors in London, Washington and to the Holy See submitted notes on the situation in Lithuania to the respective countries. In his note dated 3 October 1942, Kazimierz Papée also informed about the events from Warsaw: 'We receive reports from our other source, from Warsaw, that the ghetto in that city is being methodically emptied. One part of this ghetto, known as the "little ghetto," is already empty. Every day, groups of more than a thousand Jews are taken by rail beyond Lublin, to the east. According to information from a citizen of one the Axis countries, who had been in these areas, it seems that the Jews are first kept concentrated in a camp and then exterminated there; in any case it has been confirmed that their families never heard from them again.— It is expected that in the coming months the entire Jewish population of the Warsaw Ghetto—totalling 300,000 Jews—will get there, and that the housing in this part of the city will be given over to "Aryans." IPMS, Ambasada Watykan, A.44.49/6.

2. As a result of the mass murders carried out by the Lithuanians, the population of the Wilno Ghetto was reduced from 80,000 to 30,000. Recently, there were only 12,000 people.

3. On 18 March 1942, a Lithuanian police unit and military formation, the so-called Lithuanian Security Forces, shot 140 prisoners in Lublin, mostly imprisoned for not providing grain quotas.

4. On 19 May 1942, unknown culprits murdered the German district commander and one or two other German officers near Świąciany. As a form of repression, on the same day, a unit of the Lithuanian Security Forces, in cooperation with the Gestapo, massacred around 200 Poles from Świąciany. The Lithuanian police, on the other hand, conducted arrests within a broad radius from the place of assassination to Kiemeliszki in the south and up to Tworecz and Widze in the north. Around a thousand arrested, mostly Poles (there were also some Jews and Belarusians) were brought to Łyntupy and Świąciany, where they were murdered on 20 and 21 May by the Lithuanian Security Forces, Lithuanian order police and Lithuanian forest guard. Some executions were also carried out in the field. On this occasion, 150 Polish prisoners were shot in Wilno by the Lithuanians. The total number of victims can reach very serious proportion, although the official German message admits only to 400, indicating that they were mostly Poles.

These are the same events that are cited by the resolution of the Lithuanian National Council passed in Chicago on 15 June, which presents them as 'Lithuanian citizens' killed by the Gestapo.

5. On 9–17 May, the Lithuanians shot about 300 Poles imprisoned in Wilno, including about 80 male students of the Mickiewicz gymnasium and five female students.

6. On 25 and 26 May, the Lithuanian police shot 21 Poles in Olkieniiki. The pretext could not be established.

The terrorist action is the result of the German attempt to create a gap between the Polish and Lithuanian nations. This action is fully supported by the quisling Lithuanian elements, grouped around the Lithuanian General Council, set up in August 1941 in Kaunas. These elements considered the current situation convenient for preparing the ground for the Great Lithuania completely free from national 'minorities.'

In line with these aspirations, the entire enormous apparatus of the Lithuanian administration, after destroying a huge mass of Jews, persecutes and harasses the Polish population, forces it to go for forced labour to Germany, and work in the staff service at the front; it also reduces the general education in Polish and carries out massacres.

The state of affairs is such that the Polish population, the remnants of the Jewish population, and a part of the Belarusian population live in the fear of a massacre.¹⁶⁹

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248*

250

29 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Ambassador in Washington on the deportation of Jews from France

No. 295 of 29 Sept 1942

I ask you to submit to the Ambassador of Vichy in Washington a note containing the protest of the Polish Government against orders on the deportation of Jewish citizens from Poland to the occupied zone, which contradicts the provisions of international law and elementary principles of morality... It is necessary to note frequent cases of suicide among those endangered by deportation as well as the fact that deportation covers also some Polish combatants from the period of the current war, which is particularly reprehensible. The Polish Government holds the Vichy Government responsible for the surrender of Polish citizens to the Germans and the suffering and inevitable death of many of them, which the Vichy Government could and should have prevented.

Finally, I must add that, according to available information, the Vichy Government has already made a decision concerning the compulsory employment of workers. The Polish Government at least has the right to hope that this order will not be a pretext for continuing to surrender Polish citizens to the Germans' hands.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ The Ambassador in Washington reported in the cable of 3 November 1942: 'The Lithuanian Legation, the Lithuanian Consul, the press and some organisations implemented the agreed anti-Polish action. They refer to the "Wilno cause" and the Polish-German Pact of 1934, strongly denying the Lithuanian participation in persecution, claiming that they are repressed by the Germans on an equal footing with Poles. The Lithuanian press calls the news about outrages a German propaganda hoax and uses the fact that some Polish magazines from New York and Chicago decided to ignore this event. I am privately checking the possibility of obtaining a declaration. Please send all the evidence of Lithuanian-German cooperation, especially in the anti-Jewish action. II. There are no Lithuanian radio broadcasts for the foreign public in the USA. I am currently investigating the issue of local broadcasts for the Lithuanians living here.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248*.

¹⁷⁰ In another cable of 29 September 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs communicated: 'In connection with the anti-Jewish operation of Vichy and in view of our fears that

Sent to Washington, with a copy for Vichy.

/-/ Raczyński

Bern: Please forward the above to Zabiełło as No. 92.

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 320

251

*30 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Embassy in Washington on the establishment of Jewish delegates
at Polish diplomatic posts*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 30 SEPT 1942

No. 582

Please explain to the Jewish Congress, in reply to its letter sent through the Embassy,¹⁷¹ that the plan of granting diplomatic titles to delegates for aid to Jews in Poland, who would be assigned to Legations in Lisbon and Stockholm, *is invalid cannot be fulfilled*, as Sweden and Portugal *already made* an objection *against* the expansion of the personnel of our institutions *some time ago*.

the further stage of deportations may encompass ~~Poles~~ *all Polish citizens*, we consider it advisable, apart from our own international intervention in the matter of Polish Jews, to persuade maybe also the United Nations into making a joint statement *in the defence of all endangered citizens of all occupied countries*. This could be, for instance, a public joint declaration of Governments condemning the methods of the Vichy government, warning against further deportations or the announcement of sanctions to be used in specific cases, e.g. the treatment of the guilty ones similarly to German criminals, Quislings *and their collaborators* by the United Nations after the war. Because, in our opinion, the success of this operation depends mainly on the position of the United States, I request you to check the opinion of the Department of State in this matter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248.

¹⁷¹ In the letter from 14 September 1942, the Embassy in Washington communicated: 'The Embassy is honoured to attach a copy of the letter received from the World Jewish Congress regarding the appointment of delegates of this Congress at Legations of the Republic of Poland in Stockholm and Lisbon for the purpose of bringing aid to Jews in Poland. This plan undoubtedly has many advantages, but it can also arouse many doubts. The Embassy asks you to inform the Embassy by telegraph what kind of answer should be given to the World Jewish Congress.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 93.

Please give more details about intended aid measures.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 93

252

*30 September 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Washington on accusations of discrimination
of persons of Jewish descent in the Polish Army in the East*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 30 SEPT 1942

No. 585

Receptus 384¹⁷²

In connection with the dispatch of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency concerning the alleged discrimination of Polish Jews in Russia, it is necessary to provide a confidential explanation to Jewish officials:

During the evacuation of soldiers and civilians from Russia, the Soviet authorities emphatically and categorically demanded the exclusion of *all* Jews, who—as we know—are regarded as citizens of the USSR according to the Soviet argument. Engaging in essential disputes with the Soviet Government on that subject would certainly result in the suspension of the evacuation as a whole, which was obviously impossible. Also, the mass smuggling of Jews from Russia to Persia was not feasible due to the vigilance of Soviet authorities. In these conditions, the military authorities responsible for evacuation decided to deport at least some Jews, both soldiers and civilians, within the scope of general evacuation; this is why a total number of a few thousand Polish Jews arrived in Persia from Russia.

¹⁷² In the cable no. 384 of 26 September 1942, Ambassador Ciechanowski informed: 'In an extensive cable sent from Kuybyshev on 22 September, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency accuses the Polish military authorities in Russia of new discriminations against Jews, both soldiers and civilians. The Agency states that the military authorities want to avoid the evacuation of Jews from Russia and, therefore, dismiss Jewish soldiers from troops on a mass scale and replace them with Poles. Consequently, Jewish civilians cannot leave Russia as soldiers' family members, either. The Agency states that the Polish Embassy in Russia is helpless towards the anti-Jewish attitude of the Polish military authorities.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248.

Specific accusations quoted in the dispatch were submitted for examination to relevant circles. *Please inform New York.*

Raczyński

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248*

253

30 September 1942. Letter from the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Mexico on the possibility of obtaining typhus vaccines

30 September 1942

To the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

Today I have received the letter from 26 August from the Ministry on typhus vaccines being produced here. The vaccine produced here used to be made only of mouse germs. According to the opinion of the 'Journal of the American Medical Association' (the most popular professional magazine in this respect) of 6 June 1942, page 500, already this type of vaccine was regarded as the best.

Today this vaccine (type 42) is even better because it is produced of a mixture of mouse germs and human germs and, according to the opinion of American doctors, it fully replaces the best American vaccines, which are very difficult to get, anyway.

As I have been informed, the cost of an American vaccine is 95 c. per batch. As far as the local vaccine is concerned, we can get it from Professor Castañeda free of charge by paying only his minimum costs.

The organisation of Jewish doctors OSZ (known in Poland as TOZ) is sending the first 1,000 batches for Jewish refugees in Siberia to the Consulate General in New York today and intends to send 1,000 batches every week.

I look forward to your instructions.

Dr Ignacy Wygard
Polish Consular Agent¹⁷³

AAN, *Poselstwo Meksyk, 66*

¹⁷³ In the letter from 29 January 1942, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requested of Ignacy Wygard: "The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asks you to take the

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*1 October 1942. Report by the Envoy to the Belgian Government
on the idea of evacuation of Jewish refugees
from France to the Belgian Congo*

1 October 1942

Minister of Foreign Affairs
at the same address

I submitted a letter today to Belgium's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Spaak, regarding the matter of allowing a certain number of Polish citizens of Jewish faith staying in France to leave for the Belgian Congo.¹⁷⁴

Minister Spaak stated that he had recently addressed Minister Eden, suggesting that he should convene a conference of the representatives of Governments of the Allied States in Great Britain for the purpose of a joint consideration and discussion of the problem concerning measures that would help foreigners of Jewish faith in France to leave France and settle in other countries for the period of the war. He believes that this issue, which all allied states are concerned about, should be the subject-matter of a joint conference at which, upon becoming familiar with numbers of citizens in each country, it will be possible to arrange a refugee dislocation plan and agree upon an effective course of action. Minister Eden replied that he would take this suggestion into account and give a substantive answer in the near future. Minister Spaak promised to notify me about the content of this reply immediately.

honorary position of Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare for Mexico and all other republics of Central America. Your task will be to provide material aid under social funds to Polish citizens living in this territory and to cooperate with the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Mexico City with regard to assistance to Polish citizens; however, any of your statements or requests to be made towards authorities or local offices are allowed only with the consent of the Envoy of the Republic of Poland, which must be obtained in each specific case. The Ministry hopes that you undertake this task with a sense of civic duty and attaches the decree of nomination.' AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 66.

¹⁷⁴ In the letter from 25 September 1942, the MFA requested of Envoy Glaser: 'Dear Envoy, I ask you to strive to obtain a consent from the Belgian Government for the arrival of some Jewish citizens of Poland from France endangered by recent orders of the French Vichy government in the Belgian Congo. For the sake of easier orientation, I hereby send you a copy of the note submitted to Minister Eden in this matter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529.

He actually said that he would present our request to his Government, but this is a difficult problem for them. They are afraid of the excessive influx of Jews to the Congo due to the local population (the fear of provoking antisemitic movements) and for political (the quality of the arriving element) and financial reasons (the guarantee of maintenance). He does not envisage the possibility of admitting a larger number of Jews from Poland. There are also difficulties regarding the quota of visas: Portugal makes things difficult even in the case of transit visas and assigns only a limited quota of visas to Belgium. Because the Belgian Government is concerned about taking as many citizens of draft age as possible out of France in order to conscript them into the Belgian army in Great Britain, they would not like to burden this visa quota with another element; in any case, they must act very carefully here.

Although Minister Spaak tried to create a very friendly impression on me, this conversation left me with the feeling that this matter is not likely to succeed.¹⁷⁵

Prof. *Stefan Glaser*

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

¹⁷⁵ In an earlier report of 23 September 1942, the Envoy to the Belgian Government reported: 'Yesterday, pursuant to our telephone arrangements, I visited the Secretary-General of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Van Langenhove, who told me that the Belgian Government had not undertaken any special efforts to make it easier to leave the country or obtain British visas for Belgian citizens of Jewish faith staying in the territory of unoccupied France. When asked by me whether he considered it advisable to launch a joint action so that our citizens of Jewish faith could leave France more easily, he replied that he considered this idea to be sound and that he would notify me about his government's intentions in this matter within a short period.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529.

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*8 October 1942. Cable from the Minister of State in the Middle East
(from Tehran) on counteracting accusations of antisemitism*

Polmission—Tehran

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 8 OCT
RECEIVED ON 12 OCT

No. 530.

In reference to the accusations of antisemitism facing us from the Jews in the United States, I propose to use, through Ambassador Romer, the Polish Government's propaganda campaign almost exclusively for Jewish refugees in the Far East. Exhaustive and very convincing documents in this matter will be brought to England by [former] Secretary of the Embassy in Tokyo Staniszewski in a couple of days. At the same time, a number of Jews, who could be useful for our purposes, will arrive: journalist Klibański from the Polish Socialist Party, Rabbi Sieniatycki—a representative of Orthodox Jews, Lederman—a member of the Zionists and Kasztelaniec—a member of the Bund party.

Kot
Polmission

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 528

256

*9 October 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Istanbul
on information about the extermination
of the Jewish population in occupied Poland*

POLCONSUL—ISTANBUL
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 9 OCT 1942

No. 202.

The local Jewish activists received quite reliable information that the Germans had accelerated the already ongoing physical liquidation of the ghetto in Warsaw and other ghettos in Poland, and that the Jews recently evacuated from Germany became subject to further extermination in the General Government and in Lithuania, where such acts are easier to hide from the public. In this way, the Germans want to achieve the necessary savings in provisions for the winter, at the same time reducing the number of centres of expected resistance. The Jews' corpses are immediately processed into fats; it is even said that the excavation of mass graves has begun for the purpose of chemical processing into artificial fertilisers. The Germans are making extraordinary efforts to win the support of the Polish population for this mechanical destruction of Jews. They hope that the Poles will resign from acts of protest and succumb to illusions that this will help them survive the winter. Such moods are said to have already been created in Lwów. In this spirit, the Jews from Poland and Austria have recently warned New York via Geneva again.¹⁷⁶

PONIŃSKI

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 611

¹⁷⁶ The content of the cable was communicated to the President, the Prime Minister and Minister Mikołajczyk. In the covering note addressed to the latter, Minister Raczyński reported: 'Attaching a copy of the encrypted dispatch of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Istanbul, I would like to ask you to evaluate the message contained in it in the light of information possessed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and to comment upon the matter of a potential external action.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 611.

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9 October 1942. Cable from the Envoy in Madrid on Jewish refugees in Spain

POLMISSION—MADRID
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 9 OCT 1942
RECEIVED ON 13 OCT 1942

No. 366.

As a result of arrests of the Jews in France, approx. (?) Jewish families found themselves in the local area, mainly in Barcelona and partly in Madrid.¹⁷⁷ Most of them cross the border illegally without passports or with counterfeit Spanish documents obtained at a high expense. The Polish Legation, via the branch of the Red Cross in Barcelona and directly in Madrid, grants aid to those whose Polish citizenship can be ascertained. Considerable funds in the amount of 50,000 are needed for this purpose, assuming subsidies of 350 to 500 pesetas per person. Those Jews who crossed the border illegally without French exit visas but possess Spanish transit visas are basically allowed by the local authorities to go farther to Portugal. Recently, however, 50 Jews who did not have the right documents have been detained in Miranda.

SZUMLAKOWSKI

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 529

¹⁷⁷ In the cable of 3 October 1942 addressed to Envoy Szumlakowski, Minister Raczyński requested: 'In connection with the message that a small number of Polish-Jewish citizens got through to Spain in fear that they may be deported by French authorities, I request you to take care of these refugees and provide information about the number.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 529.

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*14 October 1942. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires
at the Legation in Lima
on intervention with Peruvian authorities
on the matter of Jewish refugees in France*

14 October 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland
in London

Regarding: Intervention in the interest of Polish Jews in France

Further to the cable sent on the 7 October, I reported that, in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry received from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Buenos Aires,¹⁷⁸ I turned to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Peruvian Republic on the 21 September with a fervent appeal for an intervention of the Peruvian Government against the Vichy Government, in the name of the most fundamental humanitarian principles, so that the inhumane action of handing over Polish-Jewish citizens into German hands would immediately cease. I repeated this appeal in verbal form to the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minister Plenipotentiary Dr. Hernán C. Bellido, during a personal visit, emphasising the role of the Catholic World in efforts to relieve the tragic fate of Jews in France. On 6 October, I received a note attached in a copy from the Secretary-General of the Ministry,¹⁷⁹ in which he conveyed that the Minister of Peru in Vichy had received a telegraphic instruction to make a relevant appeal to the Vichy Government on behalf of the Peruvian Government.

This appeal of the local Government to the Vichy Government shows that a particularly kind attitude towards Poland has been achieved, considering the fact that any interference in European matters is usually avoided here. Thus, I expressed my most sincere gratitude to the local Government for its appeal. In the meantime, I received an instruction from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Buenos Aires on the matter of obtaining a quota of visas for Jewish citizens of Poland from France; however, I should speak with the local Jewish organisations on this matter. In order to determine the tactics of proceeding in this rather delicate matter in

¹⁷⁸ See doc. 246.

¹⁷⁹ The attachment is not included in this publication.

the local area, I agreed with the local English Envoy, who has stayed here for the longest time among all the diplomats and knows the ground thoroughly and who like his wife has expressed interest in the fate of Jewish refugees a number of times. The English Envoy told me that such an action is doomed to failure in advance, and that even his interventions in the interest of a very small group of people were unsuccessful. Peru has difficulties in provisioning and lacks provincial cities, so everything is concentrated in the overpopulated capital. The population that cannot be placed on farms or in mines becomes a burden. The Jewish organisations with which I got in touch were not less pessimistic about this matter. This was also an opportunity for interesting observations as to how the Jewish matter was presented in this local area by the Jews themselves. There are three Jewish organisations here: Sociedad de Beneficencia Israelita de 1870 (The Society of German Jews, 400 members), Sociedad de Beneficencia Israelita Sefardi (The Society of Spanish Jews, 300 members) and Unión Israelita (The Society of Eastern Jews, 1500 members). Until now, these organisations have not been very active—according to the Jews, they were established a short time ago, but this is not true, taking into account that the oldest organisation dates back to 1870. As I have heard, the actual reason is that the Jews did not show any willingness to associate so as not to emphasise their descent and in order to assimilate within this society more easily. Only the recent influx of refugees forced the Jews to engage in collective life as a basis for establishing relations with greater organisations in the United States in case it is necessary to obtain funds. Thus, the mentioned three organisations created a joint committee headed by a German Jew only a few months ago. This, however, has not changed the fact that these organisations do not get along and their activity is scarce. Among others, they do not even have a rabbi. As for the actions I am coordinating on the recommendation of the Polish Government, their response so far is that you will not be able to count on a great deal of support. They told me that the action could not succeed, that the attitude of the decision-makers was definitely negative, and that they have already asked once to be given the opportunity to admit 200 children from France, which they were refused on the grounds that ‘when we let 200 children in, 200 adult Jews will settle here.’ They added that the decision-makers had pointed out that creating a ‘Jewish question’ was not in anyone’s interest here. They are certainly right insofar as the antisemitic sentiment is strongly on the rise. It manifests itself not only in minor incidents, like the one when the audience removed some Jews from the bullfighting arena a short time ago, throwing them like balls over the spectators’ heads, but also in official statements, such as a motion filed by Deputy Calle Escajadillo in Parliament on 25 September, which advocates not only the legal prohibition of the immigration of Jews, but also the examination of reasons and conditions of stay of Jews who are already in the Republic of Peru. In these conditions, it becomes necessary to prepare the action in a versatile and very careful way. Immigration permits, even

in the case of individual people, may be formally granted only by the President at the request of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The country is undergoing a deep cabinet crisis, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs is seriously sick. I am trying to interest the Catholic spheres, among other things, by referring to the address of the Holy Father and the action of the Council of Christians and Jews in London.

The reaction of local Jews to my case was interesting. Their attitude towards great democracies is sceptical. They do not believe in the intention of the Government of England and the United States to engage in the Jewish matter in any way. One of the most outstanding activists among the local Jews told me: 'During the last war England at least gave us promises that it did not keep or maybe could not keep; during that war all the nations were mentioned, but not a word has been said about Jews. The Holy See and, as we can see today, Poland were the first to remember about Jews.' I answered that the logical consequence would be to help Poland in the field of propaganda, etc., e.g. considering the fact that obtaining a rabbi for this community is necessary, they should make efforts for a Polish Jew to hold this position. A few days later they told me that one of the most outstanding Jewish activists from Lima, the owner of a clothing house, would go on a business trip throughout America in a few days with the mission of finding a Polish Jew as a rabbi for them.

Oswald Kermenic
Chargé d'Affaires of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

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*16 October 1942. Letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs
to the Prime Minister on the determination
of the death toll in occupied Poland*

16 Oct 1942

To Prime Minister General W. Sikorski

In reply to the letter of the 1st inst., L.dz.2704/IV/42, I would like to explain as follows:

Upon the receipt of a message on the persecution of Jews in Poland, a conference was held at the Ministry of Information to consider the issue of informing the

world about persecutions in Poland. The official information from the Delegate of the Government stated explicitly—after previous inquiries—that the number of Jews murdered in Poland did not exceed 200,000. At the same time, due to the intensification of terror, it was indicated that the number of murdered Poles, which had recently been specified as 140,000, should be increased to 200,000. Confusion in this field, in spite of previous warnings, was contributed by Mr Zygielbojm, who quoted the number of 700,000 murdered Jews on the basis of the Bund's report.¹⁸⁰ Even in the Bund's report, this number was quoted as questionable. However, Mr Zygielbojm communicated this number to the English press. Thus, at the conference of the Committee of Propaganda in the Ministry of Information, a decision was made to hold a meeting of the National Council, at which the Minister of Internal Affairs would present final figures concerning killings and persecutions in Poland. On their part, the Jews continued to quote the number of 700,000. I presented the figures quoted at the meeting of the National Council as follows:

The number of executed, murdered and tortured Poles exceeds 200,000 today. Based on verified information, the number of murdered Jews has also exceeded 200,000. Taking into account that:

- around 400,000 Polish citizens were murdered in Poland,
- ” 1,500,000 were sent to forced labour to Germany over the course of two and a half years,
- ” 200,000 POWs are imprisoned in Germany,
- ” 170,000 were incorporated into the German army,
- ” 150,000 were killed and lost in the campaign of 1939, we will reach the number 2,420,000 Polish citizens removed from Polish soil, not counting Poles in Soviet Russia.

Of course, these figures are not completely accurate, because they are difficult to determine with full certainty today. These figures do not stand for ultimate losses, as we fully hope to meet in free Poland a large number of those sent for forced labour or to camps or incorporated into the army; nevertheless, the fact that approximately 3 million Poles, a huge percentage of citizens, found themselves outside the country, proves the horrible fate that our nation experiences in this war.

These figures indicate that persecutions encompass both the Polish nation and the Jewish nation. Obviously, it is not the Government's fault that Jews would prefer to present German persecutions in Poland as those committed only against Jews.

Another issue is that Minister Bracken quoted the number of 700,000 Jews at the start of the conference, and Minister Stroński said at the end that 700,000 Jews

¹⁸⁰ Doc. 181.

had really died if we took into account not only those directly executed, but also those who had disappeared during the occupation. However, it does not seem to me that Jewish demagoguery in this matter could influence the position of the Government, which is obliged to present matters concerning Poland in their entirety to the world, both with regard to persecutions of Poles and Jews. Nobody can accuse the Polish Government of presenting the persecution of Polish Jews in an insufficient manner to the world, but the Polish Government has the right to demand that the Jews also communicate the news to the world moderately and, in this way, avoid compromising the reliability of Polish sources regarding persecutions in Poland.

In order to prevent this kind of contradictory information in the future, I would like to ask you to issue an order stating that state offices responsible for providing information about the situation in Poland should agree upon their statement with the Ministry of Internal Affairs beforehand. This will correspond to your circular that was once issued in these matters.

Thus, the Jews are responsible for having made the fuss in this matter, with particular regard to Mr Zygielbojm and currently Mr Schwarzbart, who increased the number of killed Jews in Poland to one million in his magazine 'Przyszłość'.¹⁸¹

S. Mikołajczyk
MINISTER

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 51

¹⁸¹ In the cable of 15 October 1942, addressed to the Government Delegate for Poland, Minister Mikołajczyk instructed: 'Please send me all data about current persecutions of Jews in Poland as soon as possible.' AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/I/2.

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22 October 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the posts in Jerusalem and Beirut
on the petition filed by the Representation of Polish Jewry

TO Polconsul Jerusalem, Beirut
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 24 OCT 1942

In reference to the cable of the Representation of Polish Jewry of 30 September addressed to the Government¹⁸² on the evacuation of Jews from the USSR, please give *confidentially* the following answer to the Representation on behalf of the Government:

The low percentage ratio of Jews evacuated from the USSR is the result of the position and orders of the Soviet authorities, and not the Polish ones. In existing local conditions, the Polish authorities did make a huge effort to take away, despite Soviet orders, those Jewish citizens of Poland who are currently in the Middle East. In the future, the Government will not spare its efforts, either, to evacuate all Polish citizens regardless of their nationality.

Please communicate this reply to Minister Kot and Consul Rosmarin.

Raczyński

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 529

¹⁸² In the letter from 20 October 1942, Deputy Prime Minister Mikołajczyk sent the petition in question to the MFA, requesting that the answer be communicated to parties concerned. One of its passages reads: 'Understand Jews evacuated from Russia so far averages six percentage in spite Jews being forty percentage of Polish deported and refugees stop According authentic information participation Jews evacuation scheme would have been increased despite formal obstacles Russian Government stop This regarded utmost injustice towards Polish Jewry stop Connection with preparations for further evacuation our requests are reiterated to increase percentage Jews military and civilian scheme stop Representation is made again with view to have Governments instructions issued factors in charge of evacuation to increase participation Jews in order alleviate what we consider great harm.' IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A (ENG).

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*23 October 1942. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on current political events (extracts)*

CIRCULAR
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 27 OCT 1942

Confidential political bulletin No. 2

I. Soviet Union

1) As a result of the intervention of the Government of the Republic of Poland with support from British and US Governments (particularly Willkie on Roosevelt's request) on the matter of the release of delegates and trusted representatives arrested in July this year, the Soviet Government discontinued proceedings against 15 of them and ordered the deportation of 78 persons 'found to be guilty of hostile activities against the USSR'.¹⁸³ With regard to 16 of them, it *announces* the institution of judicial proceedings against them. Ambassador Romer regards the decision on the release of prisoners as the will to clear the air before his negotiations in Moscow (with regard to the submission of letters of credence¹⁸⁴). We are making efforts to bring about the release of the remaining 16 persons.

...¹⁸⁵

II. Among the 29,000 Polish citizens (civilians) evacuated from the USSR in August, there are 1,002 Jews. There are a few thousand Jews in the army. The relatively low percentage of evacuated Jews is a result of the position of the Soviet authorities, which have refused to release Jews from the USSR since December 1941, questioning their citizenship and that of other minorities deported from Poland. Figures of Jews evacuated in these conditions illustrate the great effort of *Polish* civil and military authorities.

III. The deportation of Jews from unoccupied France to Germany. In the defence of Polish citizens, the Polish Government has used numerous *démarches* towards governments maintaining diplomatic relations with Vichy, including the United States, Canada and a number of Latin American countries. Apart from

¹⁸³ Between the beginning of June and 20 July 1942, the Soviet authorities arrested Polish delegates and trusted representatives (in total around 150 persons) and withdrew their consent to the functioning of delegations of the Embassy in Kuybyshev.

¹⁸⁴ After his return from Shanghai, Tadeusz Romer was appointed Ambassador in Kuybyshev. He submitted letters of credence at the Kremlin at the end of October 1942.

¹⁸⁵ Extracts about relations with the USSR and about the deportation of workers from France to Germany were omitted.

that, the Government is making efforts to obtain an asylum for endangered Polish citizens from France in a number of states.

...

23/X

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 235*

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*24 October 1942. Cable from the Envoy in Buenos Aires
on the impossibility of evacuating Jewish refugees to Paraguay*

Polmission—Buenos Aires

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 24 OCT 1942

RECEIVED ON 28 OCT 1942

No. 180

Receptus cable No. 174¹⁸⁶

For the time being, I submitted a note regarding Jews in France personally to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay in Asuncion on 10 October. He replied by asking me what I had expected and that he could not even grant courtesy visas because Jews had not been allowed to arrive in Paraguay pursuant to an act passed in 1937; he promised to consider the matter of submitting a protest to Vichy in the government.

Arciszewski

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 237*

¹⁸⁶ Doc. 246 (circular of Minister Raczyński sent as cable no. 174 to the Legation in Buenos Aires).

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*24 October 1942. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires
at the Legation in Montevideo on restrictions
in acceptance of Jewish refugees in Uruguay*

Polmission—Montevideo
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 24 OCT 1942
RECEIVED ON 26 OCT 1942

No. 9.

For the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Receptus cable No. 3¹⁸⁷

Please instruct Madrid not to place on the list of internees any Jews who have no chance to be accepted. The placement of Jews would spoil the matter.

Rozwadowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 243

¹⁸⁷ In the cable no. 3 of 14 October 1942, Minister Raczyński instructed: 'I authorise you to submit a written guarantee to the Government of Uruguay that the Polish Government will maintain internees from Miranda during their stay in U. and that they will be repatriated to Poland after the war. Please make your efforts to obtain an asylum for 100 internees. I have instructed Madrid to submit a relevant list to the Envoy of U. in Madrid and to send its copy by air to you. Please make efforts to obtain a quick favourable decision as far as possible and notify me.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 243.

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*25 October 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern
on accusations of antisemitic behaviour*

TO Polmission Bern
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 25 OCT 1942

No. 322.

There have been rumours in Palestine that a certain Colonel Pelc engaged in antisemitic behaviour among Polish internees in Switzerland. Please reply by telegraph whether an officer bearing this name exists and whether there are any signs of antisemitic behaviour among internees.¹⁸⁸

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 236

¹⁸⁸ In the cable of 3 November 1942, Ładoś replied: 'A "certain colonel Pelc" is the head of the infantry division, the highest-ranked officer after General Prugar and his deputy, so information about him can be obtained from the Ministry of Military Affairs. Antisemitic behaviours, which may sporadically occur due to the presence of various elements in the division, are harshly tackled by the command of the division. There is no question of any declared antisemitic action and the general situation in this respect is more than satisfactory.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 236. And the Consul General in Tel Aviv reported in the cable of 18 October 1942: 'I communicate that I managed to suspend the publication of news in the press that Colonel Pelc engages in antisemitic behaviour among Polish officers and soldiers interned in Switzerland.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

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*26 October 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv
on the religious education of Jewish children*

Tel Aviv, 26 October 1942

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

The delegation of Agudat Israel submitted a memorial to me, demanding that all Jewish children without exception brought from Soviet Russia to Palestine receive a religious upbringing. Moreover, it wishes to be entrusted with the care and education of children who were brought up in religious schools or whose parents were known as religious Jews. For this purpose, it suggests creating a Committee composed of representatives of the Jewish Agency and Agudat, which will carry out the classification and allocation of children to relevant educational institutions.

At the request of the Delegation, I present this proposal to you and, on my part, ask you to treat this matter as urgent.

Dr *Henryk Rosmarin*
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 552

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26 October 1942. Report by the Consul General in Istanbul on persecutions of the Jewish population in Bulgaria

Istanbul, 26 October 1942

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Jewish issues in Bulgaria

On 29 August 1942, the Ordinance of the Council of Ministers regarding the restriction of Jews' rights in Bulgaria was published in the Bulgarian official journal. At the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Commissariat for Jewish Affairs was organised to centralise all issues concerning Jewish affairs.

This Commissariat has the right to demand from all state departments the introduction of orders requested by the Commissariat with regard to matters related to Jewish issues; on the other hand, no office may issue orders in these matters without prior arrangement with the Commissariat.

Upon the motion of the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Council of Ministers decided that the function of Commissioner would be held by Alexander Belev (b. 1900)—the hitherto legal counsellor of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, formerly a legal counsellor at the Synod of the National Bulgarian Orthodox Church and then the head of department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The Commissioner will be supported by a council consisting of a representative of the Supreme Administrative Court (Dimitar Peev) appointed by the Ministry of Justice, a representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Boyan Indzev, Head of the Passport Department in the Police Directorate), the Ministry of Trade (legal counsellor M. Gryncharov), the Ministry of Treasury (Gr. Pinalov—Head of Financial Inspection), the Director of the National Bank (lawyer Velizar Panatev) and a representative of the Directorate of Civil Mobilisation (Lieutenant Colonel R. Antonov).

The Commissioner selects and appoints the personnel of the Commissariat. The expenses of the Commissariat are covered from the newly created 'Jewish Communities' fund. The following amounts are to be transferred to this fund from blocked bank accounts of persons of Jewish descent: 5 per cent of each account up to 100,000 leva, 8 per cent of each account above 100,000 leva, 10 per cent of

accounts from 300,000 up to 1,000,000 leva and 12 per cent of accounts for more than 1 million leva.

All the synagogues' assets, all Jewish societies and schools, as well as all proceeds of Jewish associations existing up until then, are transferred to this fund.

All expenses of the Commissariat and the council, costs of maintenance of Jewish Communities, costs of aid to poor Jews and costs of their residence in camps and settlements will be covered from the 'Jewish Communities' fund.

All Jewish Communities are subject to the Commissariat. The community board, comprising of the chairman and 4–6 members (of Jewish nationality), are appointed by the Commissioner. Apart from that, the presence of the delegate of the Commissioner for Jewish Affairs in each management board is planned. The ordinance does not prohibit a state official or a municipal official from being a delegate.

The obligations of Jewish Communities include taking care of the Jews who are to be displaced. The care of synagogues and schools, social welfare and charity care, etc.

The second chapter of the ordinance specifies who is regarded as a person of Jewish descent irrespective of their citizenship and denomination. The basic ordinance states that everyone in whose family one of the grandfathers professed Mosaic religion (Article 8) is a person of Jewish descent. However, children from marriages where one of the spouses is of Bulgarian descent and the other is a Bulgarian citizen of Jewish descent—unless the marriage was concluded before 1 September 1940 according to the Christian ritual and the spouse of Jewish descent was baptised before 23 October 1941—are not regarded as persons of Jewish descent (Article 1c). Mixed marriages concluded after 1 September 1942 will be considered invalid. Jews are not allowed to have Bulgarian surnames, as well as surnames with characteristic Bulgarian endings ('ev', 'ov', 'yez', 'in', 'ski'). Persons of Jewish descent who do not profess the Christian religion must not have Bulgarian and generally Christian names. Persons with prohibited surnames will have their grandfathers' surnames officially restored. The Jews who will not change officially prohibited names by 1 November 1942 will receive *ex officio* new names that will be entered into civil registers. Persons of Jewish faith are only entitled to use names from the list of Jewish names prepared by the Commissariat.

All Jews from the age of 10 are required to wear a six-pointed yellow star with a black rim no smaller than 3 cm in cross-section on the left side of their chest. The Jews who enjoy certain privileges on the basis of Article 33 of the Act on the Defence of the Nation and Jews, foreign citizens who stay in Bulgaria on the basis of transit visas are also required to wear a badge, but of round form and with a smaller dimension (2 cm) in cross-section. The Jews, excluding those who

enjoy privileges on the basis of Article 33 of the Act on the Defence of the Nation, are not allowed to live together with Bulgarians in one apartment, unless they are relatives. From 15 September 1942, each Jewish apartment should have a special rectangular 12 x 18 cm plate with an inscription 'Jewish apartment' on the entrance door, and a six-pointed 5 x 5 cm star must be placed in the left corner of the plate. This applies also to all kinds of enterprises, shops and offices, which must contain the inscription 'Jewish enterprise' placed in a visible point of the shop window. An annotation indicating that the enterprise is Jewish must also be placed on all kinds of letterheads, trade books, advertising prints, etc. Produced goods must bear an inscription 'Jewish production', and letters 'E.P.' (Jewish production) should be placed on mass produced small goods. Enterprises of mixed character are obliged to have inscriptions: 'enterprise with Jewish capital.' Jews are not allowed to have cars, radio sets and telephones. A person of Jewish descent practising a liberal profession may have a telephone, but only with the special permission of the Commissariat. All radio sets owned by Jews must be deposited in the post office branch indicated by the Commissariat. Jews are not allowed to hire Bulgarians as domestic staff. Rights related to living space are also limited. A Jewish family consisting of two persons is allowed to occupy one room, a family of three-four persons is allowed to occupy not more than two rooms, a family of five-six persons is allowed to occupy not more than three rooms, and families having more than six persons are allowed to occupy four rooms. Within one month from the effective date of the new order, the issue of the living space standard must be regulated through replacement of the apartment or admission of other Jewish families as flatmates. Administrative measures will be used compulsorily against persons refraining from the performance of this ordinance. The Commissioner for Jewish Affairs will determine the city quarters in which Jews are not allowed to live. In Sofia, Jews are not allowed to live in Category 1 and 2 hotels and are allowed to live in Category 3 hotels only in specific city areas. The displacement of the Jews who have lost their occupation under new legislation should take place before 1 November 1942. Professional business activity is subject to the following restrictions:

1) Jews not entitled to engage in trade or industry must not invest their capital in trade or industrial enterprises.

2) Those who have retained the right to pursue business activity must not have more than one occupation, must not expand their businesses and must not expand their business to another industry.

3) They must not hold shares in other businesses.

4) They may handle only their own capital up to 500,000 leva. Using the credit is allowed within the limits not exceeding one's own capital.

5) They must not participate in any form of businesses producing medicinal products, sanitary materials, surgical instruments, optical and chemical & technical materials and must not be owners of sanitary plants, i.e. pharmacies, chemist's shops, clinics, etc.

6) Jews are not allowed to participate in any form in mining businesses, in grain trade, in wholesale of agricultural products, in transport companies and in shipping. The ordinance leaves a period of two months for the liquidation of these occupations, which are prohibited for Jews.

7) All Jews without exception must not establish or take part in new industrial and trade enterprises unless they engaged in this kind of business beforehand.

8) The Jews who engaged in trade are still allowed to conduct it, but to the extent not exceeding their activity before 1 May 1941.

9) While according to the new provisions, Jews cannot continue their current occupations, they must liquidate their enterprises or their share in the form of capital or personal labour within 2 months.

10) All Jews without exception residing in newly annexed lands must cease their activity in the liberal professions and liquidate their industrial and trade enterprises within 2 months. The Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 29 August 1942 contains detailed provisions regarding the technique of the liquidation of Jewish enterprises. Liquidators are appointed by the Commissariat. The Commissioner appointed members of the council of Bulgarian descent, if there are such members of councils, as liquidators in joint-stock companies and limited liability companies. In private enterprises, owners were appointed as temporary liquidators. For non-performance of the Commissioner's orders, liquidators may be imprisoned for up to 10 years or charged with a fine up to 2 million leva (par. 37 of the Ordinance).

11) Jews who are forced to cease their activities must not resume them in any form without the consent of the relevant professional organisation and approval by the Commissariat.

12) In businesses where Jewish workers are employed, the administrative personnel must consist entirely of Jews.

Regarding properties and capitals owned by the Jews, the ordinance stipulates:

1) Within one month from the entry of the Act on the Defence of the Nation into force, all Jews must declare their movable and immovable property to the National Bank. Jews leaving Bulgaria must declare the amounts obtained from the liquidation of their property.

2) Assets that will be hidden as well as money and valuables will be confiscated in favour of the social assistance fund.

3) Jews may not own movable property without approval from the Commissariat—this does not apply to: a) amounts received as reimbursement of expenses, b) sums received as remuneration or salary supplement, c) movable property intended for personal needs or household purposes, provided that the property does not exceed 10,000 leva. Otherwise, the Commissariat's approval is required, d) capitals, goods, etc., related to the activity of the enterprise or income from activities performed in the liberal professions.

All cash received as repayment of debts, gifts, insurance or inheritance and from the sale of property is owned both by private persons and enterprises (except for cases listed above) and has to be paid onto blocked accounts in the National Bank.

The Commissariat gives permissions to make use of amounts held on blocked accounts in the following cases:

1) if it is necessary to settle debts to the state treasury, Communities or another public authority,

2) for the settlement of debts incurred before 21 July 1941,

3) to cover debts incurred due to the conclusion of commercial transactions confirmed by notarial documents or account books,

4) for costs related to the payment of employees and the premises of liquidated enterprises, and

5) for personal expenses of the account holder, unless he has no other proceeds, in the amount dependent on the size of his family and his place of residence, however, not more than 6,000 leva per family per month.

The persons who will not declare their property within the required time limit (two weeks) are liable to imprisonment and a fine up to 100,000 leva. Hidden money will be confiscated.

The Jews' property subject to liquidation and not sold by the liquidator will be liquidated by the Commissariat. In this case, according to the ordinance, the state should be the buyer.

Article 33 of the Act on the Defence of the Nation stipulates some exceptions in restrictions on the rights of persons of Jewish descent with regard to:

1) persons honoured with an award 'for bravery' before 17 March 1941,

2) war-disabled persons receiving an army invalidity pension,

3) orphans of military persons,

4) widows of military persons, unless they remarried,

5) widows and children of soldiers fighting in the war of 1877–1878,

6) Jews of both sexes of Bulgarian descent who married a person of Christian denomination of Bulgarian descent, if such a marriage was concluded before 1 September 1940, and who adopted the Christian religion before 23 January 1941.

Privileges granted under the above article shall be revoked if the person concerned is convicted by a court for all crimes in general or for speculation and communism. Persons wishing to exercise their privileges under Article 33 should submit to the Commissariat before 1 October 1942 with duly substantiated requests supported by documents. The special Commission will issue rulings.

On the margin of this ordinance, it must be emphasised that the number of Jews in Bulgaria is not very large and accounts only for 0.8 per cent of the total population. The Jewish matter in Bulgaria has never been a hot issue, although the dislike of Jews was generally present in all spheres of society. Bulgaria does not have strongly developed industry or developed trade and has never had large financial resources; therefore, it has never created particularly convenient conditions for Jewish expansion.

The participation of Jews in the economic life of Bulgaria was not excessive. The number of Jews represented in the liberal professions was not excessive, either. The Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 29 August 1942 regarding the limitation of Jews' rights was undoubtedly issued under German influence. The daily newspaper 'Dnes' published an editorial by B. Popov on 29 August pointing to the 'danger' posed by the Jews in order to justify the special ordinance in question. The author of the article proves that Jews are essentially different from any other nation. 'It is a very enterprising nation, but entrepreneurship always moves towards the blackest speculation, and it is characterised by a passion for money and the ability to acquire it, rejecting all moral scruples. The control of money makes it easier for Jews to occupy leading positions in the economic and financial life of the world. Because of this, they can exert such a huge influence on the politics and culture of the country which they live in. They deliberately bring about a decaying element, speculating on the work of the working-class masses and, thus, creating discontent and introducing chaos and disorganisation. We cannot deny the existence of great national solidarity among the Jewry, which is largely based on the principle of mutual aid. Based on international mutual aid, freemasonry was established.'

Continuing to enumerate the dark sides of the Jewish character, Popov states that the Jews living in their closed circle and striving to rule over the world without any moral constraints cannot be good citizens of the country in which they live. Their power is great, and it is difficult and hard to fight them. Hitler was the first

to start this fight by exposing the Jewry, its harmfulness and dangers. As one of the countries fighting for the 'new order', Bulgarians have no option but to fight against the Jewry, which—as has been determined—has taken deep roots in the political and economic life of Bulgaria. The Act on the Defence of the Nation is the first stage of this fight. The Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 29 August 1942 specifies precisely the methods of this fight, which is aimed at the total liquidation of the Jewish question. In resolving this matter, no sentimental motives can be taken into account. Removing the Jewish ulcer will heal the national organism.

* * *

All restrictions provided in the ordinance are in the process of being implemented. Heavy penalties are imposed for evasion of the implementation of existing ordinances. The Minister of Treasury has recently imposed fines of 1 million leva each upon a few dozen of people for the violation of the act against speculation on real property. For the failure to submit declarations regarding immovable property, fines of 1 million leva were also imposed on a number of Jews, including those currently residing abroad, e.g. in Egypt, Argentina, the United States, France, Morocco, Palestine, Serbia, etc. The anti-Jewish policy caused widespread panic among the Jews and the desire to flee Bulgaria, primarily to Palestine. However, British laws regarding visas for persons staying in countries currently at war with Great Britain are very strict and it is hard to believe that any deviations from prevailing legislation will be made for Jews living in Bulgaria.

/-/ Alfred Poniński
Minister Plenipotentiary

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A

267

*27 October 1942. Letter from the Ministry of Internal Affairs
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on the need to improve information activities on Jewish matters*

27 Oct 1942

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
at same address

In connection with publications being issued in the United States through the efforts of Jewish organisations or Research Institutes that describe the position of Jews, among others, in Poland, the Ministry of Internal Affairs draws the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to these kinds of publications and requests it to prevent the publication of tendentious brochures via its foreign posts or to ensure that such publications contain a full overview of actual relations when dealing with the position of Jews in Poland, including also the entire Jewish heritage during the period of independence of the Polish State. Obviously, this task can be achieved only by keeping in touch with Jewish research institutes in America, as the reaction following the publication of such brochure is usually delayed.

One of such publications is 'Jewish Emancipation Under Attack'—a brochure by Bernard Dov Weinryb issued by the Research Institute on Peace and Post-War Problems of The American Jewish Committee; in outlining Jewish situation in Poland, it presents the negative aspects of Jewish life in Poland in a completely one-sided manner. Issued in English and in America, the brochure is intended for the propagation of Jewish matters among American readers, in whom it must arouse an unfriendly attitude to the Polish State.

For the Minister:
A. Serafiński

On behalf of the Head of the Department

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A

268

*29 October 1942. Speech by the Prime Minister
and the Commander-in-Chief
on the persecution of the Jews in occupied Poland*

I am speaking on behalf of the Polish Government to bear witness, for this huge manifestation, to the tragic truth. It consists of mass, ruthless extermination of persecuted Jews in Poland. Among the latter, there are Polish citizens and Jews from all German-occupied countries being driven consecutively to ghettos in Warsaw, Łódź, Cracow, Lublin, Lwów and Wilno. Chased further east, in the most horrific conditions, treated much worse than herds of cattle, they are cut down by tens of thousands. Even German science today is in the service of the Nazi executioners, inventing for them new, improved methods of mass extermination. In addition to the methodical destruction to which the Polish nation has been subjected for three years, these are the most shameless persecutions and atrocities committed by the Germans. Their leaders, overcome with insane fear, under the influence of the conviction that defeat was imminent, reached for a terror that has never been seen in history, so that they could break the will to fight in defeated countries and to intimidate opinion around the world.

Today's brilliant manifestation, undertaken not only in the defence of the Jews, but also in the defence of principles of Christian morality and honesty, is an obvious proof to us that Germany, which did not avoid psychological errors this time, too, have the whole civilised world against them.

As Head of the Government, I state to the Polish Jews that they will enjoy the benefits of the victory of the allied countries on a par with all Polish citizens.

As a soldier, I warn the Nazi executioners that they will not escape punishment for their mass crimes, especially in our Country, which has been the main centre of resistance against German barbarism.¹⁸⁹

29 Oct 1942

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.88/2 (previously published)

¹⁸⁹ The speech was delivered at the time of the meeting organised by Jewish circles and held in the Albert Hall in London on 29 October 1942. In the cable of 3 November, the Consul General in Tel Aviv reported: 'I communicate that the statement made recently by General Sikorski in the Albert Hall in London and published by the local press made a huge impression on the entire Jewish population. It is regarded as a political act of immense importance, and so is the very fact that the Polish Prime Minister took part in this demonstration.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

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*29 October 1942. Report by the Government Representative in Vichy
on actions of French authorities against persons of Jewish descent*

Châtel-Guyon, 29 October 1942

SECRETTO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

In connection with the inquiry of the Ministry regarding documents of the denomination and Aryan descent for Polish citizens, I report that during the last two months this issue has undergone an evolution consisting of the following main phases:

As you know, the ban on departure for Jewish citizens of states being occupied or annexed to the Great Reich has been valid in France since the beginning of August this year. This ban was issued in the form of a preventive ordinance related to the operation planned and carried out at the end of August and the beginning of September this year, which consisted of roundups of foreign Jews of this category by the police and their subsequent transfer to the Germans. At the same time, border control authorities received a relatively vague instruction not to make it difficult to leave the country for persons who bear Polish-sounding surnames. Consequently, a certain number of persons whose surnames did not have a '-ski' or '-cki' ending or sounded German found it difficult to leave the country, but all such cases were settled positively either by giving an explanation on the spot or by issuing ad hoc certificates confirming that the traveller is a Christian.

In view of this, searching for documents confirming religion has already begun on the part of our refugees here; a number of people obtained them in advance before leaving France, and as the police's pressure on foreign Jews became more intense, efforts to get such documents covered increasingly broader circles. At that time, the Bureaux d'Administration des Polonais began issuing certificates confirming the applicant's religion on the basis of certificates of baptism or certificates issued ad hoc by Polish priests.

For a certain period, the police authorities accepted such documents, being satisfied even during roundups by stating the religion of the persons and identifying the question of religion with the question of origin. Soon, however, such documents turned out to be insufficient and in some cases the police authorities started demanding a certificate of Aryan origin in the strict sense of the word in accordance with requirements of relevant French decrees. The

Bureaux d'Administration could not issue such certificates because of the lack of both material (impossibility of presenting relevant documents by persons concerned and of bringing them from the country) and, even more importantly, formal grounds due to the impossibility of issuing such certificates pursuant to applicable Polish legal provisions. Theoretically speaking, the people in question could apply directly to the Commissariat Général aux questions juives, but they would automatically encounter a material obstacle in the form of the impossibility of submitting the required documents, not to mention the time obstacle, because it takes the Commissariat at least six months to issue a certificate of Aryan origin for French citizens submitting all required evidence.

In this situation, an indirect solution was chosen: the Bureaux d'Administration have ceased to issue certificates of religion and, instead, they are delivering a document confirming that its bearer is entitled to apply for a certificate of Aryan origin to the relevant French office. So far, such certificates have been sufficient both for departures and efforts to obtain exit visas (as in the case of Mr Leon Zundelewicz, who obtained such a visa) and for the presentation of a currently valid document to local police authorities. I would like to add that certificates of this kind were received by a number of people not only of Jewish descent, but also of Jewish faith.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND IN FRANCE
S. Zabiełło

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 533

270

*29 October 1942. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the President of the World Zionist Organisation
regarding the 25th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration*

Dr. Chaim Weizmann,
New York City

I desire to thank you most sincerely for the kind message which you have sent me on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.¹⁹⁰

I am aware of the achievements in Palestine which have been accomplished by the World Zionist Organisation and Jewish Agency during these 25 years, and I know that Polish Jews have taken a leading part in the pioneering work involved in the establishment of the Jewish National Home.

Today, when my own country is passing through frightful ordeals, when Poles and Jews are suffering the most monstrous cruelties at the hands of the German oppressors, I wish to convey to you—the President of the World Zionist Organisation and the Jewish Agency—my full sympathy with your efforts at establishing a better future for the Jewish People.

On behalf of the Polish Government, I wish to assure you that the crimes of the Germans will be punished and that in the new, post-war world, the Jewish People will share in the fruits of Allied Victory.

(Sgd.) Edward Raczyński
Acting Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs

London, 29th October, 1942

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 61 (ENG)

¹⁹⁰ This a reference to the statement made by the British government on 2 November 1917 envisaging the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine, which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Arthur James Balfour, submitted to Lionel Walter Rothschild, the leader of the Jewish community in Great Britain, in the form of a letter.

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*31 October 1942. Letter from a Polish citizen of Jewish descent
to the Legation in Bern on the provision of aid
to imprisoned family members*

St. Blaise, 31 Oct 1942

Dr Kühl
Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Bern

Dear Doctor!

On 8 July this year, I asked you and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland to take steps in order to release my wife Chana Marchewka and my 15-year-old daughter Ruth from the camp in Récébédou, France.

In reply I received the letter No. 941/244 of 16 July 1942 that relevant steps will be taken.

Following this, my correspondence with the family completely stopped within 3.5 months. The reasons have been unknown to me so far.

On these days, I have received an answer that my family is currently in the Nexon (Haute-Vienne) camp.

I earnestly ask you for a gracious intervention in order to speed up this matter so that it would not be too late, and to kindly reply.

Corporal *Salomon Marchewka*

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 515

272

1 November 1942. Cable from the Minister of State in the Middle East (from Beirut) on the situation of Jews in the Polish Army in the USSR

Polconsul—Beyruth
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 1 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 1 NOV 1942

No. 109.

Only today can I send data from General Anders concerning the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's accusations of the alleged mass removal of Jews from the Polish Army in the USSR for the purpose of avoiding their evacuation.¹⁹¹ On 3 October, immediately after the receipt of the cable No. 74, I sent the text to Anders via General Bohusz travelling to meet him, but the latter did not deliver my letter to General A., although he knew the content and importance of the matter. Only in Command, on 20 October, did I present the cable to him and receive detailed explanations:

I. The Soviet authorities initially sent large numbers of Jews to the Polish Army, but after some time, they changed their strategy and did not allow them to join the Army, assuming that all Jews who had stayed in Polish territories at the time of their occupation by the Soviets in November 1939 were their citizens (x...

¹⁹¹ In the cable of 26 September 1942, the Consul General in New York, Sylwin Strakacz, reported: 'In its dispatch from Kuybyshev dated 24 September, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency states a number of accusations concerning the removal of Jews from the Army, which makes it impossible to evacuate them and their families. It gives a list of places ... , where, as it claims, five hundred Jews were removed from ready transports under the pretext of Medical Committees. It is stressed that the Embassy is powerless and cannot prevent discrimination in the Army. ... Accusations of discrimination regarding families of Jewish soldiers are reiterated. Local Jewish managing circles, ready to cooperate in dismissing this harmful and cunning propaganda, consider it appropriate to submit a protest of Jewish members of the National Council by telegraph.' AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 316. In the cable of 14 November 1942, the Ambassador in Washington reported: 'The press service of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency submits a detailed report on the debate in the National Council on the citizenship of Polish Jews from the USSR and the treatment of Jews in the Polish Army. The report quoted by a correspondent of the London Agency is formulated in such a way that the Soviet authorities are charged with responsibility for the dispute only in the background, in contrast with the alleged discrimination of Jews in the Polish Army. In combination with the use of Wanda Wasilewska's article on antisemitism in the Polish Army by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, this news creates a basis for the intensification and broader use of anti-Polish feelings among Jews by the Soviet propaganda.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248.

omitted word). The Polish Government adopted a different position, and the Soviet authorities even demanded from me that these Jews be separated from the Army, upon which I obviously did not agree.

II. For the whole period of formation and existence of the Polish Army in the USSR, releases from military service were granted only as a result of medical certificate of the Review Committee due to poor health, or at the individual request of the soldier as the only breadwinner in the family. Releases were not granted on the grounds of nationality or religion under any circumstances.

III. During the period from 1 July 1942 until the end of the evacuation, 350 soldiers were released in total, including 188 Roman Catholics, 125 Jews, 13 Greek Catholics and 24 Orthodox persons.

In individual garrisons, releases were granted to: Jalal-Abad—51 Roman Catholics, 58—Jews, 5 Greek Catholics, 18 Orthodox persons, Kermine (x... omitted word)—15, other religions were not represented, Guzar—54 Roman Catholics, 14 Jews, 4 Greek Catholics, 4 Orthodox persons. These are actual numerical data that explicitly deny the version about the alleged release of Jews and their replacement with Poles. They encompass the period from 1 July until the end of the evacuation, so there can be no question of the mass removal of Jews from ready transports.

IV. As far as the evacuation of national minorities from the USSR is concerned, the plenipotentiary of the Soviet Government for the Polish Army told me at the conference on 3 and 4 August that the evaluation of national minority citizens covers only the nearest family, i.e. wife, minor children and parents of soldiers who currently serve in the Polish Army in the USSR and are subject to evacuation to Persia, as well as national minority citizens who had arrived in the USSR-occupied territory after 1 November 1939 and can present the relevant certificates. For all persons going to Persia who belong to national minorities, a separate list must be prepared and separate certificates ascertaining the assignment and degree of relationship of the soldier signed by the Commander or Chief of the Staff must be attached for each family member, and the admission of unauthorised persons may result in the suspension of the entire transport and may be regarded as violation of the conditions of the departure agreement. Polish citizenship in the view of Soviet authorities is specified in the letter from 29 June 1942 from General Panfilov to the Commander of the Polish Army in the USSR. Citizens of national minorities living in Western Ukraine and Belarus until 1939 are treated as Soviet citizens and, therefore, are not subject to evacuation.

V. Only thanks to my repeated efforts I was able to transport from the USSR the closest families of Jewish soldiers serving in the Polish Army and, upon evacuation, around 1,000 Jewish children.

VI. I believe that such deceitful and slanderous statements are deliberately inspired to spoil mutual relations. The Army treats all soldiers absolutely equally, the best proof of which is that there have been no antisemitic excesses in its territory. During the evacuation, we did everything to treat Jewish families and their children equally with Polish.

ANDERS'

I do not know if it should be published as a statement by A., but individual sections—II, III, IV, maybe V—can be announced.

As regards Section IV, part two—there were very few Jews who arrived during Soviet occupation in the USSR after 1 November 1939. The message of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency from Kuybyshev is obviously inspired by the Soviets—fraudster Turner usually plays a part here.¹⁹² General Anders announced that detailed lists of the Jews currently serving in the Polish Army will be sent to me and adds:

'After arrival in Persia, a large number of Jewish soldiers deserted. In the marching units from Palestine to the Army, there were even mass desertions by Jews who hid there in order to avoid leaving Palestine. For example, there were 193 Jewish deserters in the 1st Carpathian Rifle Division; 52 of them deserted in August and 141 in September. This number largely exceeds the number of soldiers released due to poor health in the Army in the USSR.' This detail can really prove useful only in a conversation. Upon request, I will send whatever is necessary in this matter.

Kot

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 236

¹⁹² In the cable of 20 May 1942, the Head of the MFA informed Consulates General in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem: 'I would like to draw your attention to Bernard Turner—a correspondent of the "Davar" magazine staying in the USSR, who spreads unjustified rumours about antisemitic tendencies of Polish authorities. He is a deserter from the Polish Army. In his activity, he is a tool of the NKVD. The Polish-Jewish circles among the Soviets do not take him seriously.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.*

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*1 November 1942. Report by the Jewish Agency
on the evacuation of persons of Jewish descent from the USSR*

Report of a representative of the Jewish Agency on the evacuation of Jews, dated the middle of September 1942, extended in Palestine¹⁹³

1) Record of Jewish refugees. The total number of refugees who have arrived by 9 September this year is 25,760. Among them, approx. 1,300 Jews have been registered, apart from those Jews who have arrived as Catholics or under their own or fictitious surname. The number of the latter cannot be ascertained definitively. In my opinion, there are 300–500 of them. In this way, the participation of Jews in the evacuation amounts to 5%–6%. The number of 1,300 Jews has already encompassed 600 orphans, some of whom are actual orphans and the others were sent by parents in this way in order to save the children. Another part of this group of refugees consists of women, children and some men.

2) It is necessary to take care of refugees in the camp. You cannot even imagine how strong antisemitism is among Polish refugees. There were cases of beating Jewish women, and insults and similar things are the order of the day.

3) ORPHANS. They have arrived partly from a Jewish orphanage and partly from mixed orphanages. With the consent of the Delegation, male and female halutz¹⁹⁴ act as caregivers of the orphans. These are lovely children, for whom all of us should be parents. Their age ranges from 2 to 16 years. When I visited them, 10-year-old girls and boys, particularly in mixed orphanages, were very happy and asked: ‘When will we go to Palestine?’ Some of them have a good command of Hebrew. Smart children. In one case, a Jewish boy said to a non-Jewish boy in my presence: ‘Come on, try to beat us now, we have our government too, and now we are not afraid, I will go to Palestine and you will not.’ I expect that we will find the routes and funds to take these children to Palestine.

4) Sanitary condition of refugees. Most of them suffered from spotted typhus or typhoid fever, and almost everyone suffered from dysentery. Many of them suffered from malaria and jaundice. Almost all children without exception have sore eyes because of the properties of the climate in Uzbekistan.

5) Evacuation method and procedure. When the news about the second evacuation under way reached places where refugees were concentrated in Russia,

¹⁹³ The note was sent to the Embassy in Kuybyshev on 10 November 1942. See also doc. 313.

¹⁹⁴ HeHalutz—a Jewish youth organisation established in 1905, the aim of which was to prepare young people for agricultural settlement in Palestine.

the registration of those who belong to the 'Military Family' began in delegations and staffs of military formations. Among Jewish refugees, a rush began in search of military relatives, and since the number of Jews in the army is very small (I will write about this in a later point), it was clear that the number of Jews covered by evacuation would be very small.

In the beginning, the arrangement of formalities with regard to Jews was very complicated. While every Pole was entered onto the list without question and proof, Jews were required to present their birth certificates, marriage certificates, etc. The principle of 'close family' was used towards Jews. In this way, the number of Jews who could be covered by the evacuation at all became even smaller. Upon arrangement of formalities, persons entitled to evacuation were entered onto the list, and certifications and numbers were issued to them in some places. The registration was in the hands of officers. A few days before departure, it was announced to the Jews that they had to give back their numbers and certificates, because the NKVD did not allow them to leave. In Kermine, for example, Jews were summoned to a meeting and had their certificates taken away. In Vrevskaya, Yangiyul, Dzalaba, Gozart and Kitaba, the removal of Jews from lists began. Soldiers' wives whose husbands left with the first evacuation were removed from the list under the pretext that the NKVD allows families of the soldiers leaving with the current evacuation to leave the country. Panic spread among the Jewish masses. It must be noted that, in order to rescue themselves, the Jews sold everything that they still had, abandoned their workplaces and places of residence and concentrated in points where the Polish Army was present. You can imagine their situation when, after all their hardships, they heard that they were not going.

A series of negotiations with the NKVD has begun. The NKVD's representatives tell the Jews that no obstacles are made on their part, and they confirm the letters that the Polish side submits. Thus, Jews go back to the Polish side, which holds to its position. The situation takes a tragic turn. The Jews start to threaten that they will not let trains depart from the station, that they will throw themselves under the train wheels. The most dramatic scenes were at three points: Kermine, Verevskaya and Yangiyul. I have already written about Verevskaya before. Now I only want to mention that the NKVD's local representative told the Jewish delegation in the presence of Poles: Colonel Sulik and Lieutenant Gierniawski that there were no obstacles on his part for Jews to leave, and when the Jews, who had visited General Anders a few days ago, replied to the NKVD's representative Captain Alexandrovich that General Anders referred to the agreement with the Soviets, under which difficulties were being made for Jews, and that he appealed to their patriotic feelings not to go to the NKVD, to which Captain Alexandrovich said: 'Let General Anders stop pretending to be a fool! When the Jews complained about Lieutenant Gierniawski, his superior Colonel Sulik stated in the presence of the lieutenant and of the NKVD that he had not issued any orders on restrictions for Jews. Eventually, the NKVD's representative Captain Alexandrovich stated: 'For

every Jew I will throw a Pole out of a wagon.' And that really did help. At the last moment, the Jews prepared a list overnight—the Poles did not want to do this—and, in this way, 120 Jews left.

6) Yangiyul and General Zhukov. In Yangiyul there was the main staff of the Polish Army headed by General Anders. General Zhukov from the NKVD functioned as liaison officer between the Soviets and the Polish Staff. In Verevskaya, there was officer Gierniawski, who tormented Jews, and his alter ego in Yangiyul was Captain Kackowski. The Jews ran from one Polish officer to another, to General Anders, to the Chief of Staff General Szyszko-Bohusz and to Mr Jenicz, a representative of the Embassy (the latter did really want to help Jews). But all of them unanimously stated that difficulties regarding Jews came from the NKVD and from General Zhukov. Eventually, the Jewish delegation consisting of Rabbi Hager, Engineer Eliasberg (Pińsk), Schlachter and Lawyer Pilcer paid a visit to General Zhukov, who said to them: 'It is true that between us and Poles there is a conflict about the Borderlands. This conflict will be settled only after the war, but we do not control at the time of departure which person entered onto the list is a Polish citizen or not—we will leave this to the Polish side, and we will approve lists as they are submitted to us.' When the Jews replied that the Polish side stated the opposite, General Zhukov summoned General Szyszko-Bohusz, and the following dialogue took place between them in the presence of the Jewish delegation: General Zhukov: 'General, why do you tell Jews that we make it difficult for them to leave, don't you know that we actually have no control over the lists, we turn a blind eye to this and it does not matter to us whether Ivan, Piotr or Rabinowicz is going.' General Szyszko: 'And the Polish-Soviet agreement states that national minorities on this side of the Bug and San do not have Polish citizenship according to the Soviet interpretation.' In response, General Zhukov flipped over sheets of the protocol and replied to General Szyszko: 'Are you familiar with this point? Just read it, there is no mention of national minorities here.' He meant the point which stipulates that Polish soldiers are allowed to take their families. General Szyszko had no reply to this; he only remarked that families should submit evidence that they are family members and that such evidence is very difficult to get. In order to spare General Szyszko further disgrace, the Jewish delegation stated that they would reach an agreement on the evidence. Consequently, the number of Jews in the last transports suddenly increased and around 400 Jews left Yangiyul in the 18th transport.

7) Engineer Jenicz and his letter regarding 557 Jews. A representative of the Embassy Engineer Jenicz issued a letter regarding a group of 557 Jews to the delegation, in which he confirms that Jews from this group are Polish citizens and that the Embassy did not mind this group leaving, but not on account of the quota. The delegation continued its negotiations with General Zhukov, who stated that each citizen having a passport and an entry visa to one of the friendly countries would get an exit visa from him. Therefore, the delegation is sure that this will

work, and Mr Schlachter, a merchant by profession and a simple but warm-hearted Jew, is convinced that he will go to Russia to take this group of Jews.

8) I know that it was said on officers' briefings that it should be noted that for every Jew deported a Pole is left, that Jews are enemies of Poland, or that Jews cannot be deported because they spread rumours about the Soviets. Before the evacuation, an order was issued to strictly adhere to the agreement with the Soviets. Naturally, that was sufficient. Lieutenants obeyed these orders willingly, they simply tormented the Jews, parents were separated from children, wives from husbands, brothers from sisters, etc.

The gendarmerie threw Jews out of the trains, often people whose documents were valid. These Jews were surrendered without any reason to the NKVD, which usually released them and put them onto evacuation trains. It was Mr A.'s gendarmes who beat and insulted halutzers and Jews. Because of this attitude, when Jews in Krasnovodsk were not allowed to embark on evacuation ships, they tried to get onto them 'illegally'; for this purpose, they jumped from one ship onto another, and many of them drowned. Because of this policy, many Jews were not disembarked from ships in Pahlevi and were surrendered to the Russians for the purpose of being sent back to Russia. Upon intervention by the Agency's representative, it was said that the Russians had arrested them, which was not true. This is proven by the fact that the Russians released 36 Jews who had 'illegally' arrived in Pahlevi, and these Jews have been held under Polish arrest so far.

9) Out of around 40,000 soldiers from the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh divisions and from other smaller formations, the number of Jews is approx. 3,000. I guess you know what the Jews had to go through before they got into the Polish Army. How much humiliation, how much pain they had to endure. People whose citizenship has been ascertained beyond all doubt were disqualified. Young and healthy people were disqualified. Some time before the evacuation, the release of Jewish soldiers and officers from the army started in order to decrease the share of the Jews in the evacuation. Antisemitism in the army is simply appalling.

10) 36 Jews, including one woman, were arrested in Pahlevi for having crossed the border of Iran illegally. One of them is halutz Waksman. Military circles stated that the release requires General Anders's decision. When General Anders arrived in Pahlevi, he sent his officer to Colonel Kirilov—a representative of the Soviets. The latter said that he did not mind releasing the arrested people. However, General Anders was not satisfied with this and requested that the Soviets express their consent in writing. As the Russians say, the 'Vолоkita' has started. To this day, people have unjustly been kept under arrest.

11) The situation of Jewish refugees in Russia is dreadful. At least 30% died of hunger, typhus, dysentery and other diseases. The number of Jewish refugees is estimated at 350,000–400,000. Almost all of them are concentrated in cities, and most of them are unemployed. Their only hope is that we will rescue them. A very

small part of the aid from Polish organisations reaches Jews. Perhaps 10% of Jews get anything.

AAN, Poselstwo Teheran, 42

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*10 November 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv
on a school incident*

Polconsul—Tel Aviv
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 10 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 12 NOV 1942

No. 73.

To the Minister

I would like to convey that as a result of an incident between several students in a Polish school and Jewish school, there was unrest in Tel Aviv for 3 days. Thanks to my swift reaction and support from the authorities and, in particular, Jewish circles, there has been complete peace for three days. I did not suspend education in the Polish school. I got in touch with Minister Kot in this matter. There is no doubt that the communists had an interest in this incident.¹⁹⁵

Rosmarin

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 126

¹⁹⁵ In the cable of 17 November 1942, the Prime Minister communicated: 'Thank you for your intervention. The prevention of incidents of any kind between Jewish and Polish pupils is fully consistent with interests of the common cause.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 126.*

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*10 November 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv
on rumours of the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto*

Polconsul—Tel Aviv
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 10 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 12 NOV 1942

No. 74.

To the Minister

At the insistent request of the Representation of the Polish Jewry, please reply by cable as to whether the press information that the Germans have displaced all Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto so that only 100,000 were left is true.¹⁹⁶ If it is, please provide me with details.¹⁹⁷

Rosmarin

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245

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*12 November 1942. Bulletin by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency:
the statement of the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief
on the situation of the Jewish minority in post-war Poland*

12.11.1942

General Sikorski on position of Jews in future Poland
London, Nov. 11th (Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

The policy the Polish Government intends to pursue with regard to its Jewish citizens is summed up by General Sikorski, the Polish Prime Minister, in a message

¹⁹⁶ In the cable of 12 November 1942, the Legation in Stockholm sent a similar inquiry: ‘Swedish Jewish circles received a message about the complete displacement of the population from the Warsaw Ghetto. Please confirm this message.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 244.

¹⁹⁷ In the cable of 12 November 1942, Minister Raczynski replied: ‘The message has not been confirmed so far. We are making efforts to obtain reliable information.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

to Jews throughout the world, expressing to them his own and his Government's sympathy in their sorrow over the sufferings and persecutions to which their brethren in Europe are exposed.

The message, which was given to 'The Jewish Bulletin', emphasises that no nation is suffering more cruel treatment than the Polish people and that no section of Polish citizens is being made to feel the humiliation of their position more than the Jewish community. General Sikorski considers the figure of 200.000 as a conservative estimate of the number of Jews massacred by the Nazis in Poland.

Pointing out that the problem of the Jews in Poland had always been a real concern of the Polish Government, General Sikorski declares that this problem will once again confront any Polish Government. 'On numerous occasions,' he says, 'I have publicly stated my own views and the views of my Government on this question.' 'We have declared that in the future Poland all citizens, irrespective of race or creed, will be given the same rights and privileges. Such privileges, naturally, will entail responsibilities and loyalties to the Polish nation from all those upon whom full rights of citizenship are conferred.'

'Before the last war,' the statement continues, 'a large number of Polish Jews found their way to Palestine where they have contributed greatly to the prosperity of the country. I am convinced that when the war is over, many Polish Jews will wish to assist in building up the Jewish National Home in Palestine. Full facilities will be given to those Jews to seek a new home with their relatives and co-religionists in the Middle East. It will nevertheless, be the policy of the Government that no Jew should be forced against his wishes to leave Poland as long as he remains a loyal member of the Polish Commonwealth.'

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.88/2 (ENG)

277

[After 12 November 1942]. Note by the Ministry of Internal Affairs
on the concentration camp in Auschwitz (extract)

CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENTS APPERTAINING
TO THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF POLAND
P O L E S IN GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS
LONDON
POLISH MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

...¹⁹⁸

STATISTICS FROM THE CONCENTRATION CAMP AT OŚWIĘCIM

On the 12th November, 1942, the Polish Government in London received the following statistics from Poland.

1. The number of women in the Women's Camp was, according to the camp register, 8,620 on the 1st June, 1942, out of which 150 were Polish, 1,150 various nationalities, and the remainder were Jewesses (7,320). The actual numbers on the same day were 7,740, out of which 148 were Polish, 1127 various nationalities, and 6,465 Jewish. Since the opening of the camp until the 1st June, 1942, the number of women decreased by 880.

2. The number of men registered in the Men's Camp was, according to the camp documents, 38,720 on the 1st June, 1942.

Poles – 27,860

Jews – 8,170 (1,100 French Jews, 5,000 Czechoslovak Jews, 2,070 Polish Jews).

Czechs – 1,100

Various – 1,580 (431 Ukrainians, 142 Russians, 47 Americans, 58 Jugoslavs, 902 Miscellaneous).

¹⁹⁸ Extracts not concerning Jewish issues were omitted. The document was prepared in English on the basis of one of the attachments to the report of the Government Delegation for Poland *Poland under German occupation. The report on the situation in Poland based on messages till 31 Oct. 1942*. IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.76/1.

The number of men actually in the camp was 15,340:

Poles	– 9,245
Jews	– 4,120
Czechs	– 750
Various	– 1,235

3. Boys of 12 years and over are sent to the common barracks, the same applies to both girls and old people. Children under 12 are not accepted in the camps, but murdered at once.

4. The total number of men who had passed through the camp was, according to the documents, 38,720, plus 13,000 Russians, 3,000 temporary prisoners detained only for a few weeks, and 8,620 women, making in all 63,340.

5. The documents do not mention the other 22,500 prisoners who also passed through the camp (this figure may not be quite accurate, but it is approximately right) out of which:

Poles	– 4,000
Russians	– 8,500
Jews	– 10,000

Adding all this together we have $63,340 + 22,500 = 85,840$. Those released or deported were 5,000, those still living are 23,080 (men and women), thus about 57,800 have disappeared.

6. Sometimes the death-rate, especially during the last few months, amounts to as many as 250 people a day (counting only those who die in the camp, and not taking into account those who were mass-murdered in 'Brzezinka'). Only 10% die of natural causes, the rest die as a result of beating and exhaustion.

7. There are different methods of execution. People are shot by firing squads, killed by an 'air hammer' (Hammerluft), and poisoned by gas in special gas chambers. Prisoners condemned to death by the Gestapo are murdered by the first two methods. The third method, the gas chamber, is employed for those who are ill or incapable of work and those who have been brought in transports especially for the purpose (Soviet prisoners of war, and, recently Jews).

8. The worst types of S.S. men are used for the executions, the so-called blokfuhrers. The gangs of executioners number from 20 to 30 and among them are several officers.

9. The corpses of those who died in the camp are transported to places of cremation, where only 200 bodies can be burned in a day, so that the rest are taken to Brzezinka and buried there in specially dug trenches. Those poisoned by gas are also buried there.

NOTE:

Not all the given figures are exactly accurate, due to two facts, first that it is difficult to prove them, and secondly that the numbers change from day to day. But we have made attempts to give the data as accurately as possible.

...

Hoover Institution, Poland. Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, 11 (ENG)

278

*13 November 1942. Cable from the Consul General in New York
on the evacuation of rabbis from the USSR*

Polconsul—New York
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 13 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 13 NOV 1942

No. 194.

The member of the National Council Schwarzbart notified the Committee of American Rabbis that the Soviet Government agreed to allow all rabbis, as well as professors and students of rabbinical universities from Poland, to leave Russia.¹⁹⁹

It specifies the presentation of entry visas as a requirement.

The Committee of American Rabbis will obtain Palestinian visas, but it must receive a list of names and addresses.

¹⁹⁹ In the cable of 21 October 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs asked the Consulate General in Jerusalem: 'The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reports a message on the acquisition of a permission from Soviet authorities for a certain number of Polish rabbis to leave Russia. Please reply if this is connected to the activity of the Jewish anti-fascist committee in Palestine signalled by Minister Kot.' In the cable of 26 October 1942, the Consul General in Jerusalem informed: 'For a long time the Union of Polish Rabbis in Palestine has been making efforts to bring about the departure of the rabbis from Soviet Russia. The Chief Rabbis of England and Palestine intervened with Maisky on this matter and they were assured by him that exit visas from Soviet Russia would be granted to rabbis. Therefore, at the request of the Chief Rabbi and the Union of Polish Rabbis, I sent a copy of the dispatch by Maisky promising exit visas to Kuybyshev. As the progress of the matter suggests, it was arranged positively as a result of the mentioned interventions. In spite of this, Kuybyshev still seems to have difficulties in obtaining exit visas.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

Until now, the following rabbinical universities have got in touch with us:

1) Kleck, 2) Kamieniec, 3) Raduń, 4) Łomża, 5) Grodno, 6) Białystok, 7) Baranowicze.

Please send me surnames grouped by university, using ordinal numbers for marking the group.

Letters ...x (*illegible word*) prepared.

Ad 1. Dawid Grynberg, place of stay: Jizzakh, Jochel Joselewski—Chimkent, Jankiel Zarecki—Mirke.

Ad 2. Naftoli Lejbowicz—Obyachevo, Solim Lejbowicz—Bukhara, Dawid Rudnicki—Samarkand.

Ad 3. Abraham Trop—Jizzakh, Ajzik Burlana Cardzou.

Ad 4. Abram Ber Hurwicz—Samarkand.

Ad 5. Abram Magence—Samarkand.

Ad 6. Izrael Mowszowicz—Mirke, Lejb Nekrycz—Kupobig.

Ad 7. Hersz Wasilski c/o Szmit Dinawska 31 Machin, Samarkand.

Rachyel Chonen—Sorochkin; regarding rabbis. Please mark the group of rabbis with Ad. 8.

Sylwin Strakacz

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 243

279

*13 November 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Legation in Baghdad on transit visas for Jewish children*

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

For Baghdad

The Jewish Agency informs me that Iraq allegedly refused to issue transit visas for Jewish children in Persia (who have arrived from Russia) for whom immigration certificates to Palestine were obtained.

I request you to take persuasive action to obtain Iraqi transit visas and to notify me.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 235

280

*19 November 1942. Cable from the Government Delegate for Refugees
in Portugal to the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
on the evacuation of Jewish children from France*

Polmission—Lisbon

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 19 NOV

RECEIVED ON 19 NOV

No. 472.

Schimitzek to the Minister of Social Welfare

Receptus cipher cable in claris No. 751.

France withdrew its permission for the first group of 500 children to leave for the United States.²⁰⁰ For the time being, in the JOINT's view, there is no hope for

²⁰⁰ In an earlier cable of 9 October 1942, Minister Raczyński informed Ambassador Ciechanowski: 'I authorise you to make an assurance to the US Government that Jewish children will have the right to return to Poland after the war. I ask you to put forward a request on this occasion to admit at least the equal number of Polish children from France to the States (as far as possible, with mothers), of whom the Polish American

the possibility of taking Jewish children away from France. I am keeping in touch with the Joint in this matter.

Polmission

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 242

281

*19 November 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Consulate General in New York
on the resolution of the National Council*

TO Polconsul New York
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 19 NOV 1942

No. 164

Receptus cable in claris 621²⁰¹

In the light of numerous declarations of the Government on equal rights for Jews in Poland, the resolution of the National Council supporting the idea of a Jewish state cannot be commented on as an expression of a tendency to resolve the Jewish issue by means of ~~mass~~ forced emigration. I send the text and the explanation by air.

Council could take care ... Polish and Jewish children could be brought to the States simultaneously.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 545. See also doc. 305.

²⁰¹ In the cable no. 621 of 2 November 1942, the Consul General in New York informed: 'The General Jewish Workers Union of Poland issues communications under the title "The Ghetto Speaks" stop In the 5th issue dated 1 November, it published a letter by Adam Ciołkosz and an extract from Arka Bożek's letter protesting against the resolution of the National Council of 2 June 1942 demanding the treatment of Jews as a stateless nation and requesting the creation of a Jewish state on that basis stop This resolution, which is characterised as antisemitic here, is to be aimed at resolving the Jewish issue in Poland only through emigration stop Both letters of protest seem to confirm this by defending the rights of Jews to stay in Poland on the basis of ideas of historical co-existence and cultural and political cooperation stop Ciołkosz's letter was sent to Zygielbojm, who is also said to have protested against the resolution stop For the effective prevention of further action in the press, please send the content of the resolution and its motives by telegraph.' AAN, *Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork*, 316.

Please note that, in his declaration on the occasion of the Jewish demonstration in London on 29 October, the Prime Minister stated on behalf of the Government that Polish Jews would fully enjoy the benefits of the victory equally with other citizens. In the declaration reported on by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on the 12 November, the Prime Minister also stated that the potential emigration of Jews from Poland to Palestine would be *only* voluntary and that Jews will not be forced to emigrate in any case²⁰².

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 243

282

*22 November 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv:
information from the Representation of Polish Jewry
on the situation in occupied Poland*

Polconsul—Tel Aviv
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 22 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 25 NOV 1942

No. 78

To the Minister

The Representation of Polish Jewry asks me to send the following telegram: 'Further messages received report the mass killings of Jews by the Germans in Poland. The rapporteurs also say that the behaviour of the Polish population instigated by the Germans during these bloody acts was not perfect. We cannot control this news, but we think that it is necessary for the Polish Government to intervene and to draw the attention of the Polish population in the country to the need to oppose these exploits of the Nazis. It is with great sorrow that we find out that the broadcasts of the Ministry of Propaganda²⁰³ for Poland do not

²⁰² Doc. 268 and 276

²⁰³ This is a reference to the Ministry of Information and Documentation. In his cable of 10 December 1942, the head of the office, Minister Stanisław Stroński, replied: 'In June, the Ministry of Information organised the dissemination of information about the persecution of Jews in Poland on a world scale. The same was done about the Warsaw Ghetto at the end of November. On 27 November, the voice of the Country, the resolution of the National Council and the statement of the Government and General

refer at all to the need for civil co-existence and mutual aid between Poles and Jews. In view of such a dreadful situation of Polish Jews, we strongly request the Government to start immediately summoning the Polish population in the country not to submit to the influence of the occupant's antisemitic action and to counteract it. The matter is incredibly important and urgent, as it can be seen that Hitler has started the process of the complete extermination of the Polish Jewry. We believe that the Government will do everything to make the population in Poland aware of how they should react to these savage intentions of the enemy.' Because of the importance of this matter, I request that you reply by telegraph what the Government decides.

Rosmarin

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245

283

*23 November 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Minister of State in the Middle East (in Jerusalem)
on post-war Polish-Jewish relations*

TO Polmission Jerusalem
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 23 NOV 1942

No. 462

Receptus 486²⁰⁴

To Minister Kot

In its attitude regarding the issue of Palestine, the Government is obviously restricted by the policy of the British Government and, therefore, cannot go

Sikorski in the Albert Hall were announced. Detailed radio information. Admonishing the society in Poland is unnecessary, as it is from there that we have information and protests'; AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

²⁰⁴ In the cable no. 486 of 16 November 1942, Minister Kot asked for instructions: 'The Jewish spheres expect a political conversation on my part. It is clear what to say about Jewish matters and about Jews in Russia. But if it were necessary to comment upon Jewish issues on the international arena, for example, to express the attitude of the Government to the Palestinian issue, I would have to receive guidelines. While there are none, I will state only general facts.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239.

beyond general declarations of sympathy for the national aspirations of the Jews at the moment.

As far as the situation of Jews in Poland after the war is concerned, I would like to recall numerous declarations by the Government and the Prime Minister about equal rights and obligations (primarily, the solemn declaration on the occasion of the convocation of the National Council on 24 February this year, which refers to guaranteeing freedoms and liberties to loyal citizens regardless of national, racial and religious differences and guarantees the possibility of free political, cultural and social development to minorities only on the condition that they fulfil their civil duties towards the State). Apart from that, the Prime Minister has recently stated during the Jewish demonstration in the Albert Hall that Polish Jews would fully enjoy the benefits of victory, and in another of his messages to Jews, explicitly supposing that many Polish Jews would help to build the national centre in Palestine after the war, he assured, however, that the potential emigration of Jews from Poland would be only voluntary.

Depending on the atmosphere of negotiations, I suggest bringing up discreetly the possibility of a further exchange of opinions with leading Jewish circles on cooperation both in the field of external policy and with regard to resolving the Jewish issue in Poland. The Government's declarations made so far express its truly democratic position, but they cannot conceal the fact that what actually happened during the occupation would presumably require radical normalisation measures in the situation of Polish Jews (e.g. with regard to changes in material status, professional redistribution and partial emigration), on which the Government would prefer to agree and arrange cooperation both with Polish Jews and with leaders of international Jewry.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 239

284

*23 November 1942. Cable from the Ambassador in Kuybyshev
on the situation of Polish citizens of Jewish descent in the USSR*

Polmission Kuybyshev
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 23 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 23 NOV 1942

No. 218

Sent to London, attn. Tehran,
Jerusalem to Minister Kot

Receiptus cable from Tehran of 20 November

Upon my arrival in the USSR, I focused in particular on examining the position of the Jews—Polish citizens of Poland, and I was surprised to find out that the southern regions, in which Jews currently account for over 90 per cent of Polish citizens and which are currently served by 37 trusted representatives, including 30 Jews, constitute 14 per cent of the entire population benefiting from our care in the USSR, have 35 per cent of our social institutions—that is, orphanages, shelters, hospitals and outpatient clinics, at their disposal—and have received 21 per cent of our entire cash aid in the last two months.²⁰⁵

This state of affairs is explained by the relatively greater intensity of our action in the south at a time when the Polish Army and the civilian population gathered around it were still there, but its duration so far clearly contradicts the allegations about the discrimination of Jews. I would like to add that the complaints received

²⁰⁵ The Ministry reacted by sending the cable of 27 November 1942, in which Minister Raczyński asked ‘for a return opinion whether data contained in the first paragraph’ of the cable ‘could be used in the press, which would be very desirable for counteracting accusations made by a part of the Jewish press, particularly in America.’ Replying in the cable of 29 November 1942, the Ambassador in Kuybyshev reported: ‘I am responsible for the accuracy of data, but I maintain my request that they should not be announced now, because they may: I) Bring about accusations from antisemites and unleash an undesirable national controversy. II) Encourage the Soviet Government to refuse to allow us to support Jews ... Instead, where it is needed, I suggest summoning a group of influential Jewish personalities to a confidential meeting and, justifying the motives of our reservedness by their own interest, explaining the significant state of affairs and demanding withdrawal from the press campaign. That would also be in line with our requests for discretion in the matter of efforts to arrange individual or group departures of Jews—Polish citizens from the USSR ... , at least until the clarification of chances for this matter in my negotiations, which should occur soon.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 241. See doc. 289.

recently from the area in question by the Embassy refer almost entirely to the allegation that Poles are treated unjustly by Jewish trusted representatives, which even forced me to order investigations.

I suggest using this data only in internal discussions for the time being, as I do not want to complicate the local situation, which is difficult anyway, with disputes (x... 1 illegible word). I also consider it necessary to reply to critics in Tehran,²⁰⁶ referring to the recently revealed tendency of the Soviet Government to reduce the evacuation of children almost to null, and to the fact that the groundless uproar around the alleged injustice done to Jews in the distribution of aid only creates the risk of questioning our right to give such aid to Jews, who are regarded as non-Polish citizens here, by the Soviet government.

Romer

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 241

285

24 November 1942. Report by the Government on the situation of the Jewish population in occupied Poland

News is reaching the Polish Government in London about the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw.

The persecution of the Jews in Poland, which has been in progress from the very first day of the German occupation, has taken on extremely acute forms since March 1942, when Himmler ordered the extermination of 50% of the Jewish population in the Government General, to be carried out by the end of 1942.

Though the German assassins had started this work with extraordinary gusto, the results apparently did not satisfy Himmler for during his visit to the General

²⁰⁶ The Envoy in Tehran, Karol Bader, reported in the cable of 19 November 1942: 'The last week has again brought the wave of pressure of Jewish agitation against the context of evacuation and help. ... The Bund members are irritated due to the withdrawal of the exemption of Glikzman, a representative of the JEWISH LABOUR, from the army. With regard to the transit via Iraq for children, information from Baghdad leaves no hope. Thus, both sides—the Agency and Joint—demand that I appeal to the English to exert adequate pressure in Iraq. I promised that I would examine what could be done ... At the same time, however, both these parties come up with an insistent demand towards the Embassy in Kuybyshev to organise the distribution of aid and to appoint trusted representatives in a manner favourable for Jews.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.*

Gouvernement in July 1942 he ordered new decrees personally, aiming at the total destruction of Polish Jewry.

The persecutions in Warsaw started on 21st July 1942, when German police cars suddenly drove into the ghettos. The soldiers immediately started rushing into houses, shooting the inhabitants at sight, without any explanation. The first victims belonged mostly to the educated classes. On that day almost all the members of the Jewish Municipal Council were arrested and held as hostages.

On 22nd July 1942 the Jewish Council was ordered to proclaim the decree of the German authorities dealing with the re-settlement of all the Warsaw Jews, regardless of sex or age, in the Eastern part of Poland, with the sole exception of persons working in German factories or members of the Jewish militia. The daily quota of people to be re-settled was fixed at 6.000 and members of the Jewish Municipal Council were ordered to carry out the order under pain of death.

By the next day, however, on 23rd July, the German police again appeared in the Jewish Municipal Council and demanded to see the chairman, Mr Czerniakow. After the police had left, Czerniakow committed suicide. From a note he left for his wife, it became clear that he had received an order to deliver 10.000 people the next day and 7000 daily on the following days, in spite of the fact that the quota had been fixed originally at 6.000. The victims to be delivered to the Germans are either dragged out of their homes or seized in the streets. As the zeal of the Jewish police to perform these duties against their own people was slight and did not give a guarantee of efficiency, the Germans have mobilised temporary security batallions for the manhunts, consisting of Ukrainians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. These batallions, under the command of SS men, are characterised by their utter ruthlessness, cruelty and inhumanity.

The Jews, when caught, are driven to a square. Old people and cripples are then singled out, taken to the cemetery and there shot. The remaining people are loaded into goods trucks, at the rate of 150 people to a truck with space for 40. The floor of the truck is covered with a thick layer of lime and chlorine sprinkled with water. The doors of the trucks are locked. Sometimes the train starts immediately on being loaded, sometimes it remains on a siding for a day, two days or even longer. The people are packed so tightly that those who die of suffocation remain in the crowd side by side with the still living and with those slowly dying from the fumes of lime and chlorine, from lack of air, water and food. Wherever the trains arrive half the people arrive dead. Those surviving are sent to special camps at Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibór. Once there, the so-called 'settlers' are mass murdered.

Only young and relatively strong people are left alive, for they valuable slave labour for the Germans. However, the percentage of these is extremely small, for out of a total of about 250.000 're-settled' only about 4000 have been sent to auxiliary work on the battlefronts.

Neither children nor babies are spared. The orphans from asylums and day-nurseries are evacuated as well. The director of the biggest Jewish orphanage in Warsaw and well known writer, Janusz Korczak, whom the Germans had given permission to remain in the ghetto, preferred to follow his charges to death.

Thus under the guise of re-settlement in the east, a mass murder of the Jewish population is taking place. Started on 22nd July 1942, it has been [in] progress ever since. By the end of September 1942 250.000 Jews had been eliminated. The extent of this action is best characterised by a few figures. In the Warsaw Ghetto there lived, according to official German statistics of March 1942, about 433.000 people. In spite of the extremely high mortality caused by bad hygienic conditions, epidemics, starvation, executions etc., the number of Jews in the ghetto remained more or less stable, for to replace the dead, Jews from other parts of Europe, Germany, Austria, Holland, were sent to Warsaw. According to information leaking from the Arbeitsamt, only 40.000 people are to remain in the Warsaw Ghetto, only highly skilled workers, to be employed in German war industry. The most convincing proof of the dwindling numbers in the ghetto lies in the fact that for September 1942 120.000 ration cards were printed. For October the number issued was only 40.000. Simultaneously with the extermination of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, ghettos in the provinces, at Falenica, Rembertów, Nowy Dwór, Kałuszyn and Mińsk Mazowiecki are being liquidated. In the district of Wilno only one Jewish community has remained, in the city itself, numbering only 12.000 people. According to news which reached London some time ago the Germans have murdered 60.000 Jews in Wilno, 14000 in Równe and 50% of the Jewish population of Lwów; similar news reaches us from cities in S. Eastern Poland, such as Stanisławów, Tarnopol, Stryj.

The methods applied in the mass extermination are, apart from executions by firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers. An electrocuting station is installed at Bełżec camp. Transports of 'settlers' arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked,—to have a bath, ostensibly—and are then led to a barrack with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on to waggons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp. A large digging machine has been installed recently at Treblinka. It works ceaselessly digging ditches—mass graves for Jews who are to meet their death there. The Ukrainian guards, witnesses of the mass murder, are allowed to keep the money and jewellery robbed from the victims. These bestial murders sometimes take place in the presence of the local non-Jewish Polish population, who are helpless and overcome with horror at the sight of such inhuman violence. What the Poles' reactions to these unspeakable crimes are, is best proved by a pamphlet by the 'Front for the Liberation of Poland', containing a strongly worded protest against the terrible extermination of the Jews. According

to the pamphlet, the total number of Jews murdered in Poland since September 1939 exceeds one million.²⁰⁷

TNA, FO 371/30923 (ENG)

286

27 November 1942. Speech by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Internal Affairs at the meeting of the National Council

Dear Members of the Council,

The Polish Government, being fully aware of its responsibility and not neglecting to inform the world about the mass murders and the bestiality of the Germans in Poland, also did everything it could to prevent this terror.

We fully realise that the only essential requirement for the effective prevention of German actions that, with regard to Poland, are aptly characterised by the slogan: to destroy the Polish nation and remove all traces of its existence, is to reduce the time of suffering and the fight of Polish citizens in Poland and to beat the enemy quickly.

Therefore, Poland's previous call for the second front and current calls for the acceleration of the pace of the war at all costs are the primary order for the Polish Government and its actions. The development of the war situation in the last few weeks, marked by the launch of an offensive by the Allies and their victories, was received with strong relief and real joy.

Poland reacted immediately to the events in Africa by sending their best wishes to President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill.²⁰⁸ The persecutions of the Jewish minority in Poland constitute a separate card in Poland's martyrology.

Himmler's order that the year 1942 must be the year of extermination of at least half of the Polish Jews is being fulfilled with utter ruthlessness and cruelty that the world has never known before.²⁰⁹ You know the details very well, so I will

²⁰⁷ The report was based on materials submitted by the Government Delegation for Poland. Upon its announcement by the Polish authorities, it was published and discussed both in the Polish and foreign press.

²⁰⁸ This is a reference to the victory of British troops over the German army in the so-called Second Battle of El Alamein fought from 23 October till 4 November 1942.

²⁰⁹ In the dispatch of 28 September 1942, General Rowecki reported: 'Himmler's orders issued in July that have been currently revealed announce that the extermination of Jews will be followed by the ultimate defeat of the Polish nation and the destruction of

not repeat them. The figures speak for themselves! Over 260,000 out of the total number of over 400,000 people in the Warsaw Ghetto have been put to death since 17 July, which is less than three months. Mass killings take place throughout the Homeland, and Polish Jews are killed together with the Jews from other occupied countries who were brought to Poland.

There is a violent protest against murder and looting coming from Poland. This protest is accompanied by compassion and a cry of powerlessness in the face of what is happening.

There, in Poland, Poles also fully realise that the faster pace of murder that is applied against Jews today will be used against the rest of the population tomorrow. The protest of the Polish underground is expressed as follows:

In the Warsaw Ghetto, behind the wall separating them from the world, a few hundred thousand condemned are awaiting death. There is no hope of rescue for them, no one comes to help them. Torturers run through the streets, shooting at anyone who dares to leave the house. They also shoot at anyone who is standing by the window. Unburied corpses lie scattered in the streets.

The daily required number of victims is 8,000–10,000. Jewish policemen are required to deliver them to the German executioners. If they fail to do this, they will die themselves. Children unable to walk by themselves are loaded onto carts. The loading is done so brutally that hardly any child reaches the ramp alive. Mothers watching this go mad. The number of those mad with despair and horror equals the number of the executed.

On the ramp, railway wagons are waiting. The tormentors push the condemned into them, with 150 people per wagon. The floor is covered with a thick layer of lime and chlorine covered with water. The wagon door is sealed. Sometimes a train starts immediately after loading, sometimes it stands on the siding for a day or two... No one cares about them anymore. The people are packed in so densely that the dead cannot fall and still stand arm to arm with the living, the people dying slowly in the fumes of lime and chlorine, deprived of air, drops of water and food—and so no one will remain alive. Wherever and whenever the deadly trains arrive, they will contain only corpses...

A quick death would be a liberation from this suffering. The torturers took this into account. All pharmacies in the ghetto were closed so as not to supply poison. There are no weapons. The only thing that remains is to leap from a window onto the cobblestones. Actually, many of the imprisoned escape from their executioners in this way.

the intelligentsia and the active part of the population... In the implementation of these directives: 1) Mass deportation for forced labour is carried out; it is to cover five per cent of the population. 2) The displacement of Poles from Cracow and the resettlement of the intelligentsia to the Ghetto premises formerly occupied by Jews.' AAN, AK, 203/I/22.

The same things as in the Warsaw Ghetto have been happening in a hundred other smaller and larger towns and cities. The total number of Jews killed has exceeded one million and increases every day. Everyone is dying. The rich and the poor, the elderly, women, men, youth, infants, Catholics dying with the Name of Jesus and Mary as well as Old Believers. Their fault was that they were born into the Jewish nation which was doomed to annihilation by Hitler.

Therefore, we, Catholic Poles, speak up. We do not want to be Pilates. We have no chance to act against the German crimes, we cannot help or save anybody, but we protest from the depths of our hearts, filled with compassion, indignation and dread. This is what God, God who did not allow people to kill, demands from us. And what Christian conscience demands. Any being calling itself a human has the right to brotherly love. The blood of the innocent cries out to heaven for vengeance. Whoever does not support this protest with us, is not a Catholic.

We also protest as Poles.

Whoever does not understand this, whoever would dare to combine the proud, free future of Poland with the despicable joy over the misfortune of his neighbours, is therefore neither a Catholic, nor a Pole.²¹⁰

On behalf of the Polish Government, I am joining this protest of the country and the protest of the National Council. The Polish Government stands up for all its citizens regardless of their religion and nationality and does this both in the name of state interests and in the name of human feelings and Christian principles.

Its attitude is shared by Poles in Poland and abroad.

During the convention of the Polish American Council in Buffalo, America, a protest against ghettos and bestial persecutions of Jews in Poland was adopted at the request of Fr Szubiński.

This is the position of Poles!

Therefore, also on this occasion, I would like to warn those few bodies of the Jewish press, certainly inspired by the enemies of Poland, that cannot refrain from entering into conflict with Poles against the background of a common tragedy by trying to put them on a par with Nazis.

None of the Poles casts a stone at the Jewish Council of the City of Warsaw, at the Jewish police, which the Nazi thugs use in their disgrace to help them exterminate the Jewish population. Czerniakow's self-sacrificing death was a glaring protest. We, therefore, have the right to demand that this small group of Jews around the world do not spread false news, doing harm to Poland at the moment when the enemy murders both Poles and Jews and has decided to exterminate them both, only using a faster rate of destruction against the latter because of their smaller number.

²¹⁰ See doc. 226.

May the protest of the Government and the protest of the National Council representing all factions of the Polish nation shake the conscience of the world; may it reach all the places where decisions on the acceleration of war operations are made; to call for a more intensive rescue of people still alive, to strengthen the desire of the Allies to punish crimes, warning the thugs that they are being closely followed and recorded, and that they will not escape deserved punishment and will soon feel the hard hand of justice on their backs.²¹¹

IPMS, MSW, A.9/Ie/2 (previously published)

287

27 November 1942. Resolution of the National Council on German crimes in occupied Poland

The resolution of the National Council of the Republic of Poland adopted at the plenary meeting on 27 November 1942

The Government of the Republic of Poland provided the Allied governments and the public opinion with the latest news about the mass killings of the Jewish population in Poland already committed and being systematically perpetrated by the German invaders. The number of Jews murdered by the Germans in Poland so far since September 1939 exceeds 1 million.

Since the very beginning of its occupation of the territories of the Republic of Poland, the savage invader has subjected the Polish Nation to horrible extermination,

²¹¹ The text of the speech was sent to the MFA (along with doc. 287) on 28 November 1942. In his covering note, Mikołajczyk reported: 'In connection with the cable from Consul Rosmarin suggesting the advisability of the Government's statement as a protest against atrocities being committed against the Jewish population in Poland, I send you the resolution of the National Council of the Republic of Poland adopted during the plenary meeting on the 27 November and the content of the statement that I submitted at this meeting on behalf of the Polish Government with a request for forwarding the content of these letters to Consul Rosmarin for further use.' IPMS, MSW, A.9/Ie/2. In the aforementioned cable of 26 November 1942, Rosmarin informed: 'The latest horrible news about the killing of Jews by the Germans in Poland made a huge impression in Palestine. It is announced that on 1 and 2 December this year there will be demonstrations by the entire Jewish population, which demands immediate repressions against the Germans staying in the Allied countries and the continuous bombing of German cities. I consider it necessary to ask the Prime Minister to send an appropriate statement for these days to me by cable. The political significance of this statement will be huge.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

destroying all of its strata to such an extent that the Polish population by now has been reduced by a few million by the invader. Currently the invader has reached the peak of its audacity and murderousness with organised mass killings of hundreds of thousands of Jews in Poland—not only citizens of Poland, but also those brought to Poland especially from other countries for this purpose. The German thug sends hundreds of thousands of men, women, elderly and children to their deaths according to his plan. His goal is to eradicate the Polish nation and exterminate the Jews in Poland completely by the end of the current year. Adolf Hitler and his servants use the most horrible means of torture to implement this plan.

The Government of the Republic of Poland, the National Council of the Republic of Poland and the Polish Nation in the country have often protested against the German crimes, announcing fair punishment for those perpetrators of crimes against humanity. The Government of the Republic of Poland has recently submitted a draft act on punishment for German criminals to the National Council of the Republic of Poland.

In the face of the latest—unprecedented in the history of mankind— wave of chilling German crimes committed against the Polish nation, with particular bestiality against the Jewish population in Poland, the National Council of the Republic of Poland again voices a loud protest and accusation towards the entire civilised world.

The National Council solemnly states:

The Polish Nation continues to gather and sharpen its forces for the day of just punishment in the middle of unspeakable sufferings with its heroic attitude in Poland.

The National Council of the Republic of Poland requests all Allied Nations, and all Nations suffering along with the Polish Nation under the German belt today, to join forces and to take immediate action against this trampling and desecration of morality and the principle of humanity by the Germans and against the extermination of the Polish Nation and Nations, which has manifested itself most horribly in the latest mass killings committed against Jews in Poland and throughout Europe, oppressed by Hitler.

The National Council of the Republic of Poland sends words of encouragement and steadfast faith in regaining common freedom to all those who are martyred and suffering in Poland, both the Polish and Jewish population taking part in the struggle for freedom and in the preparation of justice for German criminals.

The day of the victory and punishment is coming!

London, 27 November 1942

IPMS, MSW, A.9/1e/2 (previously published)

288

*28 November 1942. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on Jewish issues (extracts)*

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 28 NOV 1942

Confidential political bulletin No. 7

...²¹²

III. Jewish matter

In the declarations regarding the Jewish issues, the Government of the Republic of Poland constantly and strongly emphasises its sincere democratic attitude to the Jewish minority. ~~First of all~~ The solemn declaration of the Government on the occasion of convening the National Council of 24 February this year ~~which~~ states that rights and freedoms are guaranteed to all loyal citizens regardless of national, racial and religious differences and provides minorities with the possibility of free political, cultural and social development ~~only~~ on the condition of the fulfilment of their civic obligations. Apart from that, the Prime Minister has recently stated in public that Polish Jews would fully enjoy the benefits of victory, and in other messages he supposed that many Polish Jews would be willing to help build a national centre in Palestine after the war; however, he assured that no Jew would be forced to leave Poland against their will as long as they loyally fulfil their civic obligations. At the same time, the Government makes consistent efforts to provide care to Jewish refugees on a par with other Polish citizens.

However, the democratic approach of the Government to the Jewish matter does not prevent it from envisaging huge difficulties that will occur after the war as a result of facts accomplished during the occupation in the situation of Polish Jews. Therefore, the Government would basically prefer reaching agreement and agreeing upon cooperation with the Polish Jews as well as leaders of international Jewry with regard to normalisation procedures that may prove necessary for the resolution of the Jewish issue in Poland (e.g. regarding the settlement of financial status, professional redistribution and ~~partial voluntary emigration of Jews help for Jews emigrating voluntarily~~).

The Government is particularly concerned about putting to rest the accusations about antisemitism directed towards Poland that are still strong around the world. Therefore, the diplomatic posts of the Republic of Poland should ~~particularly~~

²¹² Extracts about preparations for Sikorski's visit to the United States and about relations with de Gaulle's Free French Forces were omitted.

ensure the adequate treatment of Polish-Jewish citizens and ~~maintain friendly relations~~ *inform* the Jewish press and organisations about everything that testifies to the ~~democratic attitude~~ *Polish Jews being taken care of* by the Government and its efforts made in favour of Polish Jews.²¹³ In the matter of Palestine, the Government is obviously bound in its standpoint by the policy of the British Government and, therefore, with an essential understanding of the advisability of granting Jews their own territory *of settlement*, it cannot go beyond general declarations of sympathy for the national aspirations of the Jewry at the moment.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 235

289

28 November 1942. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington to the Consul General in New York on aid to refugees in the USSR

28 November 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

Based on information that I received by telegraph from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I am notifying you as follows:

'Some Jewish circles have recently made allegations about a failure to dispatch aid for Polish Jews in Russia. With regard to these allegations, Ambassador Romer states that in the southern regions in the USSR where approx. 14% of all Polish citizens receiving care live today, including 90% of Jews who hold approx. 35% of all our social facilities, such as orphanages, shelters, hospitals or ambulances, in the territory of Russia. During the last two months, these regions have received 21% of our whole aid in cash. The aforementioned area is served by 37 trusted representatives, 30 of whom are Jews. In connection with this situation, Ambassador

²¹³ In the note *Reply to the Commission of Foreign Affairs of the National Council* of 9 December 1942, it was written: 'First of all, it must be stated that any antisemitic statements by individual officials of foreign posts would clearly contradict the rules and guidelines on the basis of which both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its subordinate offices work and operate. As far as the alleged statement made in this spirit by one of the officials of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Stockholm is concerned, Minister Potworowski, the former Envoy of the Republic of Poland in Stockholm, replied when asked about it that no fact of this kind was known to him and that the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Sweden had always used every effort not to make any difference towards Polish citizens due to their descent or faith.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 611.

Romer has received many complaints from Poles about the preferential treatment of the Jewish population by these Jewish trusted representatives.²¹⁴

I request that you use this data in a confidential manner in your conversations with Jewish circles as well as all persons who will bring up this matter.

In particular, it would be necessary to remind the Jewish circles in confidence that the groundless dissemination of information about alleged injustice done to Jews in the distribution of aid may result in the questioning by the Soviet Government of our right to help Jews officially regarded as Soviet citizens by Soviet authorities.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 503

290

*30 November 1942. Cable from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Legation in Stockholm on Jewish refugees in Sweden*

TO Polmission STOCKHOLM
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 30 NOV 1942

No. 189

The Ministry of Social Welfare received information that in Sweden there are approx. 15 Jewish refugees who hold Polish citizenship, deprived of their means of living and the possibility of earning a living; they are refused assistance provided by the Ministry and are sent back to the Jewish Community, which makes them feel bitter. Please investigate this matter, notify me and ensure that they receive normal care if possible. Stańczyk.

Polexterne

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 244

²¹⁴ See doc. 284.

291

*30 November 1942. Cable from the Envoy in Buenos Aires
on the planned petition of Jewish circles to the President of Argentina*

Polmission—Buenos Aires
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 30 NOV 1942
RECEIVED ON 1 DEC 1942

No. 211.

In connection with the message by the Polish Government about the mass extermination of the Jewish population started by the Germans in Poland, local organisations of Polish Jews asked me to bring about an intervention in neutral countries and the Vatican and ask the British Government and the Government of the United States for immediate action, possibly by air, that could stop the mass killings. I agreed to the participation of our Jews in a general Jewish petition to the President of Argentina. They suggest that I should submit accurate data for my intervention with the President.

Arciszewski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 237

292

*30 November 1942. Report by the Envoy in Bogotá
on the possible emigration of Jewish refugees to Colombia and Ecuador*

Bogotá, 30 November 1942

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In connection with the instruction²¹⁵ received via the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Buenos Aires, which is aimed at triggering an intervention of the South American states in the defence of Polish-Jewish citizens residing in France, I am reporting the details of this matter that are still valid.

At the express request of the Secretary-General of the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs consulted by me, the intervention in Bogotá occurred with a substantial delay, that is only on the second day after the Minister of Foreign Affairs took office, i.e. on the 2 November.—In view of the war events that happened a few days later, this intervention became irrelevant, which was raised in the response of the Colombian Minister of Foreign Affairs of 12 November. However, this reply contains details of fundamental importance, namely, it defines the position of the Colombian Government on the issue of Jewish immigration. The relevant paragraph reads as follows: 'In view of the country's experience with the immigration of Israelites from Central Europe, the Government must regretfully declare that it does not consider it appropriate to admit new quotas of these people.' This principle was actually put into practice by the previous Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr López de Mesa, but it has been expressed so openly and formally for the first time. Apart from that, clearly for the purpose of manifesting the good will of the Colombian Government, the quoted note contains a point indicating the possibility of accepting by Columbia 'Polish specialists previously subjected to individual examination in terms of the possibility of using their abilities for the economic or scientific development of the country.' It seems that this statement, despite its complexity, can serve as grounds for an intervention for allowing non-Jewish citizens of Poland to arrive in Colombia.

In reply to the written intervention in Quito two weeks earlier, I received a message dated 18 November in which the Ecuadorian Government informed that it took relevant steps in the matter in question (which obviously could have a purely theoretical sense at that time). The formula being a reply to the paragraph

²¹⁵ Doc. 246. Having ceased to fulfil the function of Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Buenos Aires, Mieczysław Chałupczyński was appointed to the position of Envoy in Colombia along with accreditation to Ecuador and Venezuela.

of my note regarding the possibility of giving shelter to citizens 'on question' reads as follows: 'the Government is always inclined to accept Polish citizens willing to work in Ecuador if they comply with the provisions of the immigration acts of the republic.' Thus, there is no question of any exception towards Jews. It is actually an exception on the entire South American continent.

I did not bring this matter up in Venezuela because of the complete lack of chances for its favourable settlement.

M. Chałupczyński
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545

293

1 December 1942. Appeal of the Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine on preventing the extermination of the Jewish population

APPEAL OF THE REPRESENTATION OF POLISH JEWRY

To all civilised nations!

In the name of the Jewish population in Poland being murdered in a barbaric way, we address a protest to all civilised nations, with a cry of endless pain.

For many months, the groans of tortured Jews and the last cries of the murdered have resounded behind the ghetto walls.

Although millions of Jews desperately cried for help for months, the world did not hear this cry of despair.

No pleading calls from closed ghettos or from places of mass extermination of Jews reached it.

Today the world already knows the whole grim and bloody truth.

Today the whole world knows that hundreds of thousands of Jews have fallen victim to the bloodlust of Nazism.

Today it is already known that the bloody executioner in his wild inclinations mercilessly kills the Jewish population in Poland and does not spare children or women in this bestial work.

And unless there is an immediate reaction, the victory of good over evil may come too late for the rest of the Jews.

And if no immediate rescue comes, the entire Polish and European Jewry is in danger of being destroyed.

Therefore today, immersed in deep sorrow and moved by the indescribable suffering of our brothers and sisters, we address the civilised nations with the only cry:

RESCUE THEM!

We call for the rescue of innocent children who are being slaughtered on a mass scale by Hitler.

We call for the rescue of women who are dying by the thousands at the hands of Nazi executioners.

We call for the rescue of the poorest of the poor, of the most oppressed in subjugated Europe, of the most severely tortured among the suffering nations.

We call for the rescue of the remaining Polish Jews still alive.

Ways must be found to put an end to the unprecedented crimes committed in the very heart of Europe.

There must be ways to save those who can still be saved.

You must not watch passively and calmly until Hitler finishes his bloody work.

Time is pressing! Each hour is the death of thousands more.

We appeal to the Governments and civilised nations of the world to immediate come to the rescue.

We appeal to the Polish Nation to do everything within its power to ensure aid to the Jewish people.

We appeal to Jews in free countries not to give up until they activate and mobilise all forces to save the Polish Jewry.

We call for help and rescue and we trust that all who respect divine and human rights will hear our call.

Tel Aviv, 1 December 1942

REPRESENTATION OF POLISH JEWRY

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 152

294

*3 December 1942. Letter from the Government Representative in China
to the Minister of State in the Middle East on Polish-Jewish relations*

Chongqing, 3 December 1942

TOP SECRET

To Professor S. Kot
Minister of the Republic of Poland

On the Jewish question

In one of his confidential political bulletins, the Minister of Foreign Affairs provided diplomatic posts with general guidelines about the attitude of the Government of the Republic of Poland to the Jewish matter.²¹⁶

This mention of this issue was timely, and this will certainly be credited to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

You have handled the Jewish matter in Poland for many years and you have the established reputation among Jews in America as a just man who without prejudice considers this important and, through the fault of both sides, a sensitive issue.

On my part, particularly in the years 1935–1938, I dealt with Polish-Jewish relations during my stay in America and published a historical sketch on Polish-Jewish relations in English at that time.

On 27 November this year, I brought this topic up in the letter No. 139/D/42 addressed to you, attaching a general note entitled 'Jews and the Post-war World.'

Yesterday I received the aforementioned guidelines from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and am writing to you, not least because of his physical presence in Palestine, with a request for your kind consideration of the remarks sketched below and the conclusions contained in this letter as a follow-up to my letters and our conversations.

In the approach to the question created to a large extent already in the Middle Ages by German influences, it is striking to refer to the Jews as a foreign body. Such a simplification of the ratio lasting for 600 to 1,000 years—the initial date may be disputable—is inappropriate.

For example, the matter of professional redistribution concerns not only Jews, but also the structure of Polish society in general. This can be said about the issues of emigration to a large extent.

²¹⁶ This probably refers to doc. 288.

In my opinion, it is not necessary to reflect upon the democratic attitude of the Government to Jews; the democratic worldview of the Government generally exists or does not exist, particularly with regard to all Polish citizens.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs quite rightly requests the adequate treatment of citizens; this, however, should not be distinguishing Jews and putting citizens in a different category or striving for their favour.

As you know, during the last several months I visited a number of countries in both Americas, Africa and Asia, and I was in London; I do not know if I should regard Kuybyshev as a part of Europe. Everywhere I paid careful attention to the problem that I was concerned with.

As a result of my observations, I think that it is necessary to remind our colleagues not of official courtesy towards Jews, but rather to explain to them that a Jew is the same as a Pole, for example—myself coming from a Ruthenian family. I have heard complaints about the lack of politeness—not from a branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—only in one place, and I have heard many complaints about other matters, as delegations of Jews paid visits to me.

It would be necessary to remind our colleagues that Jewish matters are Polish matters from the viewpoint of the state. It is not acceptable when a cipher officer says: 'Another cable about Jews. Let it wait.' In one observed case, it took nine days to dispatch a cable, and I know that it reached the destination too late to serve as an argument in a very important negotiation of nationwide importance.

In Tehran and in the USSR, I came across a subjective approach. According to many opinions, particularly among 'ladies with higher education', Jews kissed Soviet tanks entering Lwów, joined some communist guards, etc. One lady in Alma-Ata told me that she had seen a young Jew tearing epaulettes off the uniform of a Polish officer, and this officer had shot himself with his own gun. Stories of Jews snitching are frequent in prisons.

Undoubtedly, among Jewish youth there were groups greeting Soviet soldiers as heralds of a new order devoid of 'ghetto benches,' 'numerus clausus,' etc.²¹⁷ Still, however, Soviet authorities deported not 10%, but 20% of the Jews from the eastern territories of the Republic of Poland.

As far as prison stories are concerned, I have no reason to doubt the validity of my sources, but I also do not [sic] know from Jews how non-Jewish youth treated them at the very beginning of prison life.

²¹⁷ In the interwar period, Polish nationalist youth organisations strived for the introduction of legal regulations permitting the limitation (numerus clausus) or total elimination (numerus nullus) of Jewish students from Polish institutions of higher learning. Confrontations, riots and attacks on Jewish students occurred in these institutions. From 1937, most rectors of schools of higher education introduced (with the consent of the Minister of Religion and Public Education) 'ghetto benches,' i.e. separate benches in lecture rooms intended for students of Jewish descent.

Posts have recently been informed about Jews' desertions from Iran. I have no doubt that the relations have improved, but while in Tehran, I checked extremely antisemitic sentiments among higher ranking military men. I do not justify desertions by any means, but this is where I could find motives of weaker hysterical individuals.

When staying in Kuybyshev, I mentioned to you the lack of Jewish policy on our part in the United States. On the contrary, I discovered the discouragement of individuals who would like to contribute to this improvement of relations. In one case, the express wish of the Prime Minister was not fulfilled.

There is no Jewish matter in this territory, but public opinion is sensitive to racial equity.

As I was honoured to notify you, I made the press, from the Catholic one to the communist one, stress traditional Polish racial and religious tolerance and the concern of the Government of the Republic of Poland about the fate of Jewish citizens of Poland.

Jan Drohojowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 611

295

*7 December 1942. Cable from the Consul General in Istanbul
on actions of Romanian authorities*

Polconsul—Istanbul
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 7 DEC 1942
RECEIVED ON 9 DEC 1942

No. 233.

Zionist circles in Istanbul and Bucharest inform that the Romanian Government is moderating its antisemitic policy under the impact of the Allies' victories. Deportations were suspended, and the Commissioner General for Jewish Affairs Lecca suggested confidentially to Zionists the evacuation of 70,000 Jews from the camp in Transnistria (to Palestine and farther), demanding 200,000 lei per capita as costs of the evacuation. This refers also mostly to Polish Jews deported from France, Germany, Poland and Romania. Zionists passed this information to the former Deputy Grünbaum and their supreme organisations in America and Palestine. At the same time, I learnt from the Romanian side that the government

and politicians would like to erase the impression of pogroms formerly carried out with the participation of German provokers in Romania, Bessarabia and Odessa.

Poniński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 529

296

*9 December 1942. Note by the Polish Government
to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Great Britain
on the extermination of Jews in occupied Poland*

9th December, 1942

The Right Honourable
Anthony Eden, M.C., M.P.
Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office,
S.W.1.²¹⁸

Sir,

The Polish Government have on several occasions drawn the attention of the civilised world, both in diplomatic documents and official publications, to the conduct of the German Government and of the German authorities of occupation, both military and civilian, and to the methods employed by them 'in order to reduce the population to virtual slavery and ultimately to exterminate the Polish nation.' These methods, first introduced in Poland, were subsequently, in a varying

²¹⁸ The note was sent to ministers of foreign affairs of signatory states of the Declaration by United Nations. A copy of the note was also sent to the press and Jewish organisations. In the letter from 9 December 1942, the Counsellor at the Embassy in London, Antoni Baliński, informed Professor Lewis Bernstein Namier: 'As promised, I am sending you herewith a copy of the note which we are sending to all the Allied Governments. This is a copy of the note to Biddle, but the contents of all of them are identical. The note to the British Government was handed to the Foreign Office today; the others will be delivered tomorrow. Tomorrow, also, copies of it will be sent to the papers, "Times" included, as well as to the news agencies. It was unfortunately impossible to make this note shorter, as we had to include all the information which had been reported to us.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 62 (ENG).

degree, applied in other countries, occupied by the armed forces of the German Reich.

2. At the Conference held at St. James' Palace on January 13th, 1942, the Governments of the occupied countries 'have placed among their principal war aims the punishment, through the channel of organised justice, of those guilty of, or responsible for these crimes, whether they have ordered them, perpetrated them, or participated in them.'

Despite this solemn warning and the declarations of President Roosevelt, of the Prime Minister, Mr Winston Churchill, and of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Mr Molotov—the German Government has not ceased to apply its methods of violence and terror. The Polish Government have received numerous reports from Poland, testifying to the constant intensification of German persecution of the subjected populations.

3. Most recent reports present a horrifying picture of the position to which the Jews in Poland have been reduced. The new methods of mass slaughter applied during the last few months confirm the fact that the German authorities aim with systematic deliberation at the total extermination of the Jewish population of Poland and of the many thousands of Jews whom the German authorities have deported to Poland from Western and Central European countries and from the German Reich itself.

The Polish Government consider it their duty to bring to the knowledge of the Governments of all civilized countries the following fully authenticated information received from Poland during recent weeks, which indicates all too plainly the new methods of extermination adopted by the German authorities.

4. The initial steps leading to the present policy of extermination of the Jews were taken already in October, 1940, when the German authorities established the Warsaw Ghetto. All the Jewish inhabitants of the Capital were at that time ordered to move into the Jewish quarter assigned to them not later than November 1st, 1940, while all the non-Jews domiciled within the new boundaries of what was to become the ghetto, were ordered to move out of this quarter. The Jews were allowed to take only personal effects with them, while all their remaining property was confiscated. All Jewish shops and businesses outside the new ghetto boundaries were closed down and sealed. The original date for these transfers was subsequently postponed to November 15th, 1940. After that date the ghetto was completely closed and its entire area was surrounded by a brick wall, and the right of entry and exit was reserved only to the holders of special passes, issued by the German authorities. All those who left the ghetto without such a pass became liable to be sentenced to death, and it is known that German courts passed such sentences in a large number of cases.

5. After the isolation of the ghetto, official intercourse with the outside world was maintained through a special German office known as 'Transferstelle.' Owing to totally inadequate supplies of food for the inhabitants of the ghetto, smuggling on a large scale was carried on and the Germans themselves participated in this illicit trading, drawing considerable incomes from profits and bribes. The food rations for the inhabitants of the ghetto amounted to about a pound of bread per person weekly with practically nothing else. As a result, prices in the ghetto were on an average ten times higher than outside, and mortality due to exhaustion, starvation and disease, particularly during the last two winters, increased on an unprecedented scale. During the winter 1941-1942 the death rate calculated on an annual base has risen to 13 per cent., and during the first quarter of 1942 increased still further. Scores of corpses were found in the streets of the ghetto every day.

6. The population of the ghetto was officially stated to amount to 433,000 at the time the ghetto was established, and in spite of the appalling death rate, it was being maintained at this figure by the importation of Jews from Germany and from the occupied countries, as well as from other parts of Poland.

7. The outbreak of war between Germany and Soviet Russia and the occupation of the Eastern areas of Poland by German troops, considerably increased the number of Jews in Germany's power. At the same time, the mass murders of Jews reached such dimensions that, at first, people refused to give credence to the reports reaching Warsaw from the Eastern provinces. The reports, however, were confirmed again and again by reliable witnesses. During the winter 1941-1942 several tens of thousands of Jews were murdered. In the city of Wilno over 50,000 Jews were reported to have been massacred and only 12,000 of them remain in the local ghetto. In the city of Lwów 40,000 were reported murdered, in Równe 14,000, in Kowel 10,000, and unknown numbers in Stanisławów, Tarnopol, Stryj, Drohobycz and many other smaller towns. At first, the executions were carried out by means of shooting, subsequently, however, it is reported that the Germans applied new methods, such as poison gas, by means of which the Jewish population was exterminated in Chełm, or electrocution, for which a camp was organized in Bełżec, where in the course of March and April 1942, the Jews from the provinces of Lublin, Lwów and Kielce, to the number of tens of thousands were exterminated. Of Lublin 30,000 Jewish inhabitants only 2,500 still survive in the city.

8. It has been reliably reported, that on the occasion of his visit to the General Gouvernement of Poland in March 1942, Himmler issued an order for the extermination of 50 per cent. of the Jews in Poland by the end of 1942. After Himmler's departure the Germans spread the rumour that the Warsaw Ghetto would be liquidated as from April 1942. This date was subsequently altered to June. Himmler's second visit to Warsaw in the middle of July 1942 became the signal for

the commencement of the process of liquidation, the horror of which surpasses anything known in the annals of history.

9. The liquidation of the ghetto was preceded on July 17th 1942 by the registration of all foreign Jews confined to the ghetto, who were then removed to the Pawiak prison. As from July 20th, 1942, the guarding of the ghetto was entrusted to special security battalions, formed from the scum of several Eastern European countries, while large forces of German police armed with machine guns and commanded by SS. officers were posted at all the gates leading into the ghetto. Mobile German police detachments patrolled all the boundaries of the ghetto day and night.

10. On July 21st, at 11 a.m., German police cars drove up to the building of the Jewish Council of the ghetto, in Grzybowska Street. The SS. officers ordered the chairman of the Jewish Council, Mr Czerniakow, to summon the members of the Council, who were all arrested on arrival and removed in police cars to the Pawiak prison. After a few hours' detention the majority of them were allowed to return to the ghetto. About the same time flying squads of German police entered the ghetto, breaking into the houses in search of Jewish intellectuals. The better-dressed Jews found were killed on the spot, without the police troubling even to identify them. Among those who were thus killed was a non-Jew, Professor Dr. Raszeja, who was visiting the ghetto in the course of his medical duties and was in possession of an official pass. Hundreds of educated Jews were killed in this way.

11. On the morning of the following day, July 22nd 1942, the German police again visited the office of the Jewish Council and summoned all the members, who had been released from the Pawiak prison the previous day. On their assembly, they were informed that an order had been issued for the removal of the entire Jewish population of the Warsaw Ghetto and printed instructions to that effect were issued in the form of posters, the contents of which are reproduced in Annex 1 to this Note²¹⁹. Additional instructions were issued verbally. The number of the people to be removed was first fixed at 6,000 daily. The persons concerned were to assemble in the hospital wards and grounds in Stawki Street, the patients of which were evacuated forthwith. The hospital was close to the railway siding. Persons subject to deportation were to be delivered by the Jewish police not later than 4 p.m. each day. Members of the Council and other hostages were to answer for the strict fulfilment of the order. In conformity with German orders, all inmates of Jewish prisons, old age pensioners and inmates of other charitable institutions were to be included in the first contingent.

12. On July 23rd, 1942, at 7 p.m. two German police officers again visited the offices of the Jewish Council and saw the chairman, Mr Czerniakow. After they left

²¹⁹ Not included in this publication.

him, he committed suicide. It is reported that Mr Czerniakow committed suicide because the Germans increased the contingent of the first day to 10,000 persons, to be followed by 7,000 persons on each subsequent day. Mr Czerniakow was succeeded in his office by Mr Lichtenbaum, and on the following day 10,000 persons were in fact assembled for deportation followed by 7,000 persons on each subsequent day. The people afflicted were either rounded up haphazardly in the streets, or were taken from their homes.

13. According to the German order of July 22nd, 1942, all Jews employed in German-owned undertakings, together with their families, were to be exempt from deportations. This produced an acute competition among the inhabitants of the ghetto to secure employment in such undertakings, or, failing employment, bogus certificates to this effect. Large sums of money, running into thousands of Zlotys were being paid for such certificates to the German owners. They did not, however, save the purchasers of such certificates from deportation, which was being carried out without discrimination or identification.

14. The actual process of deportation was carried out with appalling brutality. At the appointed hour on each day, the German police cordoned off a block of houses selected for being cleared of all Jews, entered the back yards and fired their guns at random, as a signal for all to leave their homes and assemble in the yard. Anyone attempting to escape or to hide was killed on the spot. No attempt was made by the Germans to keep families together. Wives were torn from their husbands and children from their parents. Those who appeared frail or infirm were carried straight to the Jewish cemetery to be killed and buried there. On the average 60–100 people were disposed of in this way daily. After the contingent was assembled, the people were forcibly packed into cattle-trucks to the number of 120 in each truck, which had room for forty. The trucks were then locked and sealed. The Jews were suffocating for lack of air. The floors of the trucks were covered with quicklime and chlorine. As far as is known, the trains were dispatched to three localities: Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibór, into what the reports describe as 'Extermination camps.' The very method of transport was deliberately calculated to cause the largest possible number of casualties among the condemned Jews. It is reported that on arrival in camp the survivors were stripped naked and killed by various means, including poison gas and electrocution. The interment of the dead were effected by means of machinery in mass-produced graves.

15. According to all available information, of the 250,000 Jews deported from Warsaw Ghetto up to September 1st, 1942, only two small transports, numbering about 4,000 people, are known to have been sent eastwards in the direction of Brest Litovsk and Małachowicze, allegedly to be employed on work behind the front line. It has not been possible to ascertain whether any of the other Jews

deported from the Warsaw Ghetto still survive, and it must be feared that they have been all put to death.

16. The Jews deported from the Warsaw Ghetto so far included in the first instance all the aged and infirm, while a number of the physically strong have escaped so far, because of their utility as labour power. All the children from Jewish schools, orphanages and children's homes were deported, including the orphanage in charge of the celebrated educationist Dr. Janusz Korczak, who refused to abandon the children, although he was given the alternative of remaining behind.

17. According to the most recent reports, 120,000 ration cards were distributed in the Warsaw Ghetto for the month of September 1942, while the report also mentions that only 40,000 such cards were to be distributed for the month of October 1942. The latter figure is corroborated by information emanating from the German Employment office (Arbeitsamt) which mentioned the number of 40,000 skilled workmen as those, who were to be allowed to remain in a part of the ghetto, confined to barracks and employed on German war production.

18. The deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto were interrupted during five days, between August 20th–25th. The German machinery for the mass slaughter of the Jews was during this interval employed on the liquidation of other ghettos in Central Poland, including the towns of Falenica, Rembertów, Nowy Dwór, Kałuszyn and Mińsk Mazowiecki.

19. It is not possible to estimate the exact numbers of Jews, who have been exterminated in Poland since the occupation of the country by the armed forces of the German Reich. But all the reports agree that the total number of killed runs into many hundreds of thousands of innocent victims, men, women and children, and that of the 3,130,000 Jews in Poland before the outbreak of war, over a third have perished during the last three years.

20. The Polish population, which itself is suffering the most grievous afflictions and of which many millions have been either deported to Germany as slave labour or evicted from the homes and lands, deprived of so many of their leaders, who had been cruelly murdered by the Germans, have repeatedly expressed through the underground organisations their horror and compassion with the terrible fate which has befallen their Jewish fellow-countrymen. The Polish Government are in possession of information concerning the assistance, which the Polish population is rendering to the Jews. For obvious reasons no details of these activities can be published at present.

21. The Polish Government—as the representative of the legitimate authority on territories in which the Germans are carrying out the systematic extermination of Polish citizens and of citizens of Jewish origin of many other European countries—consider it their duty to address themselves to the British Government

and to the Governments of the United Nations, in the confident belief that they will share their opinion as to the necessity not only of condemning the crimes committed by the Germans and punishing the criminals, but also of finding means offering the hope that Germany might be effectively restrained from continuing to apply her methods of mass extermination.

I have the honour to be, Sir, with the highest consideration.

Your obedient Servant,

E. Raczyński
Polish Ambassador

TNA, FO 371/30924 (previously published; ENG)

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*10 December 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Prime Minister (to Washington)
on the delivery of a note on the extermination of Jews*

URGENT

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 10 DEC 1942

No. 742

To the Prime Minister²²⁰

Based on verified materials about the extermination of Jews in Poland, the MFA prepared a note reporting on the actual situation addressed to governments of all United Nations. The note ends in the following sentence: ‘The Polish Government—as the representative of the legitimate authority on territories in which the Germans are carrying out the systematic extermination of Polish citizens and of citizens of Jewish origin of many other European countries—consider it their duty to address themselves to the British Government and to the Governments of the United Nations, in the confident belief that they will share their opinion as to the necessity not only of condemning the crimes committed by

²²⁰ General Sikorski was on a visit to the United States from 1 December 1942. This trip, along with a visit to Mexico, ended on 13 January 1943.

the Germans and punishing the criminals, but also of finding means offering the hope that Germany might be effectively restrained from continuing to apply her methods of mass extermination.’

For the time being, we pass this note to the Governments of Great Britain, America, the Soviets and Governments of occupied countries.

At the same time, I initiated a draft collective resolution of Governments of occupied countries in order to condemn German methods and to threaten the guilty. *On 10 December*, for the purpose of considering the most appropriate form of such announcement, the meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of occupied countries will be held (in the official residence of the Prime Minister).²²¹

On its part, the British Government is preparing a declaration that it is agreeing upon with the American and Soviet Governments.

Today we submit our note to the press and try to stress Poland’s initiative in this matter for propaganda purposes.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248

²²¹ In a circular of 16 December 1942, Minister Raczyński informed: ‘On Thursday the 17 December, a declaration of powers and European occupied states on the persecution of Jews will be announced. The British government promised to consider adequately in its propaganda the participation of European governments undoubtedly representing countries interested in this issue in the declaration. I ask you to take steps in order to obtain a similar promise from the government to which you are accredited.’ IPMS, Ambasada Kujbyszew, A.7.53/24, MS.

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*10 December 1942. Report by the Consular Agency in Johannesburg
on Jewish refugees in Mozambique (with enclosure)*

10 December 1942

To Minister Stan. Schimitzek
Delegate of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
in Lisbon
49, Rua Rodrigo da Fonseca

On behalf of Minister Dr Łepkowski, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Pretoria, the Agency sends the following information in connection with your letter No. 1285/42 from 6 October 1942:

At present, there are 32 Jewish refugees, citizens of Poland in Lourenço Marques. They receive benefits from the Council for Refugee Settlement in Africa Outside the Union, 102 London House, Loveday Street, JOHANNESBURG. (Please find enclosed a nominal list of refugees in Lourenço Marques and benefits received by them).

The local Office believes that these benefits are sufficient for the coverage of maintenance costs and incidental expenditures. On the other hand, the Consular Agency thinks that it would be advisable to set aside a certain amount for aid in extraordinary cases that should be treated individually. In the case concerned, the crucial thing is to help the sick or convalescents. In the subtropical climate, where Europeans often come down with malaria, this kind of aid is necessary.

The Consular Agency wishes to emphasise that it does not have any trusted people in Lourenço Marques to whom the distribution of aid could be entrusted due to the relations that prevail in that place. The Agency thinks that the matter of potential aid should be handed over to the local Office, which may have reliable information about the important situation among refugees both directly from Lourenço Marques via local British Consul General and via local Council for Refugee Settlement, which grants financial aid for the maintenance of refugees in Lourenço Marques.

On this occasion, the Consular Agency indicates that Lourenço Marques is a place of temporary stay for Polish seamen who have become sick on ships and are staying at local hospitals and, upon recovery, have been waiting for an opportunity to return to England for months. The Agency does not have funds for granting aid to them.

In view of the above, the Consular Agency requests the allocation of the total amount of £100 for these goals.²²² Upon exhaustion of this amount, the Agency will apply for further funds.

Kazimierz Armin
Vice-Consul of the Republic of Poland

[enclosure]

LIST OF
REFUGEES BEING JEWISH CITIZENS OF POLAND
CURRENTLY STAYING IN LOURENÇO MARQUES

Surname and first name	Monthly benefit
BLUSZTEIN Isaak	£14.0.0
BLUSZTEIN Helena	
FELDMAN Pinkas	£18.0.0
FELDMAN Estera	
FELDMAN Chana	
FELDMAN Mordeha	
FRANKEL Chaim	£9.10.0
GELBARD Willy	£20.0.0
GELBARD Elisa	
GELBARD Rosa	
KRONENGOLD Chaim Lejb	£9.10.0
KUEHNREICH Chaim	£26.0.0
KUEHNREICH Resla	
KUEHNREICH Isaak	
KUEHNREICH Mindla	
KUEHNREICH Anna	
MUSZEL Lejzor	£22.0.0
MUSZEL Dwora	
MUSZEL Sara	
MUSZEL Abraham	

²²² In the letter from 14 January 1942 addressed to the MFA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare notified that it 'asked the Ministry of Treasury to transfer the amount of £100 to the Consular Agency in Johannesburg, which should have an assistance fund for refugees staying in Lourenço Marques via the British Consul.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

RUBIN Lazar	£9.10.0
SADKOWSKI Abraham	£18.0.0
SADKOWSKI Jochweta	
SADKOWSKI Henri	
SZTAB Salomon Lejba	£12.10.0. (Wages)
WEBER Emanuel	£19.10.0
WEBER Malka	
WEBER Marcel	
WEBER Suzanne	
ZANGER Moses	£18.0.0
ZANGER Helena	
ZANGER Leon	

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat (Cape Town), 1

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*10 December 1942. Note by the Press Attaché at the Legation in Stockholm
on the situation of the Jewish population in Finland*

10 DEC 1942

SECRET

Note for the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Stockholm

From a befriended Swedish diplomat, who permanently resides in Helsinki and is well acquainted with back-room secrets of Finnish policy, I received a relatively accurate description of the policy of Finnish authorities towards refugees.

According to this information, refugees from Germany (mostly Jews) were arrested as early as July 1941. At that time, they were directed to Lammi and Hauho in the Tavastland Province. At the end of December last year, they were sent to an internment camp in Salla. The conditions in this camp were harsh, and the camp commander was brutal. This caused an intervention by social democrats and Minister Ramsay (from the Swedish party). After this intervention, they were sent to Hogland Island, where conditions were better (as I informed in the previous note). When the Vichy Government agreed to the expulsion of Jews from France, the situation of Jewish refugees in Finland suddenly deteriorated,

too. At the beginning of October, 60 Jews were brought to Helsinki, from where they were to be sent to Germany. As a result of an active intervention of socialist ministers in the Government, Minister Ramsay, and intellectuals such as Professor Yrjö Hirn, Jalo Kalima and others, the majority of refugees were rescued and the matter is currently suspended. A huge role in all these things was played by my informer and the secretary of the Swedish faction of the Social Democratic Party, Mrs Karlsson, who mobilised public opinion to defend the unfortunate. In Finland, there are approx. 300 persons with children representing various nationalities and religions. Unfortunately, many of them have already been expelled, including Kopolevsky—an affluent timber merchant from Latvia, on whom I reported in a note from 4 December this year. As it turns out, Kopolevsky allegedly deposited approx. 36,000,000 Finnish marks in Finnish banks. Nevertheless, he was expelled. Expulsions are carried out by ships via Tallinn.

My colleague from the Swedish Legation asks for the quick withdrawal of refugees, citizens of Poland staying in Finland, asserting that they will be sent to Germany sooner or later. He requests the facilitation of departure from Finland primarily for Jewish citizens of Poland who are most seriously endangered for the time being. On his initiative, a list of endangered persons was prepared. He also informed me that the Swedish Government will deliberate on the issue of admitting all refugees from Finland into Sweden. In his view, this is the only possibility of rescuing those in danger.

Please find enclosed copies of letters²²³ addressed to me by two outstanding socialists in Finland: Atos Wirtanen—a member of the Commission on Foreign Affairs of the Parliament and a well-known Member of Parliament, and Mrs Karlsson—the secretary of the Swedish faction of social democrats. Because of the arrests that recently took place among Finnish citizens known for sympathising with the Allied cause, I was asked to keep names of the aforementioned sources in strict secrecy.

The Finnish Telegraphic Agency announced the following message yesterday: Some foreign newspapers tried to politically exploit the matter of a certain number of refugees of mostly Jewish descent who had arrived in Finland from Central Europe a few years ago. At the same time, it was stated that the Germans had demanded the expulsion of these refugees to Germany, or to the territory occupied by the Germans. This statement is completely groundless.

All questions regarding this group of refugees, consisting of approx. 150 persons, are handled by the Ministry of Internal Affairs under an ordinary police procedure. With regard to the less desirable and criminal part of the aforementioned category of refugees, police authorities undertook an action consistent with the legal provisions regulating the right of residence of refugees in the country. Persons

²²³ There are no attachments.

who voluntarily violated the right of asylum (e.g. due to espionage or fraud), whose number in the aforementioned category amounts to 4 persons, were expelled from the country. One of the expelled persons was accompanied voluntarily by his wife and two children. It seems to be clear that a foreigner may leave the country unless there are obstacles from authorities regarding his move to another country that granted him the right of entry.

Around 20 other cases, which refer to the expulsion of foreigners in a subsequent period, do not concern the Central European countries in question, but seamen and other persons staying in Finland without the right of residence.

I also learnt that Mrs Irya Laurila (the head of the municipal office of the AERO airline and wife of the former representative of the LOT Polish Airlines, Mr Jerzy Dunkel) was allegedly sentenced to 9 years of severe imprisonment. The arrest of Mrs Laurila took place at the beginning of September. She is allegedly involved in the case of a few dozen persons from the higher Helsingfors society who are accused of supporting the Allies, particularly of maintaining communication with the American Legation. Many of those people were arrested only for maintaining social relations with the Americans. For example, as a Swedish friend said, Countess Stackelberg was arrested and sentenced only for the fact that she allegedly visited the Americans to warn them against maintaining relations with her friends, whom they, as she said, 'recklessly' put in danger. I could not confirm any further details in the matter of Mrs Laurila-Dunkel, as both the arrest and trial were kept in deepest secrecy. Mrs Stackelberg is said to have experienced such a nervous shock that she lost her mind.

Stockholm, 10 December 1942

Norbert Žaba

AAN, Akta Norberta Žaby, 2

300*12 December 1942. Note by the Counsellor at the Embassy in London
on Jewish refugees in Tangier*

Secret

Note from a conversation with Mr Randall on 12 December 1942

Mr Randall asked me to visit him in the Foreign Office today in order to introduce me to the content of the report recently received from the British Consul General in Tangier.

The report is devoted to the issue of refugees of Allied countries in general. It states that in Tangier there are currently approx. 80 Polish citizens; with few exceptions, they are of Jewish descent. Most of them are on the edge of poverty—only 15 of them have a job. From time to time, they receive aid from Jewish organisations, but it is usually small.

As far as the political danger is concerned, the English think that it does not exist at present. Although the police check up on the refugees from time to time, it is not required to deport them to their countries of origin.

Mr Randall told me about plans being discussed by the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs—as far as I know, they are known to the Ministry—that concern the future resettlement of refugees from Tangier to North Africa. That matter has already been discussed with the Americans, but they are postponing a more thoroughgoing discussion until the cessation of military operations in North Africa. At this moment, Africa can become an asylum territory for refugees.

London, 12 December 1942

*A. Baliński**AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 7*

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19 December 1942. Note by the Embassy to the Holy See to the Secretariat of State regarding the extermination of Jews in occupied Poland

No. 122/SA/283.
To the Secretariat of State
of His Holiness
In the Vatican Palace

The Polish Embassy has the honour to draw the attention of the Secretariat of State of His Holiness to the following information obtained from an authorised source: –

The Germans exterminate the total Jewish population in Poland. This concern primarily the old, the disabled, women and children who are taken away, which proves that it is not a question of deportation for forced labour, and which confirms the information according to which the deportees were put to death by various procedures in places specially prepared for this purpose. Young, able men are often forced to work in order to make them ultimately die of overwork and malnutrition.

The number of Polish Jews exterminated by the Germans is estimated to have exceeded one million. In Warsaw alone there were about 400,000 Jews living in the Ghetto in the middle of July 1942; in July and August 250,000 of them were taken to the East; on 1 September only 120,000 ration coupons were distributed in the Ghetto and on 1 October 40,000 coupons. The liquidation is proceeding at the same time in other Polish cities.

The Polish Embassy would like to use this opportunity to express to the Secretariat of State of His Holiness the assurances of its highest consideration.²²⁴

Vatican, 19 December 1942

IPMS, Ambasada Watykan, A.44.122/28

²²⁴ In the note sent on 21 December 1942 to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador to the Holy See reported: 'When submitting the note on the persecution of Jews in Poland ..., I expressed the conviction that the Holy See will clearly and explicitly condemn both those and other German crimes; crimes which, in their size, exceed all that the history has known so far. Monsignor Tardini replied that the Soviet crimes committed against the Poles should be condemned at the same time. In my reply, I indicated that I would personally have nothing against such an attitude. What matters the most is the public and unambiguous condemnation. We have been waiting for it for such a long time. One could even ask if our stay—i.e. the stay of the diplomats from

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*21 December 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Consulate General in Tel Aviv on actions of the Polish Government
in defence of the Jewish population*

TO Polconsul Tel Aviv
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 21 DEC 1942

No. 59

In reply to the cable of the Representation, please communicate:

The extermination of the Jewish population in Poland is discussed at the special meeting of the National Council, at which Deputy Prime Minister Mikołajczyk made a declaration on behalf of the Government and announced the content of the protest sent from Poland. The declaration of the Government and the resolution of the National Council were conveyed to the press. The Minister of Foreign Affairs provided the governments of the United Nations with a note indicating the need to find resources for the effective prevention of the use of mass extermination methods by Germany.²²⁵ Irrespective of the note, the Government initiated an agreement between Allied states for the purpose of making a joint protest and warning declaration. This declaration will be published in a couple

outside the non-Axis countries—in the Vatican is actually useful in any way. Whether it has not become superfluous. Not to mention the breaching of our status by Italy—let us recall that our notes are increasingly left without an answer One can conclude that not all problems which arise between the Holy See and Italy have been solved. The Vatican is under constant pressure from the Italian State regarding general ecclesiastical matters. After all, the fact that the Holy See has not spoken so far despite so many crimes committed by the Germans can only be explained by the dependence on Italy. “Non siamo liberi”. Monsignor Tardini answered with great annoyance that not everything people say is true. I replied that I was not the only one to draw such conclusions. And all this is happening at a time when the war has already passed a dangerous turn, when the victory of the Allies is coming closer, when Italy should think about how to save from the disaster what still can be saved, when it needs the Vatican far more than the Vatican needs Italy. “I am saying all of this,” I concluded “not only in the interest of the country I represent, but also in the interest of the Holy See. And the future will probably prove that I was right”. IPMS, Ambasada Watykan, A.44.122/28.

²²⁵ In the cable of 23 December 1942, the Consul General in Jerusalem reported: ‘I communicate that the Polish Government’s action regarding the extermination of Jews in Poland, particularly the note, the speech of the Prime Minister in the overseas press club and the cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to President Weizmann made a very positive impression here. I spoke at two very large meetings. There is a consensus here that only immediate repressions can save the rest of the Jews.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245.

of days. The Government mobilises international public opinion, which has already been reflected in speeches by representatives of the church hierarchy of all denominations, many outstanding politicians and publicists, etc. Further actions are in progress.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 245

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*23 December 1942. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Prime Minister (in Washington) on Soviet propaganda actions*

TO Polmission Washington
Attn. Polmission Kuybyshev
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 23 DEC 1942

URGENT

To the Prime Minister

On 21 December, the Soviet War News issued by the Soviet Embassy in London published the message of Narkomindel's information office on the extermination of Jews in Europe by Hitler. The message describes the persecutions of Jews in Poland, particularly in Warsaw, Radom, Piotrków, Kielce and Częstochowa. The further part of the message refers to massacres in the Belarussian Soviet Republic, mentioning Mińsk, Białystok, Brześć, and Baranowicze; in the Lithuanian Soviet Republic, mentioning Wilno; in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, mentioning Łuck, Rokitno, Sarny, Kostopol and Zdołbunowo, and in Latvian, Estonian, Karelo-Finnish and Moldovan Soviet Republics. The clear intention of the message is to create a counterbalance against our note, which, referring to Wilno and Lwów as Polish cities, also gained broad publicity and became the basis for a joint action between the Allies. With such an assumption, it is striking to note that in *Narkomindel's Soviet* message the list of mentioned places from the territory of ~~Poland occupied by the Soviets~~ *the Ukrainian Soviet Republic* does not include Lwów and any other city of Eastern Lesser Poland.²²⁶

²²⁶ On 21 December 1942, Minister Raczyński informed the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs: 'I think it behoves that I should bring to your notice that the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Monsieur Valkov, called on me on Friday, December 18th in order to return to me the Note which I had sent him on December 9th, No. 851/16, regarding the

For the attention of Kuybyshev.

Ambassador Romer proposes that any reactions to the matters in question be suspended until they are discussed by him in London.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 248

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23 December 1942. Appeal by the Minister of State in the Middle East on the occasion of Christmas

Silent Christmas Eve

The fourth Christmas is coming at a very gloomy time for Polish society. Persecutions on Polish land exceed the limits of everything that human imagination could create. The whole nation lives in an atmosphere of horrible torment. The systematic slaughter of Jews proceeded daily for a whole year, and the number of these victims has exceeded 1.5 million. As at the beginning of the war, the killing of Poles continues and its pace and size may increase after the complete extermination of Jews. Particularly painful is the extermination of the Polish intelligentsia. In western territories annexed to the Reich, where there are still approx. 10 million Poles, the educated class, liberal professions, clergy, teachers and the entirety of Polish industry, trade and craft have disappeared completely. In eastern territories, most of this class has already been deported. In the General Government, there are still judges who are active, teachers (of primary and vocational schools), doctors, priests, craftsmen and merchants, but their number decreases every day as they are gradually sent to prisons and camps. In order to protest against the planned extermination of the nation and to look for ways to stop it, General Sikorski made his current trip to Washington.

As we know from Poland, the older society is already dying out. Not only leaders of public life, but also most of its prominent activists in all fields have mostly disappeared. When we return to the country, we will not recognise it. The

persecution of Jews in Poland. M. Valkov gave (orally) as the reason for this step, that the Polish note mentioned the cities of Wilno, Lwów and other "incorporated in the Soviet Union on the basis of a plebiscite of the local population." I reminded him in reply that the so-called vote was taken under Soviet military occupation, that the whole procedure was contrary to international law and entirely illegal. TNA, FO 371/31088 (ENG).

new Poland will not be ruled by the generation that laid the foundations for the Polish state in 1918. The reconstruction of both the state and local government system as well as social, cultural, economic and scientific activity will be based on the youngest element, which will be provided by ranks of those who fight with guns in their hands outside the country today or in secret organisations and civil works in Poland.

I state this with emphasis so that all young people get ready for this work wherever these words reach them. So that they prepare for it all their abilities, qualities and intellectual resources. So that they return to the country to such a responsible role with a supply of strength, knowledge and experience.

Among the Christmas greetings that I send to the Polish military and to the civilian refugees, my primary wish is that they bring from their stay in exile to Poland those values and attainments that will help them become builders of a new Poland.

Jerusalem, 23 December 1942

Stanisław Kot

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Władysława Andersa, 76

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*23 December 1942. Note by the Head of the Refugee Section
at the MFA from a conversation with the Delegate
of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee*

Note from a conversation with the Delegate of the Joint for Europe Dr Schwartz

Dr Schwartz, the Delegate of the Joint with a seat in Lisbon, arrived in London from Spain. A month ago, Sch. went to Spain, where he took care of refugees arriving from France, primarily Jewish ones. Today Sch. reported to me, referred by Mr Kullmann.

The Spanish authorities say that 16,000 refugees have arrived in Spain since August this year. Sch. regards this figure as oversized and estimates the number of arrivals at 10,000. Jews account for at least half of them. As far as national groups are concerned, the order is as follows: Germans, Austrians, stateless persons, Poles,

etc. The number of Polish citizens who have recently arrived from France in Spain is estimated by Sch. at 700–1,000, 50-60% of whom are Jews.

The attitude of the Spanish authorities to refugees is very diverse. There are cases of generous support, but on the other hand, numerous arrests, and many men of military age are being sent to Miranda. In Barcelona, there are approx. 3,000 refugees. The wife of the Honorary Consul, Mrs Rodón, takes care of Polish refugees there (we sent a cable in this matter to Madrid at the beginning of this month²²⁷). Women released from prisons are placed in hotels at the seaside town of Caldas de Malvella. However, their maintenance is very expensive and amounts to 33 pesetas a day only for sustenance and accommodation. Mrs Rodón said that she can pay only 15 pesetas per person a day, and the Joint pays the rest.

Dr Schwartz considers it necessary to make all efforts to evacuate refugees from Spain as fast as possible, as it is the only thing that ensures the relatively kind attitude of Spanish authorities to them and the freedom from exclusion for the newcomers. The Joint makes efforts in the interest of Jewish refugees directly and via the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

The evacuation of refugees from Spain to French North Africa is met with difficulties. The Joint suggests also sending approx. 1,500 to Dutch Guiana and approx. 2,000 to Jamaica.

Yesterday the Government of the United States informed the Joint that it granted visas to America to children in Spain and Portugal regardless of religion and nationality. Instructions have already been sent to American Consulates in these countries. The maintenance of children is secured in America. The Joint organises transport and covers expenses. In Spain, mothers will also be entitled to receive visas in exceptional cases (imprisonment). In Spain, there are approx. 75 Polish-Jewish children.

Dr Sch. agreed with me that there are chances today to obtain temporary asylum through transit for a certain number of refugees from Portugal. The decision of the Government of Portugal depends on the guarantee from Governments of Great Britain and the United States that refugees will be evacuated, e.g. within 6 months.

The Joint hopes to obtain 1,000–2,000 certificates of entry into Palestine for Jewish refugees. However, there are difficulties in starting the transport. It is

²²⁷ This is a reference to the cable of 7 December 1942 addressed to Envoy Szumlakowski, in which Minister Raczyński instructed: 'I ask you to transfer funds for aid to Polish citizens arriving in Barcelona to the head of the branch of the Polish Red Cross, Mrs Rodón in Barcelona. Please recommend that Mrs R. cooperate with the British Consulate, agreeing upon the matter with the British Embassy.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 242.

necessary to obtain from the Government of South Africa the right of temporary stop in its territory for the evacuated, which may be difficult.

London, 23 December 1942

J. Marlewski

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 545

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*29 December 1942. Cable from the MFA to the Legation in Lisbon:
instruction by the Ministry of Treasury
on supporting the ghetto population in occupied Poland with parcels*

Very Urgent

TO Polmission LISBON
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 31 DEC 1942

No 616

Receiptus 503²²⁸

Ministry of Treasury to Houwalt²²⁹

Please pay 6,000 pounds sent on 28 November to Schimitzek for parcels for Jews in ghettos on order from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

Polexterne

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 242

²²⁸ It should probably read: 'refero 503', i.e. a reference to the cable of 27 October 1942 in which Minister Stańczyk requested of Delegate Schimitzek: Please ~~set aside~~ *keep* the recently remitted amount of 10,000 dollars for a *larger* parcel action.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 242.

²²⁹ Władysław Houwalt, the Financial Counsellor at the Legation and the Delegate of the Minister of Treasury, engaged in the provision of aid through money transfers. For example, in a cable of 5 December 1942, he informed: 'The transfer of 200,000 dollars from New York came. I start remitting and sending francs to France, but please remember that these operations will now require more time. I think I will be able to send also effective francs in limited amounts at the cost of approx. 10%, which would be profitable at the low exchange rate of banknotes. I would like to request your authorisation to pay these costs. In view of the new situation, please instruct me if and what sums I should send directly to Mr Czapski.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 242.

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*30 December 1942, Draft [?] resolution of the National Council
on the prevention of German crimes
against the Polish and Jewish population*

RESOLUTION NO 2²³⁰

The National Council addresses the Polish Government in the very urgent matter described below:

Upon taking control of Poland, the Germans have made it their goal to destroy the entire Polish Nation. They pursue it consistently; since the very beginning, they have applied the principle of collective responsibility by murdering often thousands of people for individual petty offences. They have also murdered whole families for non-compliance with their orders and, apart from that, punished the entire village and even their surroundings. They not only shot people without legal sentences, but even the completely innocent without warning. Apart from that, they threw hundreds of thousands of Polish families out of their longstanding homes during the most severe frosts and did not allow them to take anything, hoping that they would die of hunger. Wanting to deprive the terrorised and starved rest of the Polish Nation of all political, social and economic thought, they either directly murdered professors, doctors and political leaders or took them away to concentration camps. They also directly murdered many priests and transported most of them to concentration camps so that they would die in miserable *conditions* and in order to make it impossible for ~~them~~ *people* to engage in religious practices.

When the almost three-year-long persecution and extermination of the Polish nation has not satisfied the degenerate Nazi thugs relishing the innocently spilled blood of targeted victims from morning till night, they decided to use mass extermination on an even larger scale. They started this through the mass killings of the Jewish population a few months ago. After the annihilation of most of the Jewish population, they began a similar slaughter of the entire Polish population in several districts. First, they ordered deportations of the population in villages and cities, killing the elderly and those unable to work, tearing children out of their mothers' arms and sending people in an unknown direction, which is an unquestionable proof of their planned annihilation.²³¹

²³⁰ See doc. 312.

²³¹ This is a reference to the Aktion Zamość—German deportation activities conducted in the Zamość region from November 1942 till August 1943. It is estimated that approx. 110,000 persons were deported (German settlers were brought in their place).

These horrible crimes are committed by degenerates on an increasingly larger scale because no retaliation has occurred so far; only a punishment for perpetrators was announced, but after the end of the war. This distant prospect for punishment does not stop Germans from committing mass murders, but, as we can see, reinforces their belief that, like after the previous war, none of the Germans will be punished for these murders.

Since the announcement of punishment increases rather than diminishes the murdering of the population, the National Council believes that only prompt retaliation would convince the Germans that their crimes will be punished this time, and only this could stop the slaughter of the Polish population.

Based on the above, the National Council of the Republic of Poland makes a strong appeal to the Polish Government to request our allies to use the RAF as quickly as possible for a retaliation operation by bombing German towns and villages and informing Germans that this is done in retaliation for the massacre of the Polish population.

Jan Jaworski
Arka Bożek
Kiersnowski [?]—*withdrawn*
Wincenty Łącki
Michał Kwiatkowski
Szmul Zygielbojm
Zygmunt Kaczyński
Zofia Zaleska

London, 30 December 1942

Hoover Institution, Poland. Rada Narodowa , 8

308

*2 January 1943. Letter from the President to Pope Pius XII
on persecutions in occupied Poland*

The last weeks of the passing year brought new shocking news from Poland. The terror that has affected all strata and factions of the Polish society for four years has taken on frightening forms not only with the sophisticated cruelty of its methods, but also with the extensiveness of its reach. The extermination of Jews, among them many people of the Semitic race being Christians, turned out to be an attempt to conduct a systematically and scientifically arranged mass-murder operation. Currently, this kind of mass extermination is carried out against the native Polish population in Zamość, Krasnystaw and Hrubieszów districts and parts of the Tomaszów, Puławy and Lublin districts of the Lublin province. Only in the Zamość district, 54 villages were cleared and the owners were displaced from almost 10,000 farms. Children, especially those under the age of 6, were taken away to Germany. The mothers who defended them were killed. The elderly and the disabled were rushed in an unknown direction; we know that this means death. Rural leaders were put in the concentration camp in Auschwitz. The remaining rural population in their prime of life were deported under guard for forced labour. When one of the villages—Kitów—put up resistance, 170 peasants were killed.

Holy Father,

The trampled Divine Laws and human dignity, hundreds of thousands murdered without trial, broken families, profaned and closed churches, religion forced underground—this is the picture of Poland emerging from the reports that we receive from the country.

In this tragic moment, my Nation fights not only for its existence: it fights for everything that has been Sacred to it. It wants justice, not revenge. It calls not so much for financial and diplomatic aid, knowing that only a small part of such aid can reach it, as for a voice identifying evil clearly and distinctly and condemning those who serve evil.

I am convinced that reinforcing the nation's faith that God's Law knows no compromises and is above transitory human reason will enhance its strength to persist further. It will maintain the nation's spirit of almost supernatural courage that helped Catholics in Warsaw raise a protest against the persecution and extermination of Jews in the name of Christian principles, regardless of the fact that each word of their appeal could expose them to cruel repressions.

In the past, in moments difficult for Poland, but not filled so much with blood and tears, the Great Predecessors of Your Holiness addressed fatherly words to her. So today, when preaching or even praying is simply prohibited in vast areas of

the country, let the voice of the Holy See break the silence, too. Let the blessing of the Vicar of Christ descend upon those who die in the defence of their faith and customs without religious consolations.

I submit this request of my tormented Nation with a full sense of responsibility as Head of State to Your Holiness.¹

(Signed):
/-/ Władysław Raczkiewicz

London, 2 January 1943

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/64 (previously published)

¹ In the letter from 16 February 1943, the Pope replied: ‘To Our Beloved Son WŁADYSŁAW RACZKIEWICZ, the President of the Republic of Poland, from POPE PIUS XII. Our Beloved Son, we send you best regards and the Apostolic Blessing! In the message sent to us via Your Ambassador, you again wished to draw our whole attention upon the position in which our beloved sons of Poland found themselves as a result of current circumstances, although you realised that among the fact that you present to us and among painful feelings that you experience, all had already been known to us. Amongst the current common misery, the heart-breaking echo of all adversities affecting humankind reaches our ears every day, and amongst so many sufferings we can only be deeply moved by the sufferings of the Polish Nation whose faith is well known to us and which has gained our fatherly kindness. Our Beloved Son, you know well that since the very beginning of this conflict we have not omitted anything to bring relief to those horrible sufferings of the general population amongst this huge shock to people and elements and, on the other hand, we did not—several times on suitable formal occasions—neglect to remind persons who hold leading and responsible positions about the obligations of justice and humankind, the obligations that cannot be trampled for any war reasons, and we did this in accordance with the requirements of our office as defender of both the Divine and human laws. Unfortunately, our words did not find the relevant echo in all cases, and sometimes they have not even been communicated to the people to whom they would undoubtedly bring deep comfort; however, our various efforts were not fully in vain, and we managed to provide moral and material aid where it was needed more and more urgently. We do not cease to work and pray and are not discouraged by any obstacles, taking eagerly every opportunity that occurs to us, and we are again pleased to assure you of our strong determination not to neglect anything that the course of events demands from us under current circumstances, to rush to the aid of victims of the war. Now, expressing our burning desires in prayers and beseeching God to shorten the days of the horrible trial, we wholeheartedly invoke the abundances of the Divine mercy upon the Polish Nation, and, with a fatherly feeling, we grant our Apostolic Blessing to you and all of your compatriots.’ *Papież Pius XII a Polska. Przemówienia i listy papieskie (Garść dokumentów z lat 1939–1946)*, 1946. See doc. 317.

309

*4 January 1943. Report by the Consul General in Jerusalem:
reactions to the actions of the Polish Government
with regard to the extermination of the Jewish nation*

Jerusalem, 4 January 1943

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: The Polish Government and the extermination of Jews

Along with the influx of news about the extermination of Jews by occupation authorities in Poland, the local press started making appeals addressed to the Polish Government. These appeals often assumed the form of criticism, which was sometimes harsh and even encompassed the entire Polish society in the country. The Jewish press presented its appeals in two directions: 1. the diplomatic action of the Polish Government; 2. exerting an impact by the Polish Government on the entire Polish society in the country for the purpose of assuming an active approach towards invaders as a consequence of the killings of Jews. The press of very different orientations constantly wrote about the passivity of the Polish Government and society, confronting it with societies in Norway, the Netherlands, France and Belgium, whose approach saved dozens of thousands of Jews from death.

Particularly harsh attacks are directed at Polish broadcasts on the London radio and Minister Stroński. They are accused of keeping silent about the tragedy of Jews, and one of the newspapers even claims that Minister Stroński refused to bring up the subject of extermination of Jews in Polish broadcasts.

The official appeal of the Polish Government was approved by the Jewish Press, but objections and new demands arose immediately. Claims towards Polish broadcasts in London repeat continuously. For the sake of contrast, they refer to a Polish programme broadcast from New York on 27 December 1942. They also demanded that Polish pilots should scatter brochures over Poland that would call upon the Polish society to make active protests.

The Zionist dailies 'Haaretz' and 'Haboker' and the socialist 'Davar' play a leading part in the press campaign. But the fiercest and highly disgusting article was published by 'Hacofe'—an organ of religious Mizrahi Jews. The Polish society is accused of being deliberately passive, although it could defend Jews 'with axes, pitchforks, flails and iron bars' and, in this way, prevail over Germans. Apart from similar naiveties, the aforementioned article contains a despicable innuendo that Poles in Warsaw did not follow the example of the Greeks in Thessaloniki who

stood up for Jews, and Germans chose Poland as a place for the extermination of Jews without hesitation and fear, although they did not dare to do this in the Netherlands, Belgium, France or even Germany. It is worth noting that the editor of 'Hacofe,' Mr Muenz, is a member of the Representation of Polish Jewry in Tel Aviv.²

Witold R. Korsak
Consul General

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 612

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*4 January 1943. Circular by the Secretary-General at the MFA
on the distribution of a brochure concerning the extermination of Jews
in occupied Poland*

London, 4 January 1942

Confidential

Attaching a certain number of copies of our official publication entitled 'The Mass Extermination of Jews In German Occupied Poland'³—which contains, e.g. the text of the note by the Polish Government of 10 December 1942 on the persecution of Jews in Poland addressed to the Governments of Great Britain, the United States, the USSR and the Governments of European countries under German occupation—I request Mr Ambassador (Envoy, Consul General, Chargé d'Affaires) to communicate officially one copy of this publication along with the relevant note whose form is enclosed here,⁴ to the attention of the government of the host country.

The remaining copies of the publication are intended for potential distribution between institutions and persons concerned with this issue. In the first place, it is necessary to take Jewish circles into account, towards which I request you to stress the initiative of the Polish Government on the adoption of the joint declaration of Allied countries of 17 December 1942 regarding the extermination of Jews by Germans.

² A copy of the report was sent to the Ministry of Information and Documentation.

³ Apart from the introduction and note by Raczyński (doc. 296), the attachment contains also the text of the joint declaration of Allied countries of 17 December 1942 and an extract from a speech by Deputy Prime Minister Mikołajczyk of 27 November 1942 (doc. 286).

⁴ The form is not included in this publication.

To the confidential message to the Ambassador (Envoy, Consul General, Chargé d'Affaires) I state that the primary intention of the Polish Government was to include in the declaration the principle of repressions (e.g. in the form of bombardments) towards Germans for mass murders committed by them with regard to the Christian and Jewish population in German-occupied countries, particularly in Poland. However, our standpoint was not included in the joint declaration both because of fundamental objections in Anglo-Saxon circles and, primarily, due to substantive technical and military difficulties. Nevertheless, the Polish Government still tries to persuade the Allies into accepting the principle of retaliation in the belief that it is the most effective means of stopping Germany from using barbaric methods of extermination towards the population of countries under occupation, along with the growing power of the Allied countries.

For the strictly confidential and personal attention of the Ambassador (Envoy, Consul General, Chargé d'Affaires) I also inform that the Soviet Government—despite its participation in the joint declaration of 17 December 1942 initiated by a note from the Polish Government—refused to accept this note *ex post*, on the grounds of including paragraphs concerning the Polish Eastern Borderlands (point 7 of the note). At the same time, the press release of the Soviet Government on the persecution of Jews lists a number of places located in Polish eastern territories, referring to them as part of the USSR.⁵

Therefore, the juxtaposition in our official publication of the text of the note from the Polish Government dated 10 December 1942 and the text of the declaration of 17 December 1942, as well as the official communication of this document to the attention of governments of Allied and neutral countries holds special significance.

SECRETARY-GENERAL
Kajetan Dzierżykraj-Morawski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Konsulat Dublin, 12

⁵ See doc. 303.

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*6 January 1943. Report by the Consul General in New York
on the statement of the Soviet Ambassador in Washington*

6 January 1943

Secret

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
London

In connection with the telegraphic inquiry by Ambassador Romer asking to whom Ambassador Litvinov submitted a statement concerning 3,000 visas allegedly granted to Jewish citizens of Poland for the purpose of leaving Soviet Russia, I received the following explanation of the overall matter. Because of the extensiveness of the subject and the opportunity to send this report particularly quickly⁶ by courier, please allow me to choose this form of reply, since it is almost as fast as the reply by telegraph.

The following explanation is based on reliable statements submitted to me by Dr Izaak Lewin, a rabbi and the secretary of the Union of the Orthodox Rabbis. The Union of the Rabbis directly participated in the following negotiations, even though the matter was handled outside by representatives of the American Jewish Congress—Rabbi Stephen Wise and Dr Goldmann.

Around six weeks ago, Dr Wise and Dr Goldmann were accepted by Ambassador Litvinov, who stated that 'in his opinion, the Soviet Government will release 3,000 Jewish citizens of Poland, including around 700 rabbis and students of rabbinical schools, from the state and that he reported this initiative to Moscow.' Dr Wise and Dr Goldmann became convinced that the Soviet Government had

⁶ The report was sent from the MFA to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. In a covering letter from 27 January 1943, Dzierżykraj-Morawski informed: 'Irrespective of information gathered in America about the alleged consent of Soviet authorities to release a certain number of Jewish citizens of Poland from Russia, this matter was brought up at the end of December by Ambassador Romer in his conversation with the deputy of the Soviet Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Mr Vyshinsky. Ambassador Romer suggested that, in order to make it easier for a certain number of Jews to leave Russia, a practical solution to this matter should be found without resolving the disputable question of citizenship. However, Mr Vyshinsky categorically rejected this suggestion, holding on to the formal standpoint on the Soviet citizenship of Polish Jews. In addition, Mr Vyshinsky denied that Ambassador Litvinov or Ambassador Maisky had made any promises about the departure of Jewish citizens of Poland from Soviet Russia.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/5.

agreed to this as, being aware of the relations, they did not believe that Litvinov had made such a statement to them without being sure that this plan had essentially been determined. W. and G. treated the statement about the initiative as Litvinov's will to win credit among American Jews and to gain their personal gratitude.

One week after this visit, Dr Schwarzbart, a member of the National Council, sent a message suggesting that Ambassador Maisky stated that 3,000 Jews would be released from Soviet Russia. This message came from Chief Rabbi Hertz, to whom Maisky talked. Chief Rabbi Hertz confirmed this statement by telegraph to the American Union of the Rabbis.

On the first days of December, Dr Wise and Dr Goldmann were received by Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, who told them that President Roosevelt had written a personal letter to Stalin in this matter. In reply to this letter, Stalin stated that the Soviet Government 'is opening borders to all foreign citizens who want to leave.'

A few days later, the American Jewish Congress received a letter from Litvinov, in which the latter reported that 'the Soviet Government did not agree to his proposal to grant 3,000 visas.'

Understandably, this turn of events caused consternation, so Dr Wise and Dr Goldmann went immediately to Washington, where they were received by Mr Sumner Welles and communicated the content of the last letter from Ambassador Litvinov to him.

Mr Sumner Welles would inform the Delegation that 'such things are possible in Russia and Ambassador Litvinov was apparently not informed about the position of the Soviet Government in this matter.' Moreover, Mr Sumner Welles stated that he had brought up this matter in negotiations with the Polish Government.⁷

/-/ Sylwin Strakacz

Minister Plenipotentiary, Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/5

⁷ In the letter from 8 February 1943, the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in the United States Aleksander Znamięcki reported: 'According to the content ... of the letter ... of 29 December on efforts made by the World Jewish Congress to obtain approval for the departure of 3,000 Jewish citizens of Poland from the USSR to Palestine, I notified Dr A. Tartakower about the content of the letter of Minister Stańczyk to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ... of 17 December 1942. As I have already communicated in my letter A.Z. 213 from 4 January 1943, Dr Tartakower said that "the Soviet Government eventually refused to grant such approval, because it does not want to treat preferentially one group of citizens." "However, he also notified me about the receipt of a positive reply to the special letter from President Roosevelt to Stalin, which remarked that a few hundreds of thousands of Jewish citizens of Poland staying in the USSR could find employment in other countries if allowed to leave the USSR.'

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*7 January 1943. Resolution of the National Council
on German crimes in occupied Poland*Resolution of the Polish National Council of January 7th, 1943

On the strength of reports received by the Polish Government in the last days of December, 1942, the National Council of Poland declares that the wholesale destruction by the Germans of all classes of the Polish population strike at the very existence of the nation.

It should be brought to the notice of all nations of the world that the destruction of the Polish population in specially selected areas of Poland is being carried out by the following means: children under 6 years of age are torn away from their parents and deported to Germany to be brought up as Germans; parents defending their children are murdered; aged people, invalids, cripples and the physically unfit are deported to an unknown destination which, as is well known, means to their destruction in special death camps; leaders of the population are taken to the Oświęcim penal camp; the remaining able-bodied population are forcibly employed in labour camps in Germany or Poland.

By such methods the population of some 54 villages, inter alia, have been driven out of their homes in the Lublin district in the course of December 1942. The inhabitants of these villages are offering armed resistance, thus, for example, the entire male population of the village of Kitów has perished in opposing the Germans. At the same time the entire Jewish population regardless of sex or age, is being ruthlessly murdered.

The National Council of Poland states that the Polish nation has waged an uninterrupted struggle against Germany since 1939 by active resistance, by refusal to cooperate, by the non-production of any 'quisling' and by the creation of a new army to fight outside the country.

The National Council of Poland draws attention to the fact that the inflexible attitude of the Polish nation concerning the German proposals of a joint invasion

On the 6th inst., Dr Tartakower stated that "with regard to the content of Stalin's reply to the letter from President Roosevelt, Dr Nahum Goldmann, President of the Executive Committee, World Jewish Congress, obtained a promise from Under-Secretary of State Mr Sumner Welles last week that the list delivered to him (first 70 persons at the most) would be sent to the U.S. Ambassador in Kuybyshev in order to be delivered to Stalin. If the departure of these persons is permitted and a precedent is established, the next larger list will be sent in the same way". IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/5.

of Russia saved the Soviet Union from war in 1939, and at the expense of a million Polish lives gained time for the Allied Nations to organize resistance.

In consideration of Poland's contribution to the war effort the National Council of Poland solemnly declares that a general plan for the immediate help of the Allies for Poland should constitute one of the points in the general plan for the prosecution of the war. The monstrosity of German methods of waging war is repeatedly being corroborated by facts as is the inadequacy of the means hitherto employed to counteract the organized and systematic destruction of entire nations in occupied Europe. All protests and warnings that those guilty of such crimes will be brought to justice after the war are having no effect.

Aware of its responsibility towards those fighting in Poland for the very existence of the nation, the National Council expresses the conviction that only by extraordinary emergency measures will the Allied Governments be able to check the systematic extermination of the populations of the occupied countries of Europe.

The National Council of Poland shares to the full the view of the Polish Government that only complete victory will bring about the final collapse of German barbarism, but deems it vitally necessary to take immediate and effective measures against German tyranny, and pledges its entire and complete support to the Polish Government in their efforts to elaborate and carry out, in conjunction with the Allied Nations, a plan of immediate reprisals against the Germans with the object of compelling them to cease the mass extermination of the nations of occupied countries.

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 9 (ENG)

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*11 January 1943. Report by the Embassy in Washington:
an opinion on the report of the Jewish Agency
on the evacuation of persons of Jewish descent from the USSR*

11 January 1943

SECRET

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

It is my honour to send you as an attachment the text of the Polish translation of the report from the delegate of the Jewish Agency in Palestine on his activity in

Pahlavi and Tehran in the period from 24 July till 5 September 1942.⁸ This text was sent to the Embassy by the World Jewish Congress (Dr Tartakower). According to the wish of this institution, one example of the report was delivered to Prime Minister General Sikorski.

The report is provided without the name of the author, who is, however, undoubtedly known to the Legation of the Republic of Poland and the Delegate of the Government for Refugees in Tehran *who?*, is grossly biased not so much in details, which are impossible to evaluate from this place, but in its general overview of the situation of the Jewish citizens of Poland in Russia and its evaluation of the motives of the relatively small number of Jews in the Polish Army and among evacuated Polish citizens. The tendency of the report is not only to burden Polish circles with responsibility for the existing situation, but also to protect the Russian side, particularly the NKVD, against potential accusations. Typical examples of this tendency are fragments of conversations with the captain of the NKVD Alexandrovich or between General Zhukov and General Bohusz quoted by anonymous listeners. In the light of the consistent Soviet policy regarding the citizenship of non-Poles and the NKVD's practice concerning the conscription of Jews and their departure from the USSR, Zhukov's promise to grant an exit visa to each holder of the entry visa (page 10), if really made, bears all characteristics of a deliberate campaign based on spreading misunderstandings and stimulating antagonism in Jewish-Polish relations.

If we exclude bad will, the author of the report fell victim to the same cleverly devised and efficiently conducted game of Soviet decision-makers that, unfortunately, had previously deceived some junior officers from our army in the USSR, inadvertently delivering anti-Polish arguments to the Soviet propaganda apparatus.

The value of the report as a source of objective information is diminished by the following facts:

1) Complete ignorance of the names of persons on whose statements the report is based.

2) Despite the statement that the condition of evacuated Jews is very serious and the situation of the remaining Jews in Russia is terrible (mass deaths), the author does not find even a single word of condemnation in his memorandum for the Soviet authorities that deported hundreds of thousands of Jews; instead, he states that the Polish charity action in the USSR did harm to Jewish people, which is absolutely untrue. When he has nothing else to charge Polish institutions with, he writes that 'official Polish decision-makers treated me as a representative of the Jewish Agency fairly, but cold-heartedly.'

⁸ Not included in this publication; as an example of reports from delegates of the Jewish Agency, see doc. 273.

3) In the context of shifting any responsibility away from Soviet authorities and omitting the reasons for which masses of Polish citizens, including Jews, have found themselves in terrible conditions, such generalisations as, e.g. 'lieutenants fulfilled this order (by General Anders) by literally spilling the blood of Jews and tearing parents away from children, brothers from sisters, wives from husbands'—without dates, names or the number of similar incidents—give the impression of deliberate anti-Polish propaganda.

4) The author makes no mention of the fact that the entire aid received by Jewish deportees on a par with other Polish citizens came from the Government Delegation for welfare activities in Tehran and tries to create the impression that this aid was dependent on his intervention.

5) When claiming that 'the antisemitism of refugees has no limits,' the author of the report immediately adds that this is not a good moment for analysing this phenomenon. In the current situation, however, even if certain signs of antisemitism can unfortunately be found among a part of our deportees from the USSR, dealing with this issue in an honest manner requires quoting very significant and profound reasons for this.

I have the honour to suggest sending a copy of the aforementioned report of the Jewish Agency to the Legation of the Republic of Poland and the Government Delegation for Refugees in Tehran with a request for an opinion. Good point. It is necessary to take account of the fact that the report, as well as other similar documents, may be used for anti-Polish propaganda in the local territory, so it would be advisable to send Tehran's reply to the Embassy. During a conversation with the undersigned on 6 January this year, one of the clerks of the Department of State confirmed that the American authorities are informed about the antisemitism of the Polish Army and our refugees in the USSR.

For the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland:

W. Arlet

Counsellor at the Embassy

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136

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*12 January 1943. Letter from the Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Jewish refugees in Africa*

12 January 1943

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: interned Polish citizens in North Africa

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asks the MFA to take steps in the following matter:

In North Africa, in Camp Arcola (Oran), there are 50-60 Jews, Polish citizens, who have not been released so far. According to the press, the North African Government announced the release of all the interned persons.⁹ If this government uses some sort of discrimination against Jews, the Polish Government must not allow such discrimination to be extended onto Polish citizens in any case. It is, therefore, necessary to apply to British and American authorities and to submit the firmest possible protest in this matter through their agency.

At the same time, the Ministry requests that an order is sent by telegraph to Mr Hutten-Czapski for taking immediate care of those interned in the Arcola Camp and giving a detailed report on their number, condition and needs.

According to information received by the Ministry, many Polish participants of the International Brigade¹⁰ staying in internment camps in Camp Djelfa and Camp Sidi-El-Ayachi in North Africa have so far not been released. The Ministry requests that steps be taken in the matter of releasing the interned people and handing them over to the military authorities for the purpose of their conscription into the Polish Army.

Because of the political separation of North Africa from the territory of France, the social welfare action in this area is a separate problem. For many reasons, this action will become more and more extensive and will require a special delegate for the effective implementation of the Ministry's plans. The Ministry requests that

⁹ This is a reference to actions of French authorities established in Algiers after the landing of Allied troops in November 1942.

¹⁰ This is a reference to a volunteer armed formation fighting in the Spanish Civil War against the army of General Francisco Franco.

you make an assessment with regard to the aforementioned project and to submit your opinion.

FOR THE MINISTER
Grosfeld

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 547

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[After 18 January 1943]. Unsigned note from the meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of Allied countries on German crimes in Poland

NOTE FROM A DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING OF MINISTERS
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF ALLIED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE UPON INVITATION FROM MINISTER EDEN
ON 18 JANUARY 1943

The discussion was started by Minister Eden, who provided a range of information about the current military situation (see attachment¹¹). When he finished, Minister Raczyński took the floor. He depicted the situation in Poland, mass deportations in the Lublin region, roundups and arrests in provincial cities, and a huge wave of arrests in Warsaw.

He re-emphasised the need for demonstrating a sharp and decisive allied reaction to the Germans in the form of imposing retaliatory bombings. The bombings of Berlin, which were suspended for such a long time, could be utilised for those purposes. A discussion on this subject developed, during which Minister Raczyński highlighted the Germans' efforts to hide their atrocities from world opinion and, in a sense, even German public opinion. Because of their failures during the war, the Germans must reckon with the world opinion to an increasing extent. The retaliatory bombings will largely contribute to the public exposure of German lawlessness and the decision of the powers to punish them. Minister Eden did not assume a specific obligation in this matter, but he assured that he would submit it *to the cabinet* again.

2. Minister Raczyński then summarised the position of Jews in Poland and listed the measures that should be undertaken for the receipt of Jews who would manage to leave Germany or the German-controlled territory by the allied and neutral states. He referred to the plan of calling on the Germans to release the Jews. However, such a call would require organised international collaboration

¹¹ There is no attachment.

for the receipt of displaced Jews. Minister Eden made a statement that the British Government:

Primo: Stands ready to take care of refugees who arrived in neutral states, particularly Spain, treating all refugees equally.

Secundo: Opts for bringing up the issue of Jewish refugees in the course of international action and has already made some suggestions to the United States but has not received a reply so far.

Tertio: Will be able to admit a certain number of refugees, although not large, in view of supply difficulties and the fact that Great Britain has already admitted 100,000 refugees. In addition, out of the number of people currently staying in Bulgaria, the British Government will permit 5,000 Jewish refugees, mainly children and women, to arrive in Palestine.

Quatro: Aid in kind will have to be sent to Spain, and maybe an opportunity will arise to transport refugees from Spain to the territory of North Africa. This matter is being discussed with the circles concerned.

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.49/141

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*20 January 1943. Note by the Polish Government
to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Great Britain
on the prevention of German crimes in occupied Poland*

20th January, 1943

The Rt. Hon. Anthony Eden, M.C., M.P.,
Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office, S.W.1.¹²

Sir,

On December 10th, 1942, I had the honour to address a Note¹³ on behalf of the Polish Government to Your Excellency and to the Governments of the United Nations describing, on the basis of authenticated reports from Poland, the means

¹² The note was also sent to other allied countries (also with the date of 25 January 1943) and communicated to journalists during the Prime Minister's press conference.

¹³ Doc. 296 (the note was sent to the British Government on 9 December and to governments of other countries on 10 December 1942).

employed by the German authorities of occupation for the mass extermination of Jews on the territories of Poland. In that Note the Polish Government drew the attention of the Governments of the United Nations to the appalling massacres carried out methodically by the Germans of the Jewish population of Poland, and of the many thousands of Jews whom the German authorities have deported to Poland from Western and Central European countries and from the German Reich itself. In the concluding paragraph of the Note, the Polish Government expressed their conviction as to the necessity 'not only of condemning the crimes committed by the German and punishing the criminals, but also of finding the means offering the hope that Germany might be effectively restrained from continuing to apply her methods of mass extermination.'

During the period which has elapsed since the delivery of the above-mentioned Note, the Polish Government have received fresh reports from Poland giving alarming evidence of an intensification of the German methods of violence aiming at the physical and moral destruction of the Polish nation.

1. Evidence in possession of the Polish Government indicates that the German authorities of occupation have set up at various times at least 24 concentration camps on territories of the Republic of Poland, amongst them the following:

Augustów	Bełżec
Ciechanów	Dobrzyń
Dyle in the district of Biłgoraj	Działdowo
Dziesiąta near Lublin	Grudziądz
Kosów Podlaski	Łódź (three separate camps)
Majdanek	Mysłowice
Nasielsk	Oświęcim
Płońsk	Sierpc
Sobibór in the district of Włodawa	Sosnowiec
Tarnów	Treblinka near Sokołów Podlaski (two camps)

In addition there are Poles in German concentration camps to name only such notorious places as Dachau, Buchenwald, Oranienburg, Mauthausen Gusen and Ravensbruck. Altogether there are about 80 camps in Poland and Germany in which Poles are to be found in large numbers.

The most notorious of these camps is that at Oświęcim. Deportation to this camp is tantamount to death by prolonged torture. The camp at Oświęcim, situated 30 miles West of Cracow, is divided into two sections, one for women, the other for men. According to the camp register, the number of women interned amounted on

June 1, 1942, to 8,620. The number of men at the same date was 38,720 of whom 8,170 were Jews, including about 1,100 French Jews and about 5,000 Czechoslovak Jews.

According to information which has reached the Polish Government, there have passed through the register 54,720 men and 8,620 women, or a total of 63,340 people up to June 1, 1942. In addition, 22,500 men and women have passed through the camp without being registered. Of this total of 85,840 men and women, 23,000 were until recently still alive, while 5,000 had been released or transferred to other camps. It must be presumed that up to 58,000 people have perished in the camp at Oświęcim.

The death rate among the internees in this camp is appalling and nearly all of them die a death of torture. Of the 3,000 Catholic priests who are known to have been imprisoned or placed in concentration camps, about 2,000 have been executed or cruelly murdered in the Oświęcim camp.

2. Detailed information has been forthcoming in the course of the last weeks regarding a new wave of mass arrests and public executions in numerous parts of the country. In Szopienice (Silesia) 10 persons have been publicly hanged. In Bodzanow and Mościszew (District of Płock) 40 persons have been put to death in the same way. In the province of Wilno public executions by hanging have been carried out on 14 persons in Ponary, 25 in Jewel and 18 in Jaszuny. In the city of Warsaw, after a warehouse had been set on fire, 70 persons were executed in one street. When a train was derailed near Cracow, 12 Polish road workers were seized and hanged on the spot, and their bodies left on the gallows for three days.

According to an eye-witness account in October last the passengers of a train travelling from Radom to Kielce were having their identity cards examined at the station of Różki—the first station after Radom—when a shot was fired at a gendarme. All the passengers in that carriage were arrested. Fifty of them were hanged, and of these 15, including 6 women, were hanged immediately at Różki.

On October 15th, 10 Poles, including 4 women, were hanged at Radom near the monument opposite the officers' quarters. Amongst the number was Winczewska, the proprietress of a shop in Słowacki Street, and also her daughter-in-law.

On October 17th, 15 workers from a munitions factory at Radom were hanged and were left on the gallows in front of the factory a whole day.

3. Quite recently the Polish Government have received detailed reports of a particularly alarming nature concerning the province of Lublin and the city of Warsaw. The province of Lublin is in the very heart of Poland and is mainly agricultural, possessing some of the most fertile soil in the country. Pursuing their regular practice applied since 1939 in Polish Western provinces, the Germans have chosen the winter, a season of exceptionally severe weather in Poland, to throw

the peasants forcibly out of their homes and drive them from the lands they have tilled for generations.

Since November 28th, 1942, such brutal expulsions have been authentically reported from the districts of Zamość, Lublin, Puławy, Krasnystaw, Hrubieszów, Biłgoraj, Sokołów and Tomaszów, all in the province of Lublin. For instance, all the inhabitants of 54 villages in the district of Zamość alone have been driven out of their homes and deprived of their properties, totalling some 10,000 individual farmsteads which have been confiscated for the benefit of the newly-imported German settlers. All resistance is ruthlessly crushed by mass killings. Thus, for instance, in the village of Kitów, district of Zamość, 170 peasants were murdered. The procedure usually adopted is to separate the adult and juvenile population, which is then herded in temporary barbed-wire enclosures for subsequent distribution. The able-bodied are deported for forced labour, the aged and infirm sent to various concentration camps for destruction. It is known that one such contingent was sent to the dreaded 'camp of death' at Oświęcim. Families are deliberately broken up. Children under the age of six are taken away from their mothers and deported to the Reich to be brought up as Germans. Mothers refusing to give up their children are frequently killed on the spot.

These victims, driven to despair, are defending themselves bitterly. The peasants are setting their homesteads on fire and destroying their cattle before escaping into the open country. Fourteen villages in the Lublin province destined to be taken over by German settlers were set on fire by the villagers. Those amongst the peasants who succeeded in making their escape are joining together and attacking German military objectives. A railway bridge was blown up and several trains derailed, including at least one carrying German settlers. The German military and police are crushing with the utmost brutality these desperate attempts at self-defence thus adding to the number of victims.

4. Whereas the mass expulsions of Poles from the Western provinces have as their aim the germanisation of these purely Polish lands, the driving of the inhabitants from the central province of Lublin is designed to disrupt Polish national unity by forcing German wedges between the different provinces of Poland.

The spontaneous resistance of the Polish population in the Lublin district, which moreover is creating great difficulties for Germany at the rear of her Eastern front, has provoked new reprisals on the part of the German authorities, who have struck at the very heart of our country—at the capital itself.

5. In Warsaw the Germans displayed posters on January 10th, 1943, announcing that 200 Polish patriots have been arrested and will be made to pay the penalty for the assassinations of German soldiers.

They have organised man-hunts in the streets of Warsaw since January 15th. The number of victims is estimated at several thousand a day, but these man-hunts assumed tremendous proportions on Sunday, January 17th. The Gestapo have cordoned off the different districts of the town and are taking people off from the streets and from their homes. Some are taken to the Pawiak prison in Warsaw, others to an unknown destination. According to the report received from Poland on January 19th, over 2,000 persons were taken from this prison eastwards in sealed wagons. Their fate is unknown.

From hour to hour increasingly harrowing reports on these acts of atrocity are reaching the Polish authorities in London directly from Poland. Obviously it is not possible to quote all, and many, possibly of even greater gravity, will have been received since this Note was drafted.

6. The National Council of the Republic of Poland at their meeting held in London on January 7th, 1943, passed a resolution expressing their conviction that 'only by extraordinary emergency measures will the Allied Governments be able to check the systematic extermination of the populations of the occupied countries of Europe.'

The full text of this resolution is given in an annex¹⁴.

7. While voicing the unanimous will of a country implacably resisting the invader, the Polish Government appeal to the Governments of the United Nations to take urgent counsel together in order to devise practical and effective means of restraining Germany who, if not checked in time, will not only inflict irreparable losses in Poland but also in the other countries occupied by her and may bring about so much destruction of the human resources and cultural life of Europe that the task of their restoration may prove insurmountable.

I have the honour to be, Sir, with the highest consideration,

Your obedient Servant,
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 51 (ENG)

¹⁴ Doc. 312.

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*23 January 1943. Report by the Ambassador to the Holy See
from the conversation with Pope Pius XII*

Vatican, 23 January 1943

TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Following the information transmitted by other means, I report the following:

As soon as I received your instructions by telegraph and the content of the message by the President of the Republic of Poland, I asked for an audience with the Holy Father. I was given a relatively early date and on 21 January, at 11 a.m., I was received.

After a few preliminary sentences I explained the reason for my visit. I gave a brief overview of recent incidents in Poland and asked for permission to read the message from the President.¹⁵

When I had finished, the Pope, initially smiling and gracious, said to me with signs of visible annoyance: 'Firstly, I wonder if the President has read my Christmas statement. I am astonished, even saddened. Yes, saddened. Not a single word of acknowledgement, of recognition, I mean *di riconoscimento*—*Anerkennung*—and yet I have said everything, everything. I was clear and concise.'

Here, the Pope began to quote the various paragraphs of his Christmas speech, highlighting his condemnation of the persecution of nationalities and races, the executions, deportations and robbery. He quoted entire paragraphs from memory. 'In addition,' said the Pope, 'I wrote a letter to metropolitan Bishop Sapieha (it was in reference to the letter from 28 August 1942), which was actually intended for the entire Polish clergy. This letter clearly shows my concern for Poland. The metropolitan Bishop thanked me some time ago in a special letter, but at the same time, he explained that he could not promulgate my letter. Because this could obviously result in further persecution of the Church and of the faithful. And the metropolitan Bishop does not ask for any further enunciations. After all, a man of such values and advantages as the metropolitan Bishop Sapieha—who, moreover, is present on the site of events—is a reliable person, is he not? Other bishops think the same.'

I answered by providing the Holy Father with gratitude on behalf of the Polish President and the Government, both for the last Christmas message and for all that the Holy Father did for Poland. Our gratitude is evidenced by the long series of acknowledgements which can be found in the archives of the Secretariat of State,

¹⁵ Doc. 308.

and which I submitted myself to the Cardinal Secretary of State, and often also to the Holy Father in person. My communication with London is so irregular that I can never predict in which chronological order the Government's instructions will come. However, it is clear from echoes such as, for example, the London radio broadcasts, with how much gratitude the Holy Father's last message was received.

In Poland new facts took place and are constantly taking place, the dreadfulness of which cannot be compared to anything that history knows so far. I am therefore not surprised that the President wanted to share them with the Holy Father and draw his attention to them. The Christmas message, which is a wonderful document, contains general, generic, anonymous condemnations. The Holy Father speaks in a way that we understand and admire, but will the wide masses, the minds of whom we are now fighting for, understand him, especially in the translations that I have seen? Because the Polish translation is bad, and I have heard the same about the Portuguese one, for example. Is it possible in Poland to issue comments on the message at all? Of course not, because the occupying powers will not allow this.

As for our Bishops, they are not free—but if they were here, at this particular moment, they would say the same as I do. They would ask, just like me, for a word of support and consolation for the Polish people, because this is at least how we can help them in their struggle, in their work. The best proof for that is Bishop Radoński's appeal, which I, very moved, heard on the radio a few days ago.

The Pope interrupted me by saying that emigrants can speak unpunished, but in the country, people suffer and are held accountable for everything. The Germans are only waiting for a reason to begin further persecution.

I replied that the Germans did not need any reasons. Their terror is systematic; it is a premeditated method of governing. The Gestapo creates pretexts on their own. The voices asking for the intercession, for the word from the Holy Father supporting Poland, come from the country, from the best of our clergy. The Polish nation rejects the idea of 'the need to avoid pretexts.' I am afraid that the Holy Father does not realise this feature of the spirit of our nation.

Pope: 'But you do not want to understand my most valid arguments! How should I talk with you? And besides, Poland is not the only one to suffer in Europe. There are other nations in Europe that suffer terribly.'

I replied that indeed, the Italians, for some time, have been doing in Yugoslavia the same thing as the Germans do in Poland.

Pope: 'And anyway, I used to speak about Poland and I am constantly doing it'

I replied that, as far as I can recall, the last time when the Holy Father spoke clearly about Poland was two and a half years ago.^x

^x I meant the moment Italy had entered the war.

Pope: 'But you need to understand and take into account my difficult situation.'

I then began to talk once again about the horrific situation in Poland, about the German attempt to exterminate the entire nation, about the appalling facts that led the President to issue an appeal. I pointed to the historic significance of the moment, the importance of my present audience, the meaning of each word of the Pope directed to Poland for the future arrangement of relations between the Holy See and my country. I have unambiguously raised the problem of the responsibility that personally lies with the Pope in relation to the future. Every word now spoken by the Holy Father will be analysed and commented on as historic.

These words made a visible impression on the Pope. He seemed to be reconsidering. He reached the message of the President and said: 'All right—I will think about it, I will see if we can still do something more.'

I then kneeled and asked the Holy Father to be so kind and to say a word which 'could be enshrined in the history of my country.'

Pope: 'Yes, of course, I will think about it.'

Wholeheartedly and with simple kindness, the Holy Father then gave me a personal blessing, and then added an apostolic blessing for the President of the Republic of Poland, the Polish Government and the entire Polish nation.

The audience lasted 40 minutes.

* * *

When I left, I was certain that Pius XII was sincerely and deeply convinced that everything that could be said in the defence of our country had already been expressed by him clearly and explicitly, and that Poles really required him to do something impossible. This is where the greatest difficulty of understanding lies. The personal holiness of Pius XII is only making it more difficult.

Moreover, the political situation of the Holy See is currently far from enviable.¹⁶

/-/ K. Pappée
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
to the Vatican

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/64 (previously published)

¹⁶ In the report of the following day, the Ambassador to the Holy See provided additional information: 'The second day after my audience with the Holy Father, there was a regular Friday's audience with the Cardinal, Secretary of State for the Heads of Mission accredited to the Vatican. So, I went to see Cardinal Maglione, to whom, on the previous day, simultaneously to the audience with the Holy Father, I gave a copy of the French

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27 January 1943. Letter from the Head of the Refugee Section at the MFA to the Embassy in London: information from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare on the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Portugal to Jamaica

London, 27 January 1943

Urgent

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in London
 to the hands of Counsellor A. Baliński

Referring to the letter from the Embassy dated 16 December 1942 No. 792/250, the Ministry quotes below the text of the letter from the Minister of Labour and

translation of the President's message. ... The Cardinal thanked me for informing him, and then immediately began to speak about this year's Christmas speech by the Holy Father; this time the Pope said all he could say; in his personal opinion, the Christmas speech was even too strong in some paragraphs, so he felt in his duty to mention that when speaking with the Holy Father. However, the Pope maintained the original phrasing of the speech. The Pope's radio message was well understood everywhere, which can be well proved by the letter that the Cardinal received this morning from the Metropolitan Bishop Sapieha. In this letter, the Metropolitan Bishop thanked the Holy Father for his speech, saying that it was properly understood in Poland and made a huge impression. And, after all, Metropolitan Bishop Sapieha is probably the most reliable witness. The Pope cannot mention individual countries explicitly in his speeches. In general, however, he expressed everything that had to be expressed, "and I think—the Cardinal concluded, with reference to me—that you really insist too much." I replied that the President had provided the Holy Father with new facts which took place recently in Poland and which do not have precedents in history; I am convinced that the Holy Father will not want to miss any opportunity "to try to stop the fury of the Germans or, at least, of some Germans," as we cannot forget that among the Germans there are also Catholics. I understand well that the victorious Germany would not consider the Holy Father's voice, but the current Germany is already beginning to realise that the moment of their defeat is approaching. Many people in the most outstanding positions have most probably realised that the disaster is inevitable. Such Germans could perhaps consider the words of the Head of the Church; all the more so I can see the moment when they will come to the Vatican on their knees to beg the Pope for help and rescue. ... Each of us remained officially at his position. And it could not be otherwise, as Cardinal Maglione—always defending the Holy Father's position with the zeal of a faithful servant—is sometimes more catholic than the Pope himself. However, this does not mean that the appeal of our President passed unnoticed. The Vatican is such a delicate instrument and has such a variety of possibilities that the shock that this appeal undoubtedly made in the Holy See will manifest itself outside in the future, one way or another. Papięski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykań, 2/64.

Social Welfare dated 16 January 1943 and requests that you hold negotiations with the Foreign Office in order to obtain an approval for the admission of a further number of 200 Jewish refugees in Jamaica. According to information received by the MFA, the Governor of Jamaica is already in London, and his presence here will make it easier to obtain the decision of British authorities within a short period of time.

‘In reply to the letter No. 738/Ż/43 from 8 January 1943 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare notifies that information obtained from the Foreign Office about the living conditions of Jewish refugees, citizens of Poland, in the camp in Jamaica has been forwarded to Messrs Dr Schwarzbart and Zygielbojm.

In Portugal there are currently around 145 persons without any visas, who should be evacuated as fast as possible, particularly as some of them arrived in Portugal illegally. The illegal stay of these people cannot stretch over an unlimited amount of time. The Ministry thinks that a matter of paramount importance, both in the interest of these refugees and in the general interest, is to ensure the evacuation of Polish citizens who arrived in Portugal illegally in the near future. The Ministry knows that the Governor of Jamaica is to arrive in London in the nearest future. It would be advisable to get in touch with him directly and obtain his consent to further quotas of visas.

If the Ministry of Foreign Affairs manages to obtain a larger quota of visas (around 200), the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare suggests that they should also cover at least some Jewish refugees currently staying in Caldas da Rainha.’

FOR OF THE MINISTER
J. Marlewski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545

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*29 January 1943. Note by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy
for France on the situation in North Africa*

London, 29 January 1943

Confidential

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

Relations with North African Authorities

Due to the fact that negotiations in establishing a joint French authority in the form of a temporary government do not seem likely to succeed within a short time, and taking into account the conclusions reached by Delegate Czapski—who stressed a couple of times the advisability of giving more formal character to the Polish representation towards authorities in North Africa (French and Allied authorities)—it would be desirable to take the following actions:

1) To appoint Mr E. Czapski Consul General in Algiers ~~as head~~ *entrusting him with contacts* of all Consulates in the territory of French North and West Africa.

2) To accredit Mr Czapski as delegate for matters within his consular competence at the high command of allied occupying forces.

3) To notify the above to the French High Commissioner in Algiers via the representative of the American Government at the High Command (Minister Murphy).

Decisions in the aforementioned matters seem to be quite urgent because in North Africa there is a number of issues concerning Polish interests, e.g. the matter of the release of Polish citizens from the Foreign Legion, the matter of release of Jewish citizens of Poland¹⁷ from camps—which is a very sensitive issue in the context of antisemitism prevailing here and due to the fact that anti-Jewish laws

¹⁷ In the letter from 27 January 1943 to the MFA, Ludwik Grosfeld informed: "The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare ..., in connection with the message about approx. 300 Jewish citizens of Poland staying as refugees in Morocco ... requests that Algiers be notified by cable as follows: "Hutten-Czapski.—The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that you take care of Jewish citizens of Poland staying as refugees in the territory of Morocco stop In the course of Jewish refugees being released from camps, the Ministry requests you to send a list of names of released persons and a thorough report stop—Stańczyk." As far as the issue of appointment of a delegate for social welfare for North Africa is concerned, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests you to inform what official function is fulfilled by Mr Hutten-Czapski, because the Ministry is willing to appoint him its delegate.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 547.

have not been revoked in North African territory so far—as well as the matter of gold and a number of [other] mounting current matters.

A broader development of political representation does not seem advisable for the time being.

If you approve the submitted proposal, I will immediately elaborate the main points of instructions for Delegate Czapski.

Chargé d'Affaires
F. Frankowski
Minister Plenipotentiary¹⁸

Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Paryż, 6

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*30 January 1943. Note by the Envoy in Mexico City
on the evacuation of refugees*

PRO MEMORIA

On 29 January 1943, in the presence of the counsellor Wiesiołowski, I talked about refugees to Mr Ernesto Hidalgo, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr Hidalgo stated as follows:

1. It would be desirable, in the interest of refugees and the Treasury of the Polish State, for transports of refugees not to arrive as envisaged in San Francisco, but directly at one of Mexican ports in the Pacific.¹⁹ In this way, it would be possible to save on costs of transport from San Francisco to Mexico and costs of necessary stay in the United States, and to arrange all entry formalities more easily.

¹⁸ In 1943, Feliks Frankowski, as Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy for France, was temporarily appointed Representative of the Republic of Poland at the Free French Forces.

¹⁹ In the cable of 4 January 1943 sent during his visit to Mexico and addressed to President Raczkiewicz, Prime Minister Sikorski stated that it is his 'honour to inform' that he had exchanged 'notes with the Mexican Government on behalf of the Polish Government, gaining a formal consent to the admittance until the end of the war and repatriation of 20,000 Polish refugees' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 257.

2. It is necessary to notify the departure of transports from Asia and the expected date of their arrival in Mexico in as good advance as possible to give Mexican authorities enough time for relevant preparations.

3. If, as previously envisaged, transports consist of not more than 500-600 people, one assembly point will be created: if, as currently, transports consist of a few thousand people, a few assembly points will be created.

4. The refugees will receive medical care from the Department of Health; such service, however, can be provided also by any doctors who may happen to be among the refugees. By the nature of things, Polish doctors should cooperate closely with designated Mexican doctors.

5. There will probably be no obstacles to the admission of refugees from Lisbon reported to the Legation (approx. 150 persons, only Jews).²⁰ Mr Hidalgo undertakes to take all steps in this regard and requests that a note be officially addressed in this matter to Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores. As far as Mr Hidalgo knows, there is fairly regular communication by sea between Lisbon and Veracruz.

6. Mr Hidalgo departs his post at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15 February 1943, but he promised to keep track of the matter of Polish refugees. Since Mr Hidalgo will probably become the governor of one of the States, he may continue to be in touch with this matter.²¹

México, D.F., 30 January 1943

/-/ *M. Marchlewski*

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 171

²⁰ The Envoy in Mexico City, Władysław Neuman, reported in a cable of 12 May 1943: 'The Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs asked me not to bring up the matter of Polish Jews from Portugal until the arrival of the first group of refugees from Persia. Opportunistic factors play a role here. The local government is concerned about difficulties that may arise if the first group consists only of Jews, who—as the Prime Minister knows—do not have a good reputation here.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

²¹ In the letter from 26 May 1943, the Embassy in Washington informed Envoy Neuman: 'I wish to bring up informally the matter that may cause us much trouble in the future. Namely, we can expect that, upon arrival of the transport, some persons may want to stay in the United States or to get to the United States at the earliest opportunity. The attitude of the American authorities is definitely negative and, therefore, it would be necessary to warn persons expressing such requests in advance that this would not be possible to carry out. Doing such a favour to us in carrying out the evacuation plan, the American authorities will not approve the treatment of the asylum in Mexico as a stage in getting to the United States by refugees or individual persons. Granting further transport opportunities to us will depend on the successful placement of the first group of refugees and on refugees' behaviour.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Waszyngton, 84.

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[January 1943]. Report by Jan Karski
on the situation in occupied Poland (extracts)

Karski's Report

...²²

It is necessary to divide society into two parts: the politicised society participating in the underground movement and the large strata of non-politicised society.

As far as the non-politicised society is concerned, we can indeed observe a remarkable change in its attitude to Jews. Everything the Germans did to the Jewish population in the second half of 1942 was so horrible and, despite the entire previous bestiality of Germans, the society was *so* unprepared for such horrible murders that the only feeling prevailing above all others was indignation and *horror*. It is true and it is ascertained undoubtedly by the Jewish population itself that it often happens that unknown hands *often* throw loaves of bread, vegetables, etc., over the ghetto walls. The Polish police that had watched over the ghetto until August of the last year were entirely removed because they could not bear the atmosphere in the Warsaw Ghetto and helped the Jewish population, while individual policemen, *often* losing their minds completely, abandoned their service.

Here we cannot speak of the attitude of the broad strata of society to the Jewish matter, and there is no ongoing discussion about that; it would not be a good time for such discussion, indeed. The society has a human attitude, treating Jews as people being murdered in hundreds of thousands. This human attitude is marked primarily by compassion for the fate of the Jews and indignation at everything that the invader does to the Jewish population.

Of course, the attitude of the politicised part of society is slightly different. ~~Naturally~~ It would be risky to say that extreme nationalist circles or the National Party have essentially changed their attitude to the Jewish matter, but, nevertheless, what goes on in the General Government clearly has an impact on the attitude of these circles.

First of all, with few exceptions (Falanga,²³ etc.), little is *currently* said and written about the Jewish matter *in these circles*. In the current atmosphere, such

²² A separate sheet with a handwritten annotation was attached to the report: 'A Secret Report for General W. Sikorski, dictated in January 1943 during his trip to the USA, Canada and Mexico; dictated to Mrs Walentyna Pacewicz and submitted to Mr Kułakowski.' Extracts not concerning Jewish issues were omitted.

²³ Falanga was an illegal Polish political and militant organisation founded as a result of a split within the National Radical Camp in 1935, engaged in acts of terrorism as well as proclaiming antisemitic and nationalist slogans.

discussions would rather make a bad impression on readers. If these matters are ever mentioned, they are called the Calvary of the Jewish nation. Thus, with the exception of the *Szaniec* group, the Confederation of the Nation and Pobudka,²⁴ all national, Catholic and Catholic-national centres, expressed in editorials of their press, the most intense indignation, condemnation and protest against everything that the Germans had done to the Jewish population. In the first place, it is necessary to quote an editorial in one of the issues of 'Walka' (the official body of the national party) and a specially issued brochure distributed in dozens of thousands of copies by the Front for the Rebirth of Poland—an organisation of fighting Orthodox Catholicism.

In the atmosphere of this kind in the General Government, expressing opinions in the press, during discussions or at organisational conferences, such as 'the Jews have got what they deserved,' 'The Jewish question will be solved at last,' or 'I am an antisemite' would be regarded as a sign of utter savagery, as a distasteful opinion, not as a topic for discussion.

Naturally, we cannot conclude from all of this that the society has changed its attitude towards Jews in general or to the Jewish matter as such. Such a conclusion would be too far-reaching. The society reacts only in a human manner to ~~unprecedented~~ unspeakable sufferings, never encountered in the history of humankind so far and incomparable to anything else that the Jewish population experienced in the General Government from the moment of Himmler's visit to Warsaw (July 1942).

Help is provided to the Jews as much as possible. We make it easier for them to obtain counterfeit papers, find shelter for them in villages, estates, foresters' houses and lodges, etc. Naturally, it is not necessary to attach great importance to this help. This is because It is given either to those Jews who were not regarded as Jews at all and did not regard *themselves* as Jews in normal conditions, or to outstanding experts, intellectuals, or the Jewish plutocracy. This help is not big in figures. We must remember that the Jews are in such a poor situation that their personal appearance gives them away. Upon meeting a Jew who is outlawed or is not staying within the territory assigned to him, they invariably kill him, often in anguish, and always punish all those who hide him, helped him to escape or know that this Jew has become outlawed. Because of their appearance, the Jews find it impossible to escape death, indeed.

There are many Jews in the underground movement, particularly in socialist and democratic centres and even in the military. The society knows about this and does not react negatively to this.

²⁴ The Szaniec Group, the National Confederation and the Pobudka Group were Polish underground organisations that functioned in occupied Poland during the war, formed by politicians and activists rooted mainly in national (nationalist) circles.

...

In the Eastern territories, diversionary Soviet bands are 'active.' They generally consist of prisoners-of-war—Soviet escapees and small numbers of Jews and Poles who have joined the partisan gangs. Partisan divisions are always commanded by officers—parachutists sent by air from Moscow. As can be seen from this, the Soviet command does not trust any Soviet officer who was taken prisoner, even if he escaped from this captivity, and never appoints them commanders.

Hoover Institution, Jan Karski Papers, 9 (previously published)

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*[January 1943]. Study by the Ministry of Congress Work
on Polish-Jewish relations and the situation in occupied Poland (extracts)*

The Jewish matter in Poland against the international background

...²⁵

7. The state of the Jewish matter in 1939

As part of the overall Polish nationality policy, the Jewish matter created a number of serious difficulties for the Polish Government. As a question of the social coexistence between the minority and the majority, the Jewish matter was not so much a question of a government policy but a question of good will concerning both societies. The constitutional rights of the Jews have not been violated by any government. The constitution guaranteed the Jewish minority political equality and free cultural and national development. None of these policies were violated in the twenty years of the reborn Republic of Poland.

In primary schools—public and private schools—approx. 73,000 children were taught in Hebrew and Yiddish and 57,000 in Polish and Yiddish or Hebrew, and Hebrew and Jewish secondary schools were attended by 4,500 Jews, whereas approx. 9,000 attended secondary schools with Polish, Yiddish or Hebrew language. As an urban population, the Jews naturally had easier access to secondary schools and schools of higher education than the non-Jewish rural populations. This fact resulted in a high percentage of Jewish students at some schools of higher education and became the reason for the use of an actual numerus clausus—which, as an order, may have been inconsistent with the liberal principles of the 19th century,

²⁵ The historical part, dating back to the Middle Ages, and some statistical tables in the final part of the document were omitted.

but it was entirely defensible within the framework of a more planned system of social state policy of the 20th-century. It is, however, obvious that the ghetto rule was a sign of the discriminatory attitude of universities at which those incidents took place.

Admittedly, Jews attacked some Polish legislative acts as being against Jewish interests, particularly the regulations concerning Sunday rest (1921) and orders concerning ritual slaughter and reorganisation of the meat market (1936 and 1938). Actually, however, these were orders of a general nature. In fact, no legal provisions violating the constitutional principle of equality of Jews were issued. On the other hand, the discriminatory legislation dating back to the times of the partitioning period was gradually abolished (the last decision was lifted in 1931).

The Polish Government was often accused by the Jews of maintaining actual discrimination against them by administrative practice, not allowing them to enter state and local administration, the army, etc. However, it must be stated objectively that the social and cultural structure of the Jewish minority, on the one hand, and the urging need to defuse overpopulation among the non-Jewish population, on the other hand, necessarily caused symptoms which, in the eyes of the Jews, constituted their discrimination. Moreover, these signs were of secondary importance towards the economic aspect of the Jewish matter.

Another claim made by the Jewish side was that the economic policy of the Polish Government was against the economic interests of Jewish masses. In fact, nevertheless, the Jewish economic problem was only a part of the overall economic issues of the state. Jewish poverty existed, but it was smaller than the poverty of villages—and the Jewish overpopulation in cities paled in comparison to the much bigger problem of overpopulation in rural areas.

Within the framework of the Polish economic system and the funds at the disposal of Polish Government, the issue of the reconstruction of the economic structure of the Republic of Poland was not resolved. As has been mentioned above, international conditions have considerably aggravated the situation. Attempts by the Polish Government to raise a few issues of great importance for Poland on the basis of international collaboration within the League of Nations and the International Labour Office (raw products, emigration) have completely failed. More concrete attempts to find an emigration outlet for Jews—either in Palestine or in colonial areas (Madagascar)—were unsuccessful as well.

Because emigration has turned into 'emigrationism' and, thereby, transformed from an economic process into a political theory put forward both by the Government and by antisemitic parties—even though this postulate was consistent with Jewish economic traditions—it was opposed primarily by the Jewish society. Because of this attitude, all emigrationist efforts on the international level were doomed to failure in advance—apart from the strong reluctance of Western powers to have a hand in this economically and politically uncomfortable matter.

Under these conditions, the last Polish Government pursued a policy of inhibiting the excesses on the one hand and tolerating the economic antisemitism of society on the other. Moreover, by supporting to some extent the action of preparing a professional Polish commercial and artisanal element, the Government, however, it did not interfere in any way with the productive activity of Jews, systematically carried out by various Jewish organisations. Such actions were even subsidized by the Government.

The powerlessness of the Polish Government was undoubtedly conditioned by the lack of concrete possibilities for the economic solution of the Jewish matter, since it was necessary to solve the much bigger issue of overpopulation in rural areas beforehand; an increase in antisemitic currents, particularly among young people; bitterness among the Jewish masses, who feared that their biggest European centre, unaffected by the German model of antisemitism until then, would become subject to a truly discriminatory action—this is the picture of the situation in the spring of 1939.

In the spring of 1939, the danger from the Germans, quickly eliminated the blade of Polish-Jewish antagonisms. However, *Treuga Dei*, which united Poles and Jews against the common enemy and common danger, lasted only a few months: it was replaced with German antisemitism in the autumn of 1939.

8. German antisemitism

Antisemitism as such is not a product of Christianity or a relic of the medieval social system. Antisemitism dates back as early as the diaspora—it is a result of the voluntary cultural isolation of the Jews. It is the price that the Jews paid for their faith that they are the chosen people. Thus, signs of antisemitism took place both in the Hellenistic and Roman Empire periods and even during the reign of Islam, which was tolerant towards Jews.

However, it would be misleading to say that the isolation of Jews in itself led to their persecution. On the contrary, isolation rather protected them. On the other hand, the inevitable interference of Jews in the life of those around them caused a hostile reaction. The presence of Jews—from which it was concluded that they were hostile people—imposed itself on various occasions: either in the case of refusal to acknowledge the religious and social order (refusal to make offerings to Gods) or during the acquisition of proselytes (which took place, for example, in Rome). Finally, the specific economic structure of the Jews, so similar to the current one (already Cicero was concerned about the outflow of gold from Rome to the Jerusalem temple), brought about signs of antisemitism.

Medieval antisemitism had essentially the same sources. Religious and social antisemitism was sustained by the Catholic Church (however, the Holy See protected Jews against physical extermination); economic antisemitism had its source in the bourgeoisie.

As early as the medieval period, antisemitism occurred most strongly in Germany. It was there during the crusades and great epidemics (e.g. the Black Death) that the bloodiest antisemitic excesses and large-scale expulsions of Jews took place, resulting in the influx of Jews to Poland and Eastern Europe. It is interesting to note that the Jews expelled from the country of their centuries-long stay retained the German language acquired there and a sort of cult for the culture that persecuted them the most.

Reformation changed little in the Germans' attitude towards Jews. Luther, who initially showed sympathy for Jews when expecting to gain them for Protestantism, became a bitter enemy of the Jews when his hopes were let down. It is characteristic that while Anglo-Saxon Protestantism led to tolerance towards Jews, German Protestantism retained antisemitic traits.

The emancipation of Jews in Germany, initiated by Moses Mendelssohn and concluded with the acquisition of fully equal rights by them in 1871, led to such cultural and national assimilation of Jews that Paul Goodman, the author of 'History of the Jews'—a book popular in England—stated that the German Jews had been 'much more Teutons than Hebrews' almost until the end. During that period, Germany became the cultural centre of European Jews in general.

This complete assimilation with German culture did not protect Jews from new antisemitism, which, as in the case of contemporary German nationalism, grew in the Prussian army, on the one hand, and at German universities, from where it gradually penetrated into the German middle and petty bourgeoisie, on the other. From the antisemitism of the philosopher Fichte, through Professor Rühs, who disseminated the idea that Jews should be deprived of citizenship, through the pastor of the Prussian court Stoecker—the founder of the 'German National Socialist Workers' Party'—then through Richard Wagner and Houston Stewart Chamberlain to the Nuremberg Laws, there is one and the same leading idea of a fight between the German spirit and the Jewish spirit being alien to it. The result of this hundred years long action was contemporary German antisemitism justified by historical, sociological, anthropological, ethical and economic arguments.

Antisemitic trends and literature existed also in other countries, even in democratic France. Brutal antisemitic excesses were bigger in Russia than in any other country of the world until 1919. However, the first state in which antisemitism assumed a form of biological extermination of a part of its own citizenry on the basis of legislation and actions of the government was Germany.

The extermination of Jews was carried out gradually. The year 1933 brought not only the elimination of Jews from state and local government offices, but from some liberal professions and from agriculture, as well as a numerus clausus in education.

The year 1935 brought the so-called Nuremberg Laws, which proclaimed the protection of the German blood and deprived Jews of German citizenship.

In 1938 (after the annexation of Austria), Jewish Communities ceased to be public law institutions, Jewish property was registered, a special tax of 1 billion German marks was imposed on Jews and, finally, the first decisions were issued for the purpose of seizing Jewish property and using it in the interest of German economic needs. In the same year, the Jews were excluded from several branches of economic life. They were not allowed to practice the medical and legal professions. Numerus nullus was introduced in schools. The same year brought the first ghetto orders, under which Jews were not allowed to stay in certain districts, streets, etc. Also in 1938, the first large-scale expulsions took place: Polish Jews were expatriated to Poland, usually across the 'green' border.

In 1939, the Germans introduced compulsory work (not to be confused with Arbeitsdienst) for Jews and ordered the confiscation of all Jewish valuables.

As the influence of Germany and Nazi ideology started encompassing non-German countries, a system of statutory discrimination and economic extermination of the Jews was used in these countries, too. The first country to do this was Romania, by issuing a decree on the revision of citizenship in January 1938. The Hungarian restrictive legislation started in June 1938 (numerus clausus in professions). In September 1938, anti-Jewish laws were introduced in Italy, which had been resistant to racist theories until then.

The anti-Jewish action was used much more radically in Austria after its annexation, where the legal discrimination of Jews went hand in hand with the terrorist action of the Nazi organisation (excesses took place in Romania, too). In the Czech protectorate and in Slovakia, discriminatory provisions were introduced more gradually. In Danzig, the first legislative discriminatory act dates back to November 1938 (the protection of German blood and honour).

However, German antisemitism could fully express itself only in the course of the current war, and Polish territories became the main theatre of the 'Jewish war.' The biological and economic extermination of the Polish nation was accompanied by the even more intense extermination of Jews.

The liquidation of Jews in Poland encompasses essentially not only Polish Jews, but also approx. 300,000 Jews resettled to Poland from Germany, Bohemia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Netherlands. Assuming that approx. 300,000 were deported by Soviet authorities and estimating the number of Jews in Poland on 1 September 1939 at 3.4 million, we come up with the same number of 3.4 million as the probable number of Jews subjected to German methods of solving the Jewish questions.

Because of the lack of space and the fragmentary nature of materials possessed by Polish and Jewish circles, only a very general analysis of the means and individual stages of this action is possible. The liquidation of Jews started the fastest in the incorporated territories where the number of Jews—with the

exception of that in Łódź—was insignificant. The second geographic stage was the General Government, and the third stage was Eastern Lesser Poland, Lithuania and other eastern provinces.

Substantively, the German action consists of three stages: 1) isolation and expropriation, 2) displacement, 3) physical extermination.

In the incorporated territories, the extermination of Jews took place under the legal assimilation of these territories within the Reich and on the basis of certain special orders encompassing primarily the Wartheland. Here, the only big ghetto in the incorporated territories was established in Łódź. At the end of 1941, when a significant portion of the Jews had already been displaced from the incorporated territories, this ghetto encompassed approx. 150,000 heads.

In the General Government, special legal provisions for Jews came into force at the end of October 1939. The ban on ritual slaughter, compulsory work, the requirement of wearing a special badge and the requirement of creating special Jewish councils responsible for the implementation of orders from the German authorities were successively introduced. The further stage was the registration of Jewish property and the restriction of the freedom of movement for Jews. Subsequent orders constitute basically the extension and tightening of restrictive rules specified in the first orders.

Initially, the creation of a special Jewish reserve was planned in the Lublin district. In fact, a group of Jews, also from abroad, were resettled to the Lublin district. However, the plan of the concentration of all Jews in the Lublin district was never carried out. As the Germans extended their war occupation in the East, the idea of resettling Jews farther to the East was promoted.

However, new orders were issued on 28 October and 10 November 1942 suggesting that the intention of the German authorities was to leave most of the Jews within the borders of the General Government for the time being. According to the journal *Ostland*, the placement of Jews is to be solved as follows: The Jews are to be concentrated in 13 ghettos and in 42 towns, where they are to be the only inhabitants. Jewish ghettos are to be established in the following cities and towns:

Warsaw, Cracow, Lwów, Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Złoczów, Rawa Ruska, Brzeżany, Czortków, Stryj, Drohobycz, Sambor, Borysław.

The following towns should be purely Jewish:

a) in the Warsaw district—Kałuszyn, Sobolew, Kossów, Rembertów, Siedlce—5 towns in total;

b) in the Lublin district—Łuków, Parczew, Międzyrzec, Włodawa, Końskowola, Piaski, Zaklików, Izbica—8 towns in total;

c) in the Cracow district—Przemyśl, Rzeszów, Tarnów, Bochnia—4 towns in total;

d) in the Radom district—Sandomierz, Szydłowiec, Radomsko, Ujazd—4 towns in total;

e) in the Galicia district—Bóbrka, Jaryczów, Nowy Gródek, Rudki, Jaworów, Przemyślany, Brody, Lubaczów, Busko, Sokal, Bukaczowce, Podhajce, Rohatyn, Skałat, Trembowla, Zborów, Zbaraż, Buczac, Borszczów, Kopyczyńce, Tłuste—altogether 21 towns.

The resettlement of Jews into the aforementioned ghettos and locations was to be completed by 30 November 1942.

The following moments are noticeable in particular orders:

a) the Jews are to be concentrated mainly in towns situated east of the Vistula—in particular a whole complex of Jewish centres in Eastern Lesser Poland is planned;

b) there is no data about the number of Jews to be settled in particular urban centres. The Ostland journal only states that more than 2 million Jews stayed in the General Government at the time of the introduction of new legal provisions in the General Government.

The proper meaning of these resettlement orders comes to light only if we confront these regulations with the methods of resettlement which began at the beginning of 1942 and reached their culmination in the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, which started at the end of July 1942. Then, it turns out that these resettlements are somehow aimed at obscuring the real goal: the physical extermination of a large part of the Jewish population. The fact is that the Jewish population in a number of towns decreased by a few dozen per cent. It is also a fact that only a small part of the forcibly displaced population has been found; 4,000 people are on forced labour in Eastern territories. It is also a fact that not only mass casualties occurred during the transport of displaced persons, but also there are special places of torture in which these persons are systematically murdered.

The extent of this action cannot be specified in numbers as we have only fragmentary data. The list below illustrates the Jewish population of some Polish towns in 1931, at the end of 1940 (the concentration period) and at the end of August 1942 (the liquidation period):

	1931	1940	1942
	Central Statistical Office	German source	Jewish source
in thousands			
Warsaw	350.3	480	150
Lwów	99.6	120	20
Wilno	55.0	20	12
Lublin	38.9	47	4

According to Jewish calculations, the extermination action reduced the number of Jews in Poland, after deducting approx. 500,000 Jews deported to Russia, to 1.5 million. (Report sent by a member of the National Council S. Zygielbojm²⁶). According to more cautious calculations, based on non-Jewish domestic reports, at least 700,000 Jews had died by the end of September 1942. If we take into account German sources that estimated the number of Jews in the General Government at over 2 million, we will get the following result: estimating the number of Jews in Polish territories not belonging to the General Government at 0.5 million (Łódź, Wilno region, Belarus, Volhynia), and deducting from the number of 3.4 million Jews (the number of Jews in 1939) approx. 300,000 Jews staying in Russia while adding approx. 300,000 Jews resettled to Poland from the West, we get the figure of approx. 1 million as the probable number of Jewish losses at the end of October 1942. Since it does not seem to change the system, but rather to tighten it, it should be assumed that the process of the extermination of the Jewish population by means of the method of resettlement may still destroy about half a million people. In this way, instead of 3.4 million, approx. 1.6 million Jews may remain in Polish territories.

This number may comprise a large number of non-Polish citizens whose stay in Poland can be regarded as temporary. On the other hand, there may be at least the same number of Polish Jews who will want to return to Poland from Soviet Russia.

To illustrate the German anti-Jewish action in Poland, it is also necessary to include the number of Jews who were deported or died in other German-occupied countries. According to Jewish information published by Poale Zion in London, the US State Department found the following Jewish losses as of 2 December 1942 to be reliable:

	Jewish population in 1935	Losses until 2 Dec. 1942
	in thousands	
Poland	3,400	600
Romania	830	620
Germany and Austria	690	220
Czechoslovakia	360	135
Netherlands	112	120
France	200	35
Latvia	100	25
Yugoslavia	68	96
Bulgaria	50	8.5
Total	5,810	1,859.5

²⁶ This is a reference to the list of Bund politicians (doc. 181) made available to the press on 25 June 1942 by Szmul Zygielbojm, who delivered a radio speech in Yiddish about the extermination of Jews on the BBC a day later, announcing that the guilty ones will be punished.

As can be seen from these figures, nearly 2 million or 1/3 of the Jewish population died in the area of German influence, which contained about 6 million Jews (excluding Hungary and Lithuania). Of these, the region of Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania) accounts for about 1.4 million victims.

However Germany's extermination action may continue, we can say already now that it has had a fundamental impact on the state of the Jewish matter in the aforementioned area. The question of the number of Jews has been cardinally reduced. On the other hand, the question of the pauperisation of the Jews, that is the Jewish economic issue, has grown to a serious extent. The issue of repairing the economic and social consequences of the expropriation of a few million Jewish people will be one of the primary issues of the post-war reconstruction of not only Poland, but also the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe.

...

Hoover Institution, Poland. Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, 4

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5 February 1943. Cable from the Envoy in Madrid on the situation of refugees in Spain

5 Feb 1943

At the moment, there are 100 Polish citizens in Madrid; most of them are Jews who arrived illegally from France and were released from prisons.²⁷ The Legation pays a maintenance allowance of 500 pesetas a month per person. This is the maximum allowance that Polish citizens receive, of course regardless of religion. In accordance with the agreement with the representative of the Joint, they will cover any other expenses of Polish-Jewish citizens.²⁸

²⁷ In an earlier cable of 20 October 1942, the Envoy in Madrid reported: 'The situation in Miranda: over 500 interned Poles. Most of the newly arrived are Jews. Two rabbis and one serviceman Reiter from Gdynia. An additional amount of 40,000 pesetas per month is needed.' In the cable of 20 February 1943, he reported: 'In view of the refusal to render any assistance to Polish-Jewish citizens by the Joint's representative in Madrid Sequerry, I had to increase the monthly allowances to 600 pesetas a month as of today and to pay the costs of necessary treatment and clothes. The JOINT will only take care of stateless persons.' IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.53/3

²⁸ In the cable from the same day, Envoy Szumlakowski added: 'In Miranda, there are 36 interned Israelites remaining at the disposal of the Spanish Red Cross who pass

Apart from that, there are around 60 women near Barcelona and 40 in Barcelona who receive a benefit of 15 pesetas per day and the rest is paid by the Joint. A monthly amount of 100,000 pesetas is needed for these purposes.

It may be necessary to obtain for this category of Polish citizens entry visas to a country, which would allow them to leave Spain.

Who will cover costs of departure?

Szumlakowski

IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.53/3

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5 February 1943. Report by the Consulate in Casablanca on the release of persons detained in North Africa

Casablanca, 5 February 1943

Referring to the report No. 152/43 of 23 January this year, the Consulate of the Republic of Poland has the honour to report to the Ministry that the matter described—the release of Polish citizens still being kept in Moroccan camps—was successfully settled at last. Apparently, it seems, after a lot of pressure from the American authorities, the French authorities had to abandon their position that the detention of people in the camps was dictated precisely by concern for the security of the American authorities and troops and for the defence of the country, and they appointed a special commission to issue exemptions from the camps, composed of representatives of the central security authorities, administrative authorities and the Diplomatic Office of the President. Representatives of the Consulate of the Republic of Poland participated in meetings of the Commission when matters concerning the release of Polish citizens were discussed. The Commission held two meetings on 26 and 27 January, including one in the camp in Sidi el-Ayachi. As a result of its sessions, the following decisions were made:

1) All Polish citizens and persons alleged to possess this citizenship are immediately released from the camp in Sidi el-Ayachi, the latter group at the

themselves off as Polish citizens without any basis for doing so. They are outside the Polish group. Groups of Jews passing themselves off as Belgians, Canadians and other groups not accepted by these representations are in an analogous situation. This matter is to be examined together with the Embassy of the United States and the Joint. *IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.53/3*

request of the Consulate in view of the fact that many persons concerned who could not prove their Polish citizenship with relevant documents would have to remain in the camp.

2) The same goes for persons who escaped from that camp and are staying here illegally.

3) The released people will have the right to stay in Morocco for one year, with the option of prolonging their stay.

4) They will have the right to work on an equal footing with other foreigners.

As far as the placement of the released people is concerned, the Consulate remains in contact with the local representative of the Joint, who guaranteed the French authorities that the released people would not become a burden for local charity or social welfare institutions; one of the released Polish women is leaving for Algiers, where she will live in one of the shelters of the Society for the Care of Poles, and with regard to the others the Joint, which also obtained the release of Jews of various nationalities or stateless persons using the Consulate's action, has organised housing for those who have not yet found accommodation here. In consultation with the French authorities and the Consulate, it also drew up a plan to locate in the various urban centres of Morocco those who had been released who would not find housing and work here. Because of the huge overcrowding in Casablanca, the French authorities are committed to ensuring that all people whose stay here is not justified by serious reasons are removed from this territory. Moreover, the stay of the released in the province will not be 'résidence forcée': they will only have to obtain the consent of the administrative authorities for future changes of their place of permanent residence. It should be noted, however, that only an insignificant group of released people will go to the province. A vast majority of these people found a job in Casablanca almost immediately and without much difficulty. The absorptive capacity of the local labour market—the biggest in French Africa for a long time—has hugely grown recently, e.g. due to great opportunities of finding a job in the port. It is administered by American authorities, with which the Consulate intervened several times in the matter of employing our citizens and which often request the local Office for references regarding people to be employed by them.

What remains to be settled is the issue of approx. 30 Polish citizens still remaining in a partly free state called 'résidence obligatoire.' In view of the undoubted softening of the attitude of the French authorities towards Poles—which can be seen from the moment of the Inter-Allied Conference in Casablanca²⁹ and is reflected best

²⁹ This is a reference to talks between Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt (with the participation of Charles de Gaulle) that took place on 14–24 January 1943 and were

by the release of Polish citizens from Sidi el-Ayachi within an exceptionally short time and without any formalities, against which these authorities had put forward a number of various arguments for such a long time—the Consulate hopes that this issue will be solved in accordance with our demands.

Finally, the Consulate wants to report some figures regarding Polish people in Morocco, whose number has considerably decreased as a result of the departure of our soldiers and most recent conscripts.

1) Former emigration and demobilised soldiers of the Foreign Legion—approx. 250 persons

2) Refugees who arrived in 1939 and 1940—approx. 200

3) Poles who currently serve in the Legion and whose home troops are stationed in Morocco—approx. 300

More accurate data regarding Poles in the Legion will be collected during the action of releasing Poles who joined the Legion after 25 June 1940, which is currently getting started by Delegate Czapski, the Consulate, and a representative of our military authorities. A large majority of them are currently staying in Tunisia.

To sum up, the number of identified or alleged Poles and Polish citizens currently staying in Morocco presumably does not exceed 750 persons.

For the Consul of the Republic of Poland
/-/ E. Przesmycki

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43

devoted to the war policy and strategy in 1943. Among others, the participants agreed upon the invasion of Sicily, more intense bombings of Germany and the pursuit of efforts aimed at the unconditional surrender of Axis powers.

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*7 February 1943. Report by the Consulate in Casablanca
on Jewish refugees in Morocco*

Casablanca, 7 February 1943

55, Rue Margueritte
Telephone A35-80

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In addition to previous reports and for the correction of frequently incorrect information about the number of Jews and their situation in Morocco submitted in particular to the Ministry of Social Welfare,³⁰ I would like to submit hereby this report regarding the number and situation of Jewish citizens of Poland or currently admitting Polish citizenship.

According to detailed data received from the local police authorities, the situation of Jews recorded in police files under the box: nationality—Polish, looked as follows in October 1942, i.e. shortly before the arrival of Allied troops.

Place of stay or residence	Citizens of Poland	Stateless persons	Total
Free persons:			
1. Casablanca	54	24	78
2. Meknes	5	2	7
3. Rabat	1	1	2
4. Fes	2	–	2
5. Safi	32	16	48
6. Magador	28	11	39
7. Marrakech	4	2	6
Total	128 [sic]	54 [sic]	182

³⁰ In the cable of 19 January 1943, the MFA informed the Consulate General in Tel Aviv: 'As far as we know, there are a few hundred Polish-Jewish citizens in camps in Algeria and Morocco. Consulates of the Republic of Poland in Algiers and Casablanca have been striving for their release since the entry of Allied troops. Some groups have already been released.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 547

In camps:			
1. Sidi el-Ayachi	53	31	84
2. In labour camps for former Legion soldiers (Settat, Im-Fout, Berguent, Djerada, Bou-Arfa)	15	20	35
Total in camps	68	51	119
Total free persons	128	54	182
Total Jewish citizens of Poland and stateless persons	196	105	301

The above list encompasses two different categories:

1. Jews—civil refugees who arrived in Morocco after 1 June 1940.

2. Jews who joined the Foreign Legion in France and, upon being released from it, were sent to labour camps for the former Foreign Legion soldiers. The above list does not cover Jewish citizens of Poland from the ‘old emigration,’ more than 100 of whom are in Morocco. As I wrote in previous reports, this group was constantly free, pursuing their normal occupations, etc. The situation of this group has not changed in any special way since 1940. These are generally quite affluent people.

Ad. I.

As far as Polish citizens or persons admitting to having this citizenship are concerned, no more than 500 Jews arrived here as a result of the collapse of France in the summer of 1940. As a result of the joint action of the local Joint Organisation and the local Office, approx. 300 persons left Morocco. Before the arrival of the Allies, in Morocco there were 128 Polish-Jewish citizens, 54 persons admitting to having Polish citizenship and recorded as such by French police authorities, i.e. altogether 182 persons. These people lived in a few major cities with the only restriction of their freedom (which is also applied towards French refugees here) being that they could change the place of their residence with the consent of the authorities. The French authorities agreed to the change if the person concerned justified it by obtaining a job or a flat in another area.

A relatively proportionally large group of Jews who cannot use any documents of Polish citizenship consists mostly of refugees from Belgium, who explain that they lost all their Polish documents on the way, fleeing from the Germans.

As the Consulate previously reported, some civil refugees were sent to the camp in Sidi el-Ayachi. They were sent there for various reasons, most often due to arrival without visas, without documents, for administrative crimes, etc. People staying in this camp did not work and had relative freedom of movement. It was

a shelter camp, used by the local authorities partly as pressure on people who, having the opportunity to go abroad, delayed it.

Ad. II.

In labour camps for former foreign soldiers there were only 35 Jews, including 15 who could hardly prove Polish citizenship. Most of them were Jews who evaded joining the Polish Army in France in 1939/1940 by joining the Foreign Legion for the period of the war, e.g. in hope of receiving French citizenship subsequently and because of the will to survive the war in a remote French territory in Africa.

The current situation of Jews in Morocco (at the beginning of February 1943)

After many requests made to American and French authorities, the Consulate obtained a release from labour camps and from the Sidi el-Ayachi camp not only for Jewish citizens of Poland, but also those who admitted to having such citizenship in spite of the lack of any documents.³¹ Moreover, through its interventions, the Consulate also helped on that occasion to release Jews of other nationalities or stateless persons, such as German, Austrian, Yugoslav Jews, etc., who do not have representations here.

Currently, there is not a single Polish-Jewish citizen in labour camps and, moreover, all of those claiming to be Polish Jews were released as well. Some of them who were fit for military service and spoke Polish (which was rather an exceptional thing) have already been sent to the Polish Army in England. Others, thanks to the Consulate's efforts, got a job in the port in Casablanca, unloading American products or work in industry. Those working for Americans at the port receive high daily rates and find it much easier to buy food products. Now their situation is even better than that of an average French worker.

Most people from the group released from Sidi el-Ayachi also found jobs in Casablanca—men in the port and others in craft and small trade. Some people unable to work are maintained by the local Joint in shelters.

Thus, help granted by the local Office towards Polish Jews consisted mainly in:

1. General legal assistance.
2. Release from camps.
3. Making it easier to find a job.

4. Benefits for those who were entitled to them under the instruction of the Society for the Care of Poles in France in this respect.

Regarding point 4, the Consulate wishes to explain that, in view of the existence of Jewish organisations in Casablanca—Joint or—HICEM, which had the funds to pay benefits to Jews—and in consultation with the local organisations,

³¹ See previous document.

the local centre of the Society for the Care of Poles in France granted benefits only to those Jews who did not receive it from HICEM.

To sum up, the Consulate wishes to add that the current situation, especially financial, of Polish Jews who have stayed here is even much better than, for instance, that of many French refugees from Alsace, France or Dakar.

For the Consul of the Republic of Poland
/-/ E. Przesmycki

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43

326

*11 February 1943. Cable from the Prime Minister
to the Embassy in Washington on a visit to Mexico*

TO Polmission Washington

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 12 FEB 1943

No. 73

Receptus No. 62³²

The statement from the Minister of Information and Documentation—not from the Jewish Agency—in this matter has already been issued. I reminded the delegation of Polish Jews in Mexico that especially nowadays, the title of Polish citizen abroad is obliging.

I called on them to pay attention to their members, some of whom engage in business that is allegedly not always fair. This is not a political move, but stems from the Prime Minister's care for the Polish reputation abroad. Dr Retinger did

³² In the cable no. 62 of 5 February 1943, the Ambassador in Washington informed: 'For the last few days, the Jewish organisation and press have been increasingly agitated about messages sent from Mexico by the local federation of Polish Jews about the allegedly harsh welcome of their delegation by Mr Prime Minister and about accusing the delegation that Polish Jews engage in dirty business. ... At the same time, the Jewish press reports the killing of Jews by a Polish soldier in Tel Aviv. It accuses the Prime Minister, the Government and the Polish Army of antisemitism.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 261

not give any interview.³³ I regard the matter as concluded by this explanation and do not want to return to it. Have my instructions regarding propaganda been fulfilled on the spot?

Sikorski
Poexterne

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154*

327

*15 February 1943. Cable from the Envoy in Madrid
on the citizenship of Jewish refugees in Spain*

Polmission—Madrid
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 15 FEB 1943
RECEIVED ON 18 FEB 1943

No. 31

Receptus cable No. 24³⁴

Upon the most liberal checking of all claims for the recognition of Jewish citizens of Poland staying in Madrid, the negative decision has been issued only in

³³ *The Jewish Journal and Daily News* of 29 January 1943 published an article containing the following words (according to translation by the Consulate General in New York): ‘Sikorski forgets about his diplomatic role in Mexico and talks like an anti-Semite ... The incident took place when Prime Minister Sikorski arrived at the matter of recognition of visas for 10,000 refugees currently staying in Persia. The committee consisting of a few eminent Jewish activists felt it was their duty to pay a visit to Prime Minister Sikorski and talk to him about the situation of Jews in present and postwar Poland. Prime Minister Sikorski received the delegation with ordinary Polish rigidity, trying not to make this visit too long. The leader of Poland in exile limited his conversation to a criticism of Jews’ behaviour in Mexico, stating that he learnt from Mexican government sources that the local Jews were engaged in “dirty business” ... In this way, the Prime Minister suggested that also Jews in Poland were responsible for their current conditions ... If that is still not enough, Sikorski’s secretary and counsellor Dr Retinger gave an interview to a correspondent of “Ekscelesior”—a major Mexican newspaper known to them ... But Dr Retinger, either, did not find a good word for Jews, and when the correspondent asked him about the position of Jews, the Secretary of the Prime Minister answered that his Superior strongly criticised Jews in Mexico yesterday because of their improper conduct.’ AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 503

³⁴ In the cable no. 24 of 25 January 1943, the MFA informed: ‘The Joint The Ministry of Social Welfare, recalling the right of all citizens to equal aid, communicates the *Joint’s complaints*

one case, and I request the MFA to make a decision on two cases. The rest received new passports or had their former ones prolonged. From Miranda, upon the verification of Jews' documents by Mr Kobyłecki, 24 decisions were made. We send most of them to Gibraltar, to the army. If departure is refused for the fulfilment of the military obligation, they will be deprived of their allowance in Madrid.

Szumlakowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 546

328

*17 February 1943. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv
on reports on the extermination of Jews in occupied Poland*

Polconsul—Tel Aviv
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 17 FEB 1943

No. 11

To the Minister

The Jewish women who have arrived here from Poland, which they left in the second half of January, report on the horrors of mass uninterrupted killings of Jews in Poland as the last phase of their utter extermination. Big Jewish organisations in Palestine express genuine recognition for the action of the Polish Government and request detailed telegraphic information about the important state of affairs in Poland.

Rosmarin

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 260

that Jewish citizens of Poland do not receive benefits from the Legation and the Joint is not able to bring financial aid to all Jews. If the British Embassy recommends referring Jews to the Joint, please discuss and settle this matter during a joint conference with the British Embassy and Joint. Along with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, we request that you send a report by telegraph.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 256*

329

26 February 1943. Letter from Second Lieutenant Stanisław Łuczyc-Wyhowski to Captain Jan Józef Sochacki on refugees in Spain

Madrid, 24 February 1943

Captain, Your Excellency,

I received your letter from 16 February. At the beginning, I would like to describe the situation.

I realise how uneasy and bitter the atmosphere in the camp must have been directly before the visit by Kobyłecki and the Chileans. Unfortunately, these things were completely beyond our control because the delay was caused by the Spanish, who did not grant an earlier entry time. The lack of money must have also been felt—unfortunately, there was none. Currently Rev Liedtke is bringing the necessary sums. I received letters from the camp, explaining that the situation was so hard that it posed the threat of a new strike. I will return to this subject further in my letter.

As you have reviewed the lists offered to the appropriate institutions to grant visas, they are arranged based on the criterion of the date of coming to the camp. The only deviation is the 1st part of the Chilean list, which could not be changed because it had been submitted to the Chilean Embassy. Besides, the 1st part of this list was composed by you—on the basis of the 52 Argentinian list submitted to Kobyłecki, which, as you already know, was a piece of paper. Therefore, the Chilean list contained some shortcomings, but this was absolutely unavoidable. Minister Szumlakowski showed me your list of ‘omitted’ people. It included around 30 names. I objectively state that until 1 August 1941—i.e. the day when they were granted visas by me and Captain Sn.³⁵—only the following persons were omitted.

Szmigiel Władysław	Grabowski Jan
Kin Mieczysław	Kaczmarek Piotr

Gogol Kazimierz—based on Major Ciniewicz’s opinion that these persons be evacuated at the very end. I think this is also your opinion. Anyway, these names speak for themselves.

Jews:	
Szifris Borys	Waisman Leib
Felsenfeld Pinkas	Aldorf Uszer
Tennenbaum Jakub	Soliński Julian
Dryszko Jerzy	

³⁵ Captain Stanisław Snarski.

could not be proposed under any circumstances because of very strict clauses and reservations of interested countries in this respect and guarantees given by our authorities. Thus, the entire evacuation process absolutely must not be risked. Jews are excluded.

Thus, in consideration of what I have written above, I actually must say that nobody has been omitted³⁶.

With regard to the above, please explain to Second Lieutenant Vogt that he was put in a queue on the Uruguayan list without any harm to him. We arranged the list strictly according to the order of arrival in the camp with regard to the places that we had at our disposal. If anyone was on the Chilean list and got a visa—who came after him—this is due to the first part of the Chilean list, of which we had no control and for which we are not responsible. Kobylecki made a mess here by stating that Argentinian visas are personal, so the plan of the Chilean list (the first part) was principally wrong. We tried to neutralise the consequences of this misunderstanding with Captain Sn. as far as possible—unfortunately, it was impossible to amend everything. We amended the additional Argentinian list and completely the Uruguayan list, thus introducing some kind of order. The same goes for the 2nd part of the Chilean list.

You will soon receive socks and trousers (6 March).

³⁶ In the report of 31 March 1943, Captain Jan Sochacki informed the Minister of National Defence: 'On 18 March this year, I was summoned by the camp commander along with Second Lieutenant Kiersnowski, and he showed me a list releasing all Poles from the Miranda camp who could be received immediately by the Polish post in Madrid or by the Polish Red Cross. The Polish Legation in Madrid was immediately notified about this decision of the Spanish authorities. It is currently difficult to find the reason for such a sudden release of Poles. The Legation organised the receipt of people in groups of 100 per day by rail transport to Madrid, where they were put in hotels or pensions under the care of the Polish Red Cross. The first batch left Miranda on 20 March, and the subsequent ones, each containing 100 persons, left every day. Consul E. Kobylecki, who managed the action of dispatch to Madrid on behalf of Minister Szumlakowski, stayed in Madrid for the entire period of evacuation. The last batch left the camp on 24 March. On that day, Minister Szumlakowski arrived in the camp and, in the presence of Consul Kobylecki and the Command of the Polish Group, laid a wreath on the grave of the late Lieutenant Kowalski killed by the Germans ... Issues of further evacuation come to the foreground, as the fact of so many Poles staying free will result in complications with the Spanish authorities, particularly the police. Here I mean quick evacuation to a neutral state, among others, via Portugal, because other routes, via Gibraltar or to South American States, are obstructed. Evacuation via Portugal seems to be the easiest way if the English authorities guarantee to the Portuguese Government that they will take Poles quickly. Minister Szumlakowski makes efforts in this respect, but in order to accelerate this action, an intervention by the MFA from London is necessary so that Portuguese visas could be obtained for 600 people (without the Canadian group): IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.763/3

SITUATION IN MADRID

Currently, the issue of POWs comes to the foreground. I strongly request that you submit to Rev Liedtke (urgently) a list of the Poles who signed the consent to leave for England on the basis of captivity. Then, in the case of definitive release, please inform by telegraph immediately: Polmission, Madrid—to prepare the wagons as quickly as possible with the help from Friends.

An additional list of 120 persons will be filed to the British Attaché tomorrow and will be submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately after the departure of the 1st batch. You understand that this cannot be settled at an earlier date. Its chances are probably identical to those of the first one and I suppose that the Spanish authorities will not make things difficult for Poles (consequences of the strike).

Therefore, I feel that the possibility of the liquidation of Miranda is beginning to dawn. If 300 people released from captivity departed to Gibraltar, approx. 200 would remain; within 2–6 months, they will certainly receive Argentinian, Chilean or Uruguayan visas.

The progress of the matter of Argentinian and Chilean visas is known to you. As soon as the Chilean Ambassador arrives (within the next few days), the acceleration of this evacuation will be discussed. Apart from that, we are to have dinner with the secretary of the Chilean Embassy and put what is needed into his head.

Uruguayan visas. Please do not ignore this matter, because the Uruguayans have the best attitude towards us out of the three countries. Surprisingly, they are the politest. Things have moved so far forward that the Uruguayans assume an approach based on the quota rather than personal visas. This matter is particularly important to us, because in the event of the departure of ‘prisoners’ no places will be lost, as for example with Argentinian visas. The Uruguayan Consulate is waiting for the consent of Montevideo, and the matter is essentially arranged via London.

The Ministries of Foreign and Military Affairs attach great importance to the evacuation to South America. Our relevant institutions have instruments. There was a huge reprimand³⁷ that the first Chilean batch arrived too late to board the ship.

160 Chilean visas, 24 Argentinian visas and 100 Uruguayan visas—would certainly solve the problem. However, irrespective of this, we demanded an increase of the Argentinian quota from London—just in case. It may happen that the second list of prisoners will not come off or that political conditions will change—in this case, the biggest possible number of visas of the most moderate country is a necessity.

Unfortunately, things look quite bleak in Jaraba. What I expected, i.e. the dissolution of Miranda under a pretext for others—the detainment of

³⁷ Vulgarism omitted.

soldiers—begins to come true. The declaration of being a soldier is absolutely not advised. I find it difficult to describe difficulties with Bejster and Cieřlik and 40-year-olds in Jaraba, and there has not been any result so far. At first the Spanish did not want to talk about Jaraba, like once about Miranda.

There is one more important thing. The capabilities of the Legation are very modest. Everything is done through Count de la Granja. But he is only a human being and, most importantly, a Spaniard. He is getting tired. It really takes great tact and moderation not to cross the line. Because it would be fatal if this machine stopped. Therefore, other routes are also used for reaching the Spanish Red Cross. Today I had a longer conference with the Minister about when it is proper to request the transfer of the Polish Group from Miranda to another locality. That should happen after the departure of the prisoners group. At that moment, approx. 300 people will remain.

Regardless of this, Snarski and I are to talk about this with the secretary of Jordana, and I will also talk to the Adjutant of the Ministry of Military Affairs, Major Ayuso.

All the same, please do not forget one more thing. Apart from Miranda, there is quite a serious problem of prisons. The Spanish release masses of prisoners due to age and illness. Madrid is hugely crowded with foreigners. The Poles released according to this principle in the number of 80 are in Madrid. After two weeks of efforts, we succeeded. They leave on Sunday for Gibraltar. It is also our job to get everything out of Madrid as quickly as possible, so as not to generate a crowd damaging to Miranda, and to strive for a clean sheet with the Spaniards in this respect. However, these people, released from prisons, are automatically the reason for the Spanish becoming bothered with issues of their departure. So, it is really necessary, as far as possible, to settle matters not in a method that is, so to say, swift, but more global.

And this should not be detrimental to Miranda's interests. This is the most important thing.

To sum up the situation, I think that a strike is completely 1) unjustified, 2) simply harmful at the moment. I request you not to play such a strong argument carelessly, as some might want this. At the moment, there is really no important need; I vouch for it with my word. In any case, that is how I understand the situation.

26 February 1943

I have just come back from the Chilean Embassy and am slightly irritated with what just happened. It was said that the Chileans would issue more than 20 visas. They examined 31 people, indeed, and they issued a bill for the examination of 31. Today, however, it turned out that they had chosen 20 by themselves (usually alphabetically) and had sent a note to the MFA along with a list of only 20. I attach

a copy of this list.³⁸ This is really a dirty trick. In this way, 11 people previously proposed by us have not received any visas so far.³⁹

IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.763/3

330

*8 March 1943. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Washington
on the death of Wiktor Alter and Henryk Erlich*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 8 MAR 1943

VERY URGENT

No. 147

In connection with the confirmation of the message about the execution of Alter and Erlich, the Government attaches the importance to provoking the broadest possible reaction in the public opinion and the press of the United States, primarily with the participation of the Jewish circles.

³⁸ There is no attachment.

³⁹ In the letter from 9 April 1943, Captain Sochacki notified Counsellor Roman Badior, the Head of the Evacuation Post in Lisbon: "Thank you for your information, and now I would like to tell you about the situation in Madrid. In Madrid, there are approx. 500 military Poles awaiting evacuation; apart from that, approx. 100 are in Barcelona, Giron or Barbastro. All organisational, economic, medical and other matters are completed. The payment of clothes allowances (500 Pts per person) is delayed due to the lack of cash in the Legation. As far as the behaviour of Poles in Madrid is concerned, it has been quite good so far, without any conflicts with the police; I suppose that this will not change. Evacuation. Currently, the command puts the matter of evacuation in the foreground. The entire internal organisation of the group was carried out for the purpose of improving evacuation so that the Legation would be less heavily burdened. Currently the Legation makes efforts to enable reported groups to depart quickly to South American states via Portugal, because, as you know, the route from Spanish ports was blocked as a result of German pressure. The Chilean group with Captain Snarski returned to Madrid and currently it is leaving via Portugal. The Argentinian group of 28 people and 22 people who had Portuguese visas are preparing to leave. Minister Szumlakowski notified me today that Portugal would give 300 visas and ordered me to prepare a list of

After yesterday's Declaration⁴⁰ in response to TASS's message and in view of the talks of Ambassador Romer, the Government wishes to avoid creating additional areas of friction in official relations with the Soviets and therefore does not want to engage in public statements on the case of A. and E. The Government, however, submits an active protest note to the Soviet Ambassador.

I request you to inform confidentially Jewish influential people, particularly those who have an impact on the press, that the Government, since the arrest of A. and E., has strongly intervened in their case, defending their Polish citizenship and demanding their release. It has only now found out about their execution, due to which it submits a protest to the Soviet Government.⁴¹

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545

300 persons at my discretion. In order to evacuate the entire military group, 600 visas are necessary. This would be a general solution, but an intervention by the MFA from London is needed as quickly as possible to make it happen, as every day of delay has an adverse effect on people staying in Spain. I request you on behalf of the Polish Group to present our situation in Spain to central authorities on his part so that the departure would take place as quickly as possible.' IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.763/3.

⁴⁰ In the resolution of 5 April 1943, the National Council stressed: 'The National Council of the Republic of Poland expresses its regret over the execution by the USSR authorities of citizens of the Republic of Poland Henryk Erlich and Wiktor Alter—outstanding labour activists—leaders of Jewish socialists in Poland, members of supreme authorities of world labour movement organisations. The National Council of the Republic of Poland does not give credence to announced motives for this act. Henryk Erlich and Wiktor Alter were faithful sons of the Republic of Poland and always fought relentlessly against Nazism in the course of their political activity of many years. The official announcement of the execution of these two citizens of the Republic of Poland makes the Polish society deeply worried about the fate of those thousands of Polish citizens deported deep into Russia, with regard to whom Soviet authorities have not provided satisfactory explanations so far.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

⁴¹ In the cable of 11 March 1943, Minister Raczyński informed Ambassador Romer: 'In reaction to the message confirmed by Litvinov about the execution of Erlich and Alter, I sent a protest to Bogomolov against the execution of two Polish citizens ~~concealment of this fact from the Polish Government~~ and against motives of alleged collaboration with the Polish intelligence.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

331*10 March 1943. Message from the Polish Press Agency Światpol
on German crimes in Europe (extract)*

London, 10 March 1943

By airmail

INFORMATION REPORT FOR THE POLISH PRESS ABROAD, No. 9

Poland in the first place on the tragic list

In connection with Hitler's proclamation announcing a tenfold increase of German terror, the Interallied Information Committee published the possessed figures concerning German murders on the continent. These figures, although incomplete, carry a tragic message:

In Belgium, 152 Belgians, including 42 hostages, were shot dead by the end of the previous year. 1,290 people were sent to concentration camps.

Czechoslovakia. From September 1941 till December 1942, 2,465 persons were shot dead in Prague and Brno alone. These figures are incomplete, because they do not cover the rest of the country and are based only on data confirmed by the Germans themselves. Neither does this number include victims of the events in Lidice and Ležáki, where, as you know, the whole male population (220 people) were murdered and 200 women and 80 children were taken away to camps. Until the end of the previous year, more than 100,000 Czechs were locked up in concentration camps or sentenced to hard labour in penal camps.

France. 24,000 French people were shot dead by August 1942.

Greece. In Thrace and western Macedonia, approx. 15,000 people were murdered. 5,000 people were shot dead in Crete, and approx. 2,000 people were shot dead in other centres around the country. Many thousands of Greeks were put in concentration camps.

Netherlands. The Dutch Government has a list of 200 executed Dutchmen, which by the way, is incomplete. In May last year, 2,020 professional officers were arrested and taken away to POW camps in Poland.

Yugoslavia. Up to the end of December last year, 744,000 people were shot dead, including 27,000 in Belgrade.

Luxembourg. 29 men were shot dead. Their names are known to the Luxembourg Government in London. Approx. 10,000 people are in prisons and penal camps.

Norway. 140 people were shot dead.

Poland. Until the end of 1942, 2,250,000 people, including approx. 1,000,000 Jews, were shot or murdered or died in camps and prisons. The average period of survival in a concentration camp does not exceed 9 months. Within 31 months, 85,840 people passed through one concentration camp alone in Auschwitz, out of whom 57,800 died in the camp.

IPMS, Światowy Związek Polaków z Zagranicy, 1

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*10 March 1943. Letter from the Consul General in Salisbury
to the Consul General in Pretoria on the arrival of refugees in Africa*

Salisbury, 10 March 1943

To Minister S. Łepkowski
Cape Town

Dear Minister,

My sincerest apologies for the delay in replying to such kind letters from you of 3 and 4 February this year. I primarily thank you very much for encouraging me to come to Pretoria and for the invitation to stay at your house. We would very much like to make use of this invitation, and if a real possibility occurs, let me come back to it.

My last few weeks were very busy. In relation to receiving an instruction on 29 January from the MFA to open the Consulate General in Salisbury and to take office in it, I went there from Lusaka on 4 February, after settling the most urgent matters there. But just a few days after my arrival in Salisbury, on 10 February, I went to Beira to help receive and organise the passage of two groups of refugees of 500 each—to Lusaka and to Marandellas (Southern Rhodesia). I took this opportunity to personally learn this complicated procedure well. It turned out to be necessary to arrive in Lusaka with the transport, from where I returned to Salisbury on 18 February. Immediately after my return, the local government received alarming information about the immediate arrival of a new group of 500 families of refugees in Beira, which could amount to 2,000 people or maybe even more. Nobody was

prepared to accept such a large number, and I was again asked to take part in this expedition.

On this occasion, I found out that the local authorities and society react to the arrival and stay of our refugees with absolutely exceptional devotion and sympathy, at least for the time being. Under these conditions, it was impossible for me to refuse to participate in such a trip, although this made it very difficult for me to get into a normal mode of work.

Fortunately, the alarm turned out to be false and a normal group of 500 people arrived, which we put in an uncompleted settlement in Rusapi. I returned to Salisbury on 23 February, and I intend to sit and organise my work here.

In this way, apart from the old Cypriot group, in the territory of Northern Rhodesia we have 500 refugees in Lusaka, and in Southern Rhodesia more than 400 in Marandellas and 500 in Rusapi—almost entirely women and children—from 16 February this year.

Further plans assume the arrival of a further 500 people in Southern Rhodesia, 300 in Northern Rhodesia and 1,000 children in Nyasaland. All of them, except for 1,000 people to be sent to Abercorn in Northern Rhodesia, will travel via Beira.

There is a plan that the organisation of technical aspects of all these transports would be taken over by the authorities of Southern Rhodesia.

On the occasion of this letter, I would like to let you know that, according to my information, 500 children are to arrive in the Union of South Africa via Durban, maybe even in the second half of this month.

In this way, as if automatically, Salisbury is indeed becoming a kind of organisational centre for both Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The need for such a centre, at least in regard to providing accurate information to three governments, arose very clearly in connection with the last arrival of refugees; it was not known how many people were going and where their destination was.

What I also consider positive, is that the MFA ordered me to open the Consulate General in Salisbury even before receiving a confirmation of my request from here. So far, in the absence of other orders, I retain the formal territorial competence also for Northern Rhodesia, where Zaleski was appointed as definitive head of our office in Lusaka.

For now, I have great difficulties in finding premises for the Consulate in Salisbury, because it is very difficult to find one here now. Anyway, I have my eye on 2 or 3 rooms in a trading house (more or less like our Consulate in Cape Town). For now, I will live with my wife in a hotel, because a private apartment has been impossible to find so far and I do not even have time to look for one.

In concluding this letter, I want to thank you very much for your comprehensive reply to my first letter. I consider it valuable to me to say that in principle my thoughts were correct, as I can see, the MFA also shares this view.

In the coming days, I will send my first report there, and I will not fail to include in them what you wrote to me in the last paragraph of your letter of 4 February.

I also want to add that since 29 January, Mr Tadeusz Kopeć from Nairobi, Deputy Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, has been staying first in Northern and Southern Rhodesia and currently in Nyasaland. As I can see from his work plans, which are very good in any case, the Ministry of Social Welfare intends to take over all the work of caring for refugees into its own hands. Fortunately, our mutual relations with Mr Kopeć have been good, which in these conditions is indispensable for our fruitful work.

I express my respect and esteem and warmest regards for His Excellency the Minister

A. Zawisza

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 1

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13 March 1943. Letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Jewish refugees in Italy

13 March 1943

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The Agudat Israel organisation in London sent to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare a copy of a cable received by this organisation from Tel Aviv, reporting that 500 Jews—Polish and Czechoslovakian citizens interned in Italy in the Ferramonti di Tarsia camp—are in danger of being handed over to Germans, which therefore mean death.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is sending a copy of this cable and requests you to immediately instruct the Embassy of the Republic of Poland at the Vatican or the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern that one of these posts should notify the Swiss Legation in Rome about the existing danger for the interned persons, and to provide an official explanation of the situation and report the result as quickly as possible.⁴²

⁴² In the letter from 22 February 1943 addressed to the Embassy in London, the MFA informed: 'In connection with the letter from the Embassy no 851-e/6 from

On this occasion, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare stresses that, according to a series of—insufficiently verified—messages, Italian authorities would be inclined to release interned Polish citizens if the latter had an opportunity to leave for abroad. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare believes that it is necessary to determine officially the standpoint of Italian authorities and to take steps aimed at providing residence visas and transit visas to Polish citizens staying in Italy. In particular, it would be necessary—in the view of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare—to check if the Mexican Government would agree to accept these Polish citizens and to reach an agreement with British authorities on the organisation of travel by neutral ships, e.g. to Turkey. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, it would be convenient to consider this matter in a completely vague form even before the official position of the Italian authorities is known.

FOR THE MINISTER
Grosfeld

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545

16 February this year on Jewish citizens of Poland interned in Italy, the Ministry informs that it received information from Dr. Schwarzbart a few weeks ago (communicated to him by the Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine) about the threat of deportation of a group of approx. 90 Jewish citizens of Poland from Rhodes Island, currently interned in Ferramonti di Tarsia (Cosenza province), from Italy to Poland. As a result of this information, the Ministry requested the Embassy of the Republic of Poland at the Vatican to consider the possibility of intervention in the matter of the aforementioned group via Vatican. The Ministry thinks it would be advisable to obtain support from our démarche at the Vatican via British Envoy to the Holy See.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 61. In reply to the intervention with the Holy See, Ambassador Papée reported in the cable of 11 May 1943: 'Cardinal Secretary of State assured that the protection of Polish citizens in Italy, Jews and non-Jews is secured and that they would not be released to Germans.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

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*15 March 1943. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Washington on obtaining aid
from Jewish organisations for the population in occupied Poland*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 15 MAR 1943

No. 144

Please submit to the recipients the following dispatch received by Minister Mikołajczyk via the Government Delegate for Poland from the Jewish National Committee in the country,⁴³ which comprises all Jewish political factions:

For Rabbi Wise, Goldmann and the Joint. We bring you news about the largest crime in history—the murder of millions of Jews in Poland. In view of the danger of the annihilation of Jews still alive, we demand that you: 1) take revenge on Germans, 2) force Nazis to cease the murders, 3) fight for our life and for our honour, 4) get in touch with neutral countries, 5) save 10,000 children through exchange, 6) donate 500,000 dollars for aid purposes. Brothers, the remaining Jews in Poland, believe that you did not help us during the most horrible days of our history. Please respond at least during the last days of our life. This is our last appeal to you. Jewish National Committee in Poland.

I request you to stipulate the absolute need to keep the potential raising of 0.5 million dollars secret, otherwise the Government could not undertake to transfer this amount. The message about the dispatch itself could be distributed in the case of an *important* necessity, but point 6 would have to be omitted; ~~as its disclosure~~ *please note, however, that its publication* may accelerate the pace of extermination of Jews.

Please also inform Jewish circles in confidence that, apart from the Jewish National Committee, the Polish Council to Aid Jews⁴⁴—consisting of representatives of Polish parties and Jews—acts in the Homeland as a unit subordinated to the Government Delegate for Poland; it brings aid to Jews from funds transferred secretly by the Government and raised in the Homeland. On their part, Jewish

⁴³ The Jewish National Committee was a secret political organisation created in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942; representatives of the Bund were not its members.

⁴⁴ The Council to Aid Jews at the Government Delegation for Poland was established on 4 December 1942 as a result of the transformation of the Provisional Committee to Aid Jews (Żegota), which had existed since September 1942. See doc. 401.

members of the National Council will presumably reach agreement *on the raising of funds* with Jewish organisations in America.

Raczyński

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 26*

335

*25 March 1943. Note by Jan Karski
on talks held during the stay in London (extracts)*

London, 25 March 1943

Note regarding talks held by J. KWAŚNIEWSKI⁴⁵
with English and American personalities in London

Over the past two months, I have been in contact, in reporting on national affairs, with the following personalities from the English and American official circles, or with the leaders of the English organisation that sustains the resistance and struggle on the continent:

1. Minister of Foreign Affairs Eden, 2 Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Law, 3. English Ambassador to the Polish Government O'Malley, 4. Frank Savery, 5. official of the Foreign Office for Polish issues Roberts, 6. Lord Selborne, 7. Director Leeper 8. McLaren, 9. Osborne, 10. Colonel Wilkinson, 11. Hazell, 12. Major Truszkowski, 13. Ambassador Biddle.⁴⁶

In these talks, I acted in my real capacity and as a person returning to the Homeland.

I have met some of the aforementioned persons a few times and many times (Wilkinson, Law, Roberts, Savery, McLaren, Osborne). I was referred to the above persons by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Doctor Retinger and Mr Librach.

I informed them on domestic matters to the extent that is interesting and possible for each of them. Apart from that, with the exception of Leeper, McLaren, Osborne and Roberts, I informed everyone in detail about: 1. the Soviet issue in

⁴⁵ One of the aliases used by Jan Karski (true name: Jan Koziulewski).

⁴⁶ The minor inconsistencies in numeration existing in the original are corrected without marking.

Polish territories, 2. the attitude of the society to the Polish-Soviet pact, 3. the attitude of the society to the Government in London, 4. basic contours of the Polish underground life (without details not intended for foreigners), 5. the level of works and capabilities of the armed forces (in very general terms), 6. German terror and living conditions, 7. the Jewish matter.

...⁴⁷

Reactions of individual interlocutors were quite diverse. Almost everyone made sure that my information was authentic. Everybody was interested particularly in the Soviet issue and the capabilities of the Armed Forces. Almost everyone stressed that the level of the Polish underground life is on the biggest scale among all European nations. Characteristic reactions:

1. Apart from complimenting me and asking about the food and living conditions in the Homeland, Minister Eden did not express any reaction. A few words of recognition for the Armed Forces. I had the feeling that he *coldly* received my information about the activity of Soviet agents in the Homeland. He expressed interest in the terror used by Germans against Jews. He did not keep up the conversation about the subject of Soviet agents in Polish territories. However, without encouragement on his part, I managed to present Polish matters to him in the outline stated above. The conversation lasted approx. 30 minutes. Doctor Retinger was present.

...

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.105

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2 April 1943. Cable from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Delegate in Tehran on the provision of clothes for Jewish refugees

TO POLMISSION TEHRAN

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

To Haluch

The Jewish weekly *Emanu-El* in San Francisco published an article stating that the Polish authorities in Persia had handed out the clothes sent from Palestine for Jewish refugees only to Poles and that Polish children wear clothes with Hebrew

⁴⁷ Essential extracts of the note not concerning Jewish issues were omitted.

marks, whereas Jewish children are almost naked. Please submit explanations that may be useful for the purpose of démenti. Grosfeld. Ministry of Social Welfare.⁴⁸

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545*

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*10 April 1943. Letter from the Legation in Mexico City
to F. Bochyński on aid for the Rosenfarl family*

10 April 1943

To Mr F. Bochyński
83 Delapré Crescent Road, NORTHAMPTON

In connection with your cable of 29 March 1943 on Mexican entry visas for the Rosenfarl family, the Legation informs that it started dealing with this case and will continue to handle it, however stressing that it does not promise any positive results.

Having accepted a very large number of refugees from Europe, Mexican authorities are reluctant to grant visas to further refugees. They made a special concession for Polish citizens by agreeing to accept thousands of refugees from Persia. Now their attention is focused entirely on these refugees and on preparations for their arrival.

But at the same time, the Legation also strives for the acquisition of the right of entry to Mexico for a relatively large group of Jewish refugees being concentrated in Lisbon. There are prospects that their entry will be permitted, but in a tight group.

Therefore, the Legation communicated the content of your cable to local Jewish organisations collaborating with the Legation. They are to advise you by cable that the Rosenfarl family should get in touch with Jewish committees (the Joint) in Spain and Portugal and make efforts for its inclusion in that group of Jewish citizens of Poland in Lisbon for whom the Legation tries to obtain a collective visa to Mexico.

⁴⁸ The Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Tehran, Franciszek Haluch, replied in the cable of 15 April: 'I state that there were no Hebrew badges on clothes. All refugees and children are dressed without any religion-based differences. We receive clothes from the Transport Department of the Legation and I do not know whether it comes from Palestine. We devote special attention to the Jewish orphanage. The Jewish Agency is very satisfied with our care. The text in the weekly is a slander.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545*.

Nevertheless, the Legation can guess that the case of the Rosenfarl family may be complicated by the fact that they cannot obtain Spanish and Portuguese transit visas as long as they do not present permission to enter one of the American countries. Because obtaining the permission to enter Mexico is not certain—and, in any case, may take a longer time—the Legation feels obliged to advise you or the Rosenfarl family to make similar efforts—independently of the aforementioned ones—in relation to other Latin-American countries.

For the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Aleksander Wiesiołowski

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 170

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*16 April 1943. Letter from the Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Ministry of Information and Documentation
on using the message on the delivery of a transport of matzo*

London, 16 April 1943

To the Ministry of Information and Documentation
in London

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs forwards below, suggesting its use in the Jewish press, information sent by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kuybyshev as to the division of matzo transports sent from America for Polish Jews in Soviet Russia. The Ministry recalls that various Jewish sources raised claims that this matzo had failed to reach the Jewish population and that some transports had *allegedly* been consumed by Polish children.

‘Altogether, the Embassy received 1,277 boxes of matzo (2,000 boxes were lost overboard in transport), all of which were sent to centres inhabited by Polish Jews. Out of this number, only 168 boxes have not reached the place of its destination—because of the closure of the store in Mamlyutka and the arrest of the head and personnel of the Delegation by Soviet authorities. At that moment, sending flour for the baking of matzo is impossible because of the authorities’ refusal to allow postal consignments to be sent, as well as due to the progressive liquidation of the Polish care system by Soviet authorities.’

SECRETARY-GENERAL
Kajetan Morawski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136

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16 April 1943. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern on a conversation with the Delegate of the International Red Cross

No. 143 of 16 April 1943

Refero 77 and 109⁴⁹

I have seen Dr von Wyss, the Delegate of the International Red Cross, who has just returned from Poland.

The transport arrived in order and was delivered to the Central Welfare Council,⁵⁰ which is to carry out the distribution according to the national criteria used previously, with the only difference that the Germans objected to the allocation of anything to Jews. I protested via the International Red Cross, but I ordered that other allocations be increased accordingly in case no change is possible.

The Delegate visited Cracow, Kielce, Radom, Warsaw, Lwów, Sambor, Drohobycz, Morszyn and Stryj. In all these places, he ascertained the scrupulous allocation of medicines from the previous transport and their exemplary use. He states that the German authorities are very concerned about showing scrupulousness in this matter and that strong efforts to prove exemplary administration and attempts to gain the confidence of the population can be seen now (unlike in the case of the previous trip).

In Cracow, he spoke mainly with Professor Wolter, the deputy of seriously sick Ronikier; in Warsaw, he spoke with Machnicki, Wachowiak and Wysocki. Unfortunately, he does not remember the other names. He also spoke with representatives of the Russian and Belarussian committees and—in Cracow and Lwów—the Ukrainian committee; they demanded that their allocations be increased due to a huge number of refugees from territories taken away by the Soviets. The Delegate refused, in accordance with my basic instruction not to make a difference between Polish citizens of various nationalities and religions, but to reserve help only for Polish citizens.

⁴⁹ In the cable no. 77 of 2 March 1943, Aleksander Ładoś informed: 'The second transport of medicines (three wagons) and condensed milk (three wagons) left Geneva on 26 February. The Delegate of the International Red Cross left simultaneously to be in Cracow and to receive and hand over the transport to the Central Welfare Council ... The third transport is being prepared. Please let me know if I can count on money for further transports and how much.' In the cable no. 109 of 23 March 1943, he added: 'The transport of medicines and supplements in 7 wagons reached Cracow, and the Delegate of the International Red Cross left on the 20 March to check the reception and distribution. I am preparing the third transport, so please accelerate the reply to my cable no. 77.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 250.

⁵⁰ The Central Welfare Council was a Polish social care organisation established in February 1940 in Warsaw, with local delegations.

In the next few days, a new transport—for more than 300,000 Swiss francs—of condensed milk, Ovomaltine and cocoa will leave; the consent of Swiss authorities was exceptionally obtained for this export, which I must immediately use. However, for the time being, in the absence of money and replies to my cables, I cannot fulfil new requests from the Central Welfare Council, an extensive list of which was brought by the Delegate. In this connection, I draw your special attention to the matter brought up in my cable No. 249 of the previous year, for which I have not received any reply so far. The request for the submission of vitamin A preparations is the highest priority among demands of the Central Welfare Council. The proposal from my cable No. 249 is still valid and I request you to answer by return post in this matter.⁵¹

/-/ ŁADOŚ

AAN, *Poselstwo Berne*, 327

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*16 April 1943. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Consulate in Algiers on the evacuation of Jewish refugees
to North Africa*

TO Polconsul ALGIERS
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 20 APR 1943

Very Urgent

No. 40

Receptus 107

In the cables No. 21 and 36,⁵² I explained the case of people who have been released in Spain. I will recapitulate again:

⁵¹ In the cable no. 249 of 30 October 1942, Aleksander Ładoś informed: 'I received from the Commission Mixte a proposal of purchase of ... concentrated tuna oil containing vitamin A ... The cost amounts to 187,000 Swiss francs, including 425,000 pesetas paid in Spain. The oil would be processed into dragees in Switzerland, and I will additionally state the cost. In view of the prohibition to export vitamin A, it is a great opportunity, which I would like to take, but I do not have enough money. Therefore, I request you to make a decision, to accelerate the transfer of announced \$100,000 and to let me know if a part of the costs in pesetas could be transferred directly to Spain from London or New York.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 236.

⁵² In the cable no. 21 of 19 March 1943, Minister Raczyński reported: 'In Spain, approx. 350 Polish citizens are free; a prevailing part of them are Jews who lived permanently mainly in France and Belgium before the war. These people are unfit for military service, so they

1) In Spain, approx. 350 Polish citizens (mainly Jews) are free. This group should be granted current asylum in Morocco at our cost for the period of war. It is necessary to obtain the consent of the Administration of General Giraud to this as quickly as possible.

2) At the end of March, all Polish interned people, approx. 600, were released in Spain. Approx. 100 will leave via Gibraltar here. The rest are to leave for Portugal. Their direct travel will probably be difficult, so sending everyone to Morocco (to Casablanca) is being considered, where the selection of people to arrive in England would take place.

3) In Portugal, there are approx. 250 refugees, Polish Jews. Taking these refugees will make it easier for us to obtain Portuguese visas for groups from Spain. For this reason, we want to evacuate this whole group also to Morocco. Their transport would be carried out simultaneously with Spanish groups.

I request the Consul General to hold talks on the whole matter with General Giraud's Administration and to agree upon the action with the British resident. In connection with my cable No. 21, I would like to ask if you could already clarify food deliveries with the Americans.

I consider it important that the case be settled as quickly as possible.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 546

341

*19 April 1943. Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
to the Embassy in London on attempts to release Ida Seidenman*

London, 19 April 1943

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests the Embassy to intervene with the relevant British authorities in the following matter:

For some time, the Palestinian authorities have conducted an exchange of German citizens from Palestine for Jews from German-occupied countries. The first tranche of this exchange has recently been carried out. In connection with this, on

cannot be brought to England.' In the cable no. 36 of 9 April, he added: 'It is likely that we will have to direct all Polish citizens released in Spain to North Africa. Their number constantly increases.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 546.

the initiative of Minister Kot, efforts were undertaken with Palestinian authorities to include Mrs Ida Seidenman, the wife of the legal counsellor of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kuybyshev, who is currently appointed as Vice-Consul of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem. However, according to information recently received from Jerusalem, the issue of placing Mrs Seidenman on the exchange list has not progressed forward and the Palestinian authorities do not provide an answer as to whether she will be included in the exchange. In this regard, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem has requested that the Ministry support the case of Mrs Seidenman with the central authorities in London. For his part, Minister Kot also strongly recommends that this matter be addressed.⁵³

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
Józef Zdrański

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 61

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21 April 1943. Cable from the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Lisbon on the activities of the Portuguese police

POLMISSION—LISBON
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 21 APR 1943
RECEIVED ON 22 APR 1943

No. 155

Schimitzek to the Ministry of Social Welfare

Refero cable No. 67⁵⁴

In view of the continuous illegal influx of Jewish refugees, the police has abandoned its liberal attitude to this matter and begins to use increasingly stricter

⁵³ In the letter from 22 June 1943 addressed to the Ministry of Information and Documentation, the MFA requested the 'notification of Minister Kot that efforts to include Mrs Ida Seidenman in the exchange of German citizens from Palestine for Jews from occupied countries gave no result. The Foreign Office informed the Embassy that Mrs Seidenman could not be included in any of the categories of people covered by the exchange and, for this reason, the Foreign Office saw no possibility of intervention with the High Commissioner for Palestine in this matter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136.

⁵⁴ In the cable no. 67, Minister Stańczyk staying in Lisbon informed: 'For the purpose of ensuring the friendly attitude of local authorities to the matter of Polish refugees

repressions. They limit the possibility of use of the shelter in Oeiras by Polish citizens, which is tolerated by the police, to refugees having the secured possibility of leaving Portugal in the near future, i.e. having target visas. There are almost no such people among the illegal arrivals. Thus, there is a reason to be afraid of numerous arrests among the refugees.

The situation can only be changed by the fact that the refugees from Portugal have been partially discharged, which I still consider to be an urgent matter. Refero report No. 1348 and 1462 of 3 November and 17 January.

POLMISSION

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 545

343

*22 April 1943. Study by the Ministry of National Defence
on refugees—Polish citizens (extract)*

INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL REPORT No. 2/43

...⁵⁵

POLISH WAR EXILE

Below you will find information about the fate and current situation of Polish war refugees. It is necessary to make these materials available to soldiers in the form of talks, emphasizing the enormous difficulties encountered by the action of caring for thousands of Poles scattered around the world, and outlining the Government's constant efforts in providing material and spiritual assistance to our compatriots.

General observations

At the moment the country was occupied by the enemy, thousands of waves of refugees headed for neighbouring countries, Romania, Hungary and Lithuania.

going by transit via Portugal or arriving illegally, I think it is necessary for 150–200 Jewish citizens of Poland, many of whom arrived here illegally, to leave Portugal. Please take energetic steps towards the use of pressures from British Jewish organisations in order to obtain temporary asylum for this group of refugees from Great Britain.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 256.

⁵⁵ Extracts concerning Opole Silesia, the anniversary of Nicolaus Copernicus's death and editorial issues were omitted.

As long as Hungary and Romania were neutral countries, Polish aid and care organisations could develop there relatively freely. In the winter of 1939/40 and in the spring of 1940, some refugees from these states arrived in France, and in April 1940 an agreement was concluded with the French Government which allowed the overwhelming majority of refugees to come to France under the direct care of the Polish Government. The events of the war shattered these plans, at the same time, changing the situation of Polish refugees in the Balkan countries. Some of the refugees became dispersed and some of them returned to the Homeland, so today there are approx. 3,500 civilian refugees and as many as 6,000 interned soldiers staying in Hungary and only 3,200 civilian refugees in Romania.

In addition to the soldiers, about 3,000 people have crossed from Romania and Hungary to the Middle East, most of them are in Palestine. Refugee centres in Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv are developing vibrant cultural and social activities. In Tel Aviv, a regular literary-artistic theatre was established on the initiative of the refugees; in Jerusalem there is a daily newspaper titled 'Gazeta Polska' and in Tel Aviv a bi-weekly literary and social magazine titled 'Głos Polski' has recently been published. Several Polish brochures and books were published. For schoolchildren, a primary school, a gymnasium and a high school were established in Tel Aviv. In addition, own reading rooms for books and magazines have been established, scientific courses, courses of canteen workers and nurses have been organized. A lively campaign of help for Poles in Russia is being carried out, and the collection of clothing, medical supplies and money has yielded considerable results.

The fate of the Polish refugees in Lithuania was different. Only few groups managed to get through to Sweden, and from there only a part to France and Great Britain. The huge mass of refugees shared the changeable fate of the country into which the war had driven them. When Russia gave Wilno back to the Lithuanians, this thoroughly Polish city became a centre of extensive and intensive action of aid for refugees. The incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union interrupted this action; a significant number of the refugees returned to their former settlements, and some were deported into the depths of Russia. Only approx., 2,000 people made their way to Japan, from where about half left for Canada, the United States, Australia etc., and as many as 900 people are currently under Japanese occupation in Shanghai.

Those leaving the country already during German occupation usually headed for Italy in the winter of 1939/1940, from where some people arrived in France and some dispersed around the world. Approx. 3,000 people have been in Italy so far, including a large group in concentration camps.

In France, there were approx. 15,000 civilian refugees at the time of the ceasefire. Of this number, approx. 3,000 made their way to Great Britain, and a further 4,000 people managed to leave for Brazil, Canada, United States and other American countries.

Civilian refugees in Great Britain were initially welcomed by the British Government in the form of 'billeting.' Today, with a few exceptions (approx. 420 people), almost all in one way or another are standing on their own two feet. More than 800 engineers, technicians and workers are working in the British industry for the war effort, earning themselves full recognition for their diligence, professional skill and productivity. Among the workers, the vast majority become new highly qualified craftsmen. There are many excellent specialists among the technicians. All of them take part in the war effort, providing a good service and shaping good opinions about Poland and Poles.

Similarly, in Canada and the United States, most refugees are skilled industrial employees, so a certain number of non-professionals found a job in industry there.

In all these countries, the authorities of the Polish Government provide material aid to refugees in the case of illness or unemployment, help them find a job, deliver medicines and help them with their studies.

Poles in Soviet Russia

On Soviet Russian territory, there are approx. 800,000 Polish citizens, forcibly deported from the territories of Poland occupied by Soviet authorities.⁵⁶ There is no more accurate data, because the Soviet Government did not give the Polish authorities a census of deportees, and registration was extremely difficult due to the dispersion of the population in the wide expanses of European and Asian Russia.

Among this population, children account for approx. 30%, women approx. 25%, and the remaining population is male, including a large number of the elderly.

The professional composition of the population is very diverse. In the first period of the occupation of Polish territories, the Soviet authorities arrested primarily political activists, judges and prosecutors. Subsequently, the Polish rural population, forest service and settlers with families were successively displaced from the country. Then the deportation affected refugees from central and western Poland, who found shelter in the eastern territories of the country from the advancing German army; families of clerks, soldiers and POWs were displaced on a mass scale.

The entire mass of one million Polish citizens, regardless of their professional qualifications and physical abilities, was forced to do the most primitive works in

⁵⁶ Estimates (also those prepared many years after the war) regarding the number of deportees were considerably different one from another. It was reported that in the 'four deportations' (February 1940, April 1940, June 1940, May/June 1941) as many as 1.5 million persons had been deported; sometimes five deportation batches are distinguished if the displacements of October 1939 are added. In the last few years, researchers have significantly reduced the originally stated number; today, it is estimated that approx. 330,000 persons were deported. See also doc. 479.

kolkhozes and sovkhozes, in the exploitation of forests and peat, in the construction of railway tracks, roads, canals, etc. The work is compulsory and only after the Polish-Soviet agreement was concluded in July 1941 did Polish citizens gain the freedom and possibility of choosing their place of residence and work. In practice, however, this freedom was immediately restricted by excluding the possibility of settlement in a number of reserved places, mainly towns.

Living conditions are usually very harsh, and the physical exhaustion to which the entire population is subjected and inadequate nutrition have a negative impact on health and cause numerous diseases and high mortality rates.

Under these circumstances, the aid and care organised by the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev was of tremendous importance. The principle of organizing the care was to expand it as widely in the field, in order to reach the dispersed Polish population. The Embassy's network of delegations and trusted representatives took care of the Polish population in 46 administrative regions (oblasts), where Polish citizens are concentrated in a total of 2,600 locations. However, the Embassy did not manage to provide regular care to 10 administrative regions, where Poles are concentrated in approx. 200 locations. The delegations started operating around the middle of February 1942, achieving considerable results within less than half a year. During that period, a network of care facilities was organised, including 139 orphanages and nurseries for 8,000 children, 30 facilities for the unfit for work with a capacity of 2,000 people, 21 canteens for approx. 4,000 people, 116 catering points for over 5,000 children and 5 accommodation shelters for over 700 people. Regarding sanitary care, 46 small hospitals, 16 outpatient clinics and 18 houses for convalescents were organised; apart from that, many doctors were on duty at delegations and posts of trusted representatives.

Using a loan granted by the Soviet Government, about 60 million roubles were distributed among the Polish population in the form of cash benefits. An extremely important element of care was aid in kind, the distribution of food and clothes that reached Soviet Russia as a result of purchases by the Polish Government and as a result of aid from the Polish and Anglo-Saxon societies. During the first half of 1942, 2,000,000 kg of food and clothes were distributed, mainly among families with more children.

Unfortunately, the organisation of welfare in a foreign territory depends not only on the efforts of one side. Therefore, although the Polish side tried to overcome all difficulties in order to provide the most effective aid to Polish citizens, in July 1942, all the delegations of our Embassy were closed and the entire labouriously created network of care ceased to exist for the time being. At the moment, it is difficult to predict the further course of relations in the field of taking care of the Polish population in Russia. On the part of the Polish government, continuous efforts are made so as not to leave our population to their own fate.

Despite difficulties in the organisation of aid inside Russia, aid from the Polish Government has not ceased even for a moment. During the last three months of 1942, large quantities of goods purchased by the Government in the United States and Great Britain were dispensed. It is sufficient to indicate that at this time the following shipments were made from the States (in round digits): 10,000 overcoats, 15,200 jackets, 13,000 pairs of trousers, 17,000 woollen jackets, 5,500 sweaters, 1,200 thermals, 47,500 pairs of shoes, 100,000 woollen blankets, and from Great Britain: 32,500 battle-dresses, 6,000 coats, 26,500 woollen waistcoats and shirts, 17,000 pullovers, 30,000 woollen flying caps and gloves and additionally 625 sewing machines and large numbers of threads, needles, wool for mending, etc. Food dispatched from the States included 50,000 pounds of powdered milk, 1,454,800 pounds of wheat flour, 377,800 pounds of powdered soups, 220,000 pounds of oat flakes, 813,000 pounds of edible olive oil and 80,000 pounds of dried beans. The distribution of these supplies between our population proceeds efficiently, and the food and clothes reach our compatriots.

In the harsh conditions of living in Russia and in view of huge difficulties in the receipt of sufficient aid, it is completely understandable that the Polish population in Russia takes every opportunity to get outside the borders of this country.

Evacuation of Polish citizens from Russia to Persia and Africa

Persia. During 1942, a certain number of Polish citizens were evacuated in groups several times from Soviet Russia to Persia. At the end of March and at the beginning of April this year, the first group of over 12,000 people entered Persia, including 6,000 women and 4,500 children (the rest were men). Most of the arrivals were people from villages and small towns, settlers with families, clerks, families of military men, etc.

People evacuated from Russia arrived in very poor health. Diseases spread among the exhausted and the weak, and the organisation of care in the first period was particularly difficult because the local territory was totally unprepared for it. The evacuation was carried out without a plan and resulted from the accumulation of the Polish population in southern Russia alongside army troops, with a part of which it reached Persia.

In these difficult conditions, an incredible organisational effort had to be made to ensure adequate care to the evacuated. This matter was handled by the specially organised delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Hospitals were established, food was provided to everyone, with particular regard for children and the elderly, and rags were replaced with clothes. This work soon brought positive results as the level of health improved and people became adequately fed and dressed. The care of the material living conditions of the evacuated went hand in hand with the organisation of education and a cultural and educational action. Over 1,000 children were put in Ispahan boarding schools, where normal education was organised for them, and normal school lessons in camps in Tehran started

already in April 1942. Two kindergartens for 354 children, two public schools for 2,217 children and two secondary schools for 200 children were established.

Tanganyika and Uganda. After five months of rest in Persia, the further evacuation of the Polish population to East Africa, to Tanganyika and Uganda, started (in August 1942). The placement of Poles in these territories was initiated by British authorities. Poles are put in places situated on high lands, a few thousand feet above sea level, where the climate is good and adequate for Europeans. This is an agricultural sort of emigration; the population will live off farming the land which has been left completely at their disposal. These lands yield crops twice a year, and the food supply situation is good. The place abounds in meat, fat, legumes, vegetables, fruit, tea etc.

For the organisation of the reception of the Polish population in East Africa, a special delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sent at the beginning of August 1942 in order to establish a network of consulates and a delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was sent in order to organise care.

Evacuation from Persia had to progress at a relatively quick pace because it was necessary to provide room for a new mass of Polish population arriving from Russia. This is because 25,145 civilians entered Persia in August 1942, including 11,806 women, 9,325 children and 4,013 men. This time the situation was better because the territory had already been prepared and organised.

Reports from East Africa give us a glimpse into the living conditions of our refugees. Here are some of them:

Tengeru Settlement—a settlement situated on the level of 4,500 feet above sea level, at the foot of the Meru mountain, on the hill and the slope with trickling streams. Winds from Kilimanjaro glaciers refresh the air, the climate is very good, and nights and mornings are rather cold. The settlement is designed for 3,000 people (there were 1,049 at the end of October). The settlement looks like a village scattered upon a hill and has 200 houses.

Right behind the settlement, on the hill, there is a beautiful small hospital with 50 beds (there may be even more) installed in a former Greek school. The climate is excellent, and the surroundings are beautiful.

The conditions make it possible to employ people for the following labours for one's own needs: vegetable growing, cattle and pig breeding, dairying, poultry breeding, wool grooming and yarning and the production of sweaters, socks etc. For sale: bean cultivation and pig breeding.

Ifunda Settlement—close to the Iringa town. It is situated on the level of approx. 5,000 feet and has a very good climate. The settlement is designed for 800 people who have already arrived. The houses have two rooms, with 2–3 people per room. The houses are made of baked or dried brick and look very nice. Kitchens are designed for 100 people each. A big bakery for 1,500 loaves with a dispensing

area was built. There is a beautiful room for children and a reading room for the elderly. Not far from the settlement, there is a big tea plantation, which has also plum orchards (former German plantations). These orchards were handed over to the settlement free of charge. The crop to be yielded in December is going to be used for the preparation of dried plums and jams for all the settlements. Work opportunities in the settlement are similar to those in Tengeru; in addition, tobacco is cultivated for sale.

Kidugala Settlement—situated on the level of 5,000 feet beside the town of Mambo. It is situated on two hills, between which a stream flows. The settlement resembles our Rabka, and the climate is a little cold (would be ideal for a sanatorium). The settlement is designed for 800 people (there are already 779). It consists of very modest 2-room houses for 5-6 people. In the settlement there are very beautiful buildings: a Lutheran church (a former German mansion) that will be converted into a Catholic church, a beautiful building suitable for a hospital, many brick buildings to be used as stores, and a beautiful park. The houses are surrounded with 200 peach trees, and there are also lemons.

Kondoa Settlement—situated at the level of 4,625 feet, close to the town of Dodoma. It is designed for 400 people. The houses are designed for 20 people; they are clean and have floors. The settlement has already received 200 cows, and the breeding of pigs and hens is planned. The local authorities promised to send a gardener for the establishment of gardens and to deliver expressed milk for pigs regularly from the neighbouring dairy.

Evacuation to India. India hospitably opened its territory to Polish children in Russia and built a special settlement for them in the princely state of Nawanagar. The first transport of 500 children was evacuated to India between March and July 1942. The travel from Russia to India was organised independently by Polish circles. A car expedition with goods purchased by the Polish Government set off from Bombay twice, taking little refugees on their way back.

India has recently decided to admit 11,000 children, mothers and the elderly staying in Persia. Thanks to the kindness of the Government of India, the weakest group—children—will be moved to a place with better conditions. The consent to accept mothers as well solves an important issue—it ensures that they will not be separated from their children, which would be an excessively hard new experience for them, particularly after recent experiences in Russia.

In order for children and mothers to be able to travel from Persia to India as quickly as possible, the adaptation of the existing settlements and the construction of new settlements has already started, and a detailed evacuation plan has been prepared. Each group consists of 1,000 children, at least two doctors, 40 teachers and 50 female educators.

The Polish Government will cover costs of investment and maintenance and will exercise care through delegates of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The British Government assured on its part that it will make every effort to ensure the best conditions of stay in settlements and conditions of nutrition that can be provided during the time of war.

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SOCIAL WELFARE IN RESURRECTED POLAND

In relation to the discussion taking place in Great Britain about the Beveridge Report, it is worth taking a closer look at the social welfare that developed in Poland. An overview of the Polish legislation on labour protection and social insurance that I present below in a nutshell gives not only a picture of the social policy of the Polish state, which considered the employee and his work to be the foundation of the power and development of the Republic of Poland. It also testifies to the legacy of resurrected Poland in the field of social legislation, which was one of the most modern and stayed ahead of a majority of Europe's social legislations and even the whole civilised world.

The state's care of work and its performer

The attitude of the Polish state to the working man was expressed in the Constitution, where it was stated in Article 8: 'Labour is the basis for the development and power of the Republic.' This brief but very concrete sentence specified the rule that the power and growth of the state are based on the working man, on his professional values and internal culture.

This leading rule expressed the need for the attentive care of work by the state, which was confirmed by the further sentence of the same article of the Constitution: 'The State extends protection over labour and supervises its conditions.' Protection and care on the part of the state consisted in making it easier for employees to receive professional preparation, caring about the protection of health and life during work, providing sickness, disability and old age insurances, shortening the working day and granting annual leaves to employees.

...

Hoover Institution, Poland. Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, 2

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*26 April 1943. Cable from the Embassy in Kuybyshev
on the USSR severing diplomatic relations with Poland*

Polmission—Kuybyshev
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 26 APR 1943
RECEIVED ON 27 APR 1943

No. 185

Sent to London and Moscow

I) On 26 April, at 3.30 p.m., Lozovsky, the head of the mission in Kuybyshev [sic], received the decision of the Government of the USSR regarding severing diplomatic relations with Poland.⁵⁷ When asked by the Delegate of the Embassy Garreau about the fate of Poles in the USSR, L. stated that the USSR maintains a friendly attitude towards the Polish nation.

II) Necessary dictionaries ready for burning. I also ensured communication with the diplomatic corps, obtaining assurances from Anglo-Saxon posts that they would send someone from their personnel to us every day to assess the current situation.

III) I consider the possibility of switching the radio station only to the reception mode.

IV) Please listen to us on even hours.

Zawadowski

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 255

⁵⁷ The pretext for severing relations was the submission of a request by the Polish authorities for the examination of the Katyn massacre to the International Red Cross. See footnote 22 to doc. 160.

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*[After 26 April 1943]. Report by a Jewish student
on the situation in occupied Poland (extracts)*

...⁵⁸

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Currently I am 24 years old.⁵⁹ I was born in Warsaw and lived permanently in Hrubieszów. For the last two years before the war, I studied medicine in Pisa, Italy. I arrived in P. on 26 April 1943, leaving Poland on 15 April 1943.

During the outbreak of war, I was in my mother's house in Hrubieszów, where I was to spend my summer holidays. Our town was bombed once, on 7 September 1943 [sic], and the Germans entered it on the 14th day of that month. On that day, I left my hometown on foot, going together with other Jews towards Kowel-Łuck-Sarny in order to join a Polish military formation that was to be formed there.

The route becomes dangerous starting with Kowel, as Ukrainians organise assaults on Jews and Poles there. On 21 September, I meet invading Soviet troops, which immediately liquidate Ukrainian bands. At the beginning of October, Germans retreat towards Warsaw, whereas the Soviet troops occupy some areas of the eastern Lublin region. Then I come back with the Russians and stay in Hrubieszów. From all neighbouring cities and towns, Jews move en masse scale from German-occupied territories to Russian-occupied territories, because from the first day of entering the occupied towns, the Germans held Jews responsible for every protest directed against them and took whole groups of Jews to be shot. The contributions paid to them did not save anyone. At the end of October, the Russians retreat outside the Bug River line; as a result; I remain in the German-occupied territory.

I witnessed the shooting of films, such as the giving of soup and bread to the hungry Polish population, to which the Jews were not allowed—Jews were identified by the local mob. After the receipt of this soup by a certain part of the population, the rest of the hungry crowd was chased away with whips, which of course was not filmed. After the normalisation of relations, the Kreishauptmannschaft and Gestapo were our authorities.

...

⁵⁸ Extracts not concerning Jewish issues were omitted.

⁵⁹ This account was probably noted down in the Embassy at the Holy See, and a commentary was added: 'TESTIMONY made by an absolutely reliable person, whose truthfulness is beyond doubt and who can also support a large part of his testimonies with documents. After all, this person can swear the veracity of his testimony before an independent court.' Papiński Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Spuścizna Kazimierza Papée, 8/32.

JEWS HIDDEN IN THE FOREST AND SURROUNDINGS

In connection with my work in a patriotic organisation, I lived in a peasant's house close to the forest in J. One evening, a Jew who had been wandering around for three months came up to the hut, asking for bread. Having given him something to eat, the peasant urged him to go away quickly, and then he told me the history of this poor man and many others like him. They initially paid with gold, money and eventually parts of clothes for a piece of bread allowing them to spend the night in the shed. Not knowing that I am a Jew, he told me in confidence that he could not stand the greed or even cruelty of some local peasants, who tricked everything out from hiding Jews and then gave them away to German gendarmes. It happened that German gendarmes shot both Jews and informers. I will never forget seeing that Jew who was in the room at that time. A skeleton with a ghostly look, his whole body trembling with cold, shrunken in his thin jacket. That happened in December 1942.

JEWS IN PARTISAN ORGANISATIONS

During that time, partisans do not cease their activity, and their ranks are often joined by Jews, particularly homeless people. I know a few cases where partisan troops were led by Jews and consisted entirely of Jews. Currently, I must not give any details of their whereabouts, any names or the very interesting things that we have experienced.

...

FREE AT LAST IN B.

I finally reached B. I thought I would have some rest here after my odyssey because our posts function here. However, my role has become important because the access of my case to influential circles in B. is impossible due to my actual descent, which I do not conceal in our offices now and, as far as I can see, I cannot count on any sympathy here because everything drowns in waves of office blotting paper here, quite aside from the most important problem in settlement: the lack of money.

Altogether, 13 of us, including two women, have arrived at the same time so far. We drift from one office to another, from one activist to another. We, who represent millions of Polish Jews, and here the Jews do not even give us access to themselves in fear of their own safety. The best ones send us small sums, not seeing us, and others dismiss us with a snippy question: what have you come here for? And we, so eager for a kind heart or at least an ear, curl up as if under a gust of cold wind, thinking of further departure, which unfortunately is impossible. We left behind our loved ones murdered by the German executioners, we saved ourselves miraculously, and our mental state is such that we should actually be put in straitjackets. Bureaucracy and the cold attitude to us did the rest. We grind our teeth and we have nobody to blame because we do not know WHO IS TO

BLAME? We can think thoughts that a person would be ashamed of under normal conditions, but not us, who have become accustomed to the fact that if someone does not want to give, he takes it himself by force. We are without clothes and shoes, we are terribly dressed, eat meals in various cheap and dirty dairies and, apart from a FEW PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL, whose names I will disclose later, everybody treats us with detachment, to put it mildly.

After all these experiences, I, a 24-year-old, full of bitterness, feel like an old man.

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Spuścizna Kazimierza Papée, 8/32

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*[April 1943]. Draft (?) of a Government statement
on the Jewish minority in post-war Poland*

Declaration of the Polish Government on the Jewish matter in post-war Poland

In its declarations regarding Jewish issues, the Government consistently and strongly emphasises its sincerely democratic attitude to the Jewish minority. Please find enclosed texts of the most important declarations, namely:

- 1) an official declaration on the occasion of the convening of the National Council on 24 February 1942;
- 2) a declaration made by the Prime Minister at the meeting in the Albert Hall on 29 October 1942;
- 3) an interview of the Prime Minister on the position of Jews in the future Poland on 11 November 1942;
- 4) a message on behalf of the Polish Government delivered by Professor Górka on 16 August 1942.⁶⁰

The democratic approach of the Government to the Jewish matter does not prevent it, however, from envisaging serious difficulties that will occur after the war as a result of facts accomplished in the situation of Polish Jews during the occupation. Therefore, the Polish Government wants to reach an agreement and arrange the cooperation with Polish Jews and, if possible, also with heads of international Jewry as to normalisation acts that may prove necessary in order

⁶⁰ Doc. 166, 268 and 276 (the speech by Olgierd Górka is missing).

to settle the Jewish matter in Poland in advance. These acts should concern both the settlement of the property status of Jews dispossessed by German occupants, necessary professional redistribution among the Jewish population and, if possible, also aid to Jews wanting to emigrate from Poland.

Of course, apart from this, there is also an extremely important issue of relief for the exhausted Jewish masses in Poland.

London, April 1943

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 612

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*[April 1943]. Unsigned note on counteracting the allegations
of antisemitic actions in pre-war Poland*

Arguments for the refutation of allegations of antisemitism made against society
and Polish authorities before 1939

1. The Jewish issue in Poland essentially differs, both in terms of quantity and quality, from similar problems in countries of Western Europe. While Jews accounted for a marginal percentage of the population in those countries (e.g. approx. 300,000 in England, i.e. 0.65% of the population, and fewer than 700,000 in pre-Nazi Germany, i.e. 0.9%), in Poland there were more than 3 million Jews, accounting for 9.8% of the entire population of the country. It is worth adding that, while the Jews were, in general, externally and internally assimilated to a relatively large extent in Western Europe, the Jews in Poland usually lived, at least until recently, in isolation, which was difficult to overcome, e.g. due to their high numbers. Until recently, a large percentage of the Jewish population did not speak Polish or had a very poor command of it.

Finally, it should be born in mind that the Jews in Poland were concentrated in towns to an abnormal extent (accounting for 9% of the entire population, they constituted more than 30% of the population in Polish cities, and in smaller towns this percentage was even larger, sometimes reaching up to 90%). In a professional respect, the structure of the Jewish population was highly unhealthy. While there were almost no Jews on farms and only a few of them among industrial workers, a huge majority of the Jewish population (more than 60%) lived off small trade and craft, occupying an almost monopolistic position in some sections of these branches of the economy. Obviously, such a situation resulted to a large extent

from historical conditions and the lack of the more numerous Polish middle class until recently. However, when large excess numbers of the rural population started arriving in towns and taking up work in industrial and trade occupations after the last war, this automatically led to competitive rivalry with the Jews, the echoes of which unfortunately appeared also in the political arena. It must be stressed that this conflict based on economic aspects became particularly fierce against the background of general economic difficulties of the country, which were additionally exacerbated by the long-lasting crisis. Moreover, immigration limitations common in the world before the war prevented the natural outflow of particularly the Jewish population, which throughout the whole of Central and Eastern Europe has shown a strong inclination to emigrate for the last few decades. Another reason for the aggravation of the conflict was the rising nationalistic feeling among the Jewish population itself (Zionism).

Thus, it must be said that, in contrast to the countries of Western Europe, particularly Germany, where the Jewish matter actually did not exist or where it was made up as an idea of political antisemitic trends, such as Nazism, the Jewish matter was on the contrary a serious and complicated issue in Poland.

2. Despite the accumulation of social, economic, political and religious conflicts regarding the Jewish matter that embittered the atmosphere of Polish-Jewish relations in the last years before the war, it is worth stressing that these conflicts led to excesses in the form of physical violence only in few exceptional cases. The cases where the Jews lost their lives due to outbreaks of antisemitism in Poland during the last twenty years could be counted on fingers without any exaggeration. Sporadic excesses and brawls, which the authorities energetically tried to eradicate, were usually caused by irresponsible individuals and did not find any response among broad masses of the Polish society. Perpetrators of excesses were usually punished severely by courts.

The propaganda hostile to Poland has been coming for many years primarily from German sources and gave the impression in some circles that the situation of Jews in Poland could be compared to the situation of Jews in Nazi Germany. It is necessary to stress that this is absolutely untrue, and every honest Jew will certainly admit that such comparison could never take place at all. This is proved, for example, by a large number of Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia who took refuge in Poland before the war.

3. As far as the legal and political position of Jews in Poland is concerned, it must be stated primarily that the equal rights of all citizens were constitutionally guaranteed in the Republic of Poland. All restrictions introduced by the invaders were lifted after the regaining of Poland's independence. The Jews enjoyed full political, organisational and religious freedom. Jewish parties functioned without

any obstacles, and even in the period after 1926, the restrictions of the political freedom of Jews were not at all greater but, on the contrary, perhaps even smaller than those of native Poles. Before 1926, Jewish parties played a significant role in the legislative houses, and even in the last years of 'authoritarian' rule, Jews continued to sit in the Sejm and the Senate, and their parties won municipal elections (e.g. the BUND workers' party won the election to the City Council of Warsaw in 1938). The favourable attitude of the authorities in the first years of independence is reflected, among others, by the fact that several hundred thousand Jewish refugees from the East who fled to Poland as a result of the revolution in Russia were granted Polish citizenship. Finally, it should be mentioned that the national cultural life, education and Jewish cooperatives developed in Poland without any obstacles.

There is no doubt that in the last years before the war, the attitude of the Government circles towards Jews was not entirely favourable, but even during this period there was never (except for the Act on Revocation of Citizenship, subsequently annulled by the current Government in 1941) any adoption of laws with a clearly antisemitic attitude. For example, the widely commented-upon act on ritual slaughter had a rather economic basis because it was aimed at breaking the actual monopoly of Jewish butchers, but it fully guaranteed the deliveries of kosher meat quotas to Jews.

Although the number of Jews in state and local government offices did not reflect the percentage of the Jewish population—which is, among others, due to isolation in which Jews lived—nevertheless in all branches of state administration and in the army there were a significant number of people in the Jewish population, even in the highest positions. The same applies to science, education, economic life and liberal professions (the number of Jews in the latter was considerably higher than their percentage share in the population of the country).

Finally, it should be emphasised that although Poland has accepted its commitments to protect the rights of Jewish minorities internationally, the Jewish minority have never used the procedure before the forum of the League of Nations to bring charges against the Polish Government.

4. Although it cannot be denied that the last years before the war were a period of regrettable tension in Polish-Jewish relations—which was caused, on the one hand, by objective difficulties of the Jewish matter in Poland and, on the other hand, by the unhealthy atmosphere that had formed around this issue, partly also due to antisemitic agitation infiltrating from Nazi Germany—we must remember that this period was preceded by long centuries of harmonious cooperation between both societies, which should be attributed to the innate tolerance of the Polish Nation. Thus, we can suppose that when transitory difficulties related to the shifting of Poland from a purely agricultural country to a more industrialised

country are settled and when, as a result of these changes, the Jewish population will find conditions for development in a healthier professional structure, the entire Jewish matter in Poland will automatically become less severe.

London, April 1943

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 612

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[April 1943]. Unsigned note on Government aid granted to persons of Jewish descent

Activities of the Polish Government in Jewish matters during the last war

1. In 1941, the Government annulled entirely the Act on Revocation of Citizenship of 1938. In practice, this restores Polish citizenship to Jews who lost it under this act in the pre-war period. Irrespective of this, the Government issued orders making it easier for refugees fleeing from German occupation to obtain Polish documents, which they had to destroy on the way.

2. In his orders to the army, the Commander-in-Chief strictly ordered the equal treatment of Jews. Isolated cases of non-compliance in this respect are punished severely at once.

The civil authorities (e.g. MFA) ordered their posts to exercise special care in handling the matters of Polish-Jewish citizens.

3. Within the scope of its activity for war refugees, the Polish Government made a strong effort to help Jewish refugees during the last few years.

Examples:

(a) After the beginning of the well-known anti-Jewish action by the Vichy Government in the summer of 1942, the Polish Government initiated an international action resulting in interventions with Laval in the matter of Polish-Jewish citizens by a number of neutral governments. At the same time, the Polish Government obtained quotas of visas for Jewish refugees from France, mainly for children, e.g. to the United States and Canada. Unfortunately, further incidents put an end to this action.

(b) The Government brought effective aid to the masses of Jewish refugees who managed to get through to the Far East in the first years of the war. Thanks to its efforts, almost 1,000 Jewish refugees were transferred from Japan to various

countries. The Polish Ambassador managed to evaluate a certain group of Jews along with diplomatic personnel to Great Britain. Other Polish Jews in the Far East remain in Shanghai, where the Polish Government tries to deliver aid to them regularly in every possible way.

(c) In spite of huge difficulties, as a result of numerous efforts, the Polish Government made it easier for a large number of Jews to leave for Canada, the United States, Great Britain, British colonies, Latin American countries, Palestine, India, etc. The number of persons who found shelter in these countries amounts to a few thousand.

(d) The Government dynamically strives for the departure of Jewish refugees who managed to flee from France to Spain. In spite of political and transport difficulties, it hopes to solve this issue soon by directing the aforementioned refugees to North Africa, to Mexico or, as a last resort, to Madagascar. The Polish Government has recently managed to carry out the release of a large number of soldiers, among whom there are also some Jews, from the internment camp in Spain. Some of these Jews have already arrived in Great Britain.

(e) Having learnt about the danger of deportation of a few hundred Polish-Jewish citizens interned in Italy to Poland, which would mean a death sentence for them, the Polish Government took steps through neutral channels and obtained assurance from Italian authorities that these Jews would not be given away to Germans in any case.

(f) Immediately upon the occupation of North Africa by allied troops, the Government took steps—which brought successful results a few weeks later—to release Polish-Jewish citizens from camps and to lift all restrictions regarding these people in these territories.

(g) All Jewish refugees without exception who do not have their own resources—in Palestine, in Spain, in Portugal and in Sweden, and many of them also in other countries—are maintained by the Polish Government, which pays the same allowances to them as to other Polish citizens.

4. In order to make it easier for Jewish refugees to find asylum for the period of the war, the Polish Government officially notified all governments of allied and neutral countries that after the war Poland would obviously accept back all of its citizens who had found or would find shelter abroad.

5. As soon as reliable information about the persecution of Jews on an incredible scale by German occupational authorities started to arrive, the National Council adopted an official public protest in this matter with the full participation of the Government. At the same time, by its note in this matter addressed to all

governments of the United Nations, the Government initiated an international action that resulted in the Declaration of the United Nations of 17 December 1942.

The Government often suggested to the allied governments that a retaliation action should be undertaken against Germany in order to suppress the persecution of the population of occupied countries, including Jews, but these proposals could not be fulfilled so far.

In consultation with Jewish organisations, the Government considers carefully each concrete suggestion aimed at coming to the rescue of the Jewish population in Poland or helping at least individual Jews escape from the Nazi hell. At present, for example, the Government is making preliminary efforts in consultation with Jewish organisations in order to check the possibility of the departure of a group of rabbis from Poland to Palestine and of a certain number of Jewish children to Sweden. Unfortunately, because of Germany's position, whether this action will yield results is highly questionable. Here it is necessary to emphasise the uniform position taken by the entire Polish society in the country, which utterly condemned the persecution of Jews by German authorities. The Polish underground press expressed its indignation in strong words against the German methods. It is worth noting that, despite the intense Nazi propaganda, no part of the Polish population has fallen for the anti-Jewish action. On the contrary, Polish society, which suffers incredible oppression itself, tries to help Jews in various ways by hiding them, providing food, etc. The Council to Aid Jews, consisting of representatives of Polish and Jewish political circles, was established in Poland. This council engages in the collection and distribution of funds for Jewish victims of German terror.

6. As far as aid to Jewish refugees is concerned, the Government closely cooperates with the established Jewish organisations to the mutual satisfaction of both sides. In connection with its action, the Government receives many words of gratitude from Polish Jews and Jewish organisations for the work that it did, in spite of serious difficulties, in bringing aid to Polish Jews scattered virtually around the world.

7. The Government very carefully keeps track of projects and negotiations regarding the issue of refugees. It has already expressed its interest in Anglo-American talks on that subject. It received a reply that, for the time being, these are informal discussions limited to the representatives of Great Britain and the United States. However, the Polish Government hopes that, at the next stage, it will be invited to close cooperation within the international action for refugees in which it is so highly interested.

* * *

Regarding Polish Jews who left Poland against their own will, the government has found it most difficult to help Jews deported deep into Russia by Soviet authorities. The number of these Jews cannot be determined accurately because of specific Soviet conditions, but it should presumably be estimated at minimum a few hundred thousand.

The huge difficulties that the Polish Government encountered in its work to provide aid to the Jews in Russia resulted from the position of Soviet authorities, which notified Polish authorities a few months after the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 1941 that they would treat Polish Jews as Soviet citizens from then on. This position, which is incompatible with the text of the Polish-Soviet agreement, has been unilaterally extended in recent times also to most people of Polish nationality. Despite lengthy negotiations on this matter, the Polish Government did not manage to change this Soviet position. As for the Jews, the results of this state of affairs were as follows:

(a) unlike Poles in the 1941/1942 period, Jews were not released from prisons and forced labour camps;

(b) Polish Jews came across huge difficulties in joining the Polish Army due to the prohibition issued by Soviet authorities. The only options available to the Polish Army were to resign from the conscription of recruits at all or to agree to conscription by Soviet commissions, which rejected Jews and, in general, non-Poles. The Soviet authorities used racial criteria for determining the nationality of Jews enlisting in the army, with racial examinations reaching up to the 3rd generation. In spite of this, particularly in the first phase, the Polish Army managed to circumvent the commissions and smuggle or accept many Jews.

(c) The Jewish population experienced serious difficulties in making use of the Polish welfare system. In many cases, Soviet authorities did not allow them to get in touch with representatives of the Embassy and arrested Jews for attempts to do so. It is characteristic that, despite frequent efforts, the Polish Embassy in Russia did not manage to obtain a work exemption for Polish Jews on their religious holidays, although work exemptions were granted to Poles in analogous cases.

(d) Because Polish Jews were regarded as Soviet citizens by Soviet authorities, they were prevented from leaving Russia. Even those one hundred and a few dozen Jews who had certificates to Palestine have not received permissions to leave so far. Also, efforts made by Jewish organisations in Great Britain and America with active support from the Polish Government (via Ambassadors Maisky and Litvinov) to

obtain the right to leave for a group of a few dozen rabbis completely failed, even though President Roosevelt expressed personal interest in the fate of these rabbis.⁶¹

(e) The suffering of the Polish-Jewish masses in the Soviet Union is illustrated best by the fate of outstanding activists of Polish Jewry. The case of the shooting of Alter and Erlich is famous and does not require comment. The probably most outstanding representative of Polish Jewry, commonly respected Professor Schorr, died of exhaustion in Siberia. Sommerstein, the well-known leader of the Polish Zionists and member of the Sejm, is sick, exhausted and cut off from any contact with the Embassy; it is said he has recently been forced to obtain a Soviet passport. Outstanding religious Jewish leaders, such as Rabbi Seroczkin, are also entirely isolated from the outside world. In the absence of quick aid, they are all doomed to annihilation along with the masses of Polish Jews.

It must be stressed that when Soviet authorities still granted Polish citizenship to Poles, they proposed to Polish authorities in the spring of 1942 that these Poles could be provided with Polish passports, which would remove any doubts as to their political status once and for all. Since this kind of step would automatically lead to discrimination towards Polish Jews and other national minorities, the Polish Government did not hesitate to reject this proposal for fundamental reasons, even though it undoubtedly presented benefits for native Poles.

* * *

Taking these huge difficulties into account, the Polish Government could boast considerable results in taking care of Polish Jews in the Soviet Union until recently. Unfortunately, the situation has fundamentally taken a turn for the worse.

In the first place, it must be said that considerable (in terms of size and value) aid in the form of clothes and food that began to flow from abroad for Polish citizens in Russia was distributed very fairly between all Polish citizens regardless of descent, as far as conditions created by Soviet authorities made this possible. The distribution of this aid was handled by the entire welfare system, which became liquidated on one side to a large extent by the Soviet authorities. Within this system, 40 Jews worked in managerial positions (Delegations of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland), not to mention their much more numerous share in the implementation of personnel. For example, in the Pavlodar Oblast, 17% of Jews were employed in welfare, whereas Jews accounted only for 7% of the Polish population. In Kyrgyzstan, 65% of employees of the Delegation were Jews, while they accounted for 60% of the population. In the autumn of 1942, 36% of all Polish care facilities in the entire territory of Russia functioned in southern oblasts of Asiatic Russia, where Jews accounted for 90% of resettled Polish citizens.

⁶¹ See doc. 311.

In addition, upon the two evacuations of the Polish Army from Russia to the Middle East, not only Jewish soldiers, but, contrary to Soviet protests, also approx. 2,000 Jews not serving in the Army were evacuated. The military command can be credited in particular with evacuating a few hundred Jewish children who are currently staying in Palestine, where they are still receiving material aid from the Polish Government. If plans of evacuating a larger number of Jews from Russia failed, as some misinformed Jewish circles complain, there is no doubt that Polish authorities cannot be blamed for this situation. Before starting the last evacuation, the Soviet authorities strongly warned the Polish military authorities that any attempts to transgress the conditions of evacuation, e.g. the prohibition to transport Jews away, would lead to the immediate suspension of the entire evacuation.

London, April 1943

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 612

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*4 May 1943. Radio speech by the Prime Minister
and the Commander-in-Chief:
an extract concerning the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*

...⁶²

On 16 April,⁶³ at 4.00 a.m., the Nazi executioners proceeded to 'liquidate' the remnants of the Warsaw Ghetto with the known methods to us, where tens of thousands of Jews still vegetated. Having blocked all exit points, they raided the area in armoured cars and lightweight tanks to kill the remaining men, women and children with machine guns. Driven to despair, the Jewish population put up a heroic armed resistance. Since then, the struggle has continued. The rattle of machine guns, exploding bombs and fires have alarmed Warsaw's population and brought them nearer the area. Overwhelmed by horror, they help, where and how they can, the unfortunate victims of barbarism unknown in history.

On behalf of the Government and myself, I thank Compatriots for this generous reaction. I request them to render all kinds of aid and protection to people being murdered and I also condemn all those atrocities in front of the entire humanity, which has kept silent too long.

...

Dziennik Ustaw RP, Londyn, dn. 24 maja 1943, Nr 5 (previously published)

⁶² Extracts not concerning the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising were omitted.

⁶³ The uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto began on 19 April 1943.

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*11 May 1943. Farewell letter by Szmul Zygielbojm
to the President and the Prime Minister*

11 May 1943

To the President of the Republic of Poland
Władysław RACZKIEWICZ
To the President of the Council of Ministers
General Władysław SIKORSKI⁶⁴

Dear President,

Dear Prime Minister,

Please allow myself to address my last words to you and through you to the Polish Government and society, to the Governments and Nations of the Allied countries, to the conscience of the world.

The last news from the country shows without any doubt that Germans are murdering the remnants of Jews in Poland with ruthless cruelty. Behind the walls of the ghetto, the last act of an unprecedented tragedy is taking place.

The responsibility for the crimes of murdering the entire Jewish nation in Poland falls primarily on the perpetrators, but it also indirectly burdens the whole of humanity and the Nations and Governments of Allied Countries which to this day have not undertaken any concrete act to put an end to this crime. By passively watching this murder of millions of defenceless and tormented children, women and men, they also became accomplices.

I must also say that, although the Polish Government contributed to moving the world opinion to a very large extent, though insufficiently, it has not done anything extraordinary that would correspond to the size of the tragedy happening in the country.

Out of nearly 3.5 million Jews in Poland and around 700,000 Jews deported to Poland from other countries, approx. 300,000 were still alive in April this year,

⁶⁴ Szmul Zygielbojm sent a copy of the letter also to Deputy Prime Minister Mikołajczyk, informing as follows: 'Please find enclosed a copy of the letter addressed to the President and to the President of the Council of Ministers. I bid you farewell and wish you all the best. With highest regards, S. Zygielbojm. P.S. Please regard Messrs Lucjan Blitt and Leon Oler as official representatives of the Bund authorised by the Central Committee to represent us in London. Please deliver to them all correspondence that will be sent to me or the Bund from the country.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 152.

according to official reports from the leadership of the underground Bund sent to us by the Government Delegate for Poland. And the murder continues without a break.

I cannot keep silent, and I cannot live when the Jewish people remaining in Poland, whom I represent, are dying.

My comrades in the Warsaw Ghetto died with guns in their hands, in the last heroic impulse.

I did not happen to die like them, together with them. But I do belong to them, to their mass graves.

Through my death I want to express my deepest protest against the idleness with which the world observes and condones the extermination of the Jewish people. I know how little human life means, especially today. But since I could not do this in my lifetime, maybe my death will help break the indifference of those who can and should act so that these few Jews remaining alive could be saved from inevitable annihilation at the last moment.

My life belongs to the Jewish people in Poland, so I give it away. I want this small group that has remained of a few million Polish Jews to survive until liberation along with the Polish masses and to be able to breathe in the country and in the world of freedom and justice of socialism, for all its inhuman sufferings. I believe that such Poland will arise and that such a world comes into being.

I trust that you will address my above words to all of those for whom they are intended, and that the Polish Government will immediately start an appropriate action in the field of diplomacy and propaganda in order to save these remnants of the still-living Polish-Jewish population against annihilation.

I bid farewell to everybody and everything that was dear to me and what I loved.⁶⁵

/-/ S. Zygielbojm

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.114

⁶⁵ In a special cable addressed by the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief to representatives of the Bund, it was written: 'On behalf of the Government, Polish Armed Forces and myself, I send words of deepest regret that an outstanding member of the National Council and a distinguished working-class activist, Szmul Zygielbojm, left us for ever. This loss is particularly painful because the Bund, which has always worked on the strengthening of the independence and size of Poland, has recently suffered such a heavy and painful loss due to the departure of Alter and Erlich from its ranks.—Sikorski.' AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 504.

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*12 May 1943. Cable from the Charge d'Affaires
at the Legation in Bern to the Embassy in Washington:
information from Adolf Silberschein
on the acquisition of passports of South American countries*

To Washington

No. 11 of 12 May 1943
(via 187 to London)

'According to completely reliable information, only 10% of the Jewish population in the General Government has remained alive. Therefore, I thought my first duty was to organise rescue for those remaining, particularly the outstanding individuals and youths, primarily the Halutz youth.

The action consists in obtaining passports, particularly of Paraguay and Honduras, from South American consuls that are friendly to us; these documents remain with us and their photocopies are sent to the country; this saves people from misery, because they are put as "foreigners" in decent conditions in special camps, where they are to stay until the end of the war and where we can exchange letters with them. We make a written commitment to the consuls that the passport is used only for rescuing an individual and will not be used otherwise. In this way, we saved, for example, Nathan Eck, Professor Schorr's wife and her family, Rabbi Rappaport from Pińczów, Fajwel Stempel and many young people.

However, this action is met with serious reservations from the local Legation of the United States, which is afraid of the facilitation of departure for German agents; this claim is unjustified, as the passports remain here.

In these conditions, I strongly request you to support this matter in the State Department, as the local Legation will presumably get in touch with Washington. Please also support the action towards the representatives of the South American states in Washington and, if possible, obtain a certain quota of these rescue passports for their consuls in Switzerland.

This action is fully approved by the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern, which does everything to help us.

/-/ Dr Silberschein'

Attention: Please notify the above also to the World Jewish Congress, for Wise, Goldmann and Tartakower, adding: Please help extend this action—the rescue of ‘Sh’erit ha-Pletah’ depends on this.⁶⁶

I fully support the request.⁶⁷

/-/ ŁADOSĆ

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 330

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18 May 1943. Memorandum by the Polish Government on the extermination of Jews in occupied Poland

EXTERMINATION OF THE JEWS IN POLAND⁶⁸

According to recent reliable reports received from leaders of the underground movement in Poland, the process of extermination of the Polish-Jewish population of over 3 million and of the large number of Jews deported to Poland from Germany, Austria and the occupied countries of Europe has been carried far towards its final completion.

Although at first the Germans established a number of ghettos in various Polish cities and towns, thus deluding the Jews into the belief that they would be allowed to survive in this way, they proceeded early in 1942 with the mass extermination of the Jews and it is known that the principal ghettos, those of Warsaw, Wilno, Lwów, Cracow and Lublin have now been largely liquidated. It is known that some

⁶⁶ Sh’erit ha-Pletah (Hebrew: surviving remnants).

⁶⁷ The Counsellor at the Embassy in Washington, Michał Kwapiszewski, sent the telegram to the Consul General in New York, also requesting: ‘Please communicate the content of the telegram stated below in strict confidence, without disclosing the manner of dispatch ... to Messrs Wise, Tartakower and Goldmann from the World Jewish Congress and Mr Leavitt from the Joint.’ AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 452.

⁶⁸ The memorandum was sent, among others, to Arthur Greenwood. In the covering letter, the Ambassador in London reported: ‘In connection with tomorrow’s debate in the House with regard to an action in favour of refugees from Europe, I beg to send you enclosed a document based on reports recently received from Poland. Though incomplete, it illustrates the methods employed by the Germans in the extermination of Poles and Jews in Poland, and adds to the urgency and importance of any and every action undertaken in favour of those who succeed in making their escape from the inferno of German occupied Europe.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 51 (ENG).

time in April the remnants of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, offered desperate resistance to the German military and police attempting to remove them, and that the complete destruction of the Jews in this ghetto was preceded by street and house-to-house fighting lasting several days.

The dreadful mass slaughter of the Jews in Poland is being carried out in several death camps, the largest and most notorious of which is that of TREBLINKA. The Polish Government have received a detailed description of the circumstances and methods of the mass slaughters, based on the personal accounts of several Jewish grave-diggers who succeeded in escaping from the confines of the camp and are being sheltered by the Polish underground movement.

The Slaughter Camp of TREBLINKA

„The extermination of Jews in Poland by methods of mass slaughter continues with unabated intensity. Not only Polish Jews, but those from other occupied countries of Europe, including France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Czechoslovakia, etc., are being deported to special Death Camps and murdered by the thousand without discrimination as to age or sex.

The principal Death Camp has been established near the village of TREBLINKA situated near the main Białystok–Warsaw Railway Line. At first, the Germans used this camp as a Penal Concentration Camp for Poles, where many thousands of them were executed; in March 1942, however, the Germans proceeded to construct a special Death Camp for the mass extermination of the Jews from Poland and from other European countries.

The camp is situated in a wooded part of the country, completely isolated from the outside world and covers about 10,000 acres, surrounded by two lines of barbed wire fences and entanglements. A special railway siding has been constructed, connecting the camp with the main railway carrying the transports of condemned Jews from Warsaw and other cities and towns.

The execution chambers are contained in a special building about 120 feet long and 45 feet wide. It is divided by an inner corridor, about 9 feet wide, into two rows of five chambers each. Each chamber is about 6 feet high, with a surface of about 220 sq. feet. It communicates by a door with the corridor, is windowless, but is equipped with hinged iron trap-doors on the outside wall.

The TREBLINKA camp is guarded by a small SS garrison (under the command of a Captain Sauer⁶⁹), which is being relieved from time to time. A number of Jews—called Kapos—are forced to serve inside the camp. They are engaged on

⁶⁹ At the time of preparation of this document, the camp commandant was Captain (SS-Hauptsturmführer) Franz Paul Stangl, then Kurt Franz (until the liquidation of the camp in November 1943). ‘Sauer’ (German: sour, evil, unpleasant) may have been an

burying the dead and on other tasks in connection with the disposal of the clothing and other belongings of the murdered victims. The Jews thus employed as Kapos are being treated with the utmost brutality by the Germans and very few of them can stand the inhuman treatment and the horrors of their employment for more than a fortnight.

Those who become unfit for further work are being executed outright. Every afternoon the German Commandant reviews the Jewish Kapos and orders all those who feel unfit to report. Every day a number report their unfitness and ask to be shot. They are then conducted to a special square, the victims take up positions on the edge of the open grave, after which the German commandant fires a shot into the back of the head of each of them. It is known that during a few days in September 1942, the German Commandant of TREBLINKA personally shot about 500 young Kapos in this way. They were terrorised to such a degree that not one of them showed the slightest resistance.

The ranks of the Jewish Kapos in the camp are being filled by new arrivals in the transports reaching the camp twice daily. Every arriving train is composed of several tons of freight trucks. A number of trucks are shunted to the siding facing the entrance to the camp to be rapidly emptied of the human cargo. The mass of terror-stricken and maltreated men, women and children feel a certain relief after being released from the confinement of the closed trucks. They are being received by the auxiliary Jewish Kapos, who instruct them what to do. Women and children are then separated and conducted to barracks. The men, who remain in the open, find large posters hanging around the square, informing them that they need have no anxiety as they will be sent to the East and employed on useful work, while their womenfolk will be engaged on domestic work. They are then told that before departure they must visit the baths, while their clothing will be disinfected.

In order to dispel all suspicious as to the fate awaiting them, the Germans then announce that all the men will be segregated according to their trades and in order to keep up the pretence, a number of boards are displayed on the square with such inscriptions as: Tailors, bootmakers, carpenters, etc. Needless to say that no such segregation has ever taken place.

Then follows the final act. The Jewish Kapos rapidly arrange files of men 10 abreast and order them to strip and prepare for the bath. Their clothing is immediately taken away to a special depot for subsequent disposal. The women and children are at the same time formed in rows and equally ordered to strip. At the signal of the camp commander the German guards suddenly begin to shout

alias. Captain Albert Sauer was the commandant of the Sachsenhausen camp and then he participated in the liquidation of the ghetto in Riga.

and drive all the victims with whips towards the entrance to the Death House, into the corridor and the Death Chambers. It is only then that the maddened crowd realises that it is being driven to death. The floors of the Death Chambers are slippery and the men and women fall without being able to rise again as the victims driven in after them tumble over them. Frequently the little children are being thrown in over the heads of the men and women into this inferno of convulsed men and women. When the chambers are filled, the doors are shut hermetically and slow asphyxiation by means of steam let into the chamber by a number of pipes begins. At first, muffled cries of the victims can still be heard for a time, but after 15 minutes the execution is completed.

Then comes the turn for the Jewish burying teams, whom the Germans drive to work with blows. The first task is to extract the dead bodies from the Death Chambers. The Jewish grave-diggers take their positions in front of the outside trap-doors, which are then opened. The bodies have formed a solid mass, because under the influence of the overheated steam and sweat they have become glued together into a fantastic mass of entwined limbs and trunks. Before the grave-diggers can begin to drag the dead out, they have to loosen the mass by emptying pails of cold water over them. They are then extracted and laid out, one beside the other, along the wall of the Death House. When all the Death Chambers are thus emptied, the grave diggers are driven at great speed to complete the interment. Each grave-digger first ties the legs of two corpses with a strap and drags them at the double to the open mass-grave, which has been excavated by means of a bulldozer. He throws the bodies into the grave and returns at the same speed to fetch the next two corpses. After the grave is filled, the grave-diggers rapidly cover it with earth, while nearby the bulldozer is excavating a new grave.

At first the graves were close to the Death House and the burying of the murdered was being carried out more rapidly. As the number of victims mounted, the distance of the new graves increased and the dragging of corpses to the new graves takes considerably more time.”

No exact figures are known, but this mass slaughter of the Jews has been carried on for over a year now and it is known that transports of 5.000–6.000 men, women and children were being sent every day from the Warsaw Ghetto alone.

It should be noted that conditions similar to those existing in TREBLINKA prevail in other concentration camps established by the Germans in Poland, both for Poles and Jews—to name only the most notorious, such as OŚWIECIM, SOBIBÓR and MAJDANEK. According to the latest information, the former French Prime Minister, Léon Blum, is reported to be at the last-mentioned camp⁷⁰.

⁷⁰ Léon Blum was a prisoner of the Buchenwald concentration camp.

This morning an inquest was held in London on Szmul Zygielbojm, representative of the Jewish Socialist Bund in the Polish National Council in London, who committed suicide⁷¹ under the shock of the latest reports on the dreadful tragedy of the Jews in Poland.

London, 18th May, 1943

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 51 (ENG)

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*18 May 1943. Report by the Government Delegate in Africa
on the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Gibraltar*

Algiers

13 boulevard Carnot

18 May 1943

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

I kindly inform you that a group of 18 refugees from Gibraltar consisting only of Jews has already arrived in Morocco.⁷² I will send more details concerning these refugees and information about their citizenship after the examination of this matter by the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Casablanca. At present,

⁷¹ See doc. 350.

⁷² In the report of 21 October 1943, the Consul General in Algiers, Emeryk Hutten-Czapski, informed: 'I am honoured to attach a list of people directed from Gibraltar to Morocco. According to the list, the figure has reached 64 people; a large number of them do not seem to have Polish citizenship, and some of them are declared communists who prefer not joining the Polish Army because of their views rather than health. Because, as I have often mentioned, there is a strong dislike for Jews in Morocco and Algeria, and the communistic problem becomes increasingly serious there, I am afraid that French authorities may soon categorically refuse to accept Polish citizens if there is no qualitative change in their constitution. I think that French authorities are likely to adopt such a position particularly because obtaining approvals and accepting dispatched persons in Morocco has involved constant difficulties so far. If the transport of people from Spain is to continue, I think it would be necessary to segregate them more strictly and not to direct them in the manner practised so far to Morocco, as this may have negative consequences for other Polish citizens.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43.

this group stays in the Sidi el-Ayachi camp, which is the best-organised camp in Morocco. French authorities paid the amount of 2,000 francs as a benefit to each refugee. These people will leave the camp as they find employment, which, as the Consul of the Republic of Poland in Casablanca reports to me, will not present serious difficulties because some Jews living in Morocco already show the will to employ or accept individual people.

Delegate
E. H. Czapski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 546

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*19 May 1943. Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Legation in Bern
on the action of rescuing Jews by acquiring South American passports*

London, 19 May 1943

Secret

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland
in Bern

The Ministry has recently been informed by Jewish organisations about the alleged possibility of rescuing individual Jews from being murdered by Germans on the basis of passports of South American countries. It is said that these passports are issued by representative offices of these countries in Switzerland. The recent cable of the Legation No. 187⁷³ confirms this information.

Obtaining passports from South American countries for Polish Jews is apparently handled, e.g. by Mr Ludwik Toeplitz, Lausanne, Hotel Montfleuri, and Mr Zajda (the former manager of Orbis in Łódź), Lausanne, Hotel Belmonte. A card sent from Warsaw to Lisbon suggests that also St. [sic] Silberschein, Geneva, 22 rue des Paques, serves as an intermediary in these matters.

The Ministry received a certain amount of personal data along with photographs of people in Poland for the purpose of obtaining passports of South American

⁷³ Doc. 351 (sent as cable no. 187 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London).

countries for them. Then holders of the passports from South American countries are apparently transported from Poland and placed mainly in Vittel—a spa town in France. The Ministry requests that attached personal data with photographs be delivered to a person that you consider to be trustworthy for the purpose of striving to obtain South American countries.

Moments of strictly humanitarian nature induce us to act to the broadest possible extent in these matters. The Ministry asks you for a cable message about the efforts undertaken by you, and their results.

The Ministry also encloses a list with names of people, Jews from the country, for the purpose of sending parcels to them. Previously the Legation reported that the dispatch of any food parcels was prohibited in Switzerland. The Ministry also requests you to inform whether any change has recently occurred in this respect.⁷⁴

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
G. Potworowski

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 404

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*[After 22 May 1943]. Unsigned note:
a collection of messages about the uprising
in the Warsaw Ghetto*

News about the situation in the Warsaw Ghetto (An extract from the last reports
from the country) of 20 April 1943:
(for Zygielbojm and Schwarzbart)

On 19 April, SS assault troops with tanks and artillery started murdering the remnants of the Warsaw Ghetto population. The Ghetto puts up a heroic armed resistance. The defence is managed by the Jewish Combat Organisation,⁷⁵ which brings together almost all the groups. From the Ghetto you can hear a constant cannonade and strong detonations. Above the Jewish quarter, you can see the glow of fires. Aeroplanes are circling over the area of the massacre. The outcome of the fight is a foregone conclusion. In the evening, a flag appeared over the positions of the defenders of the Ghetto with the inscription: 'We are fighting to the last man.'

⁷⁴ See doc. 420.

⁷⁵ The Jewish Combat Organisation was a secret military organisation established by the Coordination Commission of the Jewish National Committee in July 1942.

24 April 1943:

There is strong excitement throughout the city. The population of Warsaw watches the Ghetto fight with admiration and sympathy for Jews. We call for immediate retaliation...

28 April 1943: (for Zygielbojm and Schwarzbart)

This is the 9th day of the heroic fight of the Warsaw Ghetto. It is besieged by the SS and Wehrmacht. They bomb it relentlessly. They use artillery, flamethrowers and firebombs dropped from planes against 40,000 Jews. They use mines to blow up tenements where there is still resistance. The Ghetto is on fire. Clouds of smoke engulf the city. Women and children are burnt alive, and the enemy commits mass murder. The sewer outlets are sealed and covered with German posts. The insurgents fight fiercely. They inflict heavy losses upon the enemy. They burn down factories and stores of the German war industry. Approx. 1,000 Germans have been killed and wounded. The attitude of defenders arouses admiration among the population of the country and embarrassment and indignation among Germans. An appeal of the Jewish Combat Organisation to the population of the capital was published, and Polish working-class groups pay tribute to the Ghetto fighters.

The power of the Allies can render immediate effective help now. In the name of the millions of murdered Jews, in the name of those being burnt alive and massacred and in the name of those heroically fighting and all of us doomed to death, we call towards the whole world: 'Let the immense retaliation of the Allies against the bloodthirsty enemy take place in a manner commonly understood as a revenge already now, not in the darkness of the future. Let our nearest allies finally realise the scale of historical responsibility for remaining silent towards the unprecedented Nazi crime being committed against the entire nation, the tragic epilogue of which is taking place now. Let this exceptional heroic uprising of the ghetto desperados finally awaken the world to act in this matter suitably to the significance of the moment.'

1 May 1943 (for Schwarzbart)

We do not understand your silence... We can still save thousands of Jews, women and children from annihilation and death... Alarm... We are waiting for your help!

11 May 1943 (for Zygielbojm and Schwarzbart)

The heroic fight of the Warsaw Ghetto still has some points of resistance. The great courage of the Jewish Combat Organisation. Engineer Klepfisz, a member of the Bund and one of the pillars of armed resistance, died a heroic death. Shocking atrocities by the Germans. Many Jews burnt alive. Thousands were shot dead and carried away to camps. All members of the Presidium of the Jewish Community—Lichtenbaum, Wielikowski, Sztolcman, Szereszewski Stanisław—were shot dead.

A few thousand still remain in the basements and 'shops' of the Ghetto. Shops and, in particular, shelters are being liquidated with huge and active resistance.

12 May 1943 (for Zygielbojm and Schwarzbart)

The Germans successively set on fire, blow up with mines and bomb blocks of houses. Huge detonations and fires. The Ghetto is still surrounded with the gendarmerie, and so are the exits to the sewers. All who are escaping from the Ghetto hell are caught and executed on the spot. The Jewish Combat Organisation is still in the Ghetto. The epic of its heroism is coming to an end. Jewish centres formed in the country are also utterly liquidated. And the world of freedom and justice says and does nothing. Surprising...

15 May 1943 (to the Joint Distribution Committee, New York)

We summon your immediate help. The terrible massacre of the remnants of the Warsaw Ghetto has continued for three weeks. Led by the Jewish Combat Organisation, the Ghetto defended itself heroically with guns in hands, and the Germans used artillery, tanks and armoured weapons in the fight. The Jewish fighters killed more than 300 Germans and wounded approx 1,000. The Germans carried away and murdered or burned alive tens of thousands of Jews. Some Jews managed to save themselves. Altogether, no more than 10% have remained of 3 million Jews in Poland; the rest were murdered by the Germans. In the next few weeks, they will murder all the remaining people. Thousands of Jews can still be saved... The rescue of thousands of people depends on you. We are waiting!

22 May 1943

There is a rumour among Germans that the recalled head of the Gestapo in Warsaw—Dr von Sammern—was sentenced to death for the disgrace of Germans due to the armed resistance of the Ghetto.⁷⁶

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 62

⁷⁶ After the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (and the initial failure of German operations), Ferdinand von Sammern-Frankenegg was replaced with Jürgen Stroop. Sammern-Frankenegg was killed by Yugoslavian partisans near Banja Luka in September 1944.

356*3 June 1943. Note by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
on aid granted to the population in occupied Poland*

3 June 1943

Note on aid to the country

(Attention: This note contains remarks put together during one day as a result of information about the agenda of the Council of Ministers' session—therefore, these remarks are incomplete—superficial—not agreed upon with MFA).

1940

The action of aid to the country was conducted via the Commission for Polish Relief (Comporel), which was in charge of amounts collected among the Polish diaspora in America and benefits from the Polish Government (336,000 dollars till March 1941). The Comporel also bought on European markets and sent to the country various food products with a general weight of 5,571,635 pounds. Apart from that, lard was bought in Bulgaria for \$50,000, and lard and other products were bought in Russia for \$100,000. There are no data as to whether products from this last transaction to the Homeland arrived. The purchase action was not carried out on a larger scale this year due to the shrinking of the European market.

1941

At the beginning of 1941, the Polish Government tried to use H. Hoover's action for domestic aid. Hoover's action was to cover Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Poland. The Government reckoned that this action would provide the country with food products for approx. \$15,000,000. The Germans expressed their consent to the supervision of the distribution by a neutral commission, but the matter collapsed because of Great Britain's protest. Therefore, on 10 March 1941, Hoover made a statement in which he blamed Great Britain for the failure of his initiative.

Then the Polish Government launched its own action on a narrower scale by:

- 1) starting the dispatch of individual parcels from neutral countries;
- 2) starting the dispatch of packages with second-hand clothes;
- 3) starting the purchase of medicines and supplements not covered by blockade prohibitions.

Started in the first months of 1941, the parcel shipment action from Portugal developed well, so in 1942 approx. 110,000 parcels were shipped to the country and to POW camps. A large part of their costs was covered by the Government.

In addition, parcels were sent to ghettos and to individual addresses of Jews in Poland; their cost was covered by Jewish organisations in Great Britain (e.g. the Association of Jewish Communities) and in America.

Moreover, the dispatch of parcels from Sweden started at the end of 1941—£3,000 was assigned for this purpose from public funds.

In the same period, money was remitted to the country: e.g. the Episcopal Committee in Cracow received \$1,000. Other remittances are not known to us.

A huge part of second-hand clothes from America was also sent to the country. Proofs received from the country indicate that 55,600 pcs arrived.

The attempts to purchase grain on the Swedish market for \$22,000 brought no result due to purchase difficulties and the Germans' refusal to allow a neutral controller into the country.

11,000 kg of diapers for babies were sent from Sweden to the country.

1942

36 tonnes of medicines were bought in America and sent to the country via the International Red Cross in Switzerland. This transport included also medicines, particularly anti-typhus and paratyphus vaccines, bought in Switzerland for approx. 200,000 dollars.

The purchase in America was made from Comporel's funds and the purchase in Switzerland was made from state funds.

The dispatch of parcels from Portugal developed well and would have reached 1,000 pcs per day, if it had not been for difficulties on the part of Portuguese authorities, which, being afraid of the depletion of resources for their needs due to increasing blockade restrictions, twice suspended the receipt of shipments by post offices; then these authorities started to use restrictions on the quality of dispatched products. British authorities were also reluctant to approve such relatively large amounts of food sent to enemy-occupied territory. Lastly, the most important reason for restraining the scale of this action may have been transfer difficulties.

Export restrictions made it impossible to develop dispatches of food parcels from Sweden on the scale done from Portugal.

Food parcels from Sweden have been and continue to be sent to a 'professor list' delivered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A certain number of clothes parcels has also been sent to this list.

When shortages of products on the European market became increasingly severe, the MFA requested, via Ambassador Ciechanowski, that the American authorities and the International Red Cross allow 250 tonnes of various kinds of food *per month* to be sent to Poland. Unfortunately, this action did not bring *positive* results, either.

Attempts to dispatch parcels from the Middle East for soldiers' families were unsuccessful, as well; in the view of British authorities, these needs must be fulfilled from the quota of parcels sent from Portugal.

In the middle of 1942, an effort was made to acquire the organisation of aid to the country on the same conditions on which Greece receives aid. However, after a closer examination of this issue by MFA, it was found to be unfeasible, because of both the rigorous position of Germany and Great Britain's blockade policy. This policy has not been mitigated until recently, as the recent debate in the House of Commons proves.

1943

At the beginning of the year, 3 railroad freight cars of medicines and supplements bought in Switzerland were sent to the country.⁷⁷ The distribution took place in the presence of a representative of the International Red Cross, who stated that the entire transport had been divided among the population (unfortunately, it is impossible to obtain a detailed report from him). The transport was sent to the Central Welfare Council, which accepted the criteria imposed by German authorities for distribution between Polish, Jewish, Russian and Belarussian nationalities, and Jews have recently been excluded from distribution by Germans.

From that time on, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare decided to send parcels not only to the address of the Central Welfare Council, but also to the broadest possible number of Polish institutions and facilities, such as the Polish Red Cross, orphanages, hospitals, etc. For this purpose, a request was made to the Homeland via the Ministry of Internal Affairs to deliver addresses of these institutions and domestic circles were reminded about the need ~~that they should~~ carefully to observe each transport of which they would be notified by London.

In the near future, medicines bought in America for \$38,000 will be sent.

Similarly, a further amount of supplements and medicines will soon be bought in Switzerland—we already have 700,000 Swiss francs at our disposal in Switzerland. We also make attempts to purchase medicines, supplements and second-hand clothes in Sweden. It must be stressed that the local society in Sweden was made aware of the problem of aid to Poland and has recently founded the Society for Aid to Polish Children. I hope that this action will not only bring good propaganda results and help to accumulate material resources, but also make purchases easier.

After a short period of stagnation at the end of 1942 and at the beginning of 1943, the parcel action from Portugal develops and its size does not diminish.

New opportunities emerge in America due to the centralisation of the aid action. Until then, Americans of various nationalities raised funds for goals of

⁷⁷ See doc. 339.

relevant countries of origin and spent them independently at their own discretion. Currently, all funds of this kind have been integrated into the War Chest Fund, which assigns amounts to individual organisations based on justified applications. The organisation representing Polish interests there is the Polish American Council. The amount of 3.5 million dollars has been assigned to this pool for Polish goals for the year 1943, and the amount of 10-15 million dollars is envisaged for these goals for the year 1944. The Ministry prepared an estimate of needs covering both the Homeland and ~~Poles deported to Russia~~ *refugees from Russia*. In these matters, the Delegation of the Ministry maintains close contact with the Polish American Council.

Obviously, however, the use of these aid opportunities encounters difficulties related to the transfer of money outside America, purchase restrictions and blockade restrictions.

From funds envisaged for the year 1944, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare plans to spend approx. 7 million dollars for aid to the country in the form of medicines, second-hand clothes, supplements, powdered milk, food parcels for soldiers' families, etc. *Change—refers only to refugees*.

It has recently become possible to send parcels of food and medicines to concentration camps. In order to check these possibilities, particularly to determine the likelihood that these parcels would reach the right recipient, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare brought about:

- a) an inquiry sent to the relevant circles in the Homeland,
- b) an intervention with the International Red Cross.

Plans of the Ministry

1. To send the biggest possible number of individual parcels to the population in the country, to POW camps and to concentration camps, if such possibility exists. To take every opportunity in each neutral country. To organise the dispatch of parcels from War Chest's funds to all (if possible) families of children staying in Poland.

2. To continue collective dispatches of supplements, medicines, sanitary products, nappies; intensification of the relevant action in the States, in Sweden, in Switzerland and in Portugal. Instead of transports to one institution (Central Welfare Council)—to perform smaller dispatches to the Polish Red Cross, hospitals, social welfare facilities. To keep in touch with domestic circles, aiming both at increasing the actual control of distribution and at strengthening the role of underground units in the Homeland towards the society and institutions by means of this action. For this purpose, to notify each transport to the Homeland and to demand reports.

3. To commence the broadest possible propaganda action aimed at making the Anglo-Saxon society aware of the actual food position of Poland (this society is still unaware of this position, and, for example, the Belgian propaganda produces the belief that the situation of Belgium is not worse [sic] than the Polish one). For this purpose:

a) to obtain more detailed information about the situation in Poland via the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

b) to use the structures of the Ministry of Information and Documentation for planned long-term propaganda to be conducted under the motto: rescue for children in Poland; the goal of this action is to raise the awareness of the tragic participation of the Polish society in the war effort of the Allies, a consequence of which is the threat of starvation mainly for children, and to loosen the bonds of the blockade for coming to the rescue of Polish children.

This matter was brought up at the conference held recently in the Ministry of Information and Documentation on the initiative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and with support from the MFA. A resolution of the Council of Ministers will be desirable in this matter.

4. Trying, to the extent allowed by blockade and transfer possibilities:

a) in Canada—following the example of Greece, to obtain certain quantities of grain as a gift for Poland

b) in Brazil—ditto, coffee

c) Portugal—to obtain from British authorities the delivery of at least 100 tonnes of condensed or powdered food per month for the rescue of Polish children.

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/24

357

*7 June 1943. Letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on the acquisition of British visas for the Rozensztajn family*

7 June 1943

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding the issue of obtaining of visas for the Rozensztajn family

In reply to the letter No. 478/R/43 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 18 May 1943,⁷⁸ the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare informs that it does not share the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this matter and takes the view that another intervention in the Foreign Office has every chance to succeed.

In the opinion of this Ministry, the Rozensztajn family falls within the category of foreigners whom British authorities agreed to grant entry visas. The Ministry refers, in particular, to the statement made on behalf of the British Government in the House of Lords by Lord Cranborne on 23 March 1943 (Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, 23 Mar 1943, vol. 126, No 41).⁷⁹

⁷⁸ In the aforementioned letter, the MFA informed: 'Referring to the letter No. 666/43 from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare from 6 March 1943 on British visas for the Rozensztajn family, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs in consultation with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London that, upon thorough examination of standards of entry into England applied by English authorities, moments quoted in the above letter may not provide a basis for another intervention in the Foreign Office without facing an unquestionable refusal.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43.

⁷⁹ During the debate in the British Parliament, in his long speech Lord Cranborne pointed out various difficulties (e.g. in transport and provisioning) related to the evacuation of refugees to Palestine (and their admission to Great Britain). He highlighted the isolation of the British in aid measures being carried out and underlined the extent of support granted until then. He stressed that it was possible to obtain permission to enter Great Britain for families of refugees already staying there, but he concluded that Great Britain (and its dependencies) is unable to provide aid to all people in need and that some limitations would have to be imposed. In the cable of 13 April, the Consul General in Tel Aviv reported: 'At the request of the Representation of Polish Jewry, I inform that it regrets to state that Lord Cranborne's statement of 22 March is primarily a huge disappointment for Polish Jews. Therefore, it asks the Polish Government to use its influence to bring about a change of the English position. At the same time, the Representation asks the Minister of Information to appeal to the Polish population in

Apart from that, the Ministry refers to a precedent in the matter of the family of Mr Mieczysław Radzymiński, which consists of 5 persons, to whom British authorities granted entry visas. This family arrived in Great Britain from Casablanca in November last year.

In the light of these explanations, the Ministry requests a change of the adopted position and another intervention in the Foreign Office.

FOR THE MINISTER

...⁸⁰

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43

the Homeland on the radio to render aid to such terribly persecuted Jewish population?
AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

⁸⁰ Illegible signature.

358

*7 June 1943. Letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on the care for Jewish refugees in North Africa*

7 June [194]3

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding social welfare action in North Africa

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare confirms the receipt of the letter No. 738/H./43 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 28 May 1943 and welcomes instructions issued to posts in Algiers and Madrid on the liberal treatment of the matter of refugees' citizenship.

The Ministry wishes to emphasise that caution in issuing identity documents, although appropriate for state reasons, is not necessary in matters of care. Providing care to refugees of questionable citizenship will not damage or harm state interests, any potential minor material loss is insignificant and, in the view of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, humanitarian aspects should prevail.

Refusing to provide care for some formal reasons creates a risk of international resonance that would always be unfavourable for the Polish cause. An example of this is an account made by an American clerk who felt obliged to inform the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare about the attitude of Mr Hutten-Czapski towards Polish refugees staying in camps, which he considered to be harmful. The Ministry points out that Director Marlewski was present during that conversation. In the course of the conversation, he had an opportunity to learn about the impression that the attitude of Mr Czapski had made in military American circles.

The second clear example is an article published in the 'Tribune' weekly a few weeks ago, which accuses Polish posts of having refused to take care of Jewish refugees coming from Poland. The same category of allegations includes a letter from 26 May 1943 by Dr Schwarzbart, which the Ministry received as a copy.⁸¹

⁸¹ In reply to the aforementioned letter, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare informed Schwarzbart in the letter from 7 June 1943: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided posts in Algiers and Madrid with instructions to treat the matter of refugees' citizenship liberally. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare believes that the use of these instructions will undoubtedly help extend the scope of care onto a number of persons with unproven citizenship.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43.

Incidents such as the letter from N. Wajnrit to the editor of 'Reynolds News' are unquestionably outrageous, but they should not influence the essential course of action in the exercise of care. The Ministry knows that there are subversive people among refugees in North Africa. However, this is not a reason to discriminate against whole groups of refugees, such as former participants of the International Brigade or Jews.

To sum up, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare believes that for both state and humanitarian reasons it is necessary to adopt the broadening rather than narrowing procedure in the exercise of social welfare and requests that relevant instructions in this spirit be given to posts in Algiers and Madrid. In particular, the Ministry requests that the matter brought up in the letter from Dr Schwarzbart be examined and relevant steps be taken to release the aforementioned group of Jewish refugees from camps.⁸²

FOR THE MINISTER

....⁸³

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43

⁸² In the letter from 12 June 1943 to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ignacy Schwarzbart informed: 'Yesterday I received a letter from Mr Herbert Perlmutter, residing at rue Michelet Alger, 31, Algérie, in which he reports on difficulties being made to him by Consul Czapski. Mr Perlmutter reported to our Consulate as a volunteer for the Navy, for which he has full qualifications according to the letter. Consul Czapski "showed him the door," stating that he was not a Polish citizen and, therefore, he did not want to talk to him at all. Consul Czapski did not state the reasons for which he refused to talk to Mr Perlmutter. In his letter, Mr Perlmutter indicates that he is a Polish citizen. Born in Warsaw on 17 June 1923, he lived in Marseilles for a number of years. His brother served in our Army in France, was wounded and is in a POW camp in Germany at the moment. He was in the rank of sergeant. Mr Perlmutter submitted a complaint to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I want to draw the Ministry's attention to this fact because it is very sad and shows that the Ministry's instructions are not followed on the spot. I request you to kindly adopt relevant measures and notify me about their result.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/43.

⁸³ Illegible signature.

359

*8 June 1943. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv
with an appeal of the Representation of Polish Jewry
to stop the extermination of Jews*

Polmission—Tel Aviv

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 8 JUN 1943

RECEIVED ON 11 JUN 1943

No. 38

To the Minister

At the request of the Representation of Polish Jewry, I inform by cable: 'In his last speech, Goebbels openly announced that all Jews would be murdered.⁸⁴ In view of this, we ask the Polish Government to demand again that the Allied States take firm action in order to force the Germans to cease the slaughter. Maybe another alarm from the Polish Government will save the remnants of the Polish Jewry. We strongly request you to reply.'

ROSMARIN

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 260

⁸⁴ This is a reference to the speech delivered in Berlin on 5 June 1943.

360

*[After 16 June 1943]. Unsigned note:
a collection of messages of the Polish Telegraphic Agency
on the situation in occupied Poland*

Supplement to information about the situation of Jews in Poland according to messages of the Polish Telegraphic Agency

1 May 1943—PTA. The secret Polish radio station Świt⁸⁵ announced the following data concerning the Warsaw Ghetto on Friday evening:

At the beginning of the occupation period, the Ghetto in Warsaw was inhabited by 600,000 Jews, including 35,000 [sic] Warsaw inhabitants and the rest brought from other Polish towns. In January 1942, the liquidation of ghettos in Poland started, with Germans using gas chambers for murdering the population. Transports of Jews from all parts of Europe were brought in place of the murdered Polish Jews. During the last 15 months, approx. 1,000,000 Jews went through the Warsaw Ghetto. This week saw the beginning of the ultimate liquidation of 35,000 Jews, who are defending themselves desperately.

14 May 1943—PTA. Stockholm. On Thursday evening, the secret radio station Świt reported that the Germans had burnt down approx. 200 houses during the fights at the time of liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto. The members of the Jewish Council in the Ghetto—Gustaw Wielikowski, Counsellor Szereszewski, Engineer Alfred Stegman and Engineer Maksymilian Lichtenbaum,⁸⁶ who had been arrested as hostages on 17 April this year, were executed at the beginning of May in Warsaw, and their bodies were thrown onto a pile of rubbish.

21 May 1943—PTA. Stockholm. The secret radio station Świt reports that, in retaliation for the bombardment of water dams in the Ruhr region, the occupiers liquidated the remains of the ghettos in Cracow and Stanisławów during the last three days, murdering Jews on a mass scale and killing them with the use of gas chambers in suburban camps... Jewish fighters still defend themselves in the Warsaw Ghetto, which is attacked by SS troops using Latvian Quislings and Turkmenistani volunteers recruited by the Germans from among prisoners of war. The Germans introduced artillery, armoured vehicles and tanks into these fights. On Thursday evening, during our transmission, the Świt station announced that German planes had dropped incendiary bombs onto the Warsaw Ghetto. At

⁸⁵ This a reference to the secret radio station created by the British and handed over to the Polish Government-in-Exile. It was located in Great Britain and simulated a domestic radio station broadcasting from various cities in occupied Poland. In its broadcasts, it used materials sent to London mainly via the Directorate of Civil Resistance and BIP KG AK.

⁸⁶ Should be: Marek Lichtenbaum.

the same time, the access of water to the ghetto was blocked to make firefighting impossible.

24 May 1943—PTA. Stockholm

Świt reports that the fights in the Warsaw Ghetto continue but are already in the final phase. On Saturday evening, only isolated explosions could be heard in the Ghetto... Świt adds that Poles are arranging help and hiding those who somehow managed to escape the massacre in the ghetto. At the end of the broadcast, Świt summons the Allies to react quickly through retaliatory bombing of German towns.

25 May 1943—PTA. Stockholm. The Swedish press devotes a great deal of attention to the fights going on in the Warsaw Ghetto. The Stockholm newspaper 'Nya Dagligt Allehanda' publishes a big article entitled 'Uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto.'—Aftontidningen writes: 'Jews and Poles fight side by side in the Warsaw Ghetto.' This daily stresses the fact that Poles help the Jews as much as possible in such conditions.

27 May 1943—PTA. The secret radio station Świt announced that, in spite of fierce resistance put up by the Jews, the Germans managed to liquidate the Ghetto in Warsaw. Świt encourages Poles to provide all possible aid and shelter to Jews who managed to escape.

4 June 1943—PTA. Stockholm. Świt reports that the fighting that took place in the Warsaw Ghetto claimed the lives of 300 Germans and over 1,000 Germans were wounded. Świt estimates that the invaders murdered 90% of Polish Jews.

16 June 1943—PTA. According to information received from the Homeland, approx. 2,000 industrial premises, approx. 3,000 commercial premises and approx. 100,000 occupied rooms, excluding a number of factory buildings, were burnt down or blown up in the course of recent fights in the Warsaw Ghetto. In the course of the bombardment of Warsaw in September 1939, 76,000 occupied rooms were destroyed.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 62

361

*18 June 1943. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Envoy in Rio de Janeiro
on the potential exchange of German citizens from Brazil
for persons of Jewish descent from occupied Poland*

TO Polmission—Rio de Janeiro
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 29 JUN 1943

No. 84

In connection with recent German declarations about the complete extermination of Jews, Jewish organisations request an action to be carried out in South American countries whereby they would propose, via their protective powers, the exchange of *Polish* Jews for Germans from their territories. I am aware of existing difficulties, but, nevertheless, I ask you to discuss this matter with the Government of Brazil and to notify me about its attitude.

*II. Jewish circles made an analogous request to other Allied governments, too.*⁸⁷

Raczyński
J. Marlewski, 18 Jun 1943

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 258

⁸⁷ The Envoy in Rio de Janeiro replied in the cable of 6 August 1943: 'I intervened in the matter of exchange of Polish Jews from Germany. The local MFA considers this project to be virtually unfeasible.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616. See also doc. 364.

362

30 June 1943. Cable from the Legation in Bern on South American passports

No. 257 of 30 June 1943

TO WAGNER:

Receptus 276⁸⁸

Please let me know if it is about the Jews.

Relevant passports are prepared, basically for Jews, by a Jewish organisation for 500–1,000 francs per person. For some persons particularly recommended by us, it might want to do this free of charge.

If Jews are not concerned, taking these steps does not seem advisable to me because these passports:

- 1) resulting in closure in special camps, make the fate more favourable only for Jews who could expect only death otherwise;
- 2) may create a suspicion of Jewish descent;
- 3) do not make it possible to leave the occupied area legally, nor do they entitle the holder to enter the state that issued them.

/-/ NAHLIK

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 327

⁸⁸ In the cable no. 276 of 17 June 1943, Minister Raczynski forwarded Jan Wagner's request: 'I would be very grateful for getting in touch with relevant circles ... for the purpose of obtaining passports for the family of MFA official Wielowieyska consisting of two married couples and one child. The names under which they hide in Warsaw are unknown. We have no photographs, either. Please reply how to overcome these difficulties ... What sum for this purpose should be remitted to Switzerland?' In addition, Raczynski instructed: 'I request you to render all possible help in the above matter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 250.

363

*2 July 1943. Letter from the MFA to the Embassy in London
on the acquisition of British visas for rabbis in occupied Poland*

London, 2 July 1943

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in London

Following its letters No. 851-e/43 from 3 April 1943 and No. 851-e/43 from 9 June 1943, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks you to get in touch with the Foreign Office additionally in order to obtain British entry visas for the following Polish rabbis whose release from the German occupation is sought by the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain:

Rabbi Markus Rottenberg, born in Cracow in May 1872, along with his wife Sara Rottenberg, born in September 1876.

Both of them have Polish citizenship. They are currently in Antwerp.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
Frankowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 61

364

*3 July 1943. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Legation in Buenos Aires
on the exchange of German citizens from South American countries
for persons of Jewish descent from occupied Poland*

TO Polmission BUENOS AIRES
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 3 JUL 1943

No. 113

Receiptus letter from 27 May No 427/Ar/d/6

We are interested in the exchange of Germans from South American countries for Allied citizens. We have appeals from Jewish organisations for the exchange of Jews from Poland in this manner.⁸⁹ In addition, it may be possible to evacuate valuable Polish people from France according to this principle. I ask you to report information in this field to me. In view of the resolution of the Bermuda Conference⁹⁰ that Great Britain and the United States will not enter negotiations with Germans in evacuation matters, British authorities suggested to Jewish organisation that such possibility should be clarified directly with governments of South America.

Raczyński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616

⁸⁹ See doc. 361.

⁹⁰ This is a reference to the conference of representatives of Great Britain and the United States held in the Bermudas on 19-30 April 1943. During the talks, no significant decisions were made with regard to the rescue of Jews from the Holocaust, except for general appeals to give them shelter in neutral countries.

365

*3 July 1943. Cable from the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare at the Polish Army in the East
on the creation of a kosher kitchen for refugees*

POLMISSION—TEHRAN
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 3 JUL 1943
RECEIVED ON 7 JUL 1943

No. 605

To Dr Grosfeld

Receptus 383⁹¹

For technical and supply reasons, it is not possible to establish a permanent separate kosher kitchen for Jewish refugees in Iran. In the period of most important holidays, everything included in the religious ritual was delivered to Jewish refugees. Within the limits of general care of refugees, Polish citizens of Jewish faith enjoy all rights that they have in the country.

PAJAŁ
POLMISSION

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545

⁹¹ In the cable no 383 of 17 June 1943, Ludwik Grosfeld informed Franciszek Haluch, the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Tehran: 'Chief Rabbi of Palestine Dr Herzog requested Professor Kot to arrange kosher kitchens for Jewish refugees residing in Persia. Please consider the possibility of fulfilling this request and inform us about the result.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545.

366

*[Before 5 July 1943]. Report by the Envoy in Madrid:
accounts of witnesses of the liquidation of ghettos
in occupied Poland*

Liquidation of Ghettos based on testimonies
by Rybak Jan, Stawowski Bohdan
and Sadowski Stefan

Liquidation of the ghetto in Sandomierz

In December 1942, Rybak Jan stayed in Sandomierz and witnessed the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto carried out by the Germans around 20 December. At 4.00 a.m., the ghetto (surrounded with a 3m high wooden fence) was surrounded by numerous SS troops and Ukrainian troops that the Germans constantly used for activities of this kind. The Ukrainian troops wear Czech uniforms and are armed with Polish weapons (light automatic rifles and light machine guns). The SS troops burst into the ghetto and started to drive all Jews out onto the streets. All who tried to hide were executed on the spot. Rybak estimates that over 200 Jews—men, women and children—were executed at the time. Jews were brought out of the ghetto into the square near the cathedral, where they were kept in 20-degree frost until 11.00 a.m. Very many Jews wore only their underwear because the Germans had not allowed them to get dressed. When the convoy finally headed towards the railway station, around 300 Jews remained on the square near the cathedral, frozen to death. The corpses were removed from the square and the ghetto by the Jewish police that had been organised in the ghetto by the Germans. The testifying person states that there were approx. 3,000 Jews in the Sandomierz ghetto.

On the square in front of the railway station, the Jews were thoroughly re-examined once again, and all clothes fit for use were taken away from them. The testifying person witnessed the situation when young girls were told to take their panties off. Upon completion of this operation, the Jews were loaded into a freight train where cars were thickly doused with lime and chloride. The train took off around 1.00 p.m. After a few kilometres, the train stopped in an open field and stood for 16 hours. At the next station, the wagons were opened in order to take out the corpses. The same thing happened at every station. On the basis of testimonies by Polish railwaymen, only approx. 300 Jews arrived alive in Bełż.⁹²

⁹² This is a reference to the extermination camp in Bełżec. The relatively small ghetto in Bełż was liquidated in September 1942.

In Bełż, there is currently a central ghetto into which Jews have been brought from the entire Lublin region.

Liquidation of the ghetto in Radom

The liquidation of the ghetto in Radom was carried out in August 1942. Stawowski Bohdan stayed in Radom during that period and, therefore, he passes on the following information:

In the early morning, the ghetto was surrounded by the SS and also by Ukrainian troops. During the liquidation of the ghetto, Stawowski's aunt working in the nearby hospital on the ghetto premises was staying inside. She said that the Gestapo men without the slightest reason used machine guns to shoot at crowds of Jews being driven out of their houses onto the streets. All the streets in the ghetto were covered with corpses, which were eventually removed only after two days. The author of the account saw the Gestapo shooting whole volleys of bullets from machine guns at Jews marching towards the railway station. He also reports that all the Gestapo were completely drunk. Jews were deported from Radom in the Eastern direction. He is unable to provide more detailed data.

Liquidation of the ghetto in Lublin

The Jewish ghetto in Lublin was organised by the Germans in Majdanek near Lublin. A few thousand Jews stayed there. Sadowski Stefan, a student of the Maritime School in Gdynia, who stayed in one of the estates near Lublin at that time, is unable to provide the accurate number. The liquidation of the ghetto in Majdanek was carried out in September 1942. Before this liquidation took place, approx. 3,000 Jews had died of starvation, diseases and beatings in Majdanek, which was a concentration camp rather than a ghetto in the strict sense of the word. All clothes and underwear of the dead fit for use were taken off (this was done by Jews) and collected in two barracks built specially for this purpose. During the liquidation of the ghetto in Majdanek, the same scenes as in Sandomierz and Radom took place. Lublin Jews were also deported to Bełż.

Sadowski states that, upon the deportation of Jews from the Majdanek camp, the Germans established a concentration camp for Poles there. This camp is designed for 10,000 persons. The living conditions in the camp are the same as in the infamous Auschwitz camps. The death rate in the camp is very high. Over 200 people die every day. Although new transports arrive in the camp almost every day and nobody is released, the number of people staying in the camp is almost always one and the same.

The concentration camp in Majdanek is filled not only with various 'political criminals' and 'smugglers,' but also lots of persons seized without the slightest reason during roundups in trains and on railway stations.⁹³

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.8/C2

367

*5 July 1943. Cable from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
(from Jerusalem) on negotiations with representatives of the Jewish Agency*

Polconsul—Jerusalem
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 5 JUL 1943
RECEIVED ON 8 JUL 1943

No. 333

To Dr Grosfeld

I conducted exhaustive negotiations with the Jewish Agency. The matter of Aliya children causes huge excitement among local Jews. I mean religious education and lessons of the Polish language. Whereas the issue of religious education leads to many disputes, all factions of Jews agree that children should not be taught Polish. They assume that these children will not return to Poland. Not intending to interfere in internal Jewish disputes, I think that these matters must be left to the decision of Jewish organisations as their own matter. The suspiciousness concerning the Government's insincere policy towards Jews that prevails among Jews here was stimulated by the disclosure of a secret order issued by General Anders in Buzuluk in the Hebrew press.⁹⁴ This order awkwardly interprets the policy and tactics that must be used towards Jews. Jewish circles perceive this order as a harbinger of the antisemitic action in Poland after the war. At two big conferences that I attended with representations of Jews of all directions in Tel Aviv, I could discard their fears as to the existence of antisemitic tendencies in the Government. I elaborated on the same subject at two big conferences with Jewish

⁹³ The report was sent to the Civil Chancellery Office of the President on 5 July 1943. In the covering letter, the Envoy in Madrid informed: 'The Legation of the Republic of Poland in Madrid encloses testimonies by Polish citizens who fled from the country regarding: 1. Liquidation of ghettos in Sandomierz, Radom and Lublin and 2 partisan squads in Poland.' *IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.8/C2*. See doc. 372.

⁹⁴ See doc. 369.

and foreign journalists. My political meetings and press conferences resulted in favourable comments for Poland in the entire press. Because I developed dynamic activity in Jewish political circles, I paid a visit to the Arab mayor of Jaffa so as not to antagonise Arabs. This visit met with favourable resonance in the Arab press. On 2 July I am leaving for Cairo to meet the Prime Minister once again, and then I am going to East Africa, where I will stay for around 40 days.

Jan Stańczyk⁹⁵
Polconsul

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 545

368

9 July 1943. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the death of the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief

To the Prime Minister

London, 9 July 1943

Secret

To Heads of Offices:

In conversations and public demonstrations related to the tragic death of General Sikorski,⁹⁶ please highlight the constructive character of his work for the United Nations, manifesting itself in his tireless pioneering creation of foundations for the Federation of Central and Eastern Europe, in his organisation of constant cooperation between governments of occupied European countries and, finally, in his continuous attempts to settle Polish-Soviet relations.

⁹⁵ From 20 February to 8 July 1943, Minister Stańczyk stayed mainly in the Middle East. In a report on his trip, he noted down that the aim of this trip was to 'become familiar with living conditions of Polish refugees in the Middle East and in East Africa.' Then he specified in detail: 'The trip that I took by various means of transport: by ship, planes, automobile and autocars, took around four months. During that time, I visited centres of Polish refugees in Egypt, in Persia, in India and in Palestine. Unfortunately, as a result of the tragic death of General Sikorski, about which I learnt in Cairo one day before my departure to East Africa, I had to put off my trip in that direction.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 151.

⁹⁶ Prime Minister Sikorski died in a plane crash in Gibraltar on 4 July 1943.

Please continue to indicate that after General Sikorski's death, which is a heavy loss for the Polish Nation, there is a guarantee not only of the legal continuity of Polish Governmental institution based obviously on the Constitution, but also of political continuity resulting from the fact that General Sikorski's cabinet was the exponent of the biggest Polish political groups as a coalition cabinet. Thus, we can take it for granted that the new Government of the Republic of Poland will continue the policy of which General Sikorski was such an outstanding exponent.⁹⁷

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.L.39

369

*10 July 1943. Report by the Consul General in Jerusalem
on press publications regarding the Commander
of the Polish Army in the East*

Jerusalem, 10 July 1943

Secret

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In a secret illegal newspaper 'Ashraw' (window),⁹⁸ issued in Hebrew in Tel Aviv, an article entitled 'Official Antisemitic Fuss of General Anders, Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East' was published in the issue of 20 June this year (see attachment).⁹⁹ According to available information, this publication is advocated by the Jewish Agency, and English authorities tolerate Ashraw for certain reasons, because it often reflects prevailing moods and brings up various issues that cannot be discussed in the legal press. It must be added here that there are reasons to suppose that the apocryphal being distributed has been in possession of the Jewish Agency since December last year and its publication was scheduled for the period

⁹⁷ Stanisław Mikołajczyk became Prime Minister and General Kazimierz Sosnkowski became Commander-in-Chief. The appointment of the new government also resulted in a change in the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs, which was taken by Tadeusz Romer. The outgoing Head of the MFA, Edward Raczyński, continued to fulfil the function of Ambassador in London.

⁹⁸ This is a reference to Eshnav (Hebrew: peephole)—a newspaper issued in conspiracy by the Hagana (as a weekly or biweekly) in 1941–1947.

⁹⁹ Not included in this publication.

of stay of the Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East. It is also said that Jewish circles have proofs of the identicalness of the published document.

Having found out that the aforementioned article raised serious concerns among Jews and having obtained its translation, I had an opportunity to see Ambassador Romer on the following day (28 June)—during the short stay of the Commander-in-Chief in Palestine—and present the matter to him. Having met General Anders in Cairo, Ambassador Romer gave instructions by telegraph, explaining that, according to General Anders' statement, there had been no order distributed in Palestine, that it bore all the characteristics of falsification and that insane attempts to restore fuss in Polish-Jewish relations must be curbed in the Jewish society's own interest.

Minister Stańczyk, who stayed in Tel Aviv at that time, tried to dispel the Jews' fears and suspicions concerning the insincere policy of the Government towards the Jewish nation when interpellated by Jewish journalists on his part in conversations with representatives of Jews of all persuasions. This topic was also brought up by Minister Stańczyk at two bigger conferences with Jewish and foreign journalists.¹⁰⁰

In consideration of the excitement caused by the publication of the apocryphal and the fact that 'Ashraw' is a secret publication controlled by the Jewish Agency, I found it necessary to delegate Vice-Consul Weber to the Vice-President of the Jewish Agency Mr Grünbaum with an order to notify him verbally that the distributed order of General Anders had never been issued and to express hope on the part of the Consulate General that the Jewish Agency would certainly find a way to calm down public opinion. In a further—already private—conversation, Vice-Consul Weber, feeling that Mr Grünbaum treated the statement of the Consulate General with mistrust, told him that official circles in the Middle East were seriously concerned about the methods that some circles in Palestine had adopted to undermine the foundations of Polish-Jewish relations. Mr Grünbaum expressed his readiness to take relevant steps according to the wish of the Consulate General after talking to colleagues in the Jewish Agency, but he requests that the Consulate General send a letter to him stating that the document published by 'Ashraw,' about which he had heard for half a year, had never been issued. Vice-Consul Weber explained that the Consulate General had not made a written intervention to the Jewish Agency because of the unofficial, secret character of the 'Ashraw' newspaper and, therefore, oral explanations were aimed at drawing the attention of the Jewish Agency to the important state of affairs for the purpose of the prevention of artificially created anti-Polish sentiments.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ See doc. 367.

¹⁰¹ In the cable of 31 August 1943, the MFA informed the Consulate General in New York: 'Below I submit the content of the report of 16 August by General Anders to the Commander-in-Chief for the purpose of communicating it to the Jewish Telegraphic

Consul General Rosmarin rightly noticed that it would also be necessary to take some steps in America, where the 'Ashraw' publication is distributed and where unpleasant repercussions may arise, and, therefore, he suggested sending cables from himself to Nahum Goldmann and Landau, the owner and head of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, who warned against a fake document, via the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington.

I notified Ambassador Romer by telegraph about steps taken in order to liquidate the hostile action, pursuant to instructions received from him, requesting him, e.g. to agree to the sending of the letter to the Jewish Agency into the hands of Mr Grünbaum and dispatches to America proposed by Consul General Rosmarin.

Based on the consent received from Ambassador Romer on 8 July 1943, I sent the aforementioned letter to Mr Grünbaum (see attached copy).

The Consulate General will send a separate report on the progress of this matter.¹⁰²

Consulate General of the Republic of Poland
Aleksy Wdziękoński

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.755/2

Agency and, if possible, other Jewish circles. The text of the report should not be published in its full form: "I report that I have been informed about an article in the biweekly of the Jewish Agency ESHNAV of 20 June. This order is falsified from A to Z. During the entire period I commanded the army, no written or oral order was issued against Jews. On the contrary, many of my orders were aimed at normalising the Jewish matter in the Army; consequently, there are no antisemitic excesses in the Army. The Jewish matter as such does not exist in the army. I notified the above to Minister Romer, then a Delegate of the Commander-in-Chief in Cairo. Anders'" IPMS, MSZ, A.11.755/2.

¹⁰² Consul Wdziękoński provided supplementary information in the cable of 28 July 1943: "The sentiments caused by the announcement of the alleged order of General Anders calmed down to a considerable extent. As far as I know, the English censorship prevented the smuggling of the apocryphal to America in a few cases (in a parcel of diaries, in a letter and using invisible ink between the lines). However, it must be presumed that the apocryphal may have been sent to America through some route. Below I quote warning cables sent to America—about which I wrote to you in my report to Cairo and which were delivered by Rosmarin yesterday—with a request to order their submission to the Embassy in Washington: "Please submit the following two cables to the indicated address: I). Dr Nahum Goldmann, Chairman of the Jewish Congress, New York. I consider it my duty to warn you that General Anders' order with an antisemitic tendency published here in the illegal newspaper 'Eshnav' is fake. Please communicate this to Jewish institutions on my own responsibility. Rosmarin. II). Landau, Director of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency New York. I warn you against the reprint of General Anders' alleged order with an antisemitic tendency published here in Eshnav, which is a fake document. Please notify this to all editors of newspapers under my own responsibility. Rosmarin'" IPMS, MSZ, A.11.755/2.

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*13 July 1943. Letter from the Polish Committee
for Aid to War Victims to the Legation in Bern
on support granted to refugees in Switzerland
(with enclosure)*

Zürich, 13 July 1943

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland
in Bern

I am hereby honoured to submit a report on provisional aid to refugees. This report was checked and signed by Consul Kamiński. We also remit the balance of 53.45 francs to the account of the Consular Department.

With words of highest respect and regard

M. Winawer

[enclosure]

Zürich, 8 July 1943.

Statement of receipts and expenses of amounts donated by the Legation for
temporary aid to refugees:

Receipts		Expenses
on 9th day Fr. 300.-	October 1942	Fr. 10. –
	2nd day Ohlbaum	Fr. 10. –
	15th day Schmidt	Fr. 10. –
	15th day Finder	Fr. 20. –
	16th day Abrahamer and his wife	Fr. 10. –
	16th day Guttman	Fr. 20. –
	16th day Poss and his wife	Fr. 20. –
	16th day Szlanger and his family	Fr. 20. –
	23rd day Weinberg and his daughter	Fr. 20. –
	30th day Kirschbaum and his family	Fr. 20. –
	November 1942	
	6th day Singer D. and his children	Fr. 20. –
	January 1943	
	25th day Gotthelf R.	Fr. 20. –
	29th day Dr. Folman (travel costs)	Fr. 12. –
	February 1943	
25th day Bergman D.	Fr. 10. –	
March 1943		
1st day Thier N.	Fr. 20. –	
5th day Kwartner T.	Fr. 25. –	
5th day Nussbaum Ch.	Fr. 25. –	
19th day Eisenberg H.	Fr. 10.—	
On 9th day Fr. 250,-	April 1942 [sic]	
	5th day Lieberman J.	Fr. 10. –
	5th day Kirschbaum (dentist)	Fr. 12. –
	5th day Borzykowska H.	Fr. 10. –
	5th day Eidelheit J.	Fr. 20. –
	5th day Gurewicz S.	Fr. 15. –
5th day porto and money order	Fr. —70	

	May 1943 17th day Ostersetzer S. 24th day Berry N. 24th day Birom M. 29th day Dr Brüll 7th-17th day money orders, post and office supplies	Fr. 10. – Fr. 20. – Fr. 20. – Fr. 10. – Fr. 7.35
	June 1943 15th day reimbursement of telephone costs to Consul Kamiński 17th day Offen J. 18th day Eisenberg H. 21st day Merlender I. 1st-30th day money orders and typewriting paper	Fr. 20. – Fr. 10. – Fr. 20. – Fr. 15. – Fr. 4.50
	July 1943 6th day Burakowska R.	Fr. 10. –
	Balance	Fr. 496.55 Fr. 53.45
Fr. 550.–		Fr. 550. –

M. Winawer

Checked with documents and found to be in order.

Zürich, 13 July 1943

K. Kamiński

Vice-Consul of the Republic of Poland

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*21 July 1943. Report by the Government Delegation for Poland
on the possibility of departure of persons of Jewish descent
from occupied Poland to South American countries*

Warsaw, 21 July 1943

The matter of the departure of Jews, actual and alleged citizens of South American states abroad

Brought up by the Żegota section in the letter from 5 July, this matter draws particular attention at its current stage, which is accompanied by circumstances standing in a gross contradiction to the invader's attitude and policy towards Jews.

Because of the extensive additional material, we will put the descriptive part in the form of a chronicle of successive accidents and verifiable facts.

1. At the end of 1942 and in January 1943, 2 transports of legitimate South American Jews left for the Vittel camp in the total number of approx. 200 persons. The subsequent transport took place in May this year; it comprised approx. 380 persons, and its destination was also Vittel. In all these cases, Jews were put up in the Royal Hotel.

In the meantime, a massive action of the Jewish Council and a private action was organised in the ghetto in order to obtain foreign citizenships for Jews, taking into account mainly Paraguay, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Argentina.

2. As a result of the aforementioned measures that lasted a number of months, proofs of citizenship—'promises'—started to arrive in the first months of this year, i.e. when a huge part of the ghetto had already been liquidated and, in view of this, dead or outlawed recipients could not receive desired proofs. Approx. 380 promises of this kind arrived, each granted to a few persons (families).

3. In such a situation, when the aforementioned promissory notes were put at the disposal of G-o as 'undeliverable mail,' they attracted the attention of the Jewish Gestapo, or rather mainly their chief Leon Skosowski and a certain Adam Żurawin (both of these persons will be described in the latter part of the document), who initiated a bold action after concluding that such promissory notes could be put to use. In consultation with heads of the Jewish section in the Gestapo (Brandt, Grischa, Orff), Skosowski and Żurawin undertook the organisation of transport based on the aforementioned promissory notes, using a shrewd trick for this purpose: they retained 22 persons, genuine foreigners, from the May transport, doing this 'just in case' in order to have 'fry' for a further dispatch action. As it has currently turned out, their calculations were right. Organising a batch of 'foreigners' currently was not

easy because only hiding Jews remained. Thus, in order to win trust and highlight the moment of legality of the action, they additionally engaged Dr Guzik, the director of the Polish branch of the Joint being a kind of 'frontman.' The scheme is based on fees for participation in the promissory note, which amount from a few dozen to a few hundred thousand zlotys per person, although it must also be stressed that the organisers provide a certain number of places free of charge, undoubtedly for poor people and their protégés and with the intention of stressing that they do not act for profit. They charge fees 'for costs' and set the matter for wealthier Jews in such a way that they are obliged to pay more to cover costs for those unable to pay.

4. At the same time, Żurawin went to Berlin, gaining the acceptance of the scheme and an order to provide a special train for the transport for the price of 25,000 paper dollars.

Under these circumstances and with full safety ensured by the Gestapo, the recruitment was very successful as it attracted approx. 2,000 persons, who were put in Hotel Polski at Długa St. On the 5th inst., the 1st transport from this action departed in the number of 1,200 persons. Strop, Hahn, a number of Gestapo officers and a gendarmerie escort were present at the railway station. By the way, it must be added that Strop, who is responsible for the siege and destruction of the ghetto, told the gendarmes that they were being too harsh with Jews occupying the train. The transport was directed not to Vittel, but to the former Oflag premises near Hannover.

5. On the day of departure, Żurawin and Skosowski were granted a letter of thanks, a copy of which is attached here.¹⁰³

6. On the day following the departure, a letter signed by Ribbentrop came from Warsaw, in which he ordered the fastest possible organisation of another transport and stressed that the Jewish question does not exist with regard to foreign Jews and guaranteed full safety. As a result of this, a dispatch was hastily organised and carried out on Tuesday, 11 July. 600 Jews left. According to the version from the hotel premises, the haste with which this transport was prepared resulted from the need to organise the exchange of Jews for German POWs from Stalingrad.

7. Approx. 400 Jews remaining in the hotel were unexpectedly carried to Pawiak, where a room at the Division No. 5 had been prepared for them (as reported by the Żegota department). At Pawiak, the examination of documents and segregation took place; however, only 94 persons were sent to the room for the interned, and the rest was put in so-called liquidation cells. Indeed, these Jews (314 persons) were liquidated ~~under the retaliation action for a grenade thrown in Ujazdów Avenue on 15 July.~~

¹⁰³ Not included in this publication.

The next and allegedly last transport is to depart on Friday, 23 July.

That would be all about the progress of the action itself. Now there are characteristics of persons and some significant circumstances to be marked.

1. The main actor and leader of the whole action was Adam Żurawin. He is a gifted and smart man; he is only 24–26 years old and is a Jew, although he hides it perfectly and is perceived as an Aryan in the Gestapo. He owes his influence to his high personal connections in the Wehrmacht.

His right hand and the second person in this action is Leon Skosowski, popularly known as Lolek. He is currently the head of the group of the Jewish Gestapo in the Gestapo (4–5 persons). He is also very smart and resourceful. Both sent their families in a transport to Vittel in May this year.

2. In the transport that departed on 5 July, there were Gestapo informers: the Włodawski married couple, Mann, Mirecki and Romanowski. They left for good as persons identified in the local territory and, therefore, not very useful and also threatened by Polish circles. Their departure is some kind of gesture on the part of the Gestapo, which saved their lives.

3. At the time of recruitment for the first transport (on 5 July), authoritatively ascertained facts of free admission of a number of members of communist squads, including 2 Aryans, took place by the organisers. Skosowski and Żurawin, as well as Dr Guzik, knew very well who these people were, as the latter actually handed in their guns when coming into the hotel. With regard to Guzik, there are reasons to suppose that he is connected to the Polish Workers' Party (PPR).

In the light of these circumstances, this action arouses interest and suggests the need to consider whether the Germans' price was only money (a high sum in this case), or whether there are more profound reasons behind the whole action. However, based on simple reasoning and association of facts (the recently harsh anti-bribe course in the Gestapo, Ribbentrop's letter), it seems that the action carried out even by the most cunning Jewish tricksters would have failed if more profound reasons had not been taken into account apart from anything else. About them, it is not possible to reach specific conclusions, but we can point out a number of very likely hypotheses that, when taken into account, may contribute to the correct perception of the matter and potential prevention of damages that may arise.

These are the following hypotheses:

1. The will to create a propaganda proof at a small price (the minimum number of the 'saved') with regard to the special treatment of foreigners, even in the case of their Jewish descent (the relevant paragraph from Ribbentrop's letter).

2. Attempts to obtain the exchange of Jews for POWs from Stalingrad (version from the premises of the Polski Hotel).

3. Fulfilment of certain obligations or the success of the information and exchange action in terms of saving certain individuals connected with the PPR (relevant facts of saving Jews by Guzik and other PPR members as well as presumptions regarding possessed and insufficiently documented facts of cooperation between the Gestapo and the NKVD).

4. Attempts to send a trained propaganda team to foreign territories for the purpose of shaping the anti-Polish attitude towards the liquidation of Jewish people in Poland (the departure of valuable Gestapo collaborators from Poland, Włodawski and his wife, Mirecki, Romanowski and Mann; available data, though not checked closely, for anti-Polish propaganda material being in the hands of departing Jewish Gestapo collaborators).

All these hypotheses deserve to be quoted both due to their potential threat to Polish interests in the case of their truthfulness and due to the ease with which the harmfulness of their consequences on the part of the Polish Government can be prevented.

/-/ Wencki
/-/ Hübner¹⁰⁴

AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2 (previously published)

¹⁰⁴ Witold Bienkowski and Eugeniusz Gitterman.

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*28 July 1943. Letter from a member of the National Council
to the Prime Minister on the initiative of Allied countries
to prevent the extermination of Jews*

28 July 1943

To the President of the Council of Ministers
Stanisław Mikołajczyk
London
18 Kensington Palace Gardens, W.2.

Dear Prime Minister,

In connection with the conversation held yesterday and at your request, I would like to submit the following note:

The initiative that our Government once undertook with Allied governments in the matter of preventing the mass murder of Jews by the Germans did not result in any specific preventive action, apart from signs of sympathy. The result of the conference in the Bermudas was less than negligible.

The system of mass murder, now covering not only Jews, is currently in full swing in Poland. The former means of systematic extermination of the Polish population are now accompanied by mass murders of the Polish population in a manner similar to that applied by the Germans against Jews so far.

The vigilance of the political world to all these matters is stifled by political events. I think we cannot allow the political public opinion to become indifferent to these tragic accidents. Various conversations and information left me with the impression that the British Government, being inclined to take further steps, is facing certain difficulties on the part of the Government of the United States of America, without which it naturally cannot take any steps in existing conditions. When talking to the former Head of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I discussed the matter of sending another note to Allied governments. This matter was developing.

Currently, in my conversations with circles of the Jewish Congress, an idea arose that it might be possible and advisable for Heads of Allied States and Governments of these States to make a collective and friendly request, using the relevant route, to President Roosevelt in order to bring about another strong step against Germany, due to the fact of intense and large-scale brutal physical extermination of the population in occupied countries, in particular the Polish population (both Jews and Poles).

This matter seems urgent to me, and the psychological moment seems very appropriate in connection with the international situation.

The political point of gravity of this issue lies in Washington, and it is this point that would have to be overcome. I am convinced that the position of the US Government is caused not by an essential dislike, but maybe rather by inertia.

The exceptional route of the joint action proposed here would add special weight to this step and might ensure its success.

I request you to consider and accede to this suggestion and, in this case, to take relevant steps.¹⁰⁵

Please accept words of sincere regard and respect.

IGNACY SCHWARZBART

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10A

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[After 28 July 1943]. Note by Jan Karski from the conversation with the US President (extract)

TOP SECRET

Note from the conversation with President F.D. ROOSEVELT
on Wednesday, 28 July 1943

...¹⁰⁶

I am sure that many people do not realise, either, that the Jewish population is subjected to such a dreadful fate. Approx. 1,800,000 Jews have been murdered in the Homeland. There is a difference in the system of German terror directed against Poles and against Jews. The Germans want to destroy the Polish nation as a nation; in these territories, they want to have Polish people deprived of the political, intellectual, religious, economic and other elites, consisting of peasants, workers and the middle class. Regarding Jews, they want to destroy the Jewish nation biologically. I brought an official statement to my Government from the Government Delegate and the Commander of the Home Army that if the Germans would not change their methods towards the Jewish population, if there was not

¹⁰⁵ See doc. 375.

¹⁰⁶ The essential part of the note (consisting of 28 pages of typescript), which does not concern Jewish matters, was omitted.

an intervention from the Allies, through repressions or in any other manner, and finally, if no unforeseen circumstances occurred, the Jewish population in Poland, except for activists working in communication with us in the Jewish underground movement, would cease to exist.

PRESIDENT: Do you collaborate with Jews?

Yes. In two forms: The Jewish working-class, socialist movement takes part in the underground movement in close collaboration with the Polish Socialist Party. Regardless of this, there is a special commission to aid and protect Jews under the Government Delegate, which consists of representatives of Polish society, is led by a Jew and has quite large financial capabilities. We managed to hide many Jews. Unfortunately, this is limited most often to people taking part in the underground movement or to more outstanding and valuable Jewish people. We cannot develop this action on a very large scale because Jews are in dreadful conditions due to the fact that they can most often be recognised by their Semitic features. The only punishment for rendering aid to a Jew, hiding him or helping him to escape is the death penalty inflicted upon the entire family of the helping person. If anything could help, we suppose it might be an intervention from the Allies, mainly in the form of repressions against the German population in Germany and outside Europe. Such is the viewpoint submitted to me personally by underground Jewish authorities in Poland both for the international Jewry and for Allied Governments.

...

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 54

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*5 August 1943. Report by the Ambassador in Washington
on Jan Karski's stay in the United States*

TOP SECRET

5 August 1943

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

Making use of Mr Jan Karski's stay in the USA

In the last days of June this year, Mr Jan Karski reported to me in Washington after his arrival in the United States. After a longer conversation with him and

after becoming familiar with primary reports that he had made available to me, I concluded that, thanks both to the exceptional personality of Karski himself and the value of the materials he had at his disposal, his arrival opened an unprecedented opportunity to use the most valuable benefits of the political significance of Poland's participation in the war and the organisational advantages of our Homeland primarily towards leading personalities of the American Government, the political world and top-level press officers. Because Mr Karski had arrived in poor health, exhausted and suffering from a skin disease resulting from a change of nutrition conditions—therefore, I advised him to entrust his body to medical care in New York in order to undergo a treatment for 10 days. I suggested that he return to Washington on 3 July and asked him to reside as my guest at the Embassy during his stay in Washington.

At the same time, I immediately started organising meetings in Washington for him. Trying to ensure that Mr Karski was received and heard by the President for a sufficiently long time and could actually present to him a complete report on the situation in Poland and the organisation of work of the underground movement, I arranged my action appropriately, realising that things would look completely different if I made a direct request for an audience with the President for me and Mr Karski, which he would actually grant to me, but for a short time. It would be completely different if I prepared the terrain through a number of Karski's preliminary contacts with leading personalities close to the President and if my request for an audience was supported from many sides directly with the President, who would then become interested by himself and would be willing to listen to Mr Karski. This action proved surprisingly successful and brought particularly great results for our cause.

On 5 July, I held a predominantly male discussion dinner in the Embassy for currently close advisers and friends of the President. The following persons were present: Felix Frankfurter, Justice of the Supreme Court; Oscar Cox, Deputy Minister of Justice; Benjamin Cohen, legal counsellor to Judge James F. Byrnes (whom the President has recently entrusted with supreme coordination functions of all state offices), and Edward F. Prichard, second legal counsellor, active in the White House. In addition, I invited Major William McChesney Martin, who had been sent to Russia a short time ago. Apart from that, Counsellor Librach, staying in Washington at that time, and I were present. After dinner, with the reservation of full secrecy, Mr Karski presented a detailed report, arousing utmost interest and a number of profound questions from American personalities being present. This interest is understandable when we take into account that the dinner started at 8.00 p.m. and guests left the Embassy before 1.00 a.m. Judge Frankfurter concerned himself with information from Mr Karski so much that he asked me by himself if I found it advisable on my part to notify the President about the presence of Mr Karski, to stress the importance of information brought by him, its sincerity, etc., and to persuade the President into seeing him. Of course, I eagerly agreed and

Judge Frankfurter, who put off his holiday trip by two days specially in order to listen to Mr Karski, visited the President on the following day to draw his attention to Karski. Apart from that, Judge Frankfurter wrote to Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, asking him to support his request for the reception of Mr Karski with the President.

Incidentally, I wish to indicate that starting then I had an opportunity to check to what extent information from Mr Karski was, in a very discreet manner, used with benefit for us by persons being present at the first dinner.

On the following day, I held a male dinner specially for senior officials of the Department of State. Because of the departure of Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, I invited the following persons on holiday: Under-Secretary of State Berle; Head of the European Department Mr Loy W. Henderson; Chief Expert for Poland Mr Elbridge Durbrow and Expert for Russia Mr Charles E. Bohlen. This group also listened to Mr Karski until 1.00 a.m., asking him thoroughly about all details of the underground movement and expressing special interest in the underground Soviet action in Poland. The persons attending this meeting prepared a number of secret reports both for the President and for the Secretary of State, which were very useful to us.

On the third day, at the afternoon meeting, Mr Karski talked at the Embassy—in the presence of Colonel Mitkiewicz, Onacewicz, Cavalry Captain Zamoyski and me—with chief officers of the American Second Department.¹⁰⁷ The interest of these military men was visible from the time that they devoted to this report and from questions asked by them. Special reports for General Marshall and Secretary for War Stimson were the result of this conversation.

On the fourth day, I held a party for the Office of Strategic Services. In the absence of General William J. Donovan, who stayed in Europe at the same time, the meeting was attended by Mr John C. Wiley, Mr Murphy, Colonel J. Buxton, General Magruder, Messrs Shepardson and Rogers. I also invited Mr Librach on that occasion. The very detailed conversation that took place was outstandingly successful with regard to the profound interest of the participants. Later, at the special request of Mr Wiley, Mr Karski was also invited to a dinner in his premises, where he had an opportunity to present again the situation in Poland and in the underground movement in the presence of some more additional heads of relevant OSS departments.

On the fifth day, I arranged an afternoon meeting for the four most important local press officers, subject to full secrecy. The following persons were present: Walter Lippmann, William Ph. Simms, George Creel, Forrest Davis and Edgar

¹⁰⁷ This is a reference to officers of the US military intelligence and counterintelligence; the Second Department of the General Staff of the Polish Army mentioned by Ambassador Ciechanowski was the analogous Polish military unit.

A. Mowrer. George Creel is the former head of war propaganda nominated by his friend President Wilson; currently he is the editor of *Collier's Magazine* and plays a great political role in the Democratic Party. Mr Forrest Davis is one of the main editors of 'Saturday Evening Post,' has a big political influence and is one of the closest friends of President Roosevelt from among press officers. The conversation lasted a few hours. The report and answers of Mr Karski made a deep impression. I also know that Mr Forrest Davis immediately notified the President about Mr Karski.

In the further course of Mr Karski's stay at my place, I arranged a dinner for him at the Embassy, to which I invited two other persons: Assistant Secretary of War J.J. McCloy and a very important person for us close to the President—Mr Herbert Feis, Economic Adviser for International Affairs to the Department of State and the White House. I think that this evening was one of the most important contacts that I have arranged for Mr Karski. This is because Mr Feis presents the matters of our loans directly to the President and Secretary of State Hull and, as he later told me, he understood the need for and the importance of these loans only after hearing Mr Karski. As regards Mr McCloy, who is a very close personal friend of mine, he used information received from Mr Karski for preparing a special report emphasising the organisational merits, courage and effective action of Poland for Minister of War Stimson and the General Staff.

In addition, after the conversation that I held with the Secretary of State Hull a short time after the aforementioned meetings—at the request of the Secretary of State, who temporarily had no time to receive Mr Karski personally because of intense work in the absence of Sumner Wells—I invited separately his closest diplomatic adviser, Minister James C. Dunn, from the Department of State. Within the few hours of conversation, Mr Karski could submit a detailed report on Poland and the underground movement. Mr Dunn reported this conversation directly to the Secretary of State.

I also arranged a meeting for Mr Karski at the Embassy with the personalities of the Catholic world making the most outstanding political contribution here: Monsignor Michael J. Ready, who is in charge of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and famous Rev Edmund A. Walsh, a Jesuit whose activity in Russia during the trial of Archbishop Cieplak is known to you.

Apart from that, I arranged a visit for Mr Karski to former Ambassador William C. Bullitt, who could not come to the Embassy upon my invitation because he had broken his leg. Mr Karski had a long conversation with him, after which Mr Bullitt—as soon as he was able to leave his house—took an opportunity to talk to the President and to persuade him to invite Mr Karski to an audience with him without delay. On the following day, I received a telephone call to come with Mr Karski to the White House immediately.

I attach a special report on the audience with the President, prepared by Karski himself in cooperation with me.¹⁰⁸ Having had so many opportunities to learn President Roosevelt's moods during conversation, I can say that I have never seen him as deeply interested and fully absorbed as on that occasion. The President was apparently worried about the entire human aspect of the position of the Polish Nation. As he told me, he had not realised that something like that was possible. There is no question that (as he stressed later, which I heard from the Secretary of State Hull) he understood that Poland had a very separate and special card in the history of this war. His whole attitude suggested that his view on Poland matured in a very favourable direction for us.

Here I emphasise that the President, who likes talking so much during conversations, listened to Mr Karski without interrupting him and concentrated his inquiries only once Mr Karski finished reporting for given parts. The fact of his making such a firm statement regarding the annexation of East Prussia to Poland also deserves your special attention. Apart from that, the President was apparently deeply struck by Soviet disloyalty towards Poland.

Since the audience with the President held on 28 July, I have received comments from all sides about the deep impression that Mr Karski's report left on the President. Yesterday, when I entered the office of Secretary of State Hull to talk to him, he welcomed me with the words: 'The President seems so thrilled by his talk with your young man, that he can talk of nothing else.'

Apart from these most valuable contacts, I put Mr Karski in touch through social routes with a large number of persons not for the purpose of such detailed reports, but in order to create the possibility of talking about Poland and selected aspects of the underground movement.

The aforementioned Mr George Creel (page 4) expressed such strong interest that he sought permission to write two articles on the underground movement—obviously without mentioning Mr Karski—in *Collier's* and in *Ladies Home Journal*—a very widely-read monthly issued also by Creel's company; the editor of this monthly will write an interview with Mr Karski, also put in a discreet form, about the role of women in present-day Poland. In the most widely-read American weekly—*Saturday Evening Post*—Forrest Davis intends to write a basic article about Russia's attitude to the United Nations against the background of information received from Mr Karski's report.

I also plan to put Mr Karski in touch with Jewish organisations in New York: the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and with the Association of Polish Jews and

¹⁰⁸ Previous document.

the Bund.¹⁰⁹ Deputy Adamczyk and Mr Malinowski are organising meetings with supreme American union authorities.

Apart from that, Mr Karski is to be in Detroit to get in touch with currently the most important person from the Catholic episcopate, Archbishop Mooney, and with Bishop Woznicki.

I also talked to President Świetlik and Consul General Ripa, saying that Mr Karski should stay in Chicago for two days, during which he would get in touch with supreme authorities of leading Polish diaspora associations to report on the situation in the Homeland to them.

* * *

¹⁰⁹ In the report of 12 August 1943, Consul General Sylwin Strakacz gave an account of Karski's conversations in New York: 'The reports delivered by Mr Karski were top-level presentations that gave the audience insight into the terror in occupied Poland, with special stress on the situation of Jews ... Mr Karski's visit is significant in many aspects. In my opinion, the following moments connected with Mr Karski's conversations are worth special emphasis: 1. Jewish organisations highly value the fact that the Polish Government closely cooperates with them and delegated to them one of the higher officials of underground Poland for reporting on the situation in the Homeland; 2. Jewish organisations appreciate also the possibility of having a sincere conversation, asking Mr Karski about interesting details, to a certain extent without control and censorship from the local Office, as the undersigned limited his participation in these meetings to introducing Mr Karski and to assisting during approximately half of the time of the meeting ... On individual meetings, topics closely related to the work of the organisations whose representatives conferred with Mr Karski aroused special interest. For example: the Joint's representatives were particularly interested in the distribution of aid among the Jewish population, initially at large and then in ghettos, members of the Representation of Polish Jewry expressed special interest in the participation of the Jewish population in the organisation of underground Poland, questions were asked about the details of organisation of the Department of Jewish Affairs under the Government Delegate, others wanted to know why Jewish organisations did not belong to the agreement of parties; there were questions about cooperation between the Bund and the Polish Socialist Party, with whom the Orthodox cooperate, what attitude the Polish society has towards Jews in general, what kind of aid was brought to ghettos by the Polish population, how ghettos got weapons for defence against the invader in the last phase of their liquidation, whether the attitude of the Polish population to the Jewish population in Lesser Poland and in eastern territories of the Republic of Poland, previously occupied by the Soviets, was the same, i.e. friendly, as in the territory of the General Government ... Now it is difficult to predict what specific results Mr Karski's mission will bring. There is no doubt, however, that his presence in this place for two days shook the whole Jewish society and became an advantage of paramount importance for the cultivation of good relations of the local Office with Jewish organisations.' AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 503.

To sum up the above, I am honoured to ask you to communicate this report with the attachment to the Prime Minister and Minister Kot.¹¹⁰ I would like both the Prime Minister and Minister Kot to know how sending Mr Karski here at the present moment was important and useful for Poland. In view of the above, please allow me to refer to the proposal made directly to the Prime Minister by telegraph today that, contrary to original projects about which I learn now, he agrees to acknowledge the use of Mr Karski for propaganda purposes and that, after such a successful action of Mr Karski on the highest governmental and political level, any additional contacts on a mass scale that could not be kept in discretion and did not match the level represented by Mr Karski's reporting action should be abandoned. Having known this territory for many years, I state that Mr Karski should, upon finishing the additional contacts that I sketched above during August, return to London more or less at the end of August. If, through excessively broad secondary contact, he was also to establish too extensive relations, the whole significance of his presentations—their secrecy and, in particular, their official character as a direct delegate of the Polish underground work to highest American circles—would be distorted.

Finally, I am honoured to ask you that, according to local usages, the report on Mr Karski's conversation and my conversation with the President Roosevelt be treated as strictly confidential.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.L.24

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5 August 1943. Aide-Mémoire by the Polish Government for the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Great Britain on German crimes

Aide-Mémoire

1. The Polish Government along with the Governments of other Allied countries received with great satisfaction the announcement that neutral countries

¹¹⁰ Having ceased to fulfil the function of Minister of State in the Middle East, Stanisław Kot took the position of Minister of Information and Documentation (in Stanisław Mikołajczyk's government).

had been warned against granting asylum to war criminals. Information received from Poland, and referred to in Paragraph 2 below, impel the Polish Government to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that, apart from the punishment of war criminals for the crimes they have committed, it has become more imperative than ever to restrain the Germans from committing further the mass murder of the Polish population in Poland. This becomes all the more urgent since it may be anticipated that the policy of exterminating the population of entire provinces, as is practised in Poland, may also be applied by the Germans in the present final stage of the war to the people in other German-occupied territories, like the Czechs, Yugoslavs, French and those in the occupied parts of the U.S.S.R.

2. According to news received from Poland, after exterminating the majority of the Jewish population there, the Germans have since the autumn 1942 begun to deport hundreds of thousands of Poles whose homes lie along a 100 kilometer broad belt to the West of a line reaching from Białystok along the rivers Bug and Zbrucz.

A large proportion of those intended for deportation were murdered. In addition thousands of Polish children were separated from their parents and sent to Germany to be brought up as Germans. A considerable number of the Polish minorities living in East-Prussia farther to the North of the Białystok area, was deported to the Reich proper.

The inhabitants of the province of Lublin to the West of the belt which had been cleared of its population were not deported; the Germans began to murder them in July 1943. Men from 14 to 50 are taken to Germany. Women, children and old people are sent to camps to be killed in gas chambers which previously served to exterminate the Jewish population of Poland.

On July 26th the Polish Government learned from the Homeland that the Germans are adopting the same methods in the provinces of Radom and Cracow. The population of the provinces of Lublin, Radom and Cracow total more than 7 million. Details regarding the above information are given in an Appendix¹¹¹.

3. It may be presumed that the Germans are reckoning on the possibility of a defeat, and have consequently decided to exterminate the largest possible proportion of the Polish population with a view to assuring to the German race, after the war, a numerical superiority over its neighbours in the aggregate. If no preventive measures are taken, these mass murders in the provinces of Lublin, Radom and Cracow may be extended to the inhabitants of the remaining Polish provinces, as well as to war prisoners and Polish forced labourers in Germany, in other words to the whole Polish Nation.

There is no reason to believe that this mass extermination will not also be applied to other occupied countries in Europe. As a matter of fact Sauckel, the Reich's plenipotentiary for labour, declared at a public meeting in Cracow on the

¹¹¹ Not included in this publication.

19th June 1943: 'If the Germans lose the war, we shall see that nothing remains either here or elsewhere in Europe.'

4. Faced with the possible extermination of further millions of Poles, the Polish Government feel compelled to appeal to His Majesty's Government to do all in their power to prevent further murders. In the view of the Polish Government, the application of the following measures might be effective and as such are worthy of consideration:

(a) A widespread broadcasting, over the radio and otherwise, to Germany and also the occupied countries of the character, extent and purpose of the mass-murders committed against the Polish people. This should be amplified by repeated categorical warnings to the German criminals, their families in Germany, and to the whole German people wherever they may be, that all those guilty of such deeds will be held responsible for them. It may be expected that if such warnings are given drastically and repeatedly today when Germany listens to the B.B.C. more than at any other time, it will not only in a certain measure have the desired effect, but will also be instrumental in splitting German public opinion by supplying facts and providing arguments for the opposition, thus deepening the defeatist attitude already noticeable in Germany.

(b) The issue of an official statement by His Majesty's Government (if possible jointly with the American Government) to Parliament embodying the arguments and the essence of the proposed broadcast action. The statement itself should also be the subject of broadcasts and should be dropped in the form of printed leaflets over Germany including, if possible Eastern Germany.

(c) The campaign of broadcasting warnings might also be extended to broadcasts to the satellites of the Reich, for under certain conditions these nations may also become the victims of German murders; such a measure may also have important consequences by contributing to the distrust of these satellites of Germany and influencing their political relations with the Reich.

(d) An examination of measures for immediate reprisals.

When the Polish Government discussed the problem of reprisals with His Majesty's Government in connection with the extermination of the Jewish population, they met with certain objections on the part of His Majesty's Government. However, the present grave situation in Poland and the danger of its worsening still further, oblige the Polish Government to urge the need for a re-consideration of His Majesty's Government's attitude in the matter. The choice, character and scope of the reprisals in question could form the subject of a discussion between the two Governments.

London, August 5th, 1943

TNA, FO 371/34550 (ENG)

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[After 10 August 1943]. Note by Jan Karski on conversations held during his stay in the United States (extract)

Secret

Report No. 3 of JAN KARSKI on his stay in the USA

Jewish matters

During these conversations, the fact that Jewish matters were being presented by an 'Aryan' made a good impression. Both because, being deeply struck by the fate of Jews in Poland, I really would like to help them somehow as much as possible, and because I wanted to create an impression that there is sympathy and understanding for Jewish matters among the Polish society, I put much heart into the delivery of my speech. I suppose that the audience noticed this. Almost everyone stressed that they perceived my kindness and good will to come to the rescue of Jews in Poland as a proof of change of attitude towards Jews in Polish society. During the talks, I also stressed the underground collaboration between Polish and Jewish society. I laid emphasis on works of the Government Delegation aimed at bringing aid to illegal Jews in Poland. In everyone's presence, I highlighted the existing cooperation between the WRN¹¹² and the Bund in Poland (which is an accurate fact, anyway). This part of my speech aroused interest in all the Jews regardless of their beliefs and party affiliation. I must stress that the fact that I could not [sic] refer to this makes a great impression here and largely contributes to the Polish cause in Jewish American circles. Almost everyone asked me eagerly if antisemitism was still present in Poland. Almost everyone stressed that antisemitism had previously existed in Poland and had done much harm to Jewish society. In reply, I stressed that the declaration of the Government on the Jewish matter in 1940 or 1941 had been supported by almost all underground Polish circles, and I also emphasised the fact that in 1942 almost all Polish underground political centres, particularly the Home Army and the Delegation, had condemned German methods used against Jews, had expressed sympathy for the Jewish society and had called Poles to bring aid to Jews. I also highlighted the work of the unit at the Government Delegation that is responsible for the organisation of aid to Jews. There was general interest when I said that even 'Walka', the official journal of the National Party in Poland, had published an editorial in 1942 stressing that 'irrespective of our political beliefs

¹¹² The Polish Socialist Party—Freedom, Equality, Independence (PPS-WRN) was an underground form of activity carried out by politicians of the Polish Socialist Party in occupied Poland. Its representatives were members of the Council to Aid Jews and established military underground organisations.

and the evaluation of the role of Jews in the history of Poland, we express our contempt for and our condemnation of German methods and our sympathy for the unfortunate Jewish nation in Poland.' I also emphasised (which is accurate, anyway) that in the current atmosphere in the Homeland it is virtually impossible for any of the Poles, regardless of his political beliefs, to declare himself loudly as an antisemite or to express solidarity with German methods.

The opinion of Rabbi Wise (the president of the American Jewish World Congress) was quite characteristic. At the end of our conversation, he uttered a few words that seemed to be addressed to Poland. He said: 'Seeing how sincerely and warm-heartedly you, in spite of not being a Jew, strive to obtain help for our nation, how you expose yourself to danger by helping the Jewish cause, I want to stress that my goal and the subject of my work is to restore the great and independent Poland in which the Jewish nation could live freely and on equal terms with all inhabitants of the Polish State. The fact that you are here and can talk to us shows how strong the Polish underground movement is. Poland will rise!'

The Joint Distribution Committee decided to donate immediately 0.5 million dollars for direct aid to the Jewish population. It was stressed that this aid would also naturally encompass 'the most unfortunate Poles.' I was asked what route should be used for bringing aid to Jews in Poland. I encouraged my interlocutors to use only the agency of the Polish Government here, not only because this is the most advisable option, but for purely utilitarian purposes—this route will guarantee highest efficiency and fair distribution. My interlocutors agreed to this point of view and will get in touch with Polish authorities. They allegedly have large possibilities of sending passports of neutral (South American) states to Poland that could save people in Poland. And, as far as this matter is concerned, I objectively and sincerely encouraged them to use our official communication channel and assured that it is absolutely unlikely or even technically impossible for aid sent to the Jewish population in Poland in any form whatsoever to be utilised by any other people than Jews. (The chairman of the Jewish unit at the Government Delegation is a Jew.)

A majority of my Jewish and non-Jewish interlocutors asked me about the activity of Soviet partisans and communist influences in Poland. They were impressed by articles published (recently) in the communist newspaper 'Głos Ludowy.' In these articles, the editors alarmed the public opinion that the Polish underground movement was murdering 'left-wing patriots' in Poland.

...¹¹³

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136

¹¹³ The extract about the relations between Poland and the USSR was omitted.

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12 August 1943. *Unsigned note about the Auschwitz concentration camp*

Description of the Auschwitz concentration camp

1. The current number of prisoners—137,000.
2. The Polish death fate—amounted to 80–130 a day on average in winter in 1940–41–42.
3. Deaths were usually caused by the treatment of prisoners by kapos and guards, malnutrition and epidemic diseases as a result of insects and dirt in the camp, and which were not treated (typhoid fever, dysentery).
4. Deaths became less frequent by the end of 1942 and 1943.
5. Approx. 80% of prisoners (Poles) were sent to Dachau, Mauthausen and to labour camps in Hamburg, Bremen, Wilhelmshafen and others in 1943.

Jews

By September 1942, 468,000 unregistered Jews were gassed in Auschwitz. From September 1942 till the beginning of June 1943, approx. 60,000 Jews arrived from Greece (Thessaloniki, Athens), 50,000 from Slovakia and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, approx. 50,000 from the Netherlands, Belgium and France, 6,000 from Chrzanów and 5,000 from Kęty, Żywiec, Sucha, Ślemień and the surrounding area. Today, 2% of these people are alive. Out of these 98%, usually healthy young people, were sent to be gassed and burnt half-alive. Each transport coming into Auschwitz is unloaded, men and women are separated and then 98% (mainly women and children) are loaded onto trucks and taken to the gas chamber in Birkenau; after terrible torment (asphyxiation) lasting 10-15 minutes, corpses are thrown out through the opening and burnt on a pyre. It should be noted that the prisoners must have a bath before entering the gas chamber. Due to the insufficient supply of poison gasses, the still half-alive people were also burnt. Currently, three large crematoria for 10,000 people a day have been built in Birkenau, which burn corpses continuously; they are called 'eternal fire' by the local population. The remaining 2% of the transport are divided between the women's camp in Birkenau and the men's camp in Auschwitz and Birkenau. The women's camp in Birkenau is the most terrible place that humankind can ever imagine. There is neither water nor the most necessary hygiene for most primitive vegetation. An external worker, a field worker, cannot keep himself clean in any way and dies within a short time, having no possibility of recovering even from the most trivial of diseases. Apart from that, there is another crematorium in the men's camp near Rajsko, where corpses of executed people from prisons in Katowice and other towns are burnt,

the average number is 30 people every 14 days. Moreover, especially strong Jewish girls are used in the men's camps for experiments in which artificial insemination and sterilisation are carried out. These people also die over the course of time.

Many Ukrainians have been used to guard the prisoners, and a few hundred Slovak soldiers have recently volunteered to serve as SS men in Auschwitz.

In the winter, prisoners had to work without winter underwear and in wooden shoes in the open air in temperatures reaching negative 25 degrees, so a large number of frozen corpses was brought from the working yards every day.

Over the last few days, numerous transports of Poles from the areas of Radom, Lublin and Siedlce have arrived; because of serious political crimes they were not gassed but shot in the forest near Birkenau on the following day.

Gypsy camp

In 1943, approx. 10,000 Gypsies from all occupied countries and the Third Reich were assembled in the Birkenau concentration camp and ordered to perform hard labour because of their age. However, they have been gassed on a mass scale over the past few days.

Auschwitz

From 20 June, mass transports have arrived in the Auschwitz (Birkenau) concentration camp, namely: 1 transport of 870 people from Nice (southern France), 1 transport of over 500 people from Berlin, 1 transport of 900 people from Thessaloniki, 2 transports of 1,600 people from Badenburg, 1 transport from Sosnowiec and 1 transport of 391 people from Lublin. In these transports, 80% are Jews and 20% are Gypsies from Greece and southern France. Of these people, maybe 10% remained alive in the camp; the remaining 90% were taken to a gas chamber immediately upon arrival and gassed. Especially children and women do not get into the camp at all.

Since then, numerous transports of Poles (women, children and the elderly) have also arrived. Recently they have been executed, too; executions are performed also by beheading. The gassing of Poles has become very widespread in the camp. Many prisoners who had been here for 3-4 years and endured the most terrible shortages and yet have held on for so long, have been completely healthy and were gassed only because they were presumably intelligent. There are no rules for gassing; everyone chosen indiscriminately and at random is dragged into the chamber. New people are sorted every day. Polish transports arrive mainly from the areas of Radom, Lublin, Tarnobrzeg and Sandomierz.

On the night of 3/4 July 1943, 16 Ukrainians who had been trained here to serve as guards by SS-Untersturmführer Lange escaped with guns and a large quantity of ammunition. They escaped towards Grosse Chelm and wanted to cross

the Przemsza river to get to the local Jaworzno forests. The gendarmerie from local towns and villages started to search for them, and a regular battle ensued between Ukrainian escapees and the gendarmerie, who did not know who was among the escapees and fired at one another. Only when reinforcements from Katowice and Mysłowice arrived and SS men entered the area armed with light machine guns in a few armoured vehicles did an actual clash occur in which two SS men were killed, four were heavily wounded and eight were lightly wounded. 11 Ukrainians were killed during the fight, and 4-5 were captured and horrifically tortured to death. After a few days, Untersturmführer Lange was imprisoned, too. According to testimonies of other Ukrainians, most of the escapees were Russian officers.

After a period in which prisoners were always escorted by 1 Ukrainian and 1 German guard, all the guards were disarmed. The Ukrainians were imprisoned for 4 days. The company from which the fugitives were recruited were all shot. Since Friday 9 July, Ukrainians have received guns and ammunition for the day again and have been undergoing military training at the shooting range in Rajsko. Guns are taken away from them before dark. On 5 July, a garrison order was given, in which the camp commandant Obersturmbannführer Höss notified that SS Scharf, Reineke and Schutzmann Stephan Rahberger had died on duty while fighting armed groups.

In recent days, there have been many cases of typhoid fever, mainly in the women's camp in Birkenau, where whole blocks were closed because of it. Obviously, the sick and even those suspected of typhus are gassed, too. This is not strange, considering the terrible conditions in the women's camp in Birkenau. The camp lacks water and things most needed to maintain cleanliness.

There is a typhus epidemic in the Gypsy camp, so commandant Höss had to issue an order that all SS men serving in the Gypsies' camp must be accommodated separately from other SS men and that they must take a bath and be checked for the presence of lice every day.

Auschwitz, 10 July 1943

Mass executions from 15 July till 8 August 1943

Poles

After 15 July, mass transports of Polish hostages arrived, namely: 1 transport from Tarnów, 1 from Cracow, 1 from Lublin, 1 from Radom and 1 from Warsaw. All were taken to Auschwitz in prison railroad cars, with the prisoners' hands and feet handcuffed. All those people were immediately executed.

On 17 July, one prisoner escaped from the camp and therefore 12 Poles were executed. Only intellectuals, mainly doctors, lawyers and engineers, were selected

for execution. The Germans threatened that 100 people would be executed if anyone else escaped.

Approx. 2-43 Polish transports arrive every week, out of which most men and women were executed. It is also common for prisoners who had been in Auschwitz for a long time to be executed.

On 28 July, the expulsion of Poles took place in Auschwitz. It concerned mainly elderly people and wives and children whose husbands or fathers had died in the war, were prisoners of war or had been put in concentration camps or executed. Some of them went to Oberberg, others went to the General Government and a small amount of the very elderly remained in the camp and were probably gassed and then cremated, because absolutely no information about them was received.

Czechs

At that time, two transports of 100 men each from Bohemia arrived, 50% of whom were executed allegedly because of high treason, and 50% remained in KL Auschwitz. Also, two transports of Czechs who had remained in KL Auschwitz for a long time were sent to Buchenwald.

Jews

On 15 July and 1 August, isolated transports of Jews arrived from various labour camps in Germany. Rather these people should be considered as corpses. They were completely exhausted bodies that could no longer stand on their feet due to the labour. They could not even walk from the railroad car to the truck and were simply thrown like wood logs onto the trucks by the SS men. They were immediately transported to Birkenau and gassed there.

The delousing of the entire men's and women's camps was announced for 1, 2 and 3 August. Delousing is nothing but mass gassing. Everybody, even half-weak people, were taken away, regardless of whether they were Aryans or Jews, and anyone whose face the SS men did not like was selected and dragged into the gas chamber.

Simultaneously with this delousing, the expulsion of all Jews from Sosnowiec and Będzin took place. 15 complete trains with approx. 15,000 people arrived. Apart from that, trucks drove to and fro all night long. 100 people, children, men and women, were pushed onto one car. The same number on the trailer. These people arrived in a completely inhuman condition. In the open field, they were thrown off the vehicles; children were trampled upon and women were beaten almost to death, standing bloodied in the most intense heat, half-naked, all day without anyone's help, without a drop of water in the open field. It is utterly impossible to imagine or find words for describing the torment of people to the point of death;

death was their salvation. Innocent children and sick women unable to walk are tossed mercilessly in various directions, beaten and kicked.

Such annihilation of humans has not been known before and could not be invented by anyone other than the Germans, who are 'messengers of the highest level of culture.' However, these people are not ashamed to talk about the ruthless bombing of towns, churches and monuments.

Because the crematoria could not take such numbers of people, corpses were simply burnt in an open pit in a field near Birkenau and all that could be seen for three days was flames flaring up from where people were being burned.

Apart from that, transports from France arrived and were executed in the same manner.

Birkenau celebrated its record of gassing 30,000 people within one day.

Auschwitz, 12 August 1943

Names of criminals of the Auschwitz concentration camp

Obersturmbannführer GÖSS¹¹⁴—camp commandant.

Hauptsturmführer SCHWARZ—exceptionally engaged in the expulsion of Poles from villages near Auschwitz. Apart from that, he mercilessly acts against Poles and can be regarded as the driving force of the biggest mass executions of Poles. One of the biggest enemies of Poles.

Hauptsturmführer AUMEIER—head of executions, hangings and shootings.

Untersturmführer SELL—a man who arouses fear in the entire camp, wherever he can do anything nasty to prisoners or punish them, he does this mercilessly and often without any grounds. Particularly in the women's camp.

The biggest part in the selection and gassing of Jews is played by:

Oberscharführer SCHOPPE

STIBITZ

Hauptsturmführer MÜLLER

Overseer DREXLER—this woman did many evil things in the women's section in Birkenau. During the worst weather, she ordered prisoners to go to work without their heads covered and during the most intense heatwaves.

The receipt of Polish and Czech transports was done in the presence of SCHOPPE and STIBITZ, who received people immediately after the unloading

¹¹⁴ Names of the camp commandant Rudolf Höß (Höss), Friedrich Stiwitz, Elsa Margot Drechsel, Gerhard Lachmann and Erich Wosnitza are misspelt in the document.

of railroad carriages where they were still handcuffed with kicks to the stomach, blows and beatings. This was only because they did not take off their caps quickly enough, did not form ranks immediately and did not know how to behave, as orders and commands of the camp were still completely unfamiliar to them. They also acted mercilessly towards women in the same way. The weaker and sicker a woman was, the more delighted these executioners were to beat and kick her to death.

One of the biggest daemons of the women's camp in Birkenau was the senior overseer MANDL. This woman is the worst and most sadistic creature that anyone could imagine. In the Ravensbrück concentration camp, she was the overseer of the penal block and had starved to death many women and girls. This woman invented the harshest punishments and could watch with a completely clean conscience as women fell to the ground from her blows and torture and often remained there. She constantly inflicted a punishment of 25 baton blows. In the Birkenau camp, she was appointed senior overseer and can freely loosen her reins. She delightfully sought out people for gassing and punishment. These punishments were usually groundless, with the only reason being that prisoners did not work fast enough in her presence or many other similar trifles.

The Auschwitz Political Department deserves a special chapter. Its head is Untersturmführer GRABNER. All punishments and all death sentences depend on him. But this man actually only signs what is handed to him. Small ranking officials are much more malicious. They handle their matters, but they do it more precisely.

During the interrogation, the following people are usually present:

Oberscharführer KIRSCHNER

Oberscharführer BOGER

Oberscharführer LACHMAN

Untersturmführer WIZNICA.

They are the most terrible people in the camp. Every single one of them beats and tortures prisoners viciously. They are tortured until they give a statement about things they had never done in their life. That is why, a special room with instruments of torture has been arranged. It contains devices that had never been used even in the Middle Ages.

The worst device is the 'cradle'; no one gets out alive. As stated above, only the most sadistic SS men are selected for these purposes.

However, the main job of the political department is to write out record cards of the dead and the gassed. Record cards of the gassed are marked with SS¹¹⁵ (special procedure). The work of the so-called Political Department is nothing but the scream of the dead and the gassed.

Auschwitz, 12 August 1943

IJPA, Polska. Sytuacja w Kraju, V/1

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13 August 1943. Letter from the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: instructions for the Legation in Lisbon on the parcel action

13 August 1943

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that the following cable be sent to the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Portugal:

'Schimitzek.—In connection with your letter from 1 June 1943 No. 1620/43 and upon agreement with the Board of Deputies, please suspend the parcel operation to the territory of the General Government as of 31 August. Continue the operation to the incorporated territories to the addresses from which confirmations were received. Send immediately—by telegraph, by cipher and by courier—a report on the further progress of the parcel operation for Jews, separately for the General Government and the incorporated part. Please notify Kacki about the instruction. Stańczyk.'

FOR THE MINISTER
Bruner

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 572

¹¹⁵ It should probably be SB—Sonderbehandlung.

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*16 August 1943. Letter from the Council to Aid Jews
to the Government Delegate for Poland on granted subsidies*

To the Government Delegate for Poland

The unchanged subsidy granted for several months for aid to Żegota, amounting to 4,000 zlotys for Warsaw and 1,500 zlotys for the rest of the country, with every month turns out to be insufficient to cover even a part of the needs that are growing in this respect every day.

This situation is not improved by the fact that Jewish organisations pay 1,000 zlotys per month from their own funds, because the need for material aid rapidly increases; consequently, allowance rates decrease every month, not to mention that a considerable number of reported people remain outside the scope of material aid due to the shortage of funds. Moreover, the funds that have been set aside only for allowances are used to cover additional expenses for costs of the organisation of local aid units and for a newly established facility for the care of Jewish children, which requires larger investments. Both of these additional expenses have not been included in the Council's estimates so far.

Loans for the rest of the country have been used by Cracow, Lwów, Siedlce, Ostrowiec, etc. Currently, after the establishment of a new important facility of the Council in Łódź and a similar facility to be established in Lublin, the amount granted to the rest of the country is definitely insufficient and cannot be regarded even as symbolic aid, considering that such centres as Cracow or Lwów present demands for cash exceeding the entire monthly subsidy that the Council receives.

In this situation, in order to fulfil its task at least partly, the Council to Aid Jews asks you to increase the monthly subsidy in the next month to 7,500 zlotys for Warsaw and to 2,500 zlotys for the rest of the country and grant an additional subsidy of 1,000 zlotys for the coverage of current needs in the current month.

If the lack of funds for this purpose is an obstacle to the fulfilment of the above request, the Council to Aid Jews asks you to forward this case to the Government of the Republic of Poland in London with a request for granting a special budget to the Council in the amount adequate to the needs.

Warsaw, 16 August 1943

For the Council to Aid Jews
/–/ Trojan WRN /–/ Marek SPD¹¹⁶

AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2 (previously published)

¹¹⁶ Julian Grobelny and Ferdynand Arczyński.

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*21 August 1943. Letter from the Counsellor at the Legation in Bern
to Adolf Silberschein on difficulties
in obtaining Peruvian passports and on aid activities*

Bern, 23 August 1943

Secret—by courier

Dr A. Silberschein
7, rue Gautier
Genève

Dear Doctor,

In reply to your letter from 18 August this year,¹¹⁷ I kindly report as follows:

Ad 1. In the Peruvian matter, I intervened personally with the First Secretary at the Legation of Peru, Mr Carlos HEEREN, who had been its actual head due to the Envoy's absence from Bern.

¹¹⁷ In the aforementioned letter, Adolf Silberschein wrote: '1) I would be very grateful for a reply of a few words, or for letting me know by telephone about the results of the intervention with the Peruvian Legation in the matter concerned. The Secretary of the Peruvian Consulate in Geneva received a notification from the Peruvian Envoy dated 14 August that he was not entitled to fulfil the function of secretary anymore. The Consul himself has not received any notifications so far, but I am afraid that the matter of his suspension or withdrawal of consular rights from him is in progress. This is because Envoy Calderon has suddenly changed his attitude to this matter. I feel that this was influenced by the fact that the Consul, without consulting the Envoy, referred to the Nunciature in Bern and directly to his Government in Lima in this matter, sending the Envoy only a copy of relevant letters or a telegram. I am deeply concerned about this matter for reasons known to you and I will be very grateful for your answer. 2) I would be very glad if, on that occasion, you would like to send me a bill for the telegrams sent or give me the amount of expenses relating to these telegrams. 3) Mr Erwin Bienenstock, currently serving in the Polish Army as an officer in England, telegraphs me for the second time, asking about his family remaining in Poland. I have some news for him, but I cannot submit it by telegraph, because telegrams sent to me do not contain any address, and the place of dispatch customarily marked at the beginning of the letter reads: Great Britain. Although one of these telegrams contains Stirling, the telegrams sent to this place returned undelivered, and I was told at the post office that there was no such place. At one time, I sent a letter to him by courier, which was received, and I even got an answer, but again without any address or any indication of how I should write to him. Maybe, however, there is a way for the telegram to reach him. 4) As far as I know, I was once told at the Legation that there was the Refugee Department at

Mr Heeren told me that, although he is fully aware of the humanitarian background of the known action, the Consul omitted the Peruvian and Polish Legations by carrying it out directly with you, which gave it the characteristics of a suspicious action. Apart from that, instead of consular stamps to which he is entitled, he used the stamp of the Legation without authorisation from the superior authorities.

The conversation with Mr Heeren left me with the impression that this matter is serious.

Nevertheless, I sent a cable to our Legation in Lima with a request for an intervention in the aforementioned matter with the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the same time, Prince Radziwiłł from Geneva asked Mr Jerzy Potocki, the former Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Washington, currently residing in Lima, for an intervention in the same matter. I will notify you about the results of these interventions.

Ad 2. Please find enclosed a receipt for the amount of 135.85 Swiss francs constituting the cost of dispatch to Lima; the receipt for the dispatch to Washington was sent to you by Mr Nahlik by courier mail of 17 August.

Ad 3. I think it would be best to send a cable to Mr Erwin Bienenstock via the Polish Red Cross in London.

Ad 4. Indeed, there is a section for Polish affairs at the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Hungary, the head of which is Counsellor Jan Krzemień, being the Delegate of the Polish Civic Committee at the Royal Hungarian Ministry of Internal Affairs, whom I personally knew before the war. His address is: Szenthàromság utca 4, Budapest.

I am pleased to take the opportunity to send words of my sincere respect and regard to you.

Stefan J. Ryniewicz
Counsellor at the Legation

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 404

the Hungarian Government in Budapest and the official has a very friendly attitude to Poland, or maybe he is a Pole himself. I think I even saw a report on the activity of this Department. Quite many people have gotten through from the Homeland to Budapest recently. They keep asking me whom they should get in touch with. Could you please give me the name of the relevant official? If you could provide me with some other information in the aforementioned field, I would naturally be very grateful.' AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 404.

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*[August 1943]. Note by the former Embassy in Kuybyshev:
conclusions of the report on welfare activity (extract)*

Tehran, August 1943

AID AND CARE RENDERED TO THE JEWISH POPULATION IN THE USSR

Prepared by Zygmunt Sroczyński

...¹¹⁸

XII.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Reflecting on what we have discussed above in those 11 chapters, we must say that, in its distribution of aid in money, and in kind and the moral care for the Polish population, the Embassy was guided by the idea of providing this care to all Polish citizens living in the Soviet Union without any discrimination as to origin, religion or nationality.

The distribution of aid in kind was performed according to the fairest possible rules, to the extent allowed by specific local conditions, which were so different from European ones. The relatively larger amount of granted aid in territories inhabited in a larger percentage by the Jewish population was a consequence of better transport conditions in these areas, their early organisation into a network of trusted representatives' posts and the greater mobility and resourcefulness of local inhabitants.

The obligation of the Embassy was to bring aid to Polish citizens as early and as quickly as possible; therefore, as soon as the opportunity to bring it was open, the Embassy took all available opportunities to send such aid despite the absence of a relevant organisational system.

¹¹⁸ The essential part of the document (over 160 pages of typescript) was divided into 12 thematic extracts: I. Short outline of the occupation and deportation period, II. Background, environment and population relations, III. Movement of the Jewish population, IV. Distribution of the Jewish population, V. Personnel of the Embassy in the field, VI. Aid rendered to the Jewish population, VII. Children and invalids of Jewish nationality in Polish care facilities, VIII. Polish schools in the USSR, IX. General evacuation—exit visas, X. Jews—clients of the Embassy, XI. Citizenship of Jews in the USSR, XII. Final reflections. IPMS, Ambasada Kujbyszew, A.7/307/40. The data contained in the study was used for preparing the English version of the report concerning aid to the Jewish population in the USSR. See following document.

As we ascertained, the same goes for moral aid that the Embassy provided to all citizens, with so many documents proving it. And when citizens of the Republic of Poland found themselves in a situation that denied their right to Polish citizenship, the Embassy firmly defended their rights and the interests of both Poles and Jews, who expressed their opinions in best in the following letter attached below.¹¹⁹

IPMS, Ambasada Kujbyszew, A.7/307/40

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[August 1943]. Report by the former Embassy in Kuybyshev on aid granted to persons of Jewish descent in the USSR (extracts)

September, 1941–April, 1943

NOT FOR PUBLIC CIRCULATION

REPORT

on

THE RELIEF ACCORDED TO POLISH CITIZENS

BY THE POLISH EMBASSY IN THE U.S.S.R.

with special reference to Polish Citizens of Jewish Nationality

Final Report of the Polish Embassy in the U.S.S.R. compiled in Tehran in August, 1943, for the use of the charitable institutions concerned

RELIEF ACCORDED TO POLISH CITIZENS BY THE POLISH EMBASSY
IN THE U.S.S.R.

(with special reference to Polish citizens of Jewish nationality)¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Not included in this publication.

¹²⁰ The document was sent for propaganda purposes to some diplomatic posts. For example, the Legation in Havana received three copies of the report, and in the covering letter from 17 November 1943 Jan Wszelaki informed: "The Ministry points out that this report is not intended for public circulation and requests you to distribute submitted copies carefully among well-known Jewish activists and important charity organisations. The Ministry wants each distributed copy of the report to be received by people positively interested in the subject-matter of the report. After the distribution,

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FOREWORD

Before the re-establishment of the Polish Embassy in the U.S.S.R. in August, 1941, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare defined the principles which were to govern the distribution of relief among Polish citizens in the Soviet Union. It was laid down that whatever his nationality, creed or social rank, every Polish citizen applying to the Polish authorities for assistance should receive such aid as is compatible with his needs and the resources available.

Bearing the above principle in mind, the Polish Embassy defined the following plan for according priorities in relief: –

the Ministry requests you to submit a list with addresses of persons and organisations that received the report; if you need a small number of additional copies, please specify this number. One copy should remain in the Library of the Legation. IPMS, Ambasada Kujbyszew, A.7/307/40.

‘The available resources shall be distributed so as to provide means to subsistence for

(a) children who have lost their next-of-kin or whose guardians are unfit for work;

(b) old people over 60 years of age, without family, and whom it was not possible to place in local homes for old people;

(c) persons wholly unfit for work.

Resources permitting, the minimum means of subsistence shall be supplemented in the case of the following categories of persons: –

(a) Women with child dependants;

(b) Parents with large families of children;

(c) Persons partly unfit for work.

In the distribution of food and clothing, supplied mostly from abroad, account should also be taken of persons fit for work, so as to ensure their physical ability. Clothing should, in the first instance, be given to those who are unable to go to work owing to their lack of it.’

(The Polish Embassy’s instructions to delegates and local representatives dated January 15, 1942.)

Today, after the liquidation of the Polish relief organisation, it is possible to ascertain where and to what extent the principles described above were put into practice. A report on the Embassy’s relief work as a whole is being compiled; in the meantime, it has been possible to collect some information concerning the relief accorded to Polish citizens of Jewish nationality. Unfortunately, not all the material is sufficiently detailed, for not all the data dealing with this problem have become available. What there is, however, shows that this particular group of Polish citizens benefited from the relief system to no smaller extent than did other groups, and at some periods and in certain regions they benefited even to a larger extent.

The distribution of relief was not, of course, effected exclusively in accordance with the plan drawn up by the Embassy, but was subjected to a variety of other conditions. Centres situated at a great distance from railway stations or attainable solely by river transport had, by the very nature of their position, to suffer, and received consignments of relief goods only at irregular intervals. There were even cases of contact being established with Polish citizens in remote localities with whom subsequently it was found impossible to communicate and whom relief consignments never reached. On the other hand, most of the Polish Jews settled in the southern regions of the Soviet Union, in towns and villages near to or on railway lines—a factor greatly facilitating a regular and rapid flow of assistance. It

was in these same regions that, thanks to the cooperation of the Polish military authorities with the Embassy's regional representatives, a considerable network of relief institutions was set up. Later, after the Army had been evacuated, these were taken over by local Polish citizens, 76 per cent. of whom were Jews. To appreciate the significance of this single factor it suffices to recall that about 25 per cent. of the global expenses for relief were allotted to the upkeep of institutions, and that institutions in the south of the U.S.S.R. absorbed about 30 per cent. of the sum expended on all the Polish institutions in the Union.

When speaking of relief accorded to Polish citizens of Jewish nationality it is impossible not to mention the attitude of the Jews in the period after the amnesty of 1941. Throughout, they displayed a fervent patriotism and sense of discipline. Of the eight schools with a really high standard of teaching organised by Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R., five were organised by Jews. The best illustration of the spirit which prevailed in these schools is provided by the school magazines, produced by the children themselves, and imbued with a thirst for knowledge and a desire to return to Poland as soon as it become possible.

When Soviet passports were being forced on Polish citizens, the Jews stubbornly defended their allegiance to the Polish State. In sum, the whole period following the amnesty of 1941 was marked by a friendly and concrete collaboration of all Polish citizens, irrespective of nationality and creed.

Part I.

I. DEPORTATIONS OF POLISH CITIZENS FROM SOVIET-OCCUPIED POLAND TO THE INTERIOR OF THE U.S.S.R.

In the course of their occupation of Eastern Poland, which they entered in September, 1939, and whence they withdrew before the onslaught of the invading German armies in the summer of 1941, the Soviet authorities deported a substantial number of Polish citizens to the interior of the U.S.S.R. Close on 50 per cent. of the deportees consisted of Polish citizens of the national minorities: Jews, Ukrainians and White Ruthenians.

Deportations on a large scale did not begin till February, 1940. While throughout the duration of the Soviet occupation small batches of people were being banished to the interior of the U.S.S.R. day in, day out, there were four mass deportations which embraced the following categories of Polish citizens: –

(1) *February, 1940.* In towns: civil servants, local government officials, judges, members of the police force. In the country: forest workers, settlers and small farmers—Polish, Ukrainian, and White Ruthenian (several entire villages were thus left entirely bereft of their population).

(2) *April*, 1940. The families of persons previously arrested, the families of those, who had escaped abroad or were missing, tradesmen (mostly Jews), farm labourers from confiscated estates and more small farmers of the three nationalities.

(3) *June*, 1940. Practically all Polish citizens who in September, 1939, had, in thousands, sought refuge in Eastern Poland from the ruthless Nazi forces which were then invading Poland from the West; small merchants (a great many of them Jews), doctors, engineers, lawyers, journalists, artists, university professors, teachers, etc.

(4) *June*, 1941. All belonging to the categories enumerated above and who had so far evaded deportation; children from summer camps and orphanages.

It was in the course of the third mass deportation, in June, 1940, that the greatest number of Jews were deported to the U.S.S.R.

It has been impossible to establish the precise number of persons affected by the four deportations, but according to all estimates it must have run to over a million souls, that is close on 10 per cent. of the aggregate population of Eastern Poland. About 30 per cent. of the deportees according to calculations made by the Embassy's relief apparatus, were Jews. Differentiation between Poles and Jews was made by the Polish authorities merely for statistical purposes. The criterion employed was the nationality or creed reported voluntarily by the persons concerned, but if this information was not available the sound of the surname had to serve as an indication of nationality. About 50.2 per cent. of the deportees are estimated to have belonged to the working and peasant classes, while 15 per cent. consisted to clergy of various denominations, university professors and lecturers, and secondary and elementary school-teachers.

The Soviet authorities dispersed the deportees to almost every part of the U.S.S.R., even to the most remote districts. There they were placed in prisons, forced labour concentration camps, isolated villages under supervision of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (N.K.V.D.), or settled in what is known in the Soviet Union as 'free exile,' in villages, collective farms, mines, and industrial centres; a special category of men were mobilised for service in the Red Army or in the construction battalions ('stroy battalions'). The deportees were obliged to leave their homes and possessions at very short notice, rarely exceeding two or three hours, and once they reached their destination they were made to do very heavy work to which they were often wholly unaccustomed or, as in the case of mental workers, physically unsuited. Moreover, the climate in the central provinces of the Soviet Union, so much more severe than in Poland, coupled with the lack of homes of their own, clothes and possessions, seriously

impaired the physical fitness and ability to resist infections, etc., of the Polish citizens, and resulted in an appallingly high death rate.

The deportation in the early summer of 1941 was the last, for soon after it had been carried out the Germans invaded the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941). Immediately this had occurred, negotiations were initiated in London with a view to re-establishing Polish-Soviet relations. On July 30, 1941, an agreement was concluded between the Polish and Soviet Governments, to which a Protocol was appended stipulating for the release of all Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. who, either as prisoners of war or for other considerations, had been deprived of their freedom. Furthermore, the Soviet Government agreed to the Polish Government according relief to their citizens upon their release from the various places of detention.

On August 12, 1941, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree which laid down that all Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. who were either prisoners of war or detainees should immediately be set free (amnestied). The enforcement of this decree was a tremendous task, not merely because of the great number of persons for whose release it stipulated, but also, and chiefly because of, the vastness of the territory over which they were dispersed. This factor was of profound importance to the Polish authorities in their endeavour to hasten as soon as possible to the relief of those who so urgently required it.

2. THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE POLES AND POLISH JEWS IN THE U.S.S.R.

After the promulgation of the amnesty decree there was not a part of the U.S.S.R. where at least a small number of Polish deportees could not be found. Before we give a detailed statistical account of their actual distribution, it must be made clear that all the figures that will be provided deal with the period after the re-establishment of Polish-Soviet relations (July 30, 1941) and after the southward migration described below, and *relate exclusively to persons whom it was possible for technical reasons to include in the Embassy's relief organisation*. They must not therefore (and this is true of all statistics hereafter provided in this report) be taken as representing in any way the total number of Polish citizens deported to the U.S.S.R., which was probably four times greater than the number of persons who benefited from the relief in 1943.

As soon as the provisions of the amnesty decree (August 12, 1941) were put into force there took place a general, spontaneous drift southward of a great number of Polish citizens. This drift, both the Polish and Soviet authorities found it impossible to check, and its results were in very many cases tragic. Travelling was made particularly difficult by the war and the Polish citizens, weak and

exhausted as they were after many months of enforced exile, heavy labour and malnutrition, found it difficult to endure the hardships of a journey which they expected to last several days but which in some cases lasted several months. Consequently, many succumbed to sickness and disease, and it is to be feared that the death-rate among them reached a very high figure.

The attraction of the South, apart from the fact that it was the part of the Union where the Polish Army was being formed, was its climate which, even if marked by a severe winter, was, on the whole, more endurable than in other districts. Moreover, life was reputed to be easier there and it was also there that the Embassy succeeded in establishing a fairly adequate network of relief institutions. Another factor which was of no small psychological importance was that all seemed to prefer to be anywhere except where they had been when forcibly deported. And there was also the hope of evacuation abroad.

It has been established that at least 45 per cent. of the south-bound migrants were Jews.

...¹²¹

3. THE PROBLEM OF CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY

The problem of the citizenship and the nationality of the Polish deportees was one which proved to be of paramount importance in Polish-Soviet relations, and considerably impeded relief action.

The Polish attitude was perfectly clear throughout and never underwent modification: all persons who were Polish citizens in September, 1939, retained this status, wherever they were and regardless of their race, nationality, origin or creed. The Embassy confirmed this point of view in a note to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs dated December 9, 1941, in the following terms: –

‘...Polish legislation is based on the principle of equality before the law of all citizens, irrespective of their nationality or race. Any enactments of Soviet law introducing or sanctioning discrimination or differentiation in this respect, if such there be, are unknown to the Polish Embassy...

The fact of a given person possessing Polish citizenship is determined by Polish law, and in particular the law of January 20, 1920, concerning the citizenship of the Polish State.’

¹²¹ Large extracts concerning the distribution of aid funds to regions of the USSR and the distribution of aid in particular months and other detailed lists were omitted.

Thus from the Polish point of view it was immaterial whether a person was a Jew, a Ukrainian, a White Ruthenian or a Pole, and whether his faith was Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish or Greek Catholic: what mattered was whether he was a Polish citizen. If in the present report, distinction is made between Poles and Jews, this is purely and simply for statistical reasons.

The Soviet attitude, on the other hand, underwent several modifications which resulted from the claims of the Soviets to Eastern Polish territories. At the time of the signing of the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 30, 1941 (in which the U.S.S.R. revoked all the Soviet-German arrangements of 1939), and of the issuing of the amnesty decree of August 12, 1941, and throughout the first months which ensued it appeared to correspond with the Polish point of view. At any rate, no discrimination according to nationality, creed or race was at first made when the Soviet authorities began to release Polish citizens from their various places of detention. However, on December 1, 1941, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs sent a note to the Polish Embassy saying that in future they could only recognise as Polish citizens—and this by way of exception and to demonstrate their good-will—solely persons of Polish nationality who were present in 'Western Ukraine' and 'Western White Ruthenia' (i.e. Soviet-occupied Eastern Poland) on November 1 and 2, 1939. This meant that henceforth the Soviet Government would consider Polish citizens of Jewish, Ukrainian and White-Ruthenian nationality as Soviet citizens. As a result of such an attitude when the Embassy intervened with the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on behalf of Jews, or when they wished to appoint Ukrainians, White Ruthenians, Jews or even persons of Jewish-sounding names as local representatives, the Soviet authorities practically always refused to discuss the subject stating that the persons in question 'were Soviet citizens.' They also, as a rule, declined to grant exit permits to any such persons (even if they possessed visas for foreign countries, as say the United Kingdom, the United States, Palestine or India) and to consent to their taking up work in the Polish Embassy.

To this attitude, the Soviet Government adhered more or less consistently until the autumn of 1942 when they began, on the whole, to agree to the appointment of Jews, Ukrainians and White Ruthenians as local representatives of the Embassy. Then, on January 16, 1943, they informed the Polish Embassy that they could no longer see their way to recognising as Polish citizens even persons of Polish nationality who, on November 1 and 2, 1939, were present in the territories of 'Western Ukraine' and 'Western White Ruthenia,' as they had done hitherto by way of exception and to demonstrate their good will.

This, of course, meant in principle that no one, except Poles who had arrived from Britain with the Embassy's staff, was now considered by the Soviet

Government as a Polish citizen. It should be noted that both in their note of December 1, 1939, as well as their note of January 16, 1943, the Soviet authorities included under 'persons present in Western Ukraine and Western White-Ruthenia on November 1 and 2, 1939,' also those Poles and Jews who had fled to Eastern Poland to find refuge from the horrors of the German-Polish war, but who were in fact domiciled in Central and Western Poland, which was occupied by Germany.

Simultaneously with sending their note of January 16, 1943, the Soviet authorities began to force Polish citizens into accepting Soviet documents and passports, entirely against their will and not infrequently by the use of violent pressure. They also set about taking under Soviet management the Polish Embassy's relief institutions and stores which were the property of the Polish Government (see Part III, Conclusion), or in some cases, they abolished these institutions altogether. Of both these decisions, which were entirely unilateral, the Embassy was never officially informed and learnt of their existence only when they began being put into effect.

As a result of lengthy negotiations between the Polish Ambassador and the Soviet Government initiated in February, 1942, the latter finally agreed to recognise as 'indisputably' Polish citizens anyone who was not domiciled permanently in Eastern Poland, and whose presence there was accidental. The practical consequences of this new Soviet attitude never had time, however, to become fully effective, for on April 25¹²², 1943, the U.S.S.R. severed its diplomatic relations with Poland.

PART II

1. THE EMBASSY'S RELIEF APPARATUS

Soon after the promulgation of the Soviet amnesty decree of August 12, 1941, which followed upon the signing of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of July 30, 1941, it was possible to begin work on the relief of which the Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. were so badly in need.

Considerable difficulties were at first encountered by the two Governments in establishing an apparatus of distribution agreeable to both parties. For this reason it was not possible to set up an adequate or effective regional network of the Embassy's representatives—though this matter was of the utmost urgency in view of the approaching winter—until General Sikorski's visit to the U.S.S.R. early in December, 1941. As a result of the late Premier's conversations at the Kremlin agreement was finally reached and an exchange of notes followed

¹²² See doc. 344.

on December 23 and 24, 1941, between the Polish Embassy and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, which finally established the 'Rules regulating the scope of activity of Delegates of the Polish Embassy.' In conformity with these 19 regional Delegates were appointed with appropriate staffs to supervise and organise the distribution of the relief goods and to exercise legal protection over Polish citizens in the provinces. The Delegates were directly responsible to the Embassy. Apart from them, local representatives were appointed from among Polish citizens in the provinces to act as intermediaries between the Delegates and individual centres with a large Polish population.

On December 31, 1941, the Soviet Government granted the Polish Government a loan of 100,000,000 roubles (repayable at the gold dollar rate) for relief for Polish civilians. From that moment it was possible to run the relief work with relative efficiency, and the whole machinery built up by the Embassy to this purpose was set in motion.

What was achieved in the sphere of relief by the Embassy's organisation and to what extent the Polish citizens of Jewish nationality benefited by it will be described in detail in the chapters that follow.

The machinery organised along the lines described above was destined to work smoothly and unhampered for not longer than several months. As early as March and April, 1942, the Soviet authorities demanded that the Embassy cease intervening on behalf of Polish citizens of Jewish, Ukrainian and White Ruthenian nationality who were still under detention contrary to the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 30, 1941, as—in accordance with the note to the Embassy dated December 1, 1941, which so far had seemed to have no practical effect—the Government of the U.S.S.R. considered these people to be Soviet citizens (see preceding chapter). Furthermore, they took steps to prevent these minorities from occupying posts in the relief organisation.

The number of Jews engaged in relief work varied. While local representatives could only be appointed with the approval of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, this did not apply to the personnel of relief institutions which included a considerable number of Jews. There were at first very few Jews among the local representatives, for the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs declined to approve their appointment. In the autumn of 1942, however, a certain change could be felt in the Soviet attitude and the practical possibility arose of increasing the number of Jewish local representatives, especially in centres where the Jews formed the majority of the Polish citizens.

...

Towards the end of June, 1942, the Soviet authorities proceeded to arrest the Embassy's Delegates, though some of these possessed diplomatic status, and a certain number of local representatives. By July 20, not one Delegate remained free, and the Soviet Government declared that they now no longer agreed to the continuance of a relief organisation based on a network of Delegates. This move seriously impaired the working of the system which had henceforth to rely solely on the local representatives of the Polish population. Most of the arrested Delegates and local representatives were set free after a time, but they were made to leave the Soviet Union. The Embassy, wishing at all costs to maintain the help accorded to Polish citizens, itself undertook to distribute the relief among the 400-odd local representatives. Though various suggestions for a new type of organisation were being put forward until the very last moment, conditions for bringing assistance to distressed Polish citizens continued progressively to deteriorate, and when, on April 26, 1943 [sic], the Soviet Union severed relations with Poland—all action in this sphere had to be abandoned.

2. TYPES OF RELIEF

There were roughly four methods of distributing relief which will be described separately below: (a) financial relief through the regional network, (b) direct individual relief from the Embassy, (c) relief in kind, (d) relief institutions (orphanages, homes for the disabled, medical centres, kindergartens, schools, etc.).

(a) FINANCIAL RELIEF THROUGH THE REGIONAL NETWORK

Financial relief was the most common form employed both because technically it was the easiest to organise and because it was the most rapid.

It was distributed through the intermediary of the Embassy's Delegates' Offices and the local representatives. These received remittances from the Embassy through the Post Offices or the 'Gosbank' in proportion to the number of Polish citizens in a given centre and their immediate needs. During the initial period, when contact had not yet been established with all Polish centres, this form of relief may not have found its way everywhere where it was required. By 1942, however, its distribution was as comprehensive as it could be in the circumstances.

It became the practice for Delegates or local representatives to supply the Embassy with preliminary budgets; these were then checked so that it might be ascertained whether they complied with the general financial policy, whereupon a remittance would be posted. Priority was always given to the needs of children with no one to care for them, the disabled, the sick, those unfit for work and to person with large families. Great sums were also absorbed by various relief institutions, etc.

The value of this form of relief depended on the time when it was accorded and on conditions prevailing in the place it was sent to. In some districts it was

impossible to keep alive without financial assistance; in some, the absence of food in the market rendered money worthless. But, on the whole, money was indispensable for buying bread, setting up institutions, obtaining medical supplies, paying for living quarters, railway fares, etc., and even for warm meals in certain industrial centres where there were canteens.

...

(b) INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE EMBASSY

Financial relief was not only distributed through the intermediary of the Delegates and local representatives but also by the Embassy direct to individuals in the form of single remittances. The great number of individual applications for assistance made necessary the creation of a special department for this purpose. Not all applications could be or were dealt with by the Embassy, as for instance those coming from persons living in areas where there were Delegates or local representatives whose task it was to deal with such cases on the spot. But applications for assistance from persons in special circumstances were generally dealt with sympathetically (priority was always given to persons recently discharged from prisons, camps, etc., persons with large families, persons moving from one region to another, men of science, artists and men of prominence in social work and politics).

This was not the best kind of relief in view of the economic system of the Soviet Union. However, it was often the only practicable one, and it was especially so in the initial stage before a sufficient regional network of the Embassy's relief posts and institutions was set up, and in the latter stage when difficulties were encountered in maintaining the whole relief apparatus. The vastness of the Soviet Union and the seasonal inaccessibility of some of its regions necessitated the continuance of the system of individual assistance although it could not always be entirely just. It must, however, have benefited thousands of people worthy of support.

The number of applications received by the Embassy increased daily and a considerable percentage of the applicants were Jews.

...

Another special category of Polish citizens who received individual assistance both in money and in kind were the so-called 'callers' at the Embassy. These, barefoot, hungry and tired came from all parts of the Soviet Union to seek help of the Embassy which had to set up a special department to deal with them. They came from all walks of life: priests, rabbis, released prisoners of war, former tradesmen, farmers, merchants and officials. Some, having just been discharged from camps were passing through Kuibyshev on their way South. Others had to surmount the greatest difficulties to get to Kuibyshev, and after restrictions had been imposed

on the use of transport by Polish citizens many travelled on foot for hundreds or even thousands of miles. Some were emissaries from isolated Polish centres, others came of their own accord for money, medicine or any kind of assistance or to find out about the whereabouts of relatives they had not seen or heard of for two or three years.

The average daily number of „callers” was about 50, though after March, 1942, it declined somewhat in view of the traveling restrictions. A considerable proportion of the callers consisted of Jews.

...

(c) DISTRIBUTION OF THE RELIEF IN KIND

Relief in kind was not only the most desired form of assistance but also the most effective.

Great difficulties had to be faced, however, before the goods could reach their destination. In some cases, by no means isolated ones, railway trucks loaded with relief parcels travelled for three months before they arrived at the office of a Delegate or local representative. But here the difficulty did not end. In the remoter region, local representatives had to hire all kinds of even the most primitive type of transport such as donkeys, oxen, camels, etc., to get the goods from the railway station to the place of distribution. Goods had often to be taken across thousands of miles of frozen river, waste land and steppes. The following letter to the Embassy from a local representative in Siberia gives an illustration of these obstacles: –

..I must explain that the enormous distances, the primitive tracks across the taiga, the absence of transport, the irregular flow of supplies... hamper the work of the local representative and force him to cover by foot and without food distances of 100 miles at a time.

Recently, when transporting a load of relief goods in a river barge, the temperature suddenly fell and we found ourselves surrounded by drifting ice. This grew so thick that very soon we could go no farther and—there were six of us—we found ourselves imprisoned for three days and two nights in the middle of the river with the temperature at 40°F. below zero. Prisoners from a local camp finally succeeded in rescuing us and by a wonder we managed to sail to the nearest town. We then decided to take no more risks and to transport the goods, bit by bit, in horse carts... Such then are the conditions of work in this district and I hope the Embassy will take them into consideration.’ (Signed) G. D.¹²³

¹²³ The identity of the author of the submitted information was not established.

^x 66 per cent. of the goods were actually distributed though receipts were only received by the Embassy for 57 per cent., i.e. 87,382 parcels. The 14,477 parcels for which there are no receipts were sent to the local representatives, but at the moment of the severance of

The relief goods were distributed throughout the whole Union from central depots in ports and in several places inland.

...

Between September, 1941, and May 5, 1943, 101,759 parcels of clothes, food and medical supplies were distributed out of the available total of 157,925 parcels. 56,166 parcels, were confiscated together with the stores and depots by the Soviet authorities when they severed diplomatic relations with Poland^x.

Total distributed	101,759 parcels
Confiscated by the Soviet authorities	56,166 "
Total available	157,925 "

As regards the 56,166 parcels which remained in the Embassy's depots and which were confiscated by the Soviet authorities, it must be explained that the existence of such a substantial stock of relief goods was the result of the failure on the part of the Soviet authorities to supply the necessary railway trucks for transporting them. Frequent representations made by the Embassy to the highest Soviet quarters were of no avail. More than half of the goods confiscated were transported from Persia to the Embassy's depot in Ashkhabad in April, 1943, just before the Soviets severed their diplomatic relations with Poland.

...

The relief in kind, though not on so large a scale as could be desired, and despite the diversity of its forms, was an extremely important form of relief which saved the lives of many thousands of men, women and children.

Sometimes the goods distributed among Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. were also bartered for produce which could be obtained locally or sold. In Siberia, for example, a family of four could live for a month for what it could get in exchange for a pair of boots or one blanket.

The Polish authorities have received thousands of reports from the local representatives concerning the distribution of relief; they are also in possession of the original acknowledgements of receipt of the goods from which it can be seen at a glance that no discrimination was made in respect of the nationality, religion or social origin of these who benefited from the distribution. The number of Poles, Jews, Ukrainians and White Ruthenians in the lists of the recipients of relief goods in individual regions corresponds approximately to the national

Polish-Soviet relations they were still on their way. These goods must have been partly distributed by the local representatives and partly confiscated by the Soviet authorities.

composition of the Polish citizens in the same regions. An additional guarantee of a just distribution was supplied by the local representatives themselves, many of whom were recruited from the national minorities. It has been impossible, however, to make a detailed examination of the material on this subject, especially as much of it had to be left, for technical reasons, under the care of the Australian Legation in the U.S.S.R.¹²⁴

(d) RELIEF IN KIND SUPPLIED BY CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS

The bulk of the relief in kind was supplied by the Polish Government through cash purchases and on the basis of the Lease-Lend Arrangements^{xx}, but a number of foreign charitable institutions also contributed goods for distribution among Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. Among these the American Red Cross and Polish organisations in America gave most. Between September 1, 1941, and August 31, 1942, the American Red Cross sent 1,700 tons of the following goods for the use of the Embassy's relief organisation: -

Wheaten flour	- 2,200 sacks
Beans	- 1,800 sacks
Powdered milk	- 5,000 kilogrammes
Clothes	- 400 bales
Clothes	- 100 cases
Blankets	- 1,500 bales

and a great quantity of medical supplies which included 1,000,000 quinine tablets.

The relief supplies were sent from the American Red Cross stores in the Middle East without any shipping documents, consequently so far it has been impossible to establish the exact weights and values.

Between November, 1941, and December, 1942, the American Polish Council contributed 1,522 bales and 2,294 cases of clothes, uniforms and footwear totalling 677,353 lbs. in weight, and the U.S. \$815,000 in value. Considerable consignments were received from the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire, Canada, and from the Committee of R.C. Bishops of the U.S.A., these institutions' share being

¹²⁴ After severing diplomatic relations, Polish interests in the USSR were represented by Australia.

^{xx} The Polish Government was justified in obtaining relief for Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. on the basis of the Lease-Lend arrangements by the fact that these citizens were going to man the Polish Army in the Soviet Union.

69,606 and 66,423 lbs. in weight respectively and U.S. \$71,900 and \$54,087,86 in value. The goods supplied by these two organizations varied from clothes and blankets to medicines and medical appliances. There were also considerable contributions from various Polish relief organizations in Brazil, Argentine and other countries.

The Jewish organizations contributed generously in this race to afford relief, the three largest donors being the Jewish Labour Committee of New York, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the American Federation of Polish Jews.

...

The Poles, whether abroad or at home, owe a deep debt of gratitude to all those who have come to their help in their hour of need and given such generous assistance to the helpless Polish deportees in Soviet Russia. This debt will not be forgotten.

Towards the end of March, 1942, the Embassy was requested via Tehran by certain Jewish circles to supply 2,500 kg. of white flour for the baking of matzos for the Passover to centres where there was a considerable number of Jews. This was impracticable for there were Jewish centres all over the U.S.S.R. and from some of the stores, as for instance from Ashkhabad, to certain centres the distance was 10,000 miles, which meant that a consignment could take three or four months to reach its destination¹²⁵.

...

(e) LOCAL RELIEF INSTITUTIONS

The plight of children and especially orphans, of those unfit for work, the sick and disabled, etc., was particularly hard. It was therefore imperative to organise Polish institutions to take care of these categories of citizens. By setting up orphanages, homes for the disabled, kindergartens, schools, sleeping and feeding centres, medical aid posts and also, where possible, cooperative workshops, the Embassy was enabled to assist the most needy and to obtain for them special food quotas envisaged by the Soviets for such purposes.

As a result of lengthy negotiations the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs agreed, on December 23, 1941, to the organisation of Polish orphanages and kindergartens and on February 12, 1942, to grant these institutions special food quotas. The task of organising these establishments was not, however, an easy one: the local authorities were often unhelpful and sometimes lacked the

¹²⁵ See doc. 338.

necessary supplies for the food quotas; moreover, it was no easy matter to find suitable premises.

The whole achievement in this sphere, and it was no mean achievement, was, therefore, due to the energy and the initiative of the local Polish representatives and the local Polish citizens. All the figures provided below relating to relief institutions and establishments are for the last quarter of 1942, and the first quarter of 1943, but it must be borne in mind that the situation was in a constant state of flux, either on account of the attitude of the local authorities, or the absence of suitable premises or the shortage of food supplies.

On March 1, 1943, there were 807 institutions of all types ... for the use of 31,463 Polish citizens, including 15,305 Jews, i.e. 15 per cent. of the aggregate number of 104,602 Polish citizens of Jewish nationality benefiting from the relief organisations. The institutions employed 2,639 persons, 1,365 of whom, i.e. 52,8 per cent., were Jews. The majority of these institutions were feeding centres, kindergartens and orphanages. These cared for over 22,500 children, of which 10,000, i.e. almost 50 per cent., were Jews. Of the 237 persons employed by the medical centres and hospitals, 157 were Jews.

...

The somewhat lower number of Jewish personnel in Kazakhstan was due to the southward drift of the Jews, including practically all the educated Jews, who had been settled in this Republic. On the whole, however, the distribution of institutions in Kazakhstan and Siberia was fairly equal, and the slightly higher figure for Siberia was due to the larger number of children there.

The smallest number of institutions, only 77, were in European Russia, where only 5,4 per cent. of all Poles and 5,3 per cent. of all Jews were included in this form of relief. In the South, on the other hand, the network of institutions was reasonably satisfactory, thanks to the favourable conditions prevailing there for organisation, the relatively friendly attitude of the local authorities and above all, the help received from the Polish Army.

Practically all the institutions were financed and supplied by the Embassy, which expended 26,330,047 roubles on them. As the Soviet authorities could very seldom see their way to supplying the food quotas which they had promised, the relief in kind supplied by the Polish Embassy ... proved to be the basis of their existence.

The winding-up of these institutions by the Soviet authorities, a process started long before the severance of Polish-Soviet relations, will be dealt with briefly later.

(f) SCHOOLS

While cultural and educational facilities for Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. were always a subject of the Embassy's concern, and although envisaged in the 'Delegates' Rules,' their organisation met with great difficulties. Moreover, it was not easy to find suitable premises and to draw up the curricula—owing to the complete absence of Polish textbooks. Luckily, however, there was an ample supply of Polish and Polish-Jewish teachers, who by their untiring efforts were able to make up for this deficiency.

In principle, Polish children could go to Soviet schools; but none of the lessons they had there was in Polish and frequent derogatory references were made about Poland.

The following letter, written to the Embassy in October, 1942, by a Jewish headmaster, describes the organisation of a Polish school in Bukhara: –

..Last May, on the anniversary of the Constitution of May 3, a kindergarten and school was organised in Bukhara at the initiative of the local Polish Union of intellectuals and a group of teachers... At first the kindergarten and school were in one building; the kindergarten consisted of two forms, and the school of four groups of an elementary school standard. After a time we were given a state school building where the school was transferred, while the kindergarten remained in the old premises, which, in the afternoon, also served as a canteen. The curriculum corresponds to the new Polish school programme of 1934, with the addition of English and Russian language lessons. The kindergarten is attended by 70 children and the school by 210 children, so that the total number of children is 280. The staff of the kindergarten consists of seven persons who also work in the canteen. The children receive extra rations: breakfast and a two-course dinner. The meals are cooked by the personnel. In the school there is the headmaster and a staff of 10 people. There are 153 hours of lessons during six days of the week..?

...

The very substantial part played by Jews in organising and running Polish educational establishments (out of eight schools with a really high standard of teaching, five were organised by Jews and three by Poles) is evidence of the profound patriotism of the Polish-Jewish deportees in the U.S.S.R., and the very high percentage of Jewish children attending the kindergartens and schools shows how much their parents wished them to remain Polish.

Due to the particularly favourable conditions in the South, already referred to in previous chapters, and the relatively friendly attitude of the local Soviet authorities in that region, it was there that Polish schools were able to develop best; hence the very large proportion of Jews in the aggregate number of children

attending schools. Only 18 of the 175 kindergartens in the U.S.S.R. were situated in the South, but 28 of the 43 schools were there, and 24 of the 68 courses, i.e. 10,3 per cent. the kindergartens, 65,1 per cent. of the schools and 35,3 per cent. of the courses. In these: –

35,4 per cent. of the children and 55,2 per cent. of the personnel in the kindergartens were Jews.

72,2 per cent. of the children and 87,7 per cent. of the personnel in the schools were Jews.

67,6 per cent. of the students and 69,8 per cent. of the personnel at the courses were Jews.

The situation in other regions was, as regards the number of educational establishments, incomparably worse. In order of sequence in relation to the number of schools the four great regions could be classified thus: the South, European Russia, Siberia, Kazakhstan. No wonder, therefore, that Polish children, who in the South constituted a minority, could not avail themselves of the use of schools as could the Polish-Jewish children, whose geographical distribution afforded them greater facilities in this connection.

The schools, kindergartens, etc., served not only for education, but were also feeding centres. Some were boarding schools, while many were attached to orphanages. This was by no means the least important part played by them for the welfare of the children.

3. THE LIQUIDATION OF THE RELIEF ORGANISATION.

Interlinked with the Soviet Government's changing attitude towards Polish citizenship^{xxx} was their attitude towards the Embassy's relief apparatus. On January 15, 1943, the day before they sent their note declaring that henceforth not even Poles among those present in Eastern Poland on November 1 and 2, 1939, could be considered by the Soviet authorities as Polish citizens, the Council of the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. passed a decree, that all the relief institutions of the Embassy were to be taken under Soviet management and administration. This was to affect all orphanages, homes for the disabled, kindergartens, hospitals, medical posts, etc., all of which were, beyond any dispute the property of the Polish Government. It is noteworthy, moreover, that the Soviet Government never officially informed the Polish Embassy of their decision and began taking over the institutions as a fait accompli.

This action did not begin everywhere simultaneously, but gradually and in different regions. It actually began in February, 1943, and the first institutions to be taken over were in the Kuibyshev area, not far from the seat of the Embassy, while it

^{xxx} See Part II. 'The problem of citizenship and nationality.'

was not until the end of March that action on a larger scale was launched, when all the 800 establishments were either taken under Soviet administration or abolished. This was accomplished by special commissions consisting of representatives of the N.K.V.D. and the local educational ('Oblono') and administrative authorities. Persons who accepted Soviet citizenship and children under sixteen whom the Soviet authorities considered as Soviet citizens by virtue of the law itself, were allowed to remain in the institutions. The Soviet authorities then proceeded to appoint new superintendents of the institutions which they reorganised so as to eliminate what they considered to be superfluous occupations (the teaching of religion, prayers, etc.) and to introduce Russian school books, songs, etc. This met with opposition from Polish children of all creeds who never wavered in their patriotism.

Thus an end was put to the Embassy's efforts to alleviate the plight of Polish citizens deported to the U.S.S.R. Though the Embassy made every endeavour to persuade the Soviet authorities to agree to some new organisation of relief, the latter persisted in upholding their negative attitude which finally led them, on April 25, 1943, to sever their relations with Poland, thus making it entirely impossible for the Polish Government to accord any help at all to those hundreds of thousands of their citizens so badly in need of it.

What has been done, however, was under the circumstances quite an achievement, and if it did not improve the lot of many hundred thousands of Poles, Jews and Ukrainians in the U.S.S.R. to any very substantial degree, this was due to the specific conditions which prevailed there. As the above report has endeavoured to show, the Polish Embassy treated all Polish citizens alike, irrespective of race or creed, although in this it was often hampered by the Soviet attitude towards citizenship. It can be equally stated, that vice versa, all Polish citizens, irrespective of race or creed proved their complete loyalty to the Polish Republic by their fervent patriotism, their initiative and by rejecting with all the strength that they could muster all attempts at inflicting upon them an alien citizenship and allegiance. In this respect Polish citizens of Jewish nationality or creed demonstrated how tight were the ties binding them with the Polish State, and how much they cherished them.

AAN, Poselstwo Buenos Aires, 258 (ENG)

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*31 August 1943. Cable from the Ambassador
to the Holy See on Jewish refugees in France*

Polmission—Vatican
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 31 AUG 1943
RECEIVED ON 7 SEP 1943

No. 299

In Italian-occupied France,¹²⁶ there are approx. 8,000 Jews of various nationalities, including a large percentage of Polish Jews. After the withdrawal of Italian troops, they face the risk of being captured by the Germans. In consultation with Jewish organisations in America, Italian Jews undertook vigorous action against the Italian Government, supported by the Vatican, so that those 8,000 Jews could find shelter in Italy, from where they would be transported to North Africa; the funds have been secured. The attitude of the Italian Government is favourable. My English and American colleagues are positive about this. I propose that the Polish Government join this action by manifesting its active interest in them and trying to obtain the evacuation of other Polish citizens at the same time. Please telegraph instructions.

PAPÉE

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 261

¹²⁶ In June 1940, after the German aggression on France, Italy declared war on France and occupied a part of French Alpine territories and the lands located east of Nice. See also doc. 402.

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*2 September 1943. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to the Consul General in New York
on the acquisition of funds for the rescue
of Jewish families in occupied Poland*

2 September 1943

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

According to information received by telegraph from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern, the following people are threatened with inevitable death:

Dr Tenzer,
Józef Boehm and his wife,
Zygfryd Ratzersdorfer and
his brother-in-law Juljusz.

For the rescue of these people, a fund of \$250 per person is needed. Such a sum is requested for Dr Tenzer from Juljusz Górski, 500 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, NY; for Józef Boehm and his wife—from Seme Traun, 959 Carroll Street, Brooklyn, NY and Emanuel Gottlieb, 712 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, Pa.; for others—from Edmund Ratzersdorfer, 210 Riverside Drive, New York.

I request you to notify the aforementioned people without revealing the source of information, so that they transfer the necessary amounts for rescuing those at risk. According to the wishes of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern, these transfers should be made via the Financial Counsellor of the local Embassy.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

385

6 September 1943. Letter from the Council to Aid Jews
to the Government Delegate for Poland on the creation of identity documents

Council to Aid Jews
To the Government Delegate into the hands of Mr Grabowiecki

In Warsaw, there is a well organised document issuing office, called the Interorganisational Documentary Office, which has cooperated with the Council for 8 months, providing it with invaluable services. This unit was once recommended to the Council by Messrs Grabowiecki and Różycki. This office employs around 10 people, who are organisationally disciplined and ideologically committed. Its work is organised perfectly, as I Marek¹²⁷ could see personally, having been invited especially for this purpose by this Office. The value of the property of this Office is approx. 750,000 zlotys. Fees are charged at their own expenses, so the price of documents of great variety ranges from 35 to 80 zlotys. The Office provides services to a range of organisations and official units, regardless of their political orientation (except for foreign ones); however, the Council is the biggest recipient of this Office.

Currently the head of this Office asks you through us to subordinate it to state authorities and, thereby, to give official protection, because so far it has been an apolitical, socially active team; it has a semi-private character, which does much harm to this valuable team and decreases its efficiency.

At its meeting on 4 September, the Council decided to submit this request to you and to support it as strongly as possible based on the experience gained from the cooperation with this team so far.

More details in this respect can be obtained from Marek *from SPD*, who collaborates directly with this Office.

Warsaw, 6 September 1943

For the Council to Aid Jews
/-/ Trojan
/-/ Borowski¹²⁸

AAN, *Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2 (previously published)*

¹²⁷ Probably Ferdynand Arczyński—the treasurer of the Council to Aid Jews.

¹²⁸ Adolf Berman.

386*8 September 1943. Letter from the Jewish National Committee
and the Bund to the Government Delegate for Poland on financial matters*

Warsaw, 8 September 1943

To the Government Delegate for Poland

Memorandum

A representative of the Government Delegation informed representatives of the Jewish National Council and the Bund at the last payment of amounts sent to these organisations by their political representatives in London that the official circles of the Government Delegation expressed a reservation that these sums should not be used for buying weapons.

In view of the fact that this reservation also refers to the Coordination Committee as a body coordinating the active resistance action, the Coordination Committee considers itself entitled and obliged to express an official opinion in the matter that is significant to it.

In this objection lies the assumption that the Jewish society should not engage in armed struggle against the invaders. Although this idea may sound unbelievable, it is imposed as a conclusion from the reservation.

When the enemy murdered Jews on a mass scale without organised resistance on their part in the first phase of the 'liquidation' action, criticism poured in from various sides, including the official underground press, against Jewish society. When acts of active resistance, culminating in the heroic defence of the Warsaw Ghetto by the Jewish Combat Organisation as a fighting organ of the Coordination Committee, emerged in the further course of the action, this fight encountered widespread recognition and admiration, also among official circles. The Commander of the Armed Forces of the Warsaw District sent a military salute to the fighting ghetto. The Prime Minister of the Government and Commander-in-Chief General Sikorski and the Government Delegate for Poland expressed their solidarity with the struggle of the Jewish society.

Not only this fight, but also other actions within the scope of activity of the Jewish Combat Organisation, which were aimed at organising points of resistance, partisan and insurgent groups in Poland did not take place without the knowledge of and contact with the Commander of the Armed Forces.

Further acts of Jewish social resistance against Germans occurred as results of efforts of the Jewish Combat Organisation along the same line as the fight of

the Warsaw Ghetto: in Częstochowa, Będzin and, in particular, Białystok, where heroic struggle with the enemy is taking place now. The heroic rebellion of Jews in Treblinka liquidating the infamous place of execution along with its German-Ukrainian staff and liberating 2,000 inmates is also a clear expression of the atmosphere of a spirited armed fight created among the Jewish masses.

Apart from the aid actions and the rescue of people, the coordination of this fight against the enemy falls within the important scope of activity of the Coordination Committee. This is why all actions of the Jewish Combat Organisation are supported and considerable funds must be appropriated for the purchase of weapons. These activities are entirely in accordance with the intentions and express will of the London representatives of political organisations that belong to the Coordination Committee and Jewish organisations abroad that send funds to the country also for the purpose of armed resistance.¹²⁹

The reservation about not using the transferred amounts for defence purposes is presumably the result of a gross misunderstanding or false information.

We cannot be held responsible for the actions of wild Jewish bands, just as the Government Delegation or the Commander of the Armed Forces cannot bear

¹²⁹ In the letter from 9 September 1943 to the Government Delegate for Poland, the Council to Aid Jews informed: 'Following the request for an increase of the monthly subsidy submitted in August this year, the Council to Aid Jews submits the following report: The activities pursued by the Council so far—encompassing larger and larger circles of individuals affected by the invader's terror and currently reaching: various centres scattered around the Homeland, territories annexed to the Reich, concentration camps in the Reich—towards Jews deported as Aryans to the aforementioned camps (expenses are even bigger due to the establishment of a local organisational office, a child care section, a medical care section, etc.), generate higher demand for material resources every month. This constantly bigger increase of urgent needs that often require immediate action is a factor preventing the Council from the fulfilment of its cardinal obligations in relation to equal amounts granted to the Council for a number of months, e.g. in view of recently reported persons in need of help, not to mention the local activity that the Government Delegation once shifted from the District Delegation to the Council in Warsaw. In such a situation, a large number of recently reported persons remains outside the scope of activity of the Council and is devoid of material aid and organisations wonder [suspend?] the action of getting in touch with hiding Jews and field institutions established after considerable efforts intend to close down because of the impossibility of operation. The fact that Jewish organisations—the Bund and the Jewish National Committee—have donated amounts of 1,000 zlotys, and recently even 1,500 zlotys, to the Council for a few months does not improve the situation because the needs are disproportionately higher than this extra aid. Therefore, at its meeting on 9 September, the Council to Aid Jews decided to submit again to the Government Delegate a request for an increase of the subsidy, which, together with needs of the rest of the country, currently amounts to 10,000 zlotys as the minimum amount necessary to cover the most urgent expenses related to the activity of the Council: AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2.

responsibility for acts of multiplying Polish wild or even bandit bands (e.g. in the Kielce region or even in the Warsaw District). The spontaneous formation of Jewish bands here and there without any influence of the organisations is in fact a biological process and an understandable sign of the undying instinct persisting among some Jewish inmates.

The Coordination Committee of the Jewish National Council and the Bund states that it will not give up its right to defend the life and honour of the Jewish nation and its obligation to defend these supreme rights. Especially at this present moment, when the invader is finishing his satanic work of utter extermination of the remnants of the Jewish population in view of the collapse of his power and the inevitably approaching defeat, we think it is our primary human, civic and national duty to intensify the armed struggle against the invader wherever there are still a few Jewish centres.

We want to believe that the reservation made was the result of a misunderstanding. If it was otherwise, if it was an expression of real intentions and an important change in the attitude of the Government Delegation or the Commander of the Armed Forces to Jews' armed struggle against the enemy, the Coordination Committee would be forced to address its most severe protest to the highest influential circles in the country and abroad.

We believe that the Government Delegate for Poland will order the fastest possible withdrawal of the expressed reservation, considering the fundamental importance of the issue in question and recognising the aforementioned misunderstandings as cleared up.

For the Coordination Commission
of the Jewish National Committee
/-/ Borowski
and
the Bund
/-/ Mikołaj¹³⁰

AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2 (previously published)

¹³⁰ Leon Feiner.

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*14 September 1943. Report by the Envoy in Havana
on Jewish refugees in Jamaica*

Confidential

14 September 1943

To the MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

Regarding refugees in Jamaica

Upon receipt of the letter No. 909/43 from the Ministry from 11 June 1943 less than a month ago, the Legation began to settle the consular matters of Polish citizens in Jamaica that were commissioned to it. These are temporarily limited to passport issues, in particular to the renewal of passports. Already the first documents submitted for this purpose indicate that a certain percentage of 148 people sent to Jamaica do not have their Polish citizenship sufficiently confirmed and possess passports with a clause. In these, as well as other questionable cases that may occur in a given group, the Legation will strive in accordance to satisfy the formal requirements with the regularly applied practice, understanding that it is currently impossible to question the Polish citizenship of these persons because of the British authorities.

On this occasion, thanking you for the explanations sent to me in the letter No. 738/Z/43 from 25 June 1943, I would like to raise another aspect of this matter: the care by Polish authorities of the group put in the 'Gibraltar Camp.'

The information that I have recently gathered suggests that there are only 120 people there, because 20 something people have managed to leave Jamaica. However, further departures should not be envisaged, as the British authorities are currently refusing to grant return visas to those currently leaving, without which it is impossible to obtain an entry visa, even a short-term one to other countries; in some cases, this refusal made it impossible for the persons concerned to settle elsewhere.

Further information confirms the Ministry's opinion about the low value of refugee groups in Jamaica. I have encountered the same thing since the beginning of my service in Cuba. A large majority of Jewish refugees staying both here and in Haiti or the Dominican Republic are very loosely related to Poland. Apart from that, these people can adapt neither to the tropical climate nor to the local living conditions. This is the reason for their constant complaints and anxiety that often verges on hysteria. The situation of the Sosua camp in the Dominican Republic is a vivid proof of this. This institution, created at considerable expense and the

organisational efforts of the Joint Distribution Committee and calculated for many thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe whom the Dominican Government was ready to receive, eventually welcomed only 500 people, out of whom a maximum of 100 have adapted to the living and working conditions within the camp. With anxiety and dissatisfaction spreading among the rest, the Joint Distribution Committee considers the idea of liquidating the camp; this is not easy because the Dominican government will probably prevent members of this group from settling in the capital and joining the economic life of the country.

In the light of this example, the atmosphere in 'Camp Gibraltar' is understandable. The Jewish refugees are mainly tired of living in the camp in their own group, without the possibility of experiencing the city atmosphere, doing business or at least visiting cinemas, cafés, etc. The mood of the group in Jamaica is illustrated by a memorandum submitted to Honorary Consul Sachs by Mrs Berta Polak, who stopped in Cuba on her way from Jamaica to the United States. It arouses a large number of objections, taking into account necessary camp regulations and the well-known actions of humanity of the British authorities.

Nevertheless, in order to avoid unfair claims towards the Polish Government in the future, it might be advisable to give a proof of the immediate interest of the Polish authorities in the group in Jamaica. If the Ministry deems it advisable, I could go there for a few days to try to ease the atmosphere through negotiations with British authorities and by contacting the group of refugees in person.

The cost of such trip would total approx. \$150, and I would have to be authorised by the Ministry to spend this amount. It might even be advisable for me to go with Honorary Consul Sachs, whose impact on co-religionists might prove beneficial. Consequently, costs of his trip would also have to be covered.

ROMAN DĘBICKI
ENVOY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A.42/364

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*[Before 15 September 1943]. Unsigned note
about the armed resistance of Jewish organisations*

Jewish Armed Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto
according to reports received by the Polish Government¹³¹.

MAY 1943

Extensive deportations and mass murders in the Warsaw Ghetto in the summer and autumn of 1942 reduced the number of Jews there to approximately 40,000 by April 1943.

Active resistance on the part of the Jews began in January, 1943. They presumably had no arms at their disposal before then. On January 18th at 8 a.m. the German police and detachments of the SS were greeted by a shower of bullets and hand-grenades. Houses were barricaded and resistance was centred around Miła, Niska, Muranowska and Zamenhoff streets. The Jews aimed their grenades at lorry-loads of Jewish deportees and their German escorts, and by thus causing confusion and terror they made it possible for some of their kinsmen to escape. The Germans succeeded in mastering the situation only after police reinforcements had arrived on the spot. 30 German policemen and SS-men were killed and many wounded. The Jews lost 9 men but managed to capture some rifles and a number of revolvers.

On January 21st the Germans organised reprisals. 600 German policemen marched into the Ghetto equipped for battle and armed with hand grenades; there ensued, as was usual in such cases, a massacre.

The second armed battle between the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Germans was on a much larger scale than the one in January. It began on the morning of April 19th, 1943, and lasted until the 18th of May. The Germans had ordered a large contingent of Jews to be deported to Trawniki; knowing that all that awaited them there was certain death, only 200 reported, so that the Germans

¹³¹ The note was sent to posts in Washington, Ottawa, New York and Jerusalem on 15 September 1943. The covering letter informed: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs attaches 5 copies of the note in English elaborated on the basis of the last Report of the National Ministry of Internal Affairs about an armed action in the Warsaw Ghetto in May this year, with a request to use this material towards Jewish organisations.' On the same day, the letter was also sent to Ignacy Schwarzbart with the following information: 'Pursuant to the agreement, I attach a file of copies of the English note about an armed action in the Warsaw Ghetto, a certain number of which is also sent to our posts in the United States, in Canada and Palestine.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 612.

decided to round up the required number by force. They surrounded the so-called greater Ghetto which is situated between Leszno, Nowolipie, Bonifraterska, the forts of the Citadel and Smocza. The Germans, armed with machine guns and hand-grenades and equipped with armoured cars, were accompanied by detachments of Latvians, Ukrainians and Lithuanians. Obviously they expected armed resistance.

The Germans started by attacking houses but were fired at and repulsed by the Jews; they then withdrew to the outskirts of the Ghetto and returned with reinforcements, tanks and artillery. Heavy guns began shelling the corner of Bonifraterska and Nowolipie streets and into Franciszkańska street. The defenders retaliated with rifle fire and inflicted considerable losses on the Germans; in fact by nightfall they had got the upper hand and the Germans withdrew their tanks, two of which were damaged. So strong was Jewish resistance that the Germans were forced to resort to the use of planes. Their tactics were first to set fire to houses and then to advance over the smouldering ruins; but later they changed their methods: by day they reconnoitered and besieged the Ghetto, while at night their artillery shelled the houses, and block by block was ruthlessly razed to the ground. All food supplies were cut off. Intensive shelling on the night of April 23rd and 24th caused the Jewish population and their defenders, terrorised by the unceasing fires raging throughout the district, to withdraw to the northern-most part of the town; any escape from this burning hell was made impossible. The Germans shot anyone they saw in the neighbourhood of the Ghetto wall, and there were frequent cases of Poles being wounded. They then proceeded to blast the outlets of the sewers and to patrol the neighbouring Aryan districts. Thus between April 19th and May 5th they killed about 3000 Jews; while at the same time they set up posters announcing that the Jews quarter would be liquidated, that anyone helping Jews to hide would be sentenced to death, and any Jews known to be in hiding were to be denounced.

According to the underground Press German casualties up to April 30th amounted to 1000 killed and considerably more wounded.

Fires were one of the factors which put an end to the heroic resistance of the Jews. The streets completely ravaged by fire included Nalewki, Nowolipie, Nowolipki, Franciszkańska, Karmelicka, Miła, Plac Muranowski, Smocza, Geşia and many others. German sappers dynamited the ruins, and also the great synagogue in Tłomackie street, though it was a mile away from the Ghetto walls. Simultaneously with the large Ghetto the Germans attacked the little Ghetto (Żelazna, Ceglana and Prosta street), where at the beginning of May they succeeded in killing and deporting about 12,000 persons, finally they cleared it of all Jews and burnt to the ground. Nevertheless here as well as in the large Ghetto thousands of Jews must have lost their lives in the fire. Those who escaped were driven by the Germans to death camps; the only Jews who remained in Warsaw subsequent to these events were those who succeeded in escaping from the Ghetto and those who formerly

found asylum in the Aryan quarter; but against these too the Germans have launched a ruthless combing-out campaign.

The fires of April and May 1943 caused greater damage than those of September 1943. The Ghetto was completely laid waste, involving a loss of more than 100.000 habitable quarters.

Here, as in all their actions, the Germans resorted to the most cruel methods. In a temporary Jewish hospital in Franciszkańska street they shot all the patients who were ill in bed and exterminated by poison gas those who had sought shelter in the cellars.

Two scenes must be recorded here as evidence of the depth of brutality to which the Germans here sunk. A Jewish mother, rendered mad with despair, jumped on the window-sill on the fourth floor of the burning house in which she had lived. With her were two small children. One of them she threw into the street. The other clung desperately to its mother and after struggling with each other for several minutes both mother and child fell down into the street. Another scene. In the window of an upper storey of a burning house there appeared three Jewish girls; one of them immediately threw herself out into the street. The other two hesitated. Meanwhile down in the street a group of SS. men and German girls in uniform were standing and observing this terrible drama. Laughing, they shouted 'komm, komm,' to the girls in the burning house. When the second Jewish girl came crashing down on to the pavement they clapped their hands joyfully in applause.

Thus was annihilated what has from the numerical, cultural and spiritual point of view the greatest Jewish centre in Europe. Of the 350.000 Jews who had lived in Warsaw before the war together with close on 500.000 crammed into the Ghetto by the Germans, only a few managed to survive by in hiding.

Reports from provincial towns dated May 1943

MAJDANEK: Transports of Jews condemned to gradual death are continuously flowing in.

CRACOW: The remnants of the Ghetto were liquidated in March. More than 1000 Jews (old persons, children and invalides) were killed by the usual methods. About 5000 were sent to Oświęcim. The rest, who are receiving the worst possible treatment, have been transferred to temporary wooden barracks where they are dying in hundreds from hunger and at the hands of their oppressors.

WILNO: There is the only remaining Ghetto in this part of the country. It consists of about 20.000 inhabitants, who are in the main not local people, but Jews deported to Wilno from other parts.

TARNÓW: The Ghetto here still contains about 5000 inhabitants who are engaged in work for the army.

DĄBROWA BASIN: Rumours are circulating that local Jews are to be deported from this region.

OŚWIĘCIM: According to a report dated December 15th, 1942, the number of people who died as a result of the most cruel tortures, since the concentration camp was set up, was 640.000 including more than 83.000 Poles of both sexes, about 520.000 Jews (mostly deportees from France, Belgium, Holland, Yugoslavia and other countries), and approx. 26.000 Soviet prisoners of war. There are still about 30.000 prisoners in Oświęcim.

GRODNO: About 30.000 Jews were deported from this town. The members of the local Council of the Jewish Community and all the more prominent Jewish intellectuals have been killed.

BIAŁYSTOK and ŁUCK: The Ghettos have been liquidated.

Szydłowiec, Włoszczowa, Szczercz near Lwów, Radomsko, Ujazd, Radzymin, Ostrów Mazowiecka and Sokołów—the Germans have now murdered all remaining in the local ghettos.

District of Siedlce: The Germans recently apprehended 150 Jews and murdered them. Reprisals are applied to Poles who help Jews to hide. The Germans shot a Polish baker, his wife and 16 year-old son for giving a roll to a Jew, hiding at the neighbourhood.

SIEDLCE and KAŁUSZYN: All Jews deported by the Germans to Treblinka for extermination. Both places were included in the list of 54 ghettos set up in November 1942 in which the Germans placed Jews from all over the Government General.

STANISŁAWÓW: Ghetto completely evacuated and the Jews deported to an unknown destination.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 612 (ENG)

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17 September 1943. Letter from the Minister for Labour and Social Welfare to the Delegation of the Ministry in New York in relation to the organisation of the aid action

17 September 1943

Ms Z. Wojciechowska
Delegation of the Ministry of Social Welfare
in New York

In connection with your dispatch to Nairobi regarding the submission of the list of Jews, their needs and the address of the Committee, the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi asked us to issue an opinion on how to respond to these wishes, whether to create a separate Committee and whether to introduce special distinctions for Jews, who are treated on equal terms with the rest of the population in Africa, just like in other territories.

We explained to the Delegate, on the basis of his previous accounts, that we do not consider it advisable to create a separate unit dedicated to the care of the Jewish population. The number of Jews in Africa is not big; so far, only about 120 people out of the total number of over 13,000. The appointment of a special Delegate and the separation of this group may contribute to antagonism inside the settlements in respect of a privilege being granted to a very small part of the population. Taking only this into account, the Ministry does not consider it advisable to appoint a representative of the Jewish Congress permanently residing in Africa. This is by no means an obstacle in providing support in the form of individual aid based on the list of all Jews submitted to the Jewish Congress along with addresses that we told Mr Kazimierzak to send to you. Should the Jewish Congress want to become familiar with the living conditions of all the Jews in Africa, they can send their representative for a tour, just as we suggested to the Polish American Council.

A separate issue is the nomination of Haubenstok by the Central Association of Jews in New York, to which the latter refers. The Ministry has recently received information from Mr Kazimierzak that Haubenstok and Orbach had opened a restaurant, which later turned out to be a house of ill repute, in a small town. The municipal authorities granted a licence because it was supposed to be a 'Holiday House' for Poles and soldiers on holiday. Because Haubenstok and Orbach have been conscripted into the army, the Ministry does not consider it possible to ask for their withdrawal as Haubenstok demands, particularly because the basis for complaint (care of 120 persons) would be an insufficient argument for the army.

Please explain to the Jewish Congress that this form of care arrangement will certainly be more advantageous for Jews staying in Africa, as it will provide effective aid without the introduction of irritating distinctions.

We provide the information about Haubenstok in confidence. Should you consider it necessary to inform the Central Association of Jews of this fact, then it should be done carefully and in a general manner.

In order to avoid similar misunderstandings in the future, we request that you consult the Ministry beforehand on all matters of this kind.

MINISTER
Stańczyk

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/45

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*18 September 1943. Cable from the Consul General in Istanbul
on difficulties in rendering aid to Jews in Romania*

Polconsul—Istanbul
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 18 SEP 1943
RECEIVED ON 20 SEP 1943

No. 228

Refero 227¹³² (to Ankara 65)

Message from a reliable informer from Bucharest on 16 September this year, at the request of the Consulate General. Świdorski was arrested in connection with the scandal of smuggling Jews.¹³³ His position is currently held by Jakubowski.

¹³² In the cipher telegram no. 227 of 18 September 1943, Consul Szczerbiński informed about his conversation with the Romanian Envoy, with whom he discussed 'the matter of arresting Polish refugees in Romania, highlighting the harmfulness of these orders in the context of future Polish-Romanian relations and stressing the liberal treatment of Poles by Hungarians.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 254.

¹³³ In the cable of 29 September 1943, the MFA informed the Legation in Lisbon: 'According to the news from Bucharest, Świdorski was arrested on 16 September in connection with the smuggling of Jews; he has not been released yet. ... I request you to inform local Romanians—in a manner deemed appropriate by the Minister for the purpose of forwarding information to Bucharest—that the Polish Government keeps a permanent record of arrests and other steps undertaken by Romanian administration towards refugees and is unable to understand such methods of action, particularly the

For the time being, there has been no information whether he received 5,000 dollars. The deportation of Poles has not been planned so far. On 11 August, the Minister of Internal Affairs issued a circular to all Polish centres in Romania that, in connection with the smuggling of Jews and other illegal affairs, if any of the Poles abuses hospitality once more, all without exception will be transferred to the disposal of German authorities.¹³⁴

Sent to London, to the attention of Ankara.

Szczerbiński

It is necessary to protest against [the assignment of] this collective responsibility.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 142

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*21 September 1943. Report by the Consul General in New York:
an appeal of a Jewish organisation in the United States (with enclosure)*

21 September 1943

SECRET

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Below I quote a paragraph of the letter received from the President of the Representation of Polish Jewry in America, Dr Arieħ Tartakower, on 19 September:

‘During Mr Karski’s stay here and at conferences with him, the matter of saving leading Jewish activists in Poland was brought up several times. Mr Karski told us that the Government Delegation in German-occupied territories is ready to

introduction of the principle of collective responsibility. Polish refugees in Hungary are treated in an incomparably better manner. Information from Romania causes embitterment in London and is politically very harmful to Romanian interests.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 142.

¹³⁴ In the unsigned note prepared in Istanbul on 28 July 1944, it is written: ‘We received the following details about the situation of Poles in Romania. The influx of refugees from the territories of the General Government, Bessarabia, Transnistria and Hungary has reached approx. 800, including many Jews, since the beginning of the year. Our committee manages to legalise their stay.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 142.

make every effort to get the given personalities out to neutral countries if possible and that certain steps in this direction have already been made. Therefore, please let me attach to the above document a detailed list of such people created by the Representation of Polish Jewry, and I strongly request you to submit it through the most appropriate channel for the attention of the Government in London and, through its agency, for the attention of the Delegation in the country. We are ready to participate in all costs related to the rescue of these personalities; besides, as you certainly know, both the World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Labour Committee have already donated the first sums for the action of aid to Polish Jews (45,000 dollars have been transferred so far, and the manner of transferring further 155,000 dollars has also been agreed upon):

I also attach a list of persons referred to in the letter from Dr Tartakower and ask you to submit it to the relevant Office.

At the request of Dr Tartakower, I would like to ask you to acknowledge the receipt by telegraph.

Sylwin Strakacz
Minister Plenipotentiary
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

[enclosure]

List of Jewish activists in Poland

determined by the Representation of Polish Jewry with a request to take relevant steps in order to save them

Dr Ignacy Shipper, Warsaw (his detailed address in the Ghetto is unknown).

Menachem Mendel Kirszenbaum, Warsaw, Leszno St. 54.

Lipe Bloch, Warsaw, Leszno St. 19.

Józef Szuw, Wilno, Kijowska St. 2.

Leib Minberg, Białystok

Jakób Trokenheim, Warsaw, Nalewki St. 35.

Antoni Buksbaum, Warsaw

Dr Adolf A. Berman, Warsaw

Dr Emanuel Ringelblum, Warsaw

Jochanan Morgenstern, Warsaw, Przebieg St. 2.

Dawid Raduński, Warsaw, Muranowska St. 38.

Lejzor Lewin, Warsaw, Przebieg St. 2.
Aron Blum, Warsaw, Meisels St. 8.
Jankiel Radzyński, Warsaw, Dzielna St. 29.
Zalman Grynberg, Warsaw, Meisels St. 4.
Lejb Szczarańska, Warsaw, Meisels St. 4.
Jakób Berson, Warsaw, Meisels St. 4.
Marja Pate, Wieliczka, Piotr Wysocki St. 4.
Rywka Finkelstein, Warsaw, Nowolipki St. 34.

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

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*22 September 1943. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs:
extracts from the note about the propaganda plan and information actions
(with enclosure)*

London, 22 September 1943

TOP SECRET

In connection with the current political situation, which can be regarded as a turning point for many reasons, one can feel the need to adapt the methods and tactical elements of our political and information action to the tasks that the Polish foreign policy is currently facing.

The main assumptions of our policy in terms corresponding to the current situation are expressed in a speech delivered by me at the Meeting of the National Council of 13 September, the text of which is already known to the heads of posts.

Please find enclosed for your attention and for your use a report containing a certain number of arguments, most of which have already been included in the aforementioned speech, as well as instructions deliberately edited in terms of the practical needs of the political and information action.

MINISTER
Tadeusz Romer

[enclosure]

Arguments for the political and information action

...¹³⁵

8. It is also worth noting the attitude towards non-Polish national groups, particularly Jews; issues of other minorities should of course be treated with great care in the present period. As far as the Jewish matter in Poland before the war is concerned, it would be necessary to point out the extremely complicated character of this problem in Poland, both because of its numerical size and the specific economic background. Juxtaposition of the scarcity of the Jewish problem in Germany with the complexity of this issue in Poland, on the one hand, and the barbaric reaction of Nazi Germany towards Jews with the rarity of antisemitic excesses in Poland on the other hand is a measure of the innate tolerance of the Polish Nation. It is particularly necessary to exploit for propaganda purposes all the actions of the Government-in-Exile and of the Polish authorities attesting to their democratic attitude to Jewish problems, and the same goes for all signs of harmonious normal co-existence or cooperation between Poles and Jews, whether in exile, in the army or particularly in the country (aid granted to the Polish population by Poles, cooperation of underground organisations). Our information action in Jewish matters should have a positive character as far as possible and not be limited to rejecting accusations of antisemitism.

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 13

¹³⁵ Extracts not concerning Jewish issues were omitted.

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*24 September 1943. Report by the Ambassador in Washington:
the initiative of a Jewish organisation
on the rescue of Jews in occupied Poland*

24 September 1943

SECRET

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

Messrs Peter H. Bergson and Johan Smertenko, representatives of the Emergency Committee to Save Jewish People of Europe, chosen by the Emergency Conference held in August this year in New York, submitted to me, with a request for forwarding to the Polish Government, a memorandum of the Committee containing the plan of the rescue action covering European Jews endangered by the German extermination action. I am honoured to send this memorandum as an attachment.¹³⁶

For the time being, the organisational idea of the Emergency Committee is to create within the American administration a special office modelled on the Office for Relief and Rehabilitation that would handle specially the rescue of European Jews as an issue requiring full separation. The Emergency Committee is against retaining the matter of rescuing Jews as part of the Anglo-American action initiated by the Bermuda Conference in April this year. Due to the urgency of a rescue operation in this area and the particularly large casualties suffered by European Jews and the risk of total extermination, such a rescue operation would not fit within the framework of any existing institution. At a later organisational stage, such office should, in the opinion of my interlocutors, transform itself into an international organisation with the participation of the comprising governments of all interested 'United Nations.'

The delegation asked me to submit an initiative supporting the creation of this kind of international institution to Governments of Great Britain and the United States, via the Polish Government.

I reminded the delegation of the Emergency Committee that for a long time the Polish Government has been taking the initiative of rescuing European Jews, particularly Polish Jews, that it has made frequent appeals to the world public opinion and that it has alerted the Governments of Great Britain and the United

¹³⁶ Not included in this publication.

States to the disastrous situation of Polish Jews and the need to take action in their defence. Also now, the Polish Government will certainly take part in any serious action aimed at solving this difficult problem.

At the same time, I gave the delegation a few pieces of advice on those in the American Government and society who I believe should show interest in the Emergency Committee programme, as well as on the most effective ways to secure support from the decision-makers.

Having informed you of the above, I would like to point out that the Emergency Committee, founded mainly on the initiative of Zionist and pro-Palestinian activists, does not find significant support in circles of local assimilators reliable for Jewish policy and that it is hard to count on American decision-makers fulfilling the demands of the Emergency Committee.

The visit by the representatives of the Emergency Committee to the Department of State, where they were received by the Assistant Secretary of State, Breckinridge Long, confirmed my predictions in this case, as the delegation received an answer from him that there was currently no practical possibility of implementing the programme of the Committee. Thus, the Department of State dismissed the Emergency Committee with generalities, keeping up the idea that the rescue of Jews should take place according to the rules adopted during the Bermuda Conference.

The Polish Government has undertaken initiatives in this respect so many times, even exposing itself to accusations of self-promotion from certain Jewish circles, that I currently do not find it appropriate to give the Government's public support to the initiative of the Emergency Committee, which does not represent all organised Jews. Nevertheless, I am honoured to suggest that you talk to Ambassador Biddle in order to indicate that the Polish Government is interested in this matter. Such a conversation would help to determine to what extent the American Government goes along with British policy in the field of hindering and blocking all kinds of pro-Palestinian initiatives.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

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*1 October 1943. Cable from the Legation in Baghdad
on the arrival of Jewish children*

Polmission—Baghdad

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SENT ON 1 OCT 1943

RECEIVED ON 2 OCT 1943

No. 176

Receptus 41¹³⁷

The travel of 20 Jewish children without visas in the general transport did not have repercussions. In connection with the general Arabian policy of refusing to let Jews into Palestine, Iraqi authorities absolutely refuse to grant visas to persons of Jewish faith, persons of Jewish nationality or persons whose name suggests that they may be Jews. Visas are refused categorically and without exception. The Legation intervened in the matter of the legal travel of 2 persons for whom the authorities made an exception, stressing that this was the last time. Tehran has been notified about the above. Interventions of the Legation for visas for recommended persons were settled negatively.

Kościałkowski
Polmission

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 552

¹³⁷ In the cable no. 41 of 27 September 1943, the MFA asked: 'Please inform by telegraph if there were consequences, and of what kind, of the spontaneous inclusion of 20 Jewish children without visas by a representative of the Jewish Agency in Tehran in the general transport of 87 children.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 250.

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1 October 1943. Report by the Legation in Bern about the situation of refugees in Switzerland

Report

1. Number of refugees

The number of refugees staying in labour camps for men, internment homes for women and in rest homes for the sick (all under ZL's control) did not change significantly in September.

Because of the situation that had recently arisen in Italy, approx. 450–500 Polish citizens arrived in Switzerland in September.¹³⁸ Most of them arrived from France (former Italian occupation), approx. 400 people, and from Italy, approx. 100 people.

Currently, the total number of Polish refugees who have arrived in Switzerland since August 1942 is approx. 4,800 people. This number constantly changes.

2. Camps

The newly arrived refugees are placed in the following camps (all are controlled by military authorities):

1. Adliswil—Zürich
2. Büsserach—Soloturn
3. Champel—Geneva
4. Charmilles—Geneva
5. Gütsch—Lucerne
6. Hemberg—St. Gallen
7. Orphelinat—Lausanne
8. Varembe—Geneva
9. Vidy—Lausanne.

When crossing the border, all refugees must undergo a 21-day quarantine in the Charmilles or Orphelinat camp.

¹³⁸ On 3 September 1943, a ceasefire agreement (formally an act of capitulation) was signed between Italy and the Allied states, which became publicly known on 8 September. Two days later, German troops took control of a part of Italy (including Rome).

From among the recently established camps, it is necessary to mention:

1. Hemberg
2. Vidy
3. Varembe.

Adliswil, Büsserach and Gütsch camps were once dissolved, but after the latest influx of people, they have been reopened.

3. Benefits

The number of refugees receiving a medical leave of one to three months (usually all from camps under ZL's control) has recently increased. The monthly benefit for these persons is Fr 130. As far as Polish citizens of Jewish faith are concerned, Verband Schweizerischer Jüdischen Flüchtlingshilfen covers 40% of the allowance, as before.

The fact is that the position of allowances for persons staying at large has considerably increased. The sum of camp benefits has also increased as a consequence of the last wave of refugees.

In view of the above, the monthly budget of the refugee section should be increased by 8,000-10,000 francs.

See reports of 17 Apr 1943, 19 May 1943 and 31 Aug 1943.

Bern, 1 October 1943

Juliusz Kühl

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 513

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*7 October 1943. Report by the Legation in Stockholm
about the situation of Jews in Denmark (extract)*

Stockholm, 7 October 1943

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Deportation of Danish Jews
Strong reaction in Sweden

The roundups and arrests of Jews started on 2 October in Denmark by the German police Gestapo that had arrived for this purpose from Germany, with the participation of Danish Nazi volunteer troops, aroused an unprecedented strong reaction and words of indignation in Sweden. In fact, it is the first case since the beginning of the war when the press of all shades, even newspapers most obedient to censorship, do not hesitate to condemn German barbarism in harshest words. The hostile attitude to the Nazi regime in all spheres of society is reflected by editorials in newspapers of various political shades, some examples of which, taken from the most widely disseminated and influential organs of the capital's press are quoted by the Legation, while the provincial press equals the capital's press in terms of openness with which they express their condemning opinion.

But the position adopted in this matter by the Swedish society is shown even better by the general and enthusiastic approval of a step taken in Berlin by the Swedish Government, which, protesting against the deportation of Jews from Denmark, offers to receive them—despite them being specified in a German message as a dangerous and unwelcome group for the authority of the German state—in the Swedish territory. The Swedish Government has thus far not received an answer to the note sent to Berlin in this matter.

In the meantime, continuous waves of Jewish refugees—using all possible means of transport, motorboats, fishing boats, boats and even small kayaks—flow through the Öresund Strait from Denmark to Sweden. There are even cases of people saving themselves from boats sunk by German coastal guards chasing them or by stormy waves at night by swimming to the coast of Sweden. Fishermen and owners of boats helping Jews to escape are paid huge sums by the latter, sometimes reaching even five-digit numbers. In Sweden, refugees are received very kindly by the population. The authorities and the population take care of them, promptly offer help, clothes, food and medical care and do everything to provide them with accommodation and shelter from the bad autumn weather. Most of the refugees escaped only with what they wore, some of them in night wear. However, some of them had taken cash before escaping. Many of these people seem to come from more affluent classes, which have funds not only in Denmark but also in Sweden. The poorest Jews were surprised by the Gestapo operation or had no funds to quickly get out of the centre of this operation, the city of Copenhagen, to coastal points from which it was possible to escape by sea.

Approx. 1,700–2,000 Danish Jews have escaped to Sweden so far and, despite tighter restrictions by the border guard on the coasts of Denmark, this number constantly increases. The press issued on 6 October reports that, in order to make the Jews' escape by sea more difficult, the Germans have recently planted a range of sea mines at a depth of 1 m, the power of which is sufficient to blow up smaller ships and boats. It is reported that many boats with passengers have already been sunk in this way. In Denmark, the Danish police (in Copenhagen and, as we can

conclude, throughout the country) were dissolved by the Germans because they refused to help with roundups. The Gestapo bands and a few hundred organised Danish Nazis run wild in Copenhagen.

The refugees talk about the unprecedented brutality of the German Gestapo and military men during the arrests of Jews, with the elderly, women, children and even infants being beaten and killed under the most trivial pretexts. Many famous and popular people in Danish society have been arrested, including the well-known lawyer and secretary of the Jewish Community Arthur Henriques, the librarian of the said Community; the Gestapo took over the genealogical register of Jews (in order to trace their families and relatives) and lists of refugees from Germany, as well as Chief Rabbi M. Friediger. A well-known Nobel laureate sought by the Gestapo, Niels Bohr, managed to escape to Sweden in time.

According to the latest information in the press, the deportation was ordered directly by the Chancellor of the Reich, Hitler, despite objections by the Delegate of the Reich, Dr Best. They suppose here that if such a large number of Jews as the aforementioned one managed to escape in spite of the round-up prepared in conspiracy by the Gestapo, this happened because they had been warned by a part of German officials having a reluctant attitude towards the entire operation. They mention Kanstein, a high official of the German gendarmerie in Copenhagen related to a few Danish families, as the one who expressed objection in this case.

In Danish society, the anti-Jewish operation caused enormous resentment. Danish Jews, who settled in Denmark three centuries ago and now form a group of merely around 6,000 people, have become entirely assimilated and have never posed a nationality problem in Denmark. They absorbed the Danish spirit and customs and brought forth many outstanding activists in the political, literary and scientific field. One such person is Georg Brandes, a well-known writer. The Danes perceive the attack on Jews as an attack on an intrinsic part of the Danish nation. Thus, according to information coming from Denmark, the Danish society reacts by helping out refugees. Onlookers are often unable to stop themselves even at the sight of the brutality of German thugs and actively try to set the arrested ones free, which leads to fights with the Germans, who do not hesitate to use their guns. The sight of women and children being tortured arouses huge resentment among the Danes. In some cases, passers-by threw themselves at German soldiers with their bare hands in the defence of the weak victims and were themselves wounded and killed.

Of course, it is not possible to check various rumours and tales from Denmark, the country that is currently locked tight from the outside world by the Germans. The Swedish, who know Denmark well and the Danes, say that the latest events have undoubtedly created an impassable abyss between the Danish nation and the Germans. In Denmark, there are currently no people willing to compromise themselves through cooperation, apart from a small group of Nazis who burnt bridges behind themselves at the very beginning. Also in Sweden, this last example

of the German new order will open the eyes of the Swedes who have still believed in the possibility of cooperation with present-day Germans.

...¹³⁹

Reported by A. Pomian
Minister Plenipotentiary:
H. Sokolnicki

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 16

397

*8 October 1943. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern:
information from the Secretary-General
of the Jewish Agency in Geneva on Jewish refugees in Italy*

Polmission—Bern

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 8 OCT 1943
RECEIVED ON 9 OCT 1943

No. 452

Kahany to Joseph Linton Jewish Agency 77 Great Russell Street, London:

‘Among the refugees from Italy there are a few hundred Jews, mostly Yugoslavian Jews, including Licht and other Zionists and a group of Indig’s children. Many other people from Italy could be saved if the Yugoslavian Government authorises its Legation in Bern to assure the Swiss authorities formally that it will fully cover the costs of maintenance of all civilian Yugoslavs who are already here and all those who will be admitted by Switzerland. Therefore, an urgent intervention by Brodetsky with Minister Mirošević in London is necessary in order to obtain immediately relevant instructions for Bern. B. could propose the participation of Jewish organisations in this action where advisable or necessary. Please reply by telegraph using the same way.

Ładoś

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 546

¹³⁹ The extract about the reactions of the Swedish press was omitted.

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*8 October 1943. Report by the Envoy in Mexico City
on claims of discrimination against Jewish refugees*

Mexico City, 8 October 1943

To the Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
in London

In reply to Nr.Uch./738/7.Meks./43.

In connection with the complaint submitted by the Federation of American Funds, I notify the Ministry as follows:

The refugees arrived in León in the State of Guanajuato in Mexico on 1 July at noon. Among 706 refugees there are 26 Jews, including 12 from the 'Burmese' group. This group consists of 'war tourists' who did business in India or received public charity benefits and who decided to leave for Mexico to do even better business there. On 3 July, i.e. 24 hours after their arrival, a note about antisemitism among refugees was published in the Jewish newspaper 'Der Weg' and concern was expressed as to whether the arrival of Polish refugees led to 'an even bigger increase of antisemitism in Mexican rural areas.' I called a representative of the Central Jewish Committee (an international Jewish organisation) and representatives of the Federation of Polish Jews in Mexico to visit me, and I told them as follows:

'As long as I am the head of the Legation, there will be no discrimination between Christians and Jews, and I am convinced that each of my potential successors will assume the same position. However, I will not allow any privileges to a small group of "tricksters" who arrived in Mexico at the cost of public charity and wants to do business here now. I am warning you that there will be no incidents in the settlement, but I predict that such incidents will be provoked by this group. Please give them a strong warning and not force me to ask the Polish Government not to include any Jews in refugee transports being sent to Mexico in the future.'

Both the Central Jewish Committee and the Federation of Polish Jews acknowledged that there had been no discrimination in the settlement and admitted that my assumptions were right; in addition, they undertook not to make any efforts for the release of these 12 Burmese Jews and communicated their decision to the people concerned. At the moment, this group has complaints, primarily against me and then against the aforementioned Jewish organisations that they submitted to my influence. At this point, members of this group then began to address various Jewish organisations with complaints. The American Embassy receives copies of

these letters from the censorship, and Ambassador Messersmith mentioned this during a conversation with me and the English Envoy, adding that the United States would not let these people in; as a result of this conversation, the British Envoy asked his Government by telegraph if these people could be sent back to India. I know he received an answer that the Government was considering this matter with the Indian Government...

When I visited Santa Rosa a short time ago, members of the Burmese group complained that 'they are not destined to live in the camp'; when I reminded them that they had signed a declaration in India and that they were going there with total awareness that they would live together and that they would not be allowed to earn money under the agreement, they replied that they had signed it at the last moment...

Complaints will presumably be expressed in the future, but they are not important.¹⁴⁰

I have written much about this matter, although it is the least inconvenient matter in Santa Rosa. Please notify Dr Schwarzbart of the content of this letter.

Władysław Neuman

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

¹⁴⁰ In the cable of 13 October 1943, the Envoy in Mexico City reported: 'On the eve of my arrival in León, a group of Jews who had attempted to leave the settlement for a long time took advantage of a drunken brawl by giving it the character of an antisemitic demonstration and sent an alarming dispatch to the Joint in New York, the Embassy of the United States, the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Mexico City and Deputy Schwarzbart. The matter is being handled positively. In order to ensure peace and discipline in the settlement, *it is necessary* to separate criminals who constantly make trouble. In local conditions, it can be only a concentration camp or prison. I propose the former. Please send me your consent by telegraph.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.

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*8 October 1943. Letter from the Ministry of National Defence
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on officers of Jewish nationality
in the Polish Army in the USSR*

London, 8 October 1943

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Following the letter from 6 September 1943 L.dz.735/WPol/43, the Ministry of National Defence submits further data concerning Ukrainians and Jews in the Polish Army in the USSR. These data concern only officers.

Ad 1. Approx. 210 Jews and 1 Ukrainian volunteered to join the Polish Army in the USSR.

Ad 2. None was released, despite pressure from Soviet authorities.

Ad 3. 210 Jews and 1 Ukrainian were evacuated from the USSR.

Ad 4. There are currently 179 Jews on active duty, including 60 not from the USSR, but there are no Ukrainians at all.

HEAD OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT
AT THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

M. Heitzman

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.755/2

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*[After 13 October 1943]. Note by the Consul General in Jerusalem
on a conversation with a representative of the Jewish Agency
on desertions from the Polish Army in the East*

(Indeed strictly secret)

Note¹⁴¹

On 13 October, I held a 3-hour conversation with Grünbaum, Vice-President of the Executive Jewish Agency of Palestine, who had recently returned from South

¹⁴¹ The note by Consul Aleksy Wdziękoński was sent on 9 November 1943 to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of National Defence.

Africa, where he had gone for propaganda purposes to obtain money for the action of evacuating Jews from occupied countries. Grünbaum says that he is generally satisfied with the results of this trip, but he did not go into any details. The aim of Mr Grünbaum's visit to me was to discuss current issues, the most important of which were as follows:

1) On 2 October in the evening, under the pretext of searching for deserters from the Polish Army, a few Polish gendarmes assisted by the English police and a relatively large English military unit came to the Hulda Jewish settlement (near Gedera), but checking the identity of persons gave no results. Then the English started to search individual rooms and farm buildings. They found bullets remaining in one of the rooms and, apparently, hand grenades in one of the farm buildings. One shot was ultimately fired without effect, and a fight between the Jews and the English followed. The Poles did not take part in it. A few days after this incident, I met General Anders and asked him in a delicate way if it would not be appropriate to avoid the participation of Polish soldiers in gun searches, because the over-sensitive Jewish circles may again use the participation of Polish soldiers to discredit us. I asked whether the search for deserters should not be combined with the gun search action. It turned out that this accident had not yet been reported to General Anders. During the conversation on 13 October, Mr Grünbaum brought up this matter, asking who had proposed the initiative of the 'Hulda' action and, as far as the search for deserters was concerned, why such a large unit of English soldiers was necessary.

2) Then the conversation moved to the subject of desertion. Currently, the number of deserters has reached 1,400 people, including 770 soldiers who arrived from Iraq. When Grünbaum tried to strike the antisemitic chord, I even told him it was an old joke, that things could not go so bad in units that escapes would take place on a mass scale, that I had information it was an organised action (hiding, putting on disguises, being supplied with documents), that there were frequent cases of return to the ranks and the returning people admitted that they had escaped as a result of persuasion, and that our military authorities are in possession of accurate information in this matter. I stressed that neither I nor General Anders have been presented with any concrete incidents indicating an alleged anti-Jewish attitude within the military troops. Mr G. said that he had a few reports and would submit them to me; apart from that, he explained that among ordinary soldiers in the army there are Jewish engineers, doctors and other professionals not being used in their profession, that they are clever people and may feel offended by such an attitude. Actually, when talking to Jewish soldiers who had served in the army in Poland, he asked them if there was a difference between treatment in old and current days and, as he says, he almost always heard an identical answer: there was no essential difference, but they had previously been in Poland and they were currently in Palestine, where things ought to be different. I reminded him about the liberal conduct of General Anders, who had not brought cases of desertion to court

so far, that briefs were held in the army about the need to treat all soldiers equally, that there were no complaints and that if Jews had actually been ill-treated in the army, there would be a lot of noise about how they could do this even in trivial cases. Mr G. put forward a proposal whether it would be possible to announce that Jewish soldiers were allowed to move from the Polish Army to British Jewish units. I stressed that this could not be done without the consent of our military authorities as well as English ones, which may, for example, regard this as the illegal smuggling of people to Palestine. Mr G. replied that if Polish authorities basically agreed to such a change, he would bring up this matter with English authorities and would even provide each soldier 'joining Jewish troops' with certificates giving the right to reside in Palestine.

On the following day, I met General Anders. I discussed the matter. General Anders will not put up obstacles. It is interesting to note that 5 Jews serving in Jewish units at the British Army filed 5 applications with the Consulate requesting approval to join the Polish Army. In this case, the English authorities consented. I do not know at what this is aimed. I cannot rule out that they are afraid to retire from Jewish units and thus, in order to avoid revenge from their fellow soldiers, they intend to join the Polish Army and to escape from it, with the whole matter to be attributed to our alleged antisemitism. When I told Mr G., in connection with his project, about these 5 applications as an action contradicting his intentions, he was surprised and said that he did not know about this at all, but he supposes that these might be people who had an estate or family in Poland and who wanted to return to Poland for these or other reasons.

3) In the further course of the conversation, he said that the Jewish Agency had learnt that nominal lists of people to be expatriated in the event of Soviet consent were prepared in Tehran and that apparently there were 3 such lists: 1. 14,000 surnames, including 4,000 Jews, 2. A list of children, prepared without Jewish circles, 3. A general list encompassing 40,000 surnames of soldiers' families, on which families of Jewish children had apparently been omitted. The message about letters came from Tehran via special courier and, therefore, the Jewish Agency expresses its deep concern. They want to send a telegram to London, etc.

I promised to look into this matter and contacted London by telegraph and, through a quick opportunity, Tehran. General Anders told me that the army did not prepare lists of families yet. By the way, I remarked to Gr. that deserters' families probably could not count on any priority or favours.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 49

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*23 October 1943. Report by the Council to Aid Jews
to the Government Delegate for Poland on its activities during the period
from December 1942 till October 1943 (extracts)*

Report

on the activity of the Council to Aid Jews to the Government Delegate for Poland
for the period from December 1942 till October 1943

...¹⁴²

I. Establishment of the Council

After the first liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto in October 1942, the Committee of Polish organisations was established to provide material aid to Jews as victims of the cruel German terror used against the Jewish population. This Committee was active for a relatively short period. The funds assigned by the Delegation were very modest (50,000 zlotys per month) at the beginning. The work of the Committee did not have a wider reach. At the end of November and in December 1942, there was a radical reorganisation of the Committee, its composition was expanded, and its activity became much more intense. After a series of meetings with representatives of Polish organisations and Jewish society, the Council to Aid Jews to the Government Delegation was established. The Council was composed of representatives of a number of Polish parties and organisations and two representatives of Jewish society: one on behalf of the Jewish National Committee uniting Zionist, bourgeoisie and working-class organisations, and one on behalf of the Bund.

II. Organisation and scope of activity of the Council

The Council to Aid Jews was intended as a central institution for District Councils to be created in the field and as a local institution designed to work in the same way as other District Councils of the Warsaw district (in the territory of Warsaw). The Council consists of a representative of the Delegation and representatives (one per each) of the following parties: the WRN (president), the People's Party (vice-president), the Democratic Party (treasurer), the Polish Democratic Organisation and, on behalf of the Jewish society, the Bund (vice-president) and the Jewish National Committee (secretary). Apart from that, a representative of the Catholic Front for the Rebirth of Poland was present in the Council for a long time. The Council appointed the Review Committee for the control of financial agencies of the Council. The Council is apolitical in nature. The primary task of the Council is to bring aid to Jews (within the meaning of racist

¹⁴² The table of contents was omitted.

laws) as victims of German terror. This aid was supposed to include financial aid (benefits), help in the acquisition of premises, legalisation, help in searching for employment opportunities, etc.

III. Activity of the Council in Warsaw

For the first few months, the Council was actually active only as a Warsaw institution providing material aid to Jews residing in the Aryan district of Warsaw and the Warsaw Ghetto, obviously very modestly due to the very small subsidies assigned to the Council by the Delegation. The Council held 26 plenary meetings, whereas the Presidium of the Council held 35 meetings. The Review Committee held 15 meetings. The Council has its office, where two forces are active, and has several premises where it alternately holds its meetings and performs its office activities.

IV. Legalisation aid

Jews are forbidden on the penalty of death to leave the ghetto or a camp. This means that their stay in Aryan areas is possible only on condition that they are perceived as Aryans. One of the most important issues is the legalisation of Jews. In this respect, the Council got in touch with a relevant well-organised office that prepares necessary documents, such as baptisms certificates, wedding certificates, identity documents (Polish ones), Kennkarten as well as many others.¹⁴³ The Council provides these documents to all Jews who apply for such documents (via relevant organisations) and sends them out into the field without any fees, although it pays monthly lump sums of 30,000–45,000 zlotys to the relevant office. The number of these documents delivered by the Council in the reporting period amounts to a few thousand.

V. Financial aid

The second important aid should be material aid, since a large part of the people concerned cannot earn money because of their non-Aryan appearance or for fear of blackmail. And the Council rendered this aid to everyone who applied for it directly or indirectly via relevant organisations represented in the Council. Initially, the only source from which the Council derived its funds were subsidies granted to the Council by the Delegation. Subsidies of Jewish organisations from funds received by them from abroad have been another source over the past three months. The Delegation granted the following amounts to the Council: January 1943—150,000, February 1943—300,000, March 1943—250,000, in subsequent months from April till October: 400,000 a month, with the only differences that the Delegation granted the Council also an extraordinary one-off subsidy of 500,000 in April (in connection with the liquidation action carried out in the Warsaw Ghetto in April and May 1943) as well as a monthly subsidy of 150,000 for aid to the rest

¹⁴³ See doc. 385.

of the country from June till October. The amount granted to the Council by the Delegation for purposes of aid to Warsaw and the rest of the country totalled 4,750,000 zlotys for the 10-month reporting period. The Delegation granted the Council 750,000 zlotys per month for November and December and 1 million zlotys a month from 1 January 1944. The number of recipients of financial aid from the Council, initially amounting to approx. 200–300, has increased to approx. 1,000 a month in the last few months during the reporting period. The one-off monthly amount of support for each recipient was initially approx. 500 zlotys. When the number of recipients started increasing due to the exhaustion of their own funds, as a result of blackmail or similar action, and the subsidy of the Delegation remained the same, this individual aid started decreasing, recently ranging from 300 to 400 zlotys. Because of the devaluation of money and, consequently, high costs of necessary items, this aid proves less than modest and is a symbol of aid rather than actual aid. The second source of the Council's funds is subsidies from Jewish organisations, which during the last three months—i.e. at the time when they received funds from abroad—have granted 400,000 zlotys to the Council apart from amounts spent directly on similar aid by these organisations, of which more below.

VI. Housing section

Accommodation aid was supposed to be the third significant—and perhaps the most important—form of aid. The life of the person in question depended and still depends on having a roof over their head. Because of the non-Aryan appearance, for the fear of consequences as a result of sheltering Jews, because of blackmail—as a result of which one has to leave their home—and because of expensive premises in general, the housing problem is the most difficult to solve. Therefore, the Council invested much time and a considerable amount of money in this issue by creating a special housing section, but this aid was unfortunately minimal. The purchase of independent apartments turned out to be impractical, as these premises became useless after blackmail. The acquisition of subtenant rooms encountered obstacles beyond the Council's control due to high costs of these premises and the lack of appropriate funds for them. Thus, the relatively modest special housing fund assigned by the Council could not fulfil its task to the extent intended by the Council.

VII. Anti-blackmail action

A huge plague, which can be called a social disaster, is the spread of blackmail that has affected a large number of Jews staying in the Aryan areas. The victims are brutally stripped of everything they have: cash, valuables, clothes, underwear and other valuable items. Consequently, victims of blackmail lose their apartment and become a burden for relatives and friends, and if they are unable to provide help, they are forced to request the Council for material aid. This is how the number of those who need support from the Council increases.

Thus, the Council frequently appealed to the Delegation to fight blackmail systematically, quickly and radically, e.g. demanding the issue of an official order (to be published on posters) by the Government Delegate threatening blackmailers and their accomplices with death for their crimes. Such announcements, in semi-official form, were published in the underground press of the Delegation and other authorities. Moreover, the Council published several brochures in which it condemned the aforementioned crimes, summoning the society to bring aid to Jews as victims of Nazi terror and to fight blackmail. Finally, the Council notified the incidents of blackmail to the Special Court.

VIII. Propaganda section

The Council established the aforementioned section for the purpose of influencing the society with relevant literature towards providing help to Jews who are victims of the Nazi extermination policy. In this respect, the Council published four brochures, including three leaflets addressed to the Polish society in a total of 25,000 copies, and one published in German totalling 5,000 copies, which was addressed to the German society as allegedly issued by German organisations. These leaflets have been distributed around houses and posted up on the walls of Warsaw and provincial towns. They were also sent to offices etc. Moreover, the Council has recently started to publish for the Underground Press messages informing about acts of extermination by the Germans against the Jewish population and about acts of Jewish resistance against the Germans. Two issues have been published.

IX. Child aid section

The Council has recently established a special section responsible for taking care of orphans and other Jewish children in need of help and putting them in care institutions and with private families. Organised under professional management, this work begins to develop successfully. About 20–30 children have been placed in the right places, and the prospects for further work are good.

However, the development of this action, which is so important, depends on larger funds, which the Council cannot grant. The monthly budget granted to this section by the Council is about 30,000.

Therefore, Jewish organisations submitted a special subsidy of 50,000 zlotys for this purpose in October, because at least that much was necessary for the section to meet its current needs.

X. Medical care section

Because of the risk of disclosure of its 'pupils' and other Jews due to illnesses, the Council decided to establish a medical care department, which is already under organisation and will be opened in the near future. It will consist of trusted doctors, familiar with the character of this work in various points of the city; some of them will even help free of charge. Apart from this aid, help in the delivery of medicines is planned.

XI. Clothing section

Because of the lack of financial resources of which a large sum is needed for this purpose, this extremely important department cannot be launched, despite the fact that it is indispensable due to the approaching autumn and winter.

XII. Reserve fund

In many cases, it becomes urgently necessary to provide immediate aid and to supply food to imprisoned Jews. After the distribution of monthly financial aid, the Council is usually left without funds. Therefore, the Council decided to create a special reserve fund for these purposes. Unfortunately, it cannot always be put into practice due to the shortage of funds, as the amounts being received are not sufficient enough to cover the constantly increasing demand for help.

XIII. The Council's work in the country

Already during the formation of the Council and the determination of its scope of activity, starting from its first meetings, the Council stressed the need to extend the scope of aid to the rest of the country in the entire territory of the Republic of Poland. As a consequence, the Council made a decision in December 1942 to submit to the Government Delegate with a demand to issue relevant instructions to district delegates in order to establish a whole series of District Councils which, like the Warsaw Council, would develop aid activities in their limited areas.

The Delegation approved this demand, and at the same time notified the Council that the condition for establishing the District Councils and the cooperation of District Delegations with them is to first organise a social factor, as it happened in Warsaw.

As a result, this work has encountered significant obstacles due to the local market. As a result of this, when the organisation of District Councils did not take any real shape, the Central Council took over the relevant initiative with a positive effect.

1. District Council in Cracow

In April 1943, on the initiative of the Central Council, the relevant District Council was successfully established in Cracow, where representatives of the WRN, the People's Party and the Democratic Party are active and in which also a Jewish representative has recently participated. Because of the lack of funds, the agenda of the Cracow Council had to be very modest at the beginning of their activity, because funds granted to the Cracow Council were minimal for obvious reasons, amounting to several thousand zlotys used by around 100 people living in the Aryan district of Cracow. In addition, the Cracow Council provided relevant people with identity documents from the material supplied to it by the Central Council. The Cracow Council gathered, via its envoys, necessary information regarding aid to ghettos and Jewish camps located in the Cracow district (Tarnów,

Bochnia, Przemyśl, Stalowa Wola, Mielec and Trzebnia [Szebnie?] near Jasło), notifying the relevant data to the Central Council and demanding a considerable increase of subsidies, which the Central Council could not grant.

When the Delegation increased the subsidy for the Council in June 1943, particularly by granting a special subsidy for aid to the rest of the country, the Central Council increased the subsidy for the Cracow Council to the amount of 50,000 zlotys per month, which is obviously completely insufficient, because the Cracow Council demanded in its report for May the minimum amount of 320,000 zlotys for June only for Cracow itself, excluding the rest of the country. Currently, approx. 100 persons receive financial benefits from the Cracow Aid Council.

2. District Council in Lwów

In Lwów, the District Council was established slightly later than in Cracow. As in the case of the Cracow Council, the Lwów Council also consists of representatives of the WRN, the Democratic Party and the People's Party. Remarks concerning the character and direction of work of the Cracow Council, its problems and financial demands also apply to the Lwów Council; however, the territorial scope of work in Lwów is considerably larger and there is a larger number of Jewish camp, since the number of the Jewish population in these territories is much higher than in Western Lesser Poland and the adjoining territories of Silesia and the former Congress Kingdom of Poland. Carried out by an envoy of the Lwów Council, the information tour aimed at gathering the necessary data and getting in touch with ghettos or Jewish camps in the territories of the Lwów Region provided certain information regarding Stryj, Kołomyja, Brody, Borysław, Drohobycz and Przemyśl and the possibility of providing individual aid in some of these locations. However, the entire scope of work aimed at bringing some actual results, at least for local groups, depends on large amounts of money, which the Central Council cannot deliver because there is no money.

The Lwów Council has recently received 60,000 zlotys a month from the Central Council. A few dozen people staying in the Aryan district receive financial benefits. It must be stressed that the subsidy for Lwów unfortunately failed to reach the Lwów Council in September 1943, because the envoy of the Lwów Council, who had received the relevant amount along with a full set of identity documents for Lwów from the Central Council, was arrested on the way.

3. Further work of the Council in the country (Field section)

In order to carry out its aid tasks in the rest of the country (outside the reach of the Cracow Council and the Lwów Council), the Council has created a field section in the past three months.

Three people leaving on behalf of this section have established very loose contact with Łódź for the time being, where approx. 150,000 Jews work in the ghetto and approx. 30,000 of them are Łódź citizens, whereas the rest are Jews

from Western European states. Moreover, contact has been established with Jewish camps in Piotrków, Radom, Kielce and others, mainly by collecting information about the situation in the camps, about living and working conditions and about the preparation of aid. Anyway, the information obtained here suggests that high financial sums are necessary for the purpose of providing food, clothes etc.—as living conditions in these camps are dreadful—and, primarily, for the purpose of rescuing people by taking them out of these death centres. In order to fully present the need to obtain large sums from the Delegation that could be sufficient to satisfy the constantly increasing needs in this respect and in other respects—such as the increase of individual subsidies in Warsaw, Cracow and Lwów, subsidies for a children's home, etc.—the Council has submitted a long memorandum to the Delegate this month, wishing that its demands would be directly supported.

XIV. Cooperation of the Council with Jewish organisations with respect to aid

The Council's cooperation with Jewish organisations took place primarily as a result of the fact that two representatives of the Jewish community in the Council were elected, one on behalf of the Jewish National Committee and the other on behalf of the Bund, who with their active participation contributed to the obviously positive results of work of the Council itself. Through these representatives, the Council obtained important information for its tasks, about the life of Jewish society. Moreover, in the course of their aid activities, the aforementioned Jewish organisations greatly contributed to easing the burden of the Council, thereby supplementing the overall aid work among the remaining part of the Jewish community. Finally, when the aforementioned organisations started to receive larger sums from their representations from abroad, they sent these sums directly to the Council's account, thereby making the Council's work easier and filling its budget gaps, at least partially.

Jewish organisations have regularly subsidised the Council every month since August; during the last three months, they have donated the amount of 400,000 zlotys. Moreover, by providing material aid in Warsaw (in the Aryan districts) or sending larger sums—which totalled several hundred thousand zloty per month—to the field (to the camps in Trawniki, Poniatów, Piotrków, Ostrowiec, Kielce, Radom, Starachowice, Skarżysko-Kamienna), largely met tasks that are also within the scope of the Council's work in terms of materials and by sending people out in the field to gather information and establish contacts (for example recently to Białystok and Wilno).

Material support provided by Jewish organisations was not limited to people being within their organisational and ideological reach, but also covered many other people outside the scope of these standing organisations.

XV. Contact between the Council and the Delegation

It was maintained constantly and systematically, and this was primarily through:

1. The Delegation's representative participation in the meetings of the Council, who is and was the head of the Jewish section in the Government Delegation. It was this representative of the Delegation who presented the demands and appeals of the Council to the Delegate and informed the Council about the Delegate's position in matters falling within the scope of the Council's tasks.

2. Moreover, the Council addressed the Delegate by letters and memoranda, mainly in financial matters, asking for an increase of subsidies, highlighting the growing needs and the necessity of their immediate fulfilment, then in the matter of the need to fight blackmail and to issue official statements for this purpose and to announce them in public, and in the matter of executing justice on criminals-blackmailers; finally, it submitted reports on its activities, in particular its financial statements, to the Delegate.

3. Finally, in response to the Council's wish that a conversation be held between the Delegation of the Council and the Delegate in the matter of direct support for its demands, a conference was held at the end of April 1943, to which the Delegate invited the Vice-President of the Council, with whom he discussed, with a positive result, current matters brought up by the Council.

XVI. Contact between the Council and the Government of the Republic of Poland in London

Contact was established in two cases.

1. The Council contacted the Government of the Republic of Poland in the matter of allocating large government sums for aid purposes due to the fact that a necessary large-scale aid action requires huge expenditure, whereas the amount assigned by the Delegation is obviously insufficient. The Council sent a dispatch and a memorandum via the Delegation to the Government in this matter.

2. In addition, the Council sent a dispatch to the Polish Government in London with a demand for the initiation of an international agreement on the basis of which the remnants of the Jewish society could be saved from imminent destruction by way of exchange or by means of another act. The Council assumed that all aid measures are only half-measures that will not endure and, in the long run, will not bring rescue in view of the firm implementation of the policy of utter extermination of the remnants of the Jewish population by German authorities.

XVII. The Council's attitude towards the armed resistance of the Warsaw Ghetto

When Warsaw was alarmed by the heroic armed resistance of the Warsaw Ghetto directed by the Jewish Combat Organisation in the second half of April

1943, the Council adopted a statement in this matter, in which it expressed tribute and recognition for the heroism of the Warsaw Ghetto and appealed to the Government Delegate to cause relevant circles to support this heroic fight by delivering a sufficient number of weapons to the ghetto defenders. The relevant statement was immediately sent to the Government Delegate.

XVIII. The Council's attitude towards the Jewish Support Centre (JUS¹⁴⁴)

A few months ago, after the liquidation of the Cracow ghetto, central occupation authorities created a Jewish support centre (JUS—Jüdische Unterstützungsstelle), appointing the former president of the liquidated central social self-help, Dr W.,¹⁴⁵ as its head. The centre received large amounts of valuable medicines from abroad via the International Red Cross and stocks of products and cash from foreign Jews. The head of this centre wanted to get in touch with representatives of the Jewish society, i.e. with the Bund, the Jewish National Committee and the Council to Aid Jews. The representatives of the Jewish society expressed a negative opinion and proposed that the Council object to any kind of cooperation with the JUS, notifying the Council that the representatives of the Jewish National Committee and the Bund had communicated their negative position abroad and called for the suspension of any shipments to the JUS, explaining that it was a German propaganda action. The Council expressed its negative opinion on the JUS and sent its decision to the Government Delegate, attaching the relevant statement of a representative of the Jewish society.

Warsaw, 23 October 1943

Council to Aid Jews
to the Government Delegate in Poland

IPMS, Kancelaria Cywilna i Gabinet Wojskowy Prezydenta RP, A.48.10/A (previously published)

¹⁴⁴ In the original, it is consistently spelt as 'IUS.'

¹⁴⁵ Michał Weichert.

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*25 October 1943. Cable from the Ambassador to the Holy See
on the Pope's intervention in the defence of Italian Jews*

Polmission—Vatican
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 25 OCT 1943
RECEIVED ON 10 NOV 1943

No. 331

The Pope intervened with the Germans in the defence of Italian Jews. The Germans released some of them, and roundups have been suspended for the time being. The Jews still hide. Approx. 500 Jews from France (refero cable No. 299¹⁴⁶), in large part Polish citizens, arrived in Rome. I intervened with the Secretariat of State that the Vatican take care of them, and I received such a promise.¹⁴⁷

Papée

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

¹⁴⁶ Doc. 383. In another cable of 25 October 1943, Ambassador Papée added: 'I intervened in the Secretariat of State in the matter of the Vatican's care of Polish institutions and citizens in Rome and in Italy... Such care will be ensured by including our institutions—among others, the Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences—in a list of institutions protected by the Vatican, which the Germans have respected so far. Poles in Rome have been left in peace so far.' Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/34.

¹⁴⁷ In the cipher telegram of 12 December 1943, the Ambassador to the Holy See reported: 'After the last Nazi orders against the Jews, the Vatican intervened in their defence. The Cardinal Secretary of State received an informal assurance that the results of these orders in practice would be reduced to the internment of Jews and that their deportation by the Germans would not take place.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 141.

403

*25 October 1943. Letter from the Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Jewish refugees in Burma*

25 October 1943

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asks you to communicate with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington about the following matter:

In 1941, a group of 50 Polish-Jewish citizens arrived in Japan. Because of the danger of war, the Polish Government took steps to repatriate this group from Japan to Rangoon in Burma. The British Government accepted these refugees in Burma under the condition that the Polish Government guarantee the travel costs, the cost of living and the repatriation of these refugees.

The American Joint undertook to cover the costs of stay of this group in Burma and, according to this principle, the Polish guarantee was submitted to the Foreign Office.

The accounting reports of the Consulate in Rangoon suggest that the Joint has not transferred any funds for the maintenance of this group in Burma. When it became necessary to leave Burma, the Joint transferred to the Consul in Rangoon £1,750 for the group's travel expenses to Palestine or Australia. Out of this sum, the Consulate in Rangoon submitted to the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Bombay the amount of 23,022 rupees (£1,726), which was used for the travel expenses of some members of the group, and the rest was used for benefits for the period till October 1942 for members of this group remaining in India.

Currently the British Foreign Office submitted bills for the stay of the group in Burma in the amount of £1,119:3:4, which the Ministry covered in respect of the granted guarantee.

In view of the agreement of the American Joint of their obligation to cover the expenses related to the stay of these refugees in Burma, the Ministry asks that the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Washington be instructed to reach an agreement with the Joint to reimburse the Ministry for the amount given above.

FOR THE MINISTER
Bruner

404

6 November 1943. Letter from the Director of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers to a member of the National Council: information from the Prime Minister on the potential evacuation of Jews from the USSR

6 November 1943

To Mr Ignacy Schwarzbart
Member of the National Council of the Republic of Poland

Devoting the kindest attention to your letter from 1 November 1943¹⁴⁸ and the need to protect the interests of Polish Jews in the case of another evacuation of Polish citizens from Russia that was mentioned there, the President of the Council of Ministers entrusted the settlement of the matter as very urgent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The President of the Council of Ministers will inform you about the details of handling this matter, stressing in advance that there is no question of any discrimination whatsoever. The concerns expressed in attached dispatches of people acting on behalf of the Representation of Polish Jewry are based on a misunderstanding resulting from the ignorance of the essential situation.

DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDUM
Adam Romer

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.29

¹⁴⁸ In the aforementioned letter, Schwarzbart appealed: 'In the name of the Representation of Polish Jewry, I address our Government in the following matter of crucial importance and significance for the remnants of the Polish Jewry, i.e. in the matter of the expected re-evacuation of Polish citizens from the territory of the USSR. ... All official and unofficial information confirms that Jews account for at least half of Polish citizens in the USSR at the moment. During the previous two evacuations, there were obstacles regarding Jews on the part of Soviet authorities. But even within the remaining scope, practices of our Military Authorities in the USSR, which were simply unfavourable to Jewish citizens of Poland, led to the situation that Jewish citizens of Poland were not evacuated in an adequate and possible number even within this narrow scope. This gave rise to deep and justified embitterment on the part of the Representation of Polish Jewry. Currently, the position of all Polish citizens is made equal in fortune and trouble in the USSR and there are no special obstacles for Jewish citizens of Poland from Soviet authorities. Thus, there is nothing that could prevent the evacuation of Jewish citizens of Poland from taking place according to completely fair rules, in consideration of a very large number of Jewish citizens of Poland.' AYV, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/341.

405

*15 November 1943. Circular by the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on providing assistance to Polish citizens in the USSR*

London, 15 November 1943

The Polish Government undertakes constant efforts to provide government assistance to Polish citizens in the USSR. Independently, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has now attempted to send individual parcels in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in an attempt to take advantage of all the opportunities to come to the aid of Poles in Russia. These parcels are sent from Iran and Palestine through privately owned companies which have been granted permission from the Soviet authorities to send a certain number of individual parcels with foodstuffs and clothes to the USSR.

As soon as the campaign is organised, the Ministry will announce the details to enable social fundraising to aid this goal, and it will send information concerning submitting requests for parcels.

The Ministry would also like to inform that the sums obtained from fundraisers carried out to date should be paid to the 'Treasury Reserve' account at the Foreign Offices of the Republic of Poland, and that the Ministry of Treasury and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare should be simultaneously notified.¹⁴⁹

It should be taken into consideration that the above explanation will also be of interest to the institutions, which—in the understanding that aiding Poles in Russia

¹⁴⁹ In a circular of 16 November 1943, the MFA informed: 'The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has organised aid to Poles in Russia by sending a certain number of individual parcels with foodstuffs and clothes. Shipping the parcels is possible either through companies licensed by the Soviet authorities or as transit packages sent to Tehran, where they are inspected by the Soviet warehouse and where duties are paid. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare would like to extend this campaign further to include all the areas, which would make it possible to: 1) purchase and send 5-kilogram individual transit packages, containing the following goods: laundry detergent, jam, honey, margarine, melted fats, cold cuts, rice and candy, all packaged in tin cans or bags, as well as medicines, thread, clothing and underwear, and shoes, to Tehran; 2) send parcels to Russia using licensed companies; this is to be possible from all territories which have Soviet diplomatic, commercial or consular posts. The Ministry would like to ask for this matter to be investigated in a discreet manner, if possible by using trustworthy individuals; as well as to see whether the goods for the transit parcels can be obtained, in what quantities per month, and whether permission to export them can be obtained. Should the response be positive, the Ministry will send further instructions.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 2.

was not possible—decided to change the purpose of the fundraiser, earmarking the collected money to support Poles evacuated from Russia and which should have no objections to spending the funds raised to date on the original purpose.

Since attempts to organise a fundraising campaign for the benefit of Poles in the USSR by unauthorised entities are to be expected, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would like to ask for the above information concerning aiding Poles in the USSR to be provided to social organisations involved in fundraisers as well as to offices, in order to direct and organise the donations in a proper and orderly manner. In the areas which have their Delegations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, these matters should be handled in consultation with the said Delegations.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
W. Babiński

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 2

406

*22 November 1943. Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy in London
on the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Spain and Portugal*

London, 22 November 1943

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in London

Following my letter No. U/738/Afr.Plń/43 from 15 November of this year concerning the evacuation of Jews—Polish citizens—from Spain and Portugal, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggests that in talks with the Foreign Office concerning this issue, the Embassy should put forward the possibility of granting asylum to the Jews in allied countries or their territories under the provision that their stay there during the war does not grant them any right to settle in these territories after the hostilities come to an end.

In the matter at hand, the evacuation from Spain and Portugal is urgent, due to the fact that after it is successfully carried out, it will be possible to get new groups of Polish citizens, as well as endangered Jews from France,¹⁵⁰ which is difficult as of

¹⁵⁰ In the letter from 10 November 1943 addressed to the Ministry of National Defence and the Second Department of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff, the MFA informed as

now due to the lack of outflow of the populace unable to serve in the military, as well as of those who do not want to serve in the Polish Army, beyond the borders of the Iberian Peninsula.

The Ministry also sends some excerpts from the resolutions passed by the Emergency Committee concerning the matter at hand as a copy¹⁵¹ to this letter.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
W. Babiński

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1820

407

27 November 1943. Letter from the Associate of the Legation in Bern to the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Geneva on refugees in Switzerland

27 November 1943

To the Minister
Dr S. Jurkiewicz
in Geneva

Dear Sir,

We would like to provide the following data concerning refugees in Switzerland.

I. Number of civilian refugees arriving in Switzerland from 1 August 1942 to 1 November 1943—22,000, including 16,000 Jews.

II. Approximately 5,000 Polish citizens,
including ca. 5–7% of the Roman Catholic faith;
ca. 93–95% of the Jewish faith.

follows: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs, based on information from New York, that the Jewish organisations in the United States are intending to take advantage of the existing opportunities and move a significant number of Jews from France to Spain. They contacted Ben Rubinstein (Earley St., London) in connection with this matter, suggesting that he should go to Spain to look into the matter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154. See also doc. 393.

¹⁵¹ Not included in this publication.

For information purposes, we also provide the following details:

III. Number of emigrants who arrived in Switzerland before 1 August 1942—8,200.

IV. Number of military internees until 1 November 1943—35,000.

Total number of civilian refugees, emigrants and military internees in Switzerland until 1 November 1943—65,200.

Respectfully yours,
Dr Juliusz Kühl

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 513

408

*7 December 1943. Cable from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
to Consulate General in Istanbul on asylum territories*

TO Polconsul ISTANBUL
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 14 DEC 1943

No. 213

Receptus 294¹⁵²

The Polish Government continues to bring the matter of obtaining wartime asylum territories for Polish citizens, Jews in particular, to the attention of the Government of Great Britain; recently doing so in connection with the Bermuda Conference.

The British authorities remain unwilling to grant such an asylum within the borders of their empire, with the exception of Palestine in the case of Jewish

¹⁵² In the cable no. 294 of 27 November 1943, Consul Szczerbiński informed: 'The local Jewish representatives (mainly Agudat) request our support at the Foreign Office for the efforts of the Jews to obtain entry visas to the territories of the British Empire outside Palestine for about 3,000 Polish Jews currently staying in Hungary. Regardless of the outcome of these efforts, I would like to ask for information, which would enable the Consulate General to provide a confirmation to the local Jews, who are interested in this matter.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 254.

refugees, where the *five-year* immigration quota until *March* of 1944 has not been used up yet, and *there is room for 31,000* people.

In order to intervene, the British ask us to present any specific opportunities for these refugees to be able to escape occupation, as well as a justification of the degree of danger, as they know that the situation in Hungary is better than in Italy and France.

Nevertheless, please respond that the Polish Government will gladly support any efforts to come to the aid of Polish citizens; however, the matter lies solely in the hands of the Allied States.

Babiński

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

409

9 December 1943. Letter from the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the assistance to refugees in Shanghai

9 December 1943

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: Assistance to refugees in Shanghai

In response to the letter No. U/738/Z/J/43 from 30 November 1943,¹⁵³ the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare would like to request that the Polish Aid Society in Shanghai, which currently takes care of 940 Polish refugees in Shanghai, be instructed to also take care of the 230 Polish citizens who have arrived in Shanghai during the war.

Regarding the proposal extended by the Polish Aid Society to bring the support campaign under the umbrella of the Polish Residents Association, the

¹⁵³ In the mentioned letter, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs relayed an inquiry sent on 24 November 1943 via cable from Aleksander Ładoś: 'The Polish Aid Society in Shanghai has asked, via the International Red Cross, if it is supposed to support and assist about 230 Polish citizens who have arrived in Shanghai during the war, in addition to the 940 Polish refugees it supports now.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.

Ministry would like to ask the Polish Aid Society to justify this proposal and to specify the mutual relations between the support campaigns carried out by the aforementioned organisations.¹⁵⁴

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Bruner

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

410

10 December 1943. Cable from the Deputy Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Tehran on the evacuation of Jewish refugees

POLMISSION—TEHRAN
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 10 DEC 1943
RECEIVED ON 13 DEC 1943

No. 1205

To the Ministry of Social Welfare

On 29 November, the sea transport of Jews from Koramshar to Palestine has departed, with 106 men, 241 women and 64 children, 411 in total. The transport was managed by Dr Heroberg. On 1 December, the 26th sea transport left Koramshar

¹⁵⁴ In the letter from 30 December 1943, the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare addressed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, stating: 'The social welfare campaign in Shanghai, which sees so much kind interest from you due to your particular knowledge of the affairs—the proper implementation of which is one of my duties and responsibilities as a minister—has encountered serious issues, since all the letters concerning the topic of social welfare in Shanghai, a matter falling exclusively within the competence of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, are sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, instead of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The issue with the letters being misdirected is due to the fact that Mr Radziwiłł, Delegate of the Polish Red Cross to the International Red Cross in Geneva, communicates on the matters concerning social welfare in Shanghai with Minister Ładoś, Polish Envoy in Bern, instead of Mr Jurkiewicz, Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Bern. Given the above, I would like to ask you to instruct Minister Ładoś to hand over the matters of social welfare in Shanghai to Mr Jurkiewicz, as well as to ask Mr Radziwiłł to communicate on these matters with Mr Jurkiewicz. I am also communicating with the Polish Red Cross Headquarters in London concerning the matter at hand, and sending the relevant instructions to Mr Jurkiewicz, Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Bern.' *AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.*

for Karachi, destined for Africa, India and Mexico, with 230 men, 710 women and 420 children, 1360 in total. The transport was managed by Apolinary Slusarski, with doctor Grażyna Czechańska, 12 nurses, 4 clerks, 1 priest, 19 teachers.

SZEWCZYK POLMISSION

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 553

411

10 December 1943. Cable from the Chargé d’Affaires at the Legation in Bern and the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Geneva on supporting Jewish refugees in France

POLMISSION—BERN
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 10 DEC 1943
RECEIVED ON 12 DEC 1943

No. 567

~~Receiptus cable No. 546~~¹⁵⁵

To the Minister of Social Welfare

The Polish Jews in France take advantage of the support of the GAPF to the same extent as other Poles do, and they also enjoy the support of the remnants of Jewish organisations. Approximately 5,000 Jews, who cited their Polish citizenship here, moved to Switzerland and benefit from our support (about 90% of our local

¹⁵⁵ In the cable no. 546 of 10 November 1943, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs forwarded Minister Stańczyk’s instruction ‘to Piotr’, or to Stanisław Jurkiewicz, Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare: ‘Dr Schwarzbart asks for a grant of 150,000 Swiss francs, which is to be at the disposal of the organisation succeeded by Jarblum in view of the need to support Polish Jews—children in particular—in southern France. Seeing the difficult position the Polish Jews found themselves in, please discuss the matter with Jarblum, provide further details and arrive at some conclusions. We are seeking to extend the transfer to include care in France. Stańczyk.’ In the further part of the cable, Waław Babiński informed: ‘We have accurate information that Jews—Polish citizens in France—are supported by the GAPF, while some additionally try to take advantage of additional support provided by organisations run by French and Belgian Jews. There are some doubts concerning any divisions regarding care, as well as creating privileged groups, especially seeing how the current grant allocated to France is—according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—far too small and its extension should cover all Polish citizens, not just some of them.’ AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 154.

budget). There are still some Jews hiding in France, and Jarblum's organisation¹⁵⁶—unable to determine their exact number—would like to receive several million French francs to facilitate hiding or evacuation. They are aware that the issue is not supported by the Ministry of Social Welfare, and that Polish citizens constitute only a certain part, although the exact number is unknown. I believe that J. should be assisted in obtaining funds from sources dedicated to helping Jews regardless of their citizenship.

PIOTR

ŁADOŚ

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

412

[Before 12 December 1943]. Minutes of a press conference of a member of the National Council on German war criminals and the situation in occupied Poland

22nd November, 1943

PRESS CONFERENCE

JEWS NAME TEN NAZI WAR CRIMINALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXTERMINATION OF JEWS IN POLAND AND OF THE LIQUIDATION OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

In a statement made in London today (Monday) Dr. I. Schwarzbart, Member of the Polish National Council, revealed the names of 10 members of the German administration in Poland as being mainly responsible for the slaughter of Jews in Poland, especially in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Their names are:

- 1) FISCHER, Nazi Governor of the District of Warsaw, Generally responsible for murders committed on Poles and Jews in the Warsaw District.
- 2) LEIST, S.S. Obergruppenfuehrer, German Mayor of Warsaw, co-responsible for the extermination policy.
- 3) DR. AUERSWALD, Nazi commissar of the Warsaw Ghetto, directly responsible to Fischer, the Nazi Governor of the Warsaw District. In charge of the Ghetto until 22.7.1942. Responsible for constant nightly executions, among

¹⁵⁶ This is probably a reference to the activities of Marc Jarblum, a Warsaw-born activist of the Poale Zion Jewish Social Democratic Labour Party and a wartime leader of the Jewish resistance movement in France.

them for the shooting of about 60 Jewish printers and a number of bakers who published an underground trade union newspaper and for the mass execution of hundred Jews on the 17th April 1942. Reported to have answered Mr. Czerniakow the late chairman of the Jewish Council in Warsaw when the latter complained about these executions: 'You Jews should not bother about things which are not of your concern.'

4) REINHARDT, chief of the 'Annihilation Squad' (Vernichtungskommando) a unit known as 'Einsatz-Reinhardt.' As C.O. of the 'Annihilation Squad' he supervised 16 SS sub-leaders specially trained in the Lublin area in exterminating the Jewish population.

(N.B. After training in the Lublin area, where the Ghetto was first liquidated by them, these members of the annihilation squad were sent to take charge of the extermination in the Radom, Otwock, Lwów, Falenica and many other ghettos and are responsible for the killing of many hundred thousands of Jews.)

5) HEYMAN¹⁵⁷, a leading member of the above mentioned 'Annihilation Squad' one of the 17 trained in Lublin in the extermination of the Jewish population. Responsible for the killing of many thousands of Jews.

6) SCHÖN, in 1940 principal organiser of the Warsaw Ghetto as a means of registration and holding Jews preparatory to their extermination. In 1940-41 he was chief of the 'Umsiedlungsamt' in the District of Warsaw. Responsible for the transportation of 70.000 Jews from the District of Warsaw to the Ghetto of Warsaw in the Spring of 1941.

7) DR. TEBENOW, chief of the deportation office (Umsiedlungsamt) responsible under direct supervision of the German Authorities in Berlin for the liquidation of the Ghetto through deportations to the Treblinka and other human slaughter houses in 1942/43.

8) BRANDT, SS chief in charge of Jewish affairs in the period of the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto. After the departure of the Annihilation Squad in September 1942 responsible for personally shooting many Jews and for action leading to their final extermination in Warsaw.

9) SEIFERT, chief of the 'Transferstelle,' an organisation regulating the speed of the extermination of Jews through a gradual diminution of food supplies for the Ghetto. Responsible for the death of many thousands of Jews.

10) BEHRENS, in charge of the 'Industrial Production Department.' Responsible for the organisation of exploitation of Jewish slave labour and the withdrawal of labour permits identical, under the circumstances, with the sentence of death.

¹⁵⁷ Some of the names have been written down inaccurately. 'Heyman' might have referred to Hermann Hackmann, while 'Tebenow' stands for Stabenow.

THE LAST PHASE IN THE WARSAW GHETTO ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT ACCOUNTS

In the first three years of the Nazi occupation of Poland the Jewish population was subjected to very severe persecutions, but the crowning phase of the drama i.e. the execution of the plan of a complete annihilation of Jews had not begun until the spring of 1942 and as far as Warsaw was concerned until July 1942. Between September 1939 and July 1942 about 150.000 Warsaw Jews died of starvation and in slave labour camps. There remained in Warsaw in July 1942 about 350.000 Jews.

Between July and September 1942 the population of the Warsaw Ghetto inhabited by Polish and only about 6000 foreign Jews from Berlin and Hannover sent to Poland, was reduced from 350.000 to 120.000 through deportation, shootings and mass slaughter in death camps.

The details of this period are on the whole known to the civilised world, but not the fact that the Jews were ordered to kneel in the streets, while the Germans were choosing among them the victims for execution. However, the main facts relating to the phase after September 1942 have been assembled and corroborated only in the past few weeks.

'Life cards'

This last phase began on September 5th, when the Nazi authorities in Warsaw declared that as from October 1st 1942 the Ghetto was to be issued only with 40.000 ration books instead of the required 120.000.

Terror descended on the Jews in Warsaw as the few German-owned factories told their Jewish slave labourers that only one third of them would henceforth be permitted to work and thus (temporarily) save their lives. The new labour permits were known in the Ghetto as 'life cards' the old ones being described as 'death warrants.'

Happenings in the 'Pleasant' street

Soon the whole Jewish population of Warsaw was summoned to assemble round the Miła (Pleasant) Street. Amid heart-rendering scenes persons not possessing the new labour permits ('life cards') were rounded up and sent to marshalling yards at the Stawki station whence they were transported to the Treblinka and other human slaughter houses. The streets were lined with thousands of Gestapo soldiers who shot at people who were offering the slightest resistance or (as it was in the case of women and children) were weeping or crying.

In October 1942 round-ups as well as man-hunts which were periodically taking place in the Ghetto were organised by the Gestapo helped by the auxiliary Ukrainian, Latvian and Lithuanian police. The Germans also organised still in 1940 a 1.800 men strong unarmed Jewish police the members of which were

impressed into the force under the threat of deportation or shooting. During the last phase of the liquidation of the Ghetto 1,500 Jewish policemen refused to take part in man-hunts. Of the remaining 300, forty were executed on the spot by the Germans for helping their fellow-Jews to escape from cattle trucks destined for Treblinka.

The 1943 Uprisings

The horrors which were descending on the Ghetto for the first three years of the Nazi occupation and which culminated in the September 1942 extermination order would have resulted in a general rising a long time before that measure was taken by the Nazis. But the Jews suffered from an absolute lack of arms.

During the last winter, however, the Polish Socialist Party cooperating with the Underground Jewish movement succeeded in smuggling into the Ghetto a quantity of weapons including machine guns and some ammunition. These supplies were used in the January and April uprisings in the Ghetto. At least eleven hundred Germans were killed or wounded in the course of the fighting which was conducted with a courage and despair of men, who know that they had nothing to defend but their honour. In house to house fighting members of the Jewish Underground Organisation comprising Zionists, Socialists and Orthodox Jews distinguished themselves alongside scores of Poles, members of the Polish Socialist Party who participated in the action. It is now known that among the main leaders of the rising were many distinguished members of the Poale-Zion, who may be still alive and whose names cannot be yet revealed. They have been helped by many well-known Polish Socialist leaders.

More houses were destroyed by German planes, tanks and incendiary squads in the April fighting, than during the siege of Warsaw in September 1939. The result of this struggle was obvious:

The Ghetto inhabitants of Warsaw were finally wiped out.

Outlook for the Future

A similar fate befell the Jews in other small and large ghettos. Today—after four years of planned extermination about 2 1/2—3 million Jews were killed by the Germans in Poland alone.

To realise the monstrosity of this one of the many German crimes it can be said that the losses sustained by the Jewish population in the whole world could be, proportionately, compared with, say, the loss of London's total population in relation to the number of inhabitants of Britain, were this vast city wiped out by any enemy attack.

Only a few hundred thousand Jews are believed to be still alive in Poland. These tragic remnants of a whole people think that after their unspeakable sufferings only reprisals could stop the Nazis from finishing the work of annihilation.

It is imperative that all possible help should be rendered to the remaining Jewish population in Poland at once if it is to survive this war.

This help is essential in addition to the support and aid which in spite of the risks of death penalty is given to the Jews by many Poles, and will be given in future by the Polish population, suffering and persecuted themselves.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 61 (ENG)

413

*18 December 1943. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires
at the Legation in Bern: information
on the need of support for holders of Paraguayan passports*

No. 583 of 18 DEC 1943

Sternbuch, chairman of the committee for the support of Jewish refugees, requests that the following dispatch be forwarded:

“The holders of Paraguayan passports issued by the previous Paraguayan Consul in Bern, who are now interned in camps for citizens of South American countries in Germany, face deportation and a horrifying death, since the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin refuses to recognise these passports, acting on the instructions of the Paraguayan Government and the Pan-American Union. The local Nuncio has intervened in Madrid; however, there has been no response to date; he is also attempting an intervention in Paraguay via the Vatican. I ask for all possible interventions addressed to the Pan-American Union and Paraguay via organisations, figures and the Dutch Government to revoke—at least provisionally, for the time being—the existing instructions to the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin. The issue concerns Polish, Belgian and Dutch citizens who are going to return their passports after the war, with guarantees from their respective governments, and return to their countries; meaning that the American governments will therefore have no obligations towards them. Many internees also have valid Palestinian certificates. Offer every guarantee you can. The lives of these people depend solely on American governments—it would be a disgrace to knowingly sentence them

to certain death. We cannot waste any time. Please let me know immediately what actions have been undertaken and what are the projected outcomes.¹⁵⁸

Please forward the above immediately to the following addresses:

I. Agudat, Gerer Rebbe, Jerusalem;

II. Agudat, Rosenheim, New York;

III. Rabin S. Zalmanoff, 5501, 15 Avenue, Brooklyn;

IV. Schabse Fränkel, 112 Wilson Street, Brooklyn;

V. Harry Goodman, 27 Lord's Park, London N. 16.'

/-/ ŁADOŚ

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 327

414

19 December 1943. Cable from the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern: request for intervention concerning South American passports

No. 584 of 19.12.1943

Following instructions issued by the Paraguayan Government, the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin wants to void the courtesy Paraguayan passports issued by the Paraguayan Consul in Bern to Polish Jews, who—as a result of this—were placed in a special camp for citizens of the Allied countries. This resulted in a German commission coming to the camp on 12 December to collect the passports of all the Allied countries held by the Jews for inspection and further examination.

I would like to ask you to intervene with haste with all the governments concerned (England, United States, Paraguay, Honduras, Peru, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Haiti, Chile, Venezuela)¹⁵⁹ and with the Pan-American Union without any undue delay, so that they send instructions to the Allied legations in Berlin

¹⁵⁸ In a cable of 27 December 1943, Aleksander Ładoś informed: 'The International Red Cross has declared their readiness to broker a possible exchange of Jews at risk because of questioned South American passports for interned Germans. Please try and see whether such an exchange would be possible, and, if possible, support their efforts.' AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 327.

¹⁵⁹ The Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern followed up with the cable of 23 February 1944: 'Please also intervene with San Salvador, whose passports help protect about 1,000 Polish citizens.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616. See doc. 417 and 459.

that all these passports—which have been issued solely for humanitarian purposes to save people from certain death and which do not impose any obligations on the governments in question after the war—are to be recognised as valid for the duration of the war.

This is a very urgent matter. I would appreciate if you could let me know the outcome of your interventions.

/-/ ŁADOŚ

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 327

415

*20 December 1943. Report by the Consul General in Wellington
on the situation in New Zealand (extracts)*

CONFIDENTIAL

20 DEC 1943

To the Minister of Information and Documentation
in London

Regarding: Jewish matters and the stay of Dr M. Traub in New Zealand

Following the departure of Dr Michael Traub, Delegate of the Jewish Agency in Palestine, to Argentina via the United States of America after a six-month-long stay in New Zealand, I would like to send you the following observations and comments.

Dr Traub arrived in New Zealand in mid-June this year from Australia, where he had spent a long time working for the Jewish Agency. Previously he had spent a number of months in the Union of South Africa, which, as you know, is one of the major centres for pro-Palestinian efforts due to Marshal Smuts' pro-Zionist sympathies, as well as due to the particular political situation in this country. As a holder of a Polish passport, he immediately contacted the office here to establish contact with its head; Dr Traub loyally maintained this contact throughout his stay, constantly reporting on the progress of his activities within the Dominion. I am also aware that during his stay in Australia he collaborated loyally with the Minister Plenipotentiary in Sydney.

This report consists of the following sections: (I). A brief summary of the Jewish relations in New Zealand; (II). The course and results of Dr Traub's efforts and his attitude towards the Polish matters, and (III). Conclusions.

(I). A brief summary of the Jewish relations in New Zealand

According to the census of 1936, New Zealand has only 2,653 inhabitants of the Jewish faith, who are divided into 5 synodal districts. With a population of only about one and a half million—not including the Maori—they comprise about 2 per mille of the country's populace. However, the number is actually higher due to two reasons: (I). In the pre-war years, nearly 100% of the immigrants coming there were Jews, leaving Europe in fear of Hitler; and (II). There was also a significant number of the so-called 'Marginal Jews' who did not list themselves as belonging to the Jewish faith.

Notwithstanding this comparatively small percentage of the total population, the Jews play quite a prominent role in this country, which they owe to their internal organisation and their wealth. Some of them hold some of the most important posts and offices—for example, Chief Justice and Deputy Governor Sir Michael Myers and the Director of the Reserve Bank in Dunedin are both Jews. It should be noted, however, that as far as Sir Michael is concerned, this has no bearing on his policies and attitudes. The only visible sign that shows him being a part of the Jewish society is the fact that he voluntarily taxes himself high in connection with all Jewish charity matters. The high standard of living and income of the vast majority of the Jewish populace in New Zealand, as well as the fact that Jews gathered in several of the country's major cities has given rise to the characteristic, latent, mostly hidden antisemitism among the local society. For example, I will mention that when a small group of Polish refugees, made up in 100% of Polish Jews, came to Wellington from Tokyo in 1941—thanks to the efforts of this office—I was asked by officials to make every effort to ensure that this event received as little publicity as possible. I suppose we would face much greater difficulties if we wanted to locate Jews rather than Polish Christians in New Zealand. Of course, the anticipation of such possible reactions from the side of the society of New Zealand has given rise to an analogous reaction from the Jewish community in NZ, which manifests itself as reluctant to bring refugees of Jewish origin to this Dominion. As a result, when a possibility appeared to bring another group of several dozen Polish Jews, who were in Shanghai at the time, to New Zealand, directly before the outbreak of war with Japan, no influential member of the Jewish settlement, not even the rabbi, did anything to expedite the efforts initiated by this office. Despite the fact that the authorities of New Zealand issued a positive decision, handling the matter in Shanghai proved to be impossible due

to the lack of means of transport, which was soon followed by the outbreak of hostilities.

It would not be out of place to point out that, as everywhere, there are many home-grown communists of Jewish origin here, although to be completely honest it needs to be said that these are isolated individuals and the vast majority of the Jewish population here is eminently anti-communist and perhaps even anti-Russian.

The attitude of the Jewish society towards Polish affairs was indifferent, if not hostile, when this office started its operations in 1941. The only matter that the local Jewish populace was aware of regarding Poland concerned their memories of the pre-war years, as well as the naturally insane antics of the supporters of 'Jestem Polakiem.' Only on such a remote post one can fully realise the extent of the damage done to our cause by this magazine, damage that took years of information work to make up for.

As the result of the events that transpired in Poland, the policy of our government, and to some extent perhaps also the information materials published by this office, as well as, most importantly, I suppose, the pressure of the leading Zionist circles in London, New York and Australia, their views began to change. At the same time, the beginning of 1942 brought a certain re-emergence of the existing Zionist societies. The great protest rally held in Wellington in February this year, which took place thanks to the efforts of this office, contributed greatly to this change of moods. As I previously reported, this rally, which was attended by the most prominent speakers and representatives of the local society and the Government of New Zealand, and which organised thanks to the outstanding support of the Jewish community, not only raised awareness about the state of affairs in Europe under German occupation, but also contributed to the mobilisation of more robust efforts among the Jewish community. As a result of this, in April this year I was asked to give a longer speech on the situation of Jewry in Europe in connection with the 'Youth Aliyah Appeal' Jewish rally—please refer to my letter No. C/2/a306/43 from 9 April this year. It was about raising funds to bring and keep Jewish children who ended up in Tehran and other capitals. This speech, the text of which was printed in a Jewish monthly published in New Zealand and sent to the Ministry, did a lot to ease relations with the Jewish community. As a result of all of this, Dr Traub came to New Zealand, which was ready to launch some sort of an effort to further the Palestinian cause.

...¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ A detailed description of Michael Traub's activities in New Zealand was omitted.

(III). General findings and conclusions

Summing up the above, I would like to state the following:

The campaign conducted by Dr Traub in New Zealand was carried out in an excellent manner, and one may believe that it has achieved good results, in particular concerning the organisation of Jewry and the preparation for peace issues. In a sense, it may serve as a model for similar short-term political and information campaigns. One may say that Dr Traub cooperated loyally with our representatives here, in particular when it came to matters concerning the Palestinian question, which are of interest to us. It could be said that his presence contributed to the easing of the attitudes towards the Polish cause, in particular among the Jewish society. One negative aspect of this visit is the lack of a clear agenda of Traub and the Zionists in general concerning dealing with the issue of all those Jews for whom there will be no place in Palestine for one reason or another, and who will remain in large numbers in the European diaspora. I should also note that Traub, like the Zionist circles, had a completely negative attitude towards any other project of solving the Jewish matter in the form of settling Jews outside Palestine.

Dr K.A. Wodzicki
Consul General

AAN, Poselstwo Buenos Aires, 258

416

21 December 1943. Unsigned note on Jewish refugees in Spain and Portugal

NOTE

concerning Jews—Polish citizens in Spain and Portugal

In the first months of 1943, there were about 350 Polish citizens (mainly Jews) in Spain—this number grew by about a hundred of people unfit for military service (including Jews) after the liquidation of Miranda. In the meantime, however, about 70 people were evacuated to French North Africa. With a high degree of probability, we can assume that 400 people are now ready to be evacuated from Spain as of now.

In the first months of 1943, a group of 150 Polish citizens—Jews—stayed in Portugal; however, due to the fact that with the coming months a small number of people transiting through the country remained there, we must assume that

about 250 people (including 50 Poles) require evacuation from Portugal for it to be finally relieved.

London, 21 December 1943

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

417

21 December 1943. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on passports of South American countries

TO Polmission: Buenos Aires, Santiago, Lima,
Bogotá, Mexico City, Havana, Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SENT ON 22 DEC

The Envoy of the Republic of Poland in Bern reports:

‘Following instructions issued by the government of Paraguay, the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin wants to void the courtesy Paraguayan passports issued by the Paraguayan Consulate in Bern to Polish Jews, who as a result of this were placed by German authorities in a special camp for citizens of the Allied countries. This resulted in a German commission coming to the camp on 12 December to collect the passports of all the Allied countries (England, the United States, Paraguay, Honduras, Peru, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Haiti, Chile, Venezuela) held by the Jews for inspection and further examination, which in most cases had been issued to them by the consulates of these countries as a matter of courtesy to save their lives.’¹⁶¹

I ask you to take immediate and swift action with all the Governments concerned, so that they send instructions for the legations representing their interests in Berlin that all these passports, which have been issued solely for humanitarian purposes to save people from certain death, and which do not impose any obligations on the governments in question after the war, are to be recognised as valid for the duration of the war. Please report on the outcome of your intervention.

Sent to Buenos Aires, Santiago, Lima, Bogotá, Mexico City, Havana, and Washington, with the request for support for these efforts from the diplomatic

¹⁶¹ See doc. 414; see also doc. 459.

representatives of the United States in the capitals of the countries concerned, as well as discreet information about this effort among the American Jewish circles.

ROMER

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 613

418

28 December 1943. Letter from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: information on refugees in Africa

28 December 1943

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In response to the letter from 17 December, No. U/738/AfWsch/43 and in view of the position agreed upon during the conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the 21st, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requests that the following dispatch be sent to Kazimierczak in Nairobi and that its contents be communicated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Delegates in Palestine, Tehran and India.

'Receptus 126.¹⁶² Regarding the English proposal concerning sending Jews from Africa to Palestine, we ask that the following guidelines, jointly agreed upon by the Ministries concerned, be observed: a) The Polish Government shall provide care to all refugees in all evacuation zones, regardless of their nationality or religion; b) The Polish Government does not impede the passage of Jewish refugees to Palestine, as shown by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in granting refugee benefits to Jews brought to Palestine from Persia by the Jewish Agency; c) should the Jewish Agency or any other Jewish organisation request moving Jews

¹⁶² In the cable no. 126 of 2 December 1943, the post in Nairobi sent information from the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Kenya—Kazimierz Kazimierczak—to Minister Stańczyk: 'The Deputy Chief Secretary of Uganda Nurteek proposes and has initiated efforts to send all Jewish citizens from our settlements to Palestine. Director Ivor Bruton asked about the Delegation's stance on this matter. I replied that I saw no reason, and what is more, I could see even more Jewish citizens arriving with a future transport. I suppose N. is concerned with controversies in Masindi, where people shouted slogans against Jews and foreigners, and uses it as a pretext for this.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 257.

from a specific area to Palestine, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare will not interfere with these efforts; d) however, since the Polish Government is not directly interested in such transfers of Jews, such efforts may not be initiated on the Polish initiative; the conditions for such an action include: 1) the request of a Jewish agency or other Jewish organisation; 2) the consent of people involved; 3) the consent of the British authorities; 4) obtaining Palestinian certificates. Stańczyk.'

MINISTER
Stańczyk

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 136

419

*31 December 1943. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
request for providing financial aid to Switzerland*

URGENT—CONFIDENTIAL

31 December 1943

To Minister Sylwın Strakacz
Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Please find the contents of a cable received through the Polish Legation in Bern from Mr Sternbuch for the Agudat in New York attached below. I would like to ask you to discreetly inform the addressee about the contents of this cable, without revealing the way in which this information was transmitted:

‘1. I confirm receipt of 34,126 Swiss francs, the value of which amounts to 11,300 dollars at an exchange rate of 3.02. I will use this money as instructed.

2. The following individuals are members of the Committee: Sternbuch, Rosenzweig, Rubinfeld, Schreiber, Rosenbaum, Erlanger, Bollag, Bender, Botschko, Weigart, Eiss Jr. and Sołowiejczyk.

3. As of now, I am unable to provide a list of the rescued or the number of additional passports. I am not aware of the whereabouts of the families, and some are probably hiding in the woods. We are carrying out a search. The Rabbi of Bełz begs for assistance. Thousands of important Polish Jews suffer from starvation

and die. We know their addresses. The only way to help them is to allow them to cross into Hungary. Any delay is dangerous, and we need to carry out a large-scale campaign. Thousands of people are also hiding in the Netherlands, Belgium and France.

4. We have received permission to raise deported children from the best Belgian and Dutch families in a special institution. We are not able to raise all the necessary funds in our area, so we ask for a significant monthly contribution, lest the whole project will fail.¹⁶³

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

¹⁶³ In another letter from 4 January 1944, the Ambassador in Washington added: 'Referring to my letter from 31 December 1943 ..., below you may find the remainder of the cable received from the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern from Sternbuch to the Agudat in New York. I would like to ask you to discreetly inform the Agudat about the contents of this cable, without revealing the way in which this information was transmitted: "5. Sternbuch communicates the following individual rescue requests (the first name denotes the addressee of the request, the second name denotes the person making the request): 1) Rabbi Aron Jeruchem, 38 Sherif Street (to use his money deposited with Eiss); Schreiber, 169 (J t. he) West?; Horowitz, 124 Penn Street, Brooklyn; Frankel, 211 Houper, Brooklyn; (Idesrand) with children (life in danger. 5,000 Swiss francs is needed to escape to Switzerland); 2) M. Hausman, 317 Grand St.—Rabbi Ch. Halberstam 8,000 Swiss francs; 3) A. Reichman, 327 E. 3rd St., City—daughter Rachela, a significant sum needed immediately for her and her husband; 4) Sam Fisch, 99 Canen St.—parents; 5) M. Neugroschel, c/o Taube and Gaus, 314 E. 2nd St.—family; 6) (B.) Weiser, 28 Avenue D., City—siblings; 7) David Laufer, 14-16 President St., Brooklyn—father; 8) following the request of the Rabbi of Belz, I ask for 25,000 directly for the rescue of Rabbi Pinkas Twerski and his family in Sambor"'. AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506.

420

*4 January 1944. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern
on passports of South American countries*

Bern, 4 January 1944

Secret

In response to the letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs No. 851-e/43 from 19 May 1943,¹ which was received by this office only on 23 December 1943, the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern reports the following:

The matter of obtaining South American passports for Polish Jews in order to protect them from being sent to the so-called 'Vernichtungslager' was indeed current in May last year, when the Ministry wrote the aforementioned letter, and resulted in numerous people being saved and sent to internment camps for foreigners, the so-called 'lager,' located for the most part in France (Vittel).

Unfortunately, in the meantime, there have been serious complications concerning this matter, of which the Ministry has been informed by telegraph several times, resulting not only in issuing new South American passports not being a possibility anymore, but also leading to the validity of the previously issued documents to be called into question, of which the Legation has also recently notified the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by telegraph.

These difficulties have led, among others, to the withdrawal or cancellation of the exequaturs of several South American consuls in Switzerland. Given these circumstances, obtaining further South American passports has become all but impossible—as of now, it is only a matter of saving people who have ended up in internment camps thanks to previously obtained documents, and who are now threatened with deportation. In the latter case, the Legation requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help and intervene.

Aleksander Ładoś
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 404

¹ Doc. 354.

421

*4 January 1944. Cable from the Consul General in New York
on Paraguayan passports*

VERY URGENT
POLCONSUL—NEW YORK
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 4 JAN 1944
RECEIVED ON 5 JAN 1944

No. 3.

Receptus cable without number (please specify number) of 24 December.²

Rabbi Dr Lewin reported that he had managed to get the Department of State to send a cable with instructions for the United States Ambassador in Paraguay to intervene with regard to the revocation of the instructions that passports issued in Bern are to be considered void. On 28 December, the Department of State received the Ambassador's reply stating that the Paraguayan government recognised the validity of these passports, which was never actually questioned at all. The *démarche* of the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin was not understandable (not understood?). Lewin speculates that the *démarche* may have been caused by the new Paraguayan Consul in Bern. Perhaps the Legation in Bern could clarify this matter. The Nuncio in Washington has dispatched a cable to the Vatican requesting the Pope to stop, via Spain, the deportations. The Department of State has also sent a cable to the Allied Refugee Committee in London.

STRAKACZ

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 616

² This is a reference to doc. 413 of 18 December 1943, the contents of which were provided on 23 December 1943 to the Consulate General in New York as the cable no. 327 (received on 24 December 1943) and to the Consulate General in Jerusalem.

422

*5 January 1944. Letter from the Envoy in Havana
to the Ambassador in Washington concerning Haitian passports*

Confidential

5 January 1944

To the AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
in Washington

In response to the instructions sent by telegraph by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 22 December last year,³ which was also sent to the Legation there, please find a copy of my note to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Haiti⁴ enclosed in this letter, which may be of possible use in discussions and interventions which the Embassy will undertake on the basis of the last paragraph of the said cable.

I have had an in-depth conversation with the Chargé d'Affaires of Haiti concerning the matter at hand, and I have also sent him a letter of explanation. For his part, he was to inform his government of the whole issue and facilitate a positive response to our requests.

As far as I know, Switzerland represents Haiti's interests in Berlin.

In view of the very friendly sentiments of the President and the Government of Haiti towards Poland, as evidenced in the handling of all matters, which I bring up in contacts with the government in Port-au-Prince, by virtue of my accreditation there, I believe that this intervention will bring the desired outcome.

I have no doubts that the possible endorsement of this intervention by the Ambassador of the United States, John Campbell White, will be effective, especially after President Lescot's recent visit to the United States, where, as he told me on his way back to Havana, he was received most cordially.

Roman Dębicki
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Waszyngton, 3093

³ Doc. 417. See also doc. 470.

⁴ Not included in this publication.

423

*7 January 1944. Letter from the Ambassador to the Holy See
to the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Bern on Jewish refugees in Rome*

Vatican City, 7 January 1944

Confidential
Urgent

To the Envoy of the Republic of Poland
in Bern

There is a group of approximately 400 Jews in Rome claiming Polish citizenship, who came from France on 8 September 1943. They were taken care of by the Delaseme,⁵ but after the liquidation of this institution, they found themselves destitute. As of now, they are taken care of by the Capuchins. Their current situation is approaching disaster due to the lack of funds.⁶

At one point, I have informed the Ministry about the arrival of the people whom the Italians were going to release to America. We are now facing the need to come to their aid. As of now, their budget amounts to 480,000 lire per month. In view of the very small Social Welfare budget of our Embassy, we are unable to do this without special loans, as well as sending additional money effectively, which is already running out.

I would like to ask you to look into this matter, in particular to reach an agreement with the Ministry regarding loans and shipment, since I fear that

⁵ This is a reference to the DELASEM (Delegazione per l'Assistenza degli Emigranti Ebrei), an Italian-Jewish aid organisation. After the capital of Italy fell under German occupation, the organisation had to shut down its Rome office but continued to operate underground.

⁶ In the cable of 21 January 1944, the Ambassador to the Holy See informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 'Following our intervention, the Vatican is looking after a group of Jews claiming Polish citizenship in Rome. There are about 1,000 of them, and to date they were taken care of by the Delaseme of the Secretary of State; since the institution was shut down, starting on 1 February they are going to be left without any funds or support. The monthly budget amounts to 1,000,000 Italian lire, which far exceeds the means of the Embassy. It would be advisable to contact the American Jewish Committee to see how much they can provide for them and what the Ministry of Social Welfare would be able to cover. Donations can be made through the Nunciature in Bern or through the local Embassy. I have informed Ładoś.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 141.

I would not be able to reach a conclusion in a timely manner if I communicated directly.⁷

/-/ K. Papée
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 154

424

*9 January 1944. Cable from the Counsellor at the Embassy in Washington
on refugees in Mexico*

POLMISSION—WASHINGTON
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 9 JAN 1944
RECEIVED ON 10 JAN 1944

No. 12

In my detailed report from the mission in Mexico,⁸ which I sent via courier, I report as follows:

1) The United States Embassy in Mexico City and UNRRA in Washington have already been convinced that the alleged antisemitic incidents in Santa Rosa were invented by communist propaganda and exploited by a group of Jews wishing to move to the United States.⁹ I send the copies of declarations of Jewish organisations in Mexico denying these allegations.

⁷ In the letter from 27 January 1944, Deputy Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Emeryk Hutten-Czapski asked the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare 'to reconsider the possibility of earmarking certain sums of money at the disposal of Ambassador Papée or the Polish Legation in Bern. It seems advisable to get Jewish organisations—in particular the Joint—interested in this matter, so that they may offer their support in Italy, taking advantage of their own transfer capabilities in Switzerland—in particular due to the fact that it concerns persons who cannot prove their Polish citizenship, but who should be supported nevertheless for humanitarian reasons.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 154.

⁸ Emmanuel Freyd, counsellor at the Embassy in Washington, went to Mexico in December 1943 to clarify allegations of antisemitic incidents in the Santa Rosa settlement.

⁹ In the letter from 21 January 1944, the Ambassador in Washington informed the Envoy in Buenos Aires: 'In connection with your dispatch, I am glad to inform that the matter of the alleged antisemitism in the Santa Rosa settlement has been thoroughly explained. The United States authorities, who are sponsoring the refugees' passage and their

2) In accordance with wishes expressed by the UNRRA concerning the consolidation of Polish power and financial matters in Mexico, I have concluded that Szmejko, the head of the settlement, would agree on the education budget with Delegate Sobota, and then refer the budget in its entirety (financed by Lehman, the Polish American Council and the Catholic Conference) to Minister Neuman, who submits it quarterly via the United States Embassy to Washington for approval.

3) I have resolved the most contentious issue of wages by establishing three categories of 1, 2 and 3 pesos per day in addition to sustenance; teachers are paid 125 pesos per month. The Embassy in Mexico City and the UNRRA accepted all my suggestions along with the project of a self-sustaining farm and its own health facilities; however, their final decision will hinge upon the detailed budgets, which are yet to be submitted.

4) The reputation of the settlement is constantly put in jeopardy by more than ten professional knifemen and prostitutes, whose behaviour casts a shadow over the peaceful and morally sound existence of the settlement. If the correctional attempts fail, these individuals will be transferred to a Mexican correctional camp.

5) The commotion caused by a small group of politicised and neurotic individuals, who send dispatches to Roosevelt, as well as countless letters to the Poles in America, poses as much of a threat as well. Together with both delegates and the parish priest Kaczyński, I held a meeting with all residents, warning them against the rowdiness, which are harmful to the Polish cause.

6) I request that you ask the military authorities for Jan Muc, who was given leave from the military until 15 January 1944, to be sent back to the army and returned to active duty; he is an unrepentant and deranged troublemaker, whose actions lead to unpleasant complaints from the Americans.

7) Due to the proximity of the United States and the fact that even the most trivial incidents in the Polish settlement are exaggerated, I request that a recommendation is issued that antisocial and neurotic individuals as well as troublemakers are not to be sent to Mexico.

I will send detailed information concerning the possibility of accepting new transports via courier.

8) The mutual cooperation between the delegates and the new parish priest ensures that difficulties will be dealt with successfully.

existence in Mexico have little doubt that there were some individual incidents, which were rare and sporadic. These incidents were deliberately exaggerated by some of the Jewish refugees who wanted to get out of the camp.' AAN , Poselstwo Buenos Aires, 258.

Sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a request to provide copies to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Education

FREYD
POLMISSION

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

425

*21 January 1944. Letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on Jewish refugees in Hungary and the Balkan countries*

SECRET

London, 21 JANUARY 1944

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs

In connection with the cable (Tel Aviv 8) sent by Consul Rosmarin from the Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine and the cable (Istanbul 294) sent by Consul Szczerbiński¹⁰ regarding Jewish refugees from Poland in Hungary and the Balkan countries, the Ministry of Internal Affairs urges that all the means at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs be used to:

- (a) obtain all, or at least some of the required entry visas to various countries (except Palestine) for Polish citizens of Jewish origin currently in exile in Hungary,
- b) intervene with the Turkish Government in order to increase the number of transit visas for Polish citizens of Jewish origin, enabling them to travel from the Balkan countries to Palestine.

Seeing the keen interest of the Jewish circles in the fate of these refugees, the Ministry of Internal Affairs requests that Consul Rosmarin be informed on behalf of the Prime Minister, and Consul Szczerbiński be informed on behalf of the

¹⁰ In the cable no. 8 of 10 January 1944, the Consul General in Tel Aviv sent the request of the Representation of Polish Jewry addressed to Ignacy Schwarzbart for the sum of 115,000 pounds sterling, part of which was to be 'used to enable the passage of Jews to neighbouring countries.' At the same time, the Representation sent an inquiry into 'the matter of Australian visas for the evacuation of Jews from the USSR.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 272. Regarding cable no. 294 from Istanbul, see footnote 152 to doc. 408.

Ministry of Internal Affairs, of the Government's approval regarding this matter, and that the Ministry of Internal Affairs be kept informed of the results of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' efforts.¹¹

MINISTER
Władysław Banaczyk

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

426

*21 January 1944. Note by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on Jewish refugees in Spain and Portugal*

Note
concerning asylum for Jews—Polish citizens in Spain and Portugal

For more than a year now, the Refugee Department of *the Ministry of Foreign Affairs* has been trying to find suitable asylum for a group of about 400 Polish citizens of Jewish origin, who are currently in Spain, as well as about 200 in Portugal. They are war refugees who managed to get out of France after 1940; however, they cannot be evacuated to Great Britain, since they are not fit for military service.

After the Allies occupied French North Africa, a project was devised to transfer them to Morocco. As a result of long-running efforts, supported by English circles, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Algiers succeeded in obtaining a certain number of Moroccan entry visas (100), and the French authorities let in about 70 individuals of this category between May and October 1943. However, further evacuation to North Africa faces difficulties stemming from the fact that the individuals who were sent there had dubious Polish citizenship and were communists, in many cases fit for military service, dismissed by the Polish Armed Forces on political and moral grounds. This leads to a threat of the French authorities withholding entry permits.

¹¹ In a cable of 21 March 1944, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the posts in Ankara and Istanbul: 'We are making efforts to obtain entry visas to the British Empire for endangered Polish citizens in Hungary, which also includes Polish citizens of Jewish origin, from the British authorities. Please contact Ira Hirschmann of the War Refugee Board at the United States Embassy and talk to him about: 1) the support of these efforts by the Americans, 2) the technical matters connected with travel from Hungary to Palestine, and 3) endorsing these efforts.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154. See doc. 446.

This matter is crucial for us, since after the evacuation of Polish refugees from the Iberian Peninsula it will be much easier to get the subsequent transports of Polish citizens, including the endangered Jews, from France, which is currently made difficult due to the slow outflow of refugees.

Given this state of affairs, in November last year the Ministry requested the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London to intervene with the Foreign Office, asking that the English authorities should find a suitable asylum for Jews from Spain and Portugal in the Allied countries or on their territories, under the provision that their stay for the duration of the war would not result in any right to permanent settlement in the designated asylum areas after the cessation of hostilities, in accordance with the declarations made by the Polish Government. To date, the Foreign Office has made no concrete response to this intervention (other than a draft United Nations declaration urging neutral states to offer asylum).

In the meantime, however, it has come to our attention that there are some opportunities for moving these refugees to Canada, since according to the latest reports, the Canadian Government—in an attempt to realise the resolutions of the Bermuda Conference—is carrying out an evaluation in cooperation with the Joint, with an intention to evacuate, for the beginning, a number of Jewish families from there to Canada. For the sake of accuracy, it should be noted that in the first days of December last year, Breckinridge Long stated at a meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives that the United States is ready to accept all Jewish refugees, who manage to get out of France. However, so far there were no signs that the United States Government is ever intending to go beyond mere declarations in this regard.

In view of the above, it would now be appropriate to consider the available options and make a decision as to on what we should focus our continued efforts, in particular when it comes to relieving Spain and Portugal. It seems, however, that given all the opportunities which are now arising, we ought to choose the perhaps most difficult one, namely the evacuation to Palestine, which is the most suitable both from the standpoint of the Jewish refugees themselves, as well as the possible cost of supporting them in Canada or in any other territory, with the exception of Palestine.

London, 21 January 1944

T. Wyszogrodzki

427

*21 January 1944 Cable from the Consulate General in New York
to the Legation in Havana on the issue of passports*

January 21, 1944

POLMISSION
Havana, Cuba

No. 33

To prove Polish citizenship of his wife Henia Mejzner nee Burzna and son Denis both in Havana Icek Mejzner submitted his Polish passport 762 by Roman nine by 35 issued September 16 1935 by Polish Consulate General Paris, France. Please give them Polish passport after identification by marriage certificate and other travel documents.

POLCONSUL

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 317 (ENG)

428

*31 January 1944. Note by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on the arrangements with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
regarding the care for refugees in Shanghai*

Note

from a conference at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
on care in Shanghai

On 28 January 1944 the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare held a meeting devoted to the issue of the organisation of care in Shanghai.¹² The meeting was

¹² In the letter from 18 February 1944, Izaak Lewin addressed the Consul General in New York: 'In connection to our conversation from yesterday, I am sending the list of 12 individuals belonging to the rabbinical group in Shanghai, whom we consider particularly important, to be included already in the current exchange. In addition to these 12 individuals, we expect our group to be given 30 additional spots (that is, 42 in total), to which it is entitled due to the proportional numbers compared to the total number of Polish citizens currently in Shanghai. The key issue here is that the Ministry

attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare—Messrs Skalak and Żuławski, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was represented by Messrs Załęski and Wyszogrodzki.

An agreement was reached that the Polish Aid Society—in addition to the 940 refugees it was supporting to date—should also take care of the 230 Polish citizens from the so-called resident group, recently relocated by the Japanese authorities to the so-called ‘zone spécifiée,’ as well as all of those who will be transferred there *in the future*.

Among the discussed matters were the disagreements that had arisen between the Polish Aid Society and the Polish Residents Association over the increase in the population of the ‘zone spécifiée’ who required support, as well as over the need to help the numerous ‘residents’ who were still free, but whom the war left impoverished or in financial ruin. However, no agreement was reached as to the future organisation of the spending of funds provided by the Polish Government for care in Shanghai.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has proposed to settle the matter in question as follows:

1) The spending of the funds for social welfare are to be centralised in the Commission of the General Board of the Union of Poles in China, along with their distribution between the two welfare organisations,

2) The Commission is to be recognised as an institution superior to the Polish Aid Society and the Polish Residents Association, and as such it should serve as a court of appeal for individuals who feel wronged by refusal of support either by the Polish Aid Society or the Polish Residents Association.

Such a stance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was approved by Mr Skalak, while Mr Żuławski insisted on his project, which assumed the centralisation of all support activities within the Aid Society, as well as on the dissolution of the Residents Association—contrary to the proposal of the Polish Aid Society, which suggested that all the support activities should be entrusted to the Polish Residents Association.

of Foreign Affairs in London should instruct the Swiss Consulate in Shanghai through Switzerland that the individuals listed above are to be included in the current exchange and that the Swiss Consulate in Shanghai may receive the additional 30 names directly from the leaders of the rabbinical group there. OUR LIST: 1. Rabbi Majer Feiweł Żywica, 2. his wife Riszel Żywica, 3. Rabbi Leib Malin, 4. Rabbi Wysokier, 5. Rabbi Karpenszprung, 6. Rabbi Mendel Krawiec, 7. his wife Riszel Krawiec (with a one-year-old child), 8. Rabbi Szymon Kalisz, 9. his wife Feiga Brucha Kalisz, 10. Rabbi Jakob Kalisz, 11. Rabbi Lejzer Soroczkin, 12. his wife Chasia Soroczkin (with a one-year-old child).’ AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 505.

Given this state of affairs, the matter is yet to be discussed within the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, after which it will give a definitive response in writing to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

London, 31 January 1944

Reported by *T. Wyszogrodzki*

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

429

4 February 1944. Cable from the Consul General in Tel Aviv on the demands of the Representation of Polish Jewry

Polconsul—Tel Aviv
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 4 FEBRUARY 1944
RECEIVED ON 5 FEBRUARY 1944

No. 15

To the Minister

On 2 February, a conference was held at the local Consulate *of the Republic of Poland in Tel Aviv*, attended by Consul Wdziękoński and myself, *Consul Rosmarin*, during which the Representation of Polish Jewry put forward the following demands concerning Jewish refugees *in Hungary*: 1) The Government should immediately send funds for the 1,500 refugees who are not receiving aid, and a reserve for new arrivals; 2) Jews should not be placed in separate camps in towns predominantly inhabited by Jews; 3) Poles should be influenced to treat Jews better, in particular not to reveal their Jewish origin;¹³ 4) The Government should hasten its efforts to obtain visas enabling their departure, taking the necessary precautions, as they are

¹³ In a cable of 16 February 1944, Consul Rosmarin sent the following: "The Representation of Polish Jewry claims: "The new arrivals from Poland claim that a part of the local population is helping the Germans with exterminating the Jews, mainly the Blue Police, who are handing over Jews hiding as Catholics. In view of the fact that the Germans have set a price for each Jew handed over, hunts are being organised in the forests and mountains". The Representation asks the Commander-in-Chief to address Warsaw, the army units in Poland, to help the Jews, and asks the Government to announce severe punishment for those who aid in the extermination of the Jews." AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.

passing themselves off as Christians there. I will send the demands concerning the country in the subsequent cable.

Rosmarin

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154*

430

4 February 1944. Contract on the organisation of parcel support

CONTRACT

On 4 February 1944, the following contract was concluded in Tehran between Zbigniew JAKUBSKI, President of the Parcel Dispatch Commission, acting on its behalf, and Eliah SEGALL, representative of the JOINT, acting on behalf of the organisation on the basis of a power of attorney No. 384/P/5302 of 28 December 1943, concerning the shipment of parcels to Polish citizens in the USSR¹⁴ under the following conditions:

1. The Parcel Dispatch Commission undertakes to deliver goods of net weight of approximately 45 tonnes, owned by the Polish Treasury, according to specifications agreed upon between the parties, to the JOINT without any payment, within the specification agreed upon by the parties.

2. The JOINT undertakes to use the received goods specified in item 1 for 10,000 parcels, which are to be sent exclusively to Polish citizens in the USSR, containing goods agreed upon in the contract. The parcels are to be sent as 'Polturs' for 'Orbis.'

¹⁴ In a cable of 11 March 1944, sent from the Legation in Cairo, Zbigniew Jakubski informed: 'In a conversation with the United States Chargé d'Affaires in Tehran, which I had 6 weeks ago ... the American side expressed concern that our cooperation with the Joint might lead to the discrimination of Poles in the proposed parcel campaign. I have heard similar concerns in Palestine, where the English authorities willingly granted a hard-to-obtain export permit for goods to be shipped in parcels, upon learning that it would be used for aiding Christians only. This sentiment is also apparent in Cairo, where British circles believe that in the UNRRA in New York it is Jewish influence that predominates. The Joint, being well-informed and well-acquainted with the situation, has undoubtedly realised that given these circumstances, our cooperation may result in significant benefits for them, which on the other hand should allow us to put forward our demands properly towards the Anglo-Saxons and the Joint.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 148.

3. The JOINT undertakes to send the above-mentioned 10,000 parcels to Polish citizens in the USSR by ca. 15 March this year. The addresses of the recipients will be provided in 50% by the Parcel Dispatch Commission and in 50% by the JOINT.

4. The list of Polish citizens provided by the JOINT will be submitted to the Parcel Dispatch Commission for review in order to reconcile it with the list of addresses provided by the Parcel Dispatch Commission in order to avoid situations where individuals would receive more than one parcel.

5. The actual costs of preparing, packing and shipping the parcels shall be shared equally by the parties.

6. In order to enable mutual settlements in accordance with the principle specified in item 5, the JOINT undertakes to keep appropriate separate accounts for goods and costs incurred.

7. The JOINT agrees that the bodies of the Parcel Dispatch Commission may verify its accounts mentioned in item 6.

8. The settlement of costs resulting from the dispatch of parcels to the addresses provided by the Parcel Dispatch Commission will take place in London.

9. The Parties concerned view this Contract as a first step towards further mutual cooperation, the terms of which will be determined in the future either by an agreement between the superior authorities of the Commission in London and the JOINT, or between the Parties themselves.

10. The JOINT expresses its willingness to exchange goods with the Parcel Dispatch Commission in the future.

11. In the event of a possible overarching agreement between the superior authorities of the Parcel Dispatch Commission and the central authorities of the JOINT, the parties agree that the terms and conditions of the present contract may be amended to adapt them to a future contract or agreement.

12. This Agreement has been drawn up in two counterparts.

Chairman of the Parcel Dispatch Commission
Zbigniew Jakubski
Authorised representative of the Joint
Eliah Segall

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5 February 1944. Cable from the Consul General in Jerusalem: reports on the situation in Hungary

POLCONSUL—JERUSALEM
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 5 FEBRUARY 1944
RECEIVED ON 8 FEBRUARY 1944

No. 75

To the MFA and MINISTER STAŃCZYK

Jews and doctor Broncha Majzer from Kałusz as well as Unger arrived in Palestine from Poland via Hungary.

They talked about the situation of Jews in Poland and in Hungary. The Information Centre is sending the minutes to London. In connection with their reports, the delegates of the Jewish representation talked to me, asking that the Sławik Committee provide material aid to Polish Jews fleeing to Hungary. As of now, there are more than 1,500 Jews, who have arrived from Poland over the course of the recent months. They are passing themselves off as Christians, which the Hungarians let slide. S. claims that help is impossible due to the lack of funds. The Jewish representation asks for higher subsidies for S. and for sending a reserve. In Poland, the Polish Police is allegedly taking advantage of the situation of the Jews, robbing them and handing them over to the Germans.

They ask to instruct the authorities in Poland to ameliorate the attitude of Poles towards Jews and to declare that those who harm them will be punished in the future.

Please find the report attached.

WDZIĘKOŃSKI

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

432

7 February 1944. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington to the Consul General in New York: information on activities in Switzerland

7 February 1944

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

To Minister Sylwin Strakacz
 Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

I would like to ask you to convey the following cable sent by Sternbuch from Bern to the Agudat organisation in strict confidence, without disclosing the origin of the message:

‘1) The United States Legation confirmed the receipt of a license for \$100,000. Negotiations with Riegner and Michel are now underway. At the same time, Neutrauer has launched a rescue operation, the result of which will probably be known soon. Budapest informed that Saly Mayer is offering more than 100,000 Swiss francs to be used.

2) To date, it has not been possible to establish the current whereabouts of Rabbi A. Lewin-Griffel, for whom they are still searching. Finding people who went into hiding is very difficult in general.

3) Attempts are being made to provide those staying in the Netherlands with the ‘Vatikin’ certificates. Efforts to rescue Richter-Weil are also made through Nuchim, and certificates were requested again.

4) Fuchs P, Dora Temps and the three Reich children are in (Switzerland?) [sic]. The cost of getting to Hungary is estimated at \$6,000—a relative of Torkiewicz’s is already in Hungary and requires support.

5) Reports from Shanghai claim that 450 rabbis and rabbinical students are starving. Immediate assistance is required.¹⁵

¹⁵ In the cable of 17 January 1944, the Consul General in New York informed: ‘The Union of Rabbis intends to send a telegram to Rabbi Loevenstein in Zürich to intervene with the Swiss Government to instruct the Swiss Consul in Shanghai to provide the group of rabbis with half the number of seats in the next intended evacuation, to which they are entitled. The Association would like to be assured that the Polish Envoy in Switzerland has received instructions from the Polish Government to support these efforts. The Association is prepared to submit a list of 42 individuals—whom it considers the most urgent to rescue—to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The initiative was prompted by

6) In the previous communication, Blum's address was inaccurate. P. Sternbuch would like to ask you to provide it again.

7) Please notify the Agudat Youth Council that Edward Guggenheimer, as well as his wife, mother and two children are feeling well at the camp and shelter. They are in touch.

8) The following individuals are asking for help: 1. Lejb Lifschitz (please address Mr Ginsburg, 614 Lawndale Ave Chicago). 2. Joel Jawner (please address L. Mekner, Dexter, Missouri); 3. Brother Izaak and his wife (please address Mosche Rottenberg, 430 Bedford Ave Brooklyn, NY).¹⁶

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

a desperate telegram from Shanghai sent via the International Red Cross by the Rabbinical Association.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.

¹⁶ In another letter from 9 March 1944 to the Consul General in New York, the Embassy in Washington stated: 'Following my previous letter, please contact the individuals to whom it may concern in strict confidence, to relay the following telegram from Mr Sternbuch in Bern for the Agudat: "I. Due to cold weather and snow, the rescue operation is progressing slowly. We will make every effort to send lists of the rescued individuals in the near future. The list of individuals rescued to date and the detailed report were sent via the Legation's courier. II. The Swiss authorities have been offering a home for 120 children. More Committees can possibly be formed. The costs amount to 120 Swiss francs per child, of which we can cover 60. This offer concerns mainly children of those deported from Belgium, the Netherlands and France. If the plan fails, both we and their parents are going to lose the children. III. The source of the money we are receiving is irrelevant to us. If the exchange rate is not unfavourable, please continue sending money through the Polish Legation. IV. Schoendorf does not need the money right now. We are still looking for his family in Belgium and Italy. V. M. Herz has not yet made a passport for Teitelbaum. He requested personal details but received no response to date. VI. The addresses of Eliaz and Bondi are unknown. We keep searching for them. Eisenman has not heard anything about Bronia for a long time. VII. The community of Medias Dicio and J. in Romania are in need of aid for refugees, including the son and grandson of Koppel Reich and the son of Rabbi Kraus of Debrecen. VIII. Izydor Kwit died of natural causes on 18 February 1943. We have messages from his children. Emila Morielza and her five children ask Natus Meier Szenkolowski for help, as well as Jadwiga Gleich'" AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506.

433

*7 February 1944. Letter from the Council to Aid Jews
to the Government Delegate for Poland on financial matters*

To the Government Delegate for Poland

Referring to the Żegota's memoranda and detailed information provided to you during a personal visit concerning the material situation of the remainder Jewish community, as well as the fact that the number of people in dire need of support is steadily growing at a massive pace, the Council to Aid Jews informs that over the course of the last quarter, it had managed to meet its obligations thanks only to extraordinary subsidies, outside the regular state budget, in the amount of 230 II [sic], as well as more extensive support from the Coordinating Committee, which amounted to 9,000 zlotys.

Now that the emergency subsidy (II) has been exhausted, the Council's budget is lower by about 35%, while the number of supported individuals has grown, both in Warsaw and in the countryside. That is why the February allowances were lowered, both in relation to the individual rates and the number of supported individuals. The subsidies and grants provided by the Government Delegation in the amount of 10,000 zlotys, as well as the additional 4,000 zlotys provided by the Coordination Committee, cover only 70% of our current needs, not to mention the needs of the additional 1,000 people waiting in vain to be eligible to receive assistance. The Council currently supports about 3,500 individuals here and in the countryside, and according to the representative of the Coordination Committee, they support almost as many people—but as I have already mentioned, there are still about 1,000 people waiting for help.

The prolonged war leads to great impoverishment with each passing day, even among the wealthier strata, which is undoubtedly one of the causes of the influx of new requests. However, on the other hand, we must take into account the fact that the allowances paid to the individuals, which amount to 4–5 zlotys per month [sic] is barely enough to pay rent. Given these circumstances, taking into account the growing cost of living, we should strive to increase the support rates by at least 100%.

The operations of the Council in Cracow, Lwów, Radom, Kielce, Częstochowa, Skarżysko and other cities cost us a considerable amount. The areas of the Cracow and Lwów districts alone cost us more than 3,000 zlotys per month, which—given our relatively meagre budget—constitutes a significant expense. What is more, the expansion of the expensive child care facility and medical aid would require additional subsidies.

Given this state of affairs, the Council to Aid Jews has decided to ask you to:

- 1) Increase the monthly subsidy to 20,000 zlotys, as well as
- 2) Grant the Council an additional subsidy of 3,500 zlotys in February, so that we can cover our current expenses.

Since this list of important and valid arguments in favour of increasing the relief funds presented in this memorandum is not exhaustive, the Council to Aid Jews would like to request you to meet the delegation of the Council, who will present a more exhaustive justification of the request above.

For the Council to Aid Jews
/-/ T[rojan]
/-/ ...¹⁷

Warsaw, 7 February 1944¹⁸

Dr Klonowski. (to Director Muszyński).

*I am sending you the above, noting that meeting the representatives of the Council would be particularly advisable, due to the fact that increasing the subsidy amount is impossible. I would prefer to meet the President of the Council and Berezowski... head of the Council. Meeting him... would be...*¹⁹

AAN, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, 202/XV/2 (previously published)

¹⁷ Illegible fragment.

¹⁸ In the original document '1934.'

¹⁹ Illegible fragments.

434

9 February 1944. Note by the Press Attaché at the Legation in Stockholm to the Minister of Information and Documentation on a Jewish refugee from occupied Poland

Confidential

Stockholm, 9 February 1944

To the Minister of Information
in London

On 17 January, a young Jewish refugee named Leo Mandel arrived in Sweden from Poland via Finland. For some time, he was a member of Jewish work units, and then, upon receiving forged documents with Polish and Jewish support, he managed to get to Finland via the Todt organisation, from where he escaped to Sweden. His escape was facilitated by the fact that he does not have a conspicuous Semitic appearance.

Mandel was recommended to us by our consular and military authorities, on whom he has made a positive impression. He is a member of a wealthy intelligentsia family from Lwów—supposedly, his father was a well-known timber merchant, and his accounts are fully in line with our official propaganda. He also highlights the fact that during his escape, he received significant support from Polish organisations. The fact that he received, as it seems, a proper upbringing at home and secondary education, *as well as my personal impression*, leads me to believe that he will not succumb to rapid political demoralisation, which, unfortunately, happened to some of his predecessors. If Mr Mandel does not disappoint our expectations, I could recommend using him for a propaganda campaign on the Anglo-Saxon grounds. I recall that during our conversation, you have mentioned that there is a need in England for the accounts of eyewitnesses of the extermination of the Jewish population in Poland.

I am going to do some interviews with Mr Mandel in the Swedish press and for the Associated Press in the coming days.

I will send Mr Mandel's first accounts to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

I ask you to take a stance regarding the matter mentioned above.

Norbert Żaba

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 50

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*12 February 1944. Cable from the Envoy in Bogotá
concerning passports of South American countries*

POLMISSION—BOGOTÁ
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED ON 12 FEBRUARY 1944

No. 3

Ref. Cable No. 2 *Jewish passports*²⁰

Although the notes I sent to *Caracas and* Quito had an alarming tone, while keeping a proper form, the reaction of both Foreign Offices is clearly negative, judging by the very fact of the significant delay. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela stated in their response that it has ‘come to the conclusion’ that Venezuela has not issued any courtesy passports to Polish citizens. In my opinion, this statement may be rooted in—first of all—the suspicion of the authorities, bordering on certainty, that these alleged courtesy passports were issued illegally by the consuls for personal gain; second of all—in the growing antisemitic sentiment throughout South America, one of the symptoms of which is—among other actions—the prevention of any further influx of Jews, despite the tiny probability of such, as is the case with the matter at hand.

CHAŁUPCZYŃSKI

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616

436

*14 February 1944. Unsigned note concerning the opinions
on the situation in occupied Poland*

Jerusalem, 14 February 1944

*Remarks concerning anti-Polish propaganda spread by Jews, who have recently
arrived in Palestine from Poland*

The arrival of about a dozen Jews from Poland who left the country in the spring of 1943, has sparked a renewed interest in the matter of Jewish-Polish

²⁰ This is probably a reference to doc. 417.

relations in Palestine. Their accounts indicate that the level of antisemitism in Poland is particularly high, or at least that the underground movement did not manage to control the situation and prevent the impact of the German antisemitic propaganda. According to their statements, antisemitic acts were commonplace, especially denouncing the Jews who use Polish names to hide from the Germans, based on the promise that those who denounce the Jews would receive their properties. Although the Jewish Agency has forbidden the dissemination of these facts, they find their way to spread among the general public, sparking widespread outrage.

This has coincided with the return of 14 Jewish orphans from Nairobi. These children talk about being brutalised by Polish children, as well as the inappropriate attitude of the hosts and the housekeeping staff towards these occurrences. Despite being suppressed by official institutions, these reports are spreading in Palestine, fuelling the anti-Polish sentiment that was already evident. As a result of this, Jewish members of the Polish military, as well as the Jewish officials working for Polish institutions, are criticised (sometimes publicly) for serving the Polish cause.

These sentiments are not seen as something unfavourable by the English; however, there are some doubts as to whether the leading Zionist organisations—despite being well-aware of the harm those sentiments are doing given the current political situation—will manage to control them.^x What makes matters worse, the correspondents of the American Jewish press already got hold of this information, and given the significant influence of German Jews in the United States, there is no doubt that they will be widely publicised and commented on.

We should discuss whether we should launch preventive efforts, namely:

A. In Poland—issuing an address, announcing that antisemitic brawlers and those who denounce Jews will be treated as Nazi agents, and possibly also sentencing and executing some of the most malicious among them.

B. Abroad: Promoting manifestos and facts of active fight against antisemitism in Poland, publicising the issue of fighting antisemitism as Nazi heritage in the emigration press, including the military press.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Władysława Andersa, 71

^x Cf. J. Nowak on Polish propaganda in Arab states, appendix No. 1.

437

*16 February 1944. Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare regarding moving refugees from India to Mexico*

London, 16 February 1944

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

Jews in Mexico

In connection with the letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare No. 11178/43/In/10 of 26 October 1943, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs that it has received an explanation from the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Bombay concerning the individuals who joined the first transport of Polish refugees from India to Mexico,²¹ in which Consul General Banasiński states:

– Following only the guidelines of the instruction he received, he selected individuals whose health and inability to find employment predisposed them for being evacuated from India;

– These individuals knew that they would have to live in a settlement in Mexico, which they stated by signing a special declaration (please find the template attached);²²

– The information concerning the inclusion of these individuals in the transport was provided by the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Bombay to the local Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and to the United States Consulates in Bombay and Karachi, which was met with no objection on their part.

– Consul General Banasiński provided the following information concerning the individuals in question:

²¹ In the letter from 24 September 1943 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asked 'to inform Consul Banasiński about the contents of the conversation between the Foreign Office and Counsellor Ruciński (communicated to us on 24 August 1943) concerning the inclusion of individuals—who are attempting to get out of India to the United States and who have furs and diamonds—in the refugee transport heading to Mexico. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare recalls an exchange of cables on this issue with Consul Banasiński ..., based on which it was established that the irregularities concerning new individuals to the Mexican transport is the sole fault of Consul Banasiński, which should be brought to his attention.' IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381.

²² Not included in this publication.

1-3 Vogel Salomon with his family—wife and daughter

Hairdresser by profession. Throughout his stay in India (more than 3 years) he subsisted on an allowance of Rs 180 and made some additional money by working as a door-to-door barber. The wife had been complaining of headaches, as well as high blood pressure combined with haemorrhages for a long time. The doctors strongly recommended that she move to a different climate.

4-5 Poznański Mordka with his wife

They belonged to the Burmese group. They took advantage of the subsidy for refugees at a fixed rate—initially Rs 150, later Rs 240. He tried to make himself financially independent by working in commerce, but with little success. During the period immediately before his departure, this work did not bring in sufficient income, so he applied to the Consulate General for the subsidy, which he used to receive, in the amount of Rs 240. His wife suffered from anaemia combined with severe physical exhaustion.

6 Kolski Hilary

Since his arrival on 1 January 1942, he had been receiving a subsidy at a fixed rate—initially Rs 75, later Rs 120. He is physically healthy but suffering psychologically due to the inability to find employment in his trade.

7 Birenbaum Mordka

He belonged to the Burmese group and received subsidies at the level comparable to others. He made attempts to find employment in his profession as an upholsterer but did not have much success. On the verge of mental breakdown due to unemployment and being idle.

8 Kapłan Izrael

Member of the Burmese group, recipient of social care, as the previous one. He made efforts to achieve financial independence by working in commerce, but with little success. He took advantage of the social care throughout his stay in Bombay, except for a brief period when he had some income from work. He complained about poor health.

9 Klajman Izydor

He belonged to the Burmese group. He made efforts to become financially independent and managed to find work after a long period of unemployment. He was constantly suffering from gastritis—clearly the climate did not suit him.

10 Zelcer Szamaj

He belonged to the Burmese group. He had been receiving social care at normal rate, in addition to which he had also received a one-time loan of Rs 200 for the opening of a tie-making shop. Despite his efforts, however, he did not

earn, as he claimed, enough money by working. He was mentally exhausted, which he attributed to the tropical climate.

11 Wileńczyk H.

He did not take advantage of any social care and earned his money by teaching private Hebrew classes. Physically, he was very frail. He complained of ill health and doctors recommended that he leave India.

12 Jędrzejewski Marian

He came to India via Afghanistan and constantly took advantage of social care. He was an engineering technician by trade. He approached the Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi via the Consulate General with a suggestion that he could be engaged in settlement construction work. This suggestion was, however, met with a refusal. The inability to find employment resulted in a state of severe irritation and physical fatigue. He supposed that he would find work and enjoy life more in a Mexican settlement, which offered a better climate.

At the same time, Consul General Banasiński stated that—based on observations of the individuals, their lifestyle, as well as the assessment carried out by the Jewish Relief Association and the information he had—all these individuals should be considered rather poor; they were hardly regarded as people who could own furs, jewellery and other such items. One could assume that only Mrs Vogal, who has arrived from Romania in the mid-1940, might have owned fur coats and some jewellery. However, her family was considered poor and was supported not only by Social Welfare, but also by the Jewish Relief Association. Before her departure, the local Jewish community raised some funds to fix her issues.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
E. H. Czapski

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

438

*24 February 1944. Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy in London
on the assistance to refugees in Hungary*

London, 24 February 1944

As of now, there are about 11,000 Polish citizens in Hungary, including 2,000 to 3,000 Jews who managed to flee from Poland in 1939 and in the following years. Over the course of recent months, various Jewish organisations, especially those operating in the Middle East, have taken a keen interest in the fate of the latter group. Seeing how staying in Hungary is becoming increasingly risky,²³ the Polish Government would like to enable some of the Polish citizens to leave Hungary. For this reason, it is requesting an intervention with the British Government to enable Polish citizens to leave Hungary for the British Empire (and Jews for Palestine), possibly via Turkey.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
E. H. Czapski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

²³ In 1943, the Hungarian authorities began secret negotiations with the Allies concerning Hungary's withdrawal from the war. In March 1944, this has resulted in the German occupation of the country and increased terror against Jews, including deportations to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Regent Miklós Horthy temporarily halted the deportation of Jews; however, they were resumed after he was interned by the Germans on 15 October 1944, and after Ferenc Szálasi, leader of the fascist Arrow Cross Party, took power in the country. See also doc. 458 and 501.

439

*25 February 1944. Note by the Ministry of National Defence
on the desertion of Jewish soldiers from the Polish Armed Forces
(with enclosures)*

Commission of the Ministry of National Defence
for the case of mass desertion of Jewish soldiers

25 February 1944

Minister of National Defence
London

In response to the order of the Ministry of National Defence L.dz.1978/W. Pol./44 of 25 January 1944 (working instructions for the Commission)—the Commission presents the following report:

I Case background:

In order to understand the background of the case at hand, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the circumstances of both the Christian and the Jewish sides in the Polish Army.

1. Christian side:

(a) Commanders (officers and senior NCOs) do not engage in antisemitic activities, and intentional antisemitism does not occur. They can only be blamed for underestimating the seriousness of the issue and downplaying anti-Jewish incidents by tolerating them or not punishing them harshly enough.

b) Among the soldiers, there are sporadic, although quite frequent, incidents of dislike of Jewish soldiers, only some with a motive, usually limited to verbal abuse and general statements, which neither the authors themselves nor the more balanced Jewish soldiers took literally and seriously.

(c) Both the officers and soldiers hardly realise the nature and importance of the Jewish problem. In many cases, they are illiterate when it comes to political issues.

d) In very few [sic] cases, the basis for the hostile attitude towards Jewish soldiers were the memories from the time of Soviet occupation or from the stay in Soviet Russia, where a part of Jewish society behaved in a way that was unbecoming of Polish citizens and emphasised their sympathy for the occupying army, insulted the Polish Nation and State, and even went as far as to carry out hostile acts towards retreating Polish troops (testimony of Rifleman Szlamberger—enclosure No. 1.).

2. Jewish side:

a) A large percentage (about 30) of Jewish soldiers were rather unpatriotic, bad soldiers, who shirked their duties, for example by making frequent needless visits to field hospitals.

b) A smaller percentage of Jewish soldiers who emigrated and have no ties to Poland, conscripted into the Army or volunteers from South America, wanted to use the army to get to the United States or Great Britain. They exhibit negative attitudes towards the Army and towards duties in their units to an even higher degree than the Jewish soldiers in point a).

c) The behaviour of the two categories described above led to nasty remarks and aggravation from their fellow Christian soldiers, and their generalisation also had a negative impact on the third category, the relatively small number of Jewish soldiers who had more intelligence or a stronger sense of Jewish nationality, who were otherwise disappointed due to their ambitions and who had complained about the lack of promotions and inadequate use of their skills. This category also includes a very small number of individuals connected with Jewish or other political organisations, in the cases of whom we have only circumstantial evidence. The leaders and organisers of the mass desertion were the members of this group.

3. The nature of desertion:

a) The group desertion of the Jewish soldiers to London was in no way a random occurrence; it was a long-planned, organised effort, which was carried out when the atmosphere in the units was less tense due to the orders issued beforehand.²⁴ More details in enclosure No. 2.

(b) The Commission believes that there is an enormous discrepancy between the very serious offence of collusion and mass organised desertion during the war and the grievances that the deserters complained about. In the majority of cases, the chief complaint concerned being taunted by their colleagues, a few cases of brawls between individual soldiers of different faiths caused by personal quarrels, which were never serious, as well as a few cases of failure to report their complaints. In many cases, the interrogated deserters, when questioned, declared

²⁴ In the letter from 23 February 1944, the Ministry of Information and Documentation stated the following: 'Some sixty Jewish soldiers deserted from the Polish Army in Scotland. They have arrived in London and are demanding to be transferred to the British Army. Since this is the second desertion within a month, and the commission carrying out the inquiry into the causes of the first incident is still in Scotland, the military authorities are determined to act in accordance with military regulations, that is to forcibly return them to the army with the assistance of the English authorities for further examination of the case. The Ministry of Information and Documentation shares the above information, taking into account the possibility of hostile response of the press.' AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506.

that they did not complain about their grievances because they considered such a step ineffective. The Commission sometimes had the impression that they did not complain because they themselves realised the trivial nature of the incidents, and only after they were convinced after deserting from the army did they begin to use these incidents as an explanation for taking this step. Testimonies of deserters were often biased, and the accusations they raised were based on gossip. More details in enclosure No. 3.

(c) The Commission is convinced that other motives for the desertion—which have nothing to do with antisemitism, such as disappointed ambition or political motives—cannot be ruled out. More details in enclosure No. 4.

(d) The Commission believes that it cannot be overlooked that of the total of 68 deserters who ended up in London, only two did not belong to the 1st Armoured Division.

4. Reasons for desertion:

Summing up the results of the inquiry, the Commission concludes that the decision of the Jewish soldiers to leave the units on their own was influenced by a number of reasons of various nature, the most important of which are as follows:

a) The lack of emotional ties with Poland among the Jewish soldiers, formally Polish citizens, who have not been in the country for a long time and thus built ties to other places.

b) The loss of Polish families in the country among some of the Jewish soldiers and their intention to move abroad after the war.

c) The uncertainty of the political situation in Poland, especially in its eastern lands, and the resulting reluctance to return to former places of residence in these areas.

d) In connection with reasons a) to c)—they are guided by their intent to obtain British citizenship by way of service in the British Army, as they believe it will make their life easier in the future.

e) The influence of the political views of certain parts of the Jewish society, aimed at the biological protection of the Jewish element.

f) The unkind attitude of a certain group of Christian soldiers towards their Jewish colleagues, which is manifested in isolated incidents and unpleasant remarks. Given the reasons detailed above in items a) through c), this has resulted in a formal basis to make the decision to desert. More details in enclosure No. 5.

The specific accusations, which the interrogated Jewish soldiers levelled against their unit commanders, were as follows:

a) restrictions on the admission of Jewish soldiers to driver's courses and to the Cadet School;

- b) overlooking Jewish soldiers for promotions;
- c) underestimating the positive performance of Jewish soldiers in their duty;
- d) not allowing grievances to be settled through official channels;
- e) too-lenient punishment of disciplinary offences arising from disputes between Jewish soldiers and soldiers of other religions doled out by the commanders.

However, neither of the above allegations and accusations were confirmed in the course of the investigation, with the exception of isolated incidents, based on which the Commission has drawn the appropriate conclusions, which are set out in section III of this report.

II. Conclusions on Jewish soldiers whose cases were analysed by the Commission and who were not accepted into the British Army:

Regarding the Jewish soldiers who ended up in Draft Office No. 1 (Tensuir) as a result of their intended or committed desertion, the Commission makes no conclusions, as the matter in question has been settled by the decision of the Commander-in-Chief and the Ministry of National Defence, as well as by the decision of the British authorities, who agreed to draft the whole group into the British Army.

With regard to the Jewish soldiers who in the second group in the meantime have committed mass desertion, around 22 February, the Commission is of the opinion that after they have served their sentences or after their sentences are suspended, they should be assigned to units other than those from which they deserted.

III. Conclusions regarding possible perpetrators of anti-Jewish incidents

The Commission requests an investigation to be carried out, as well as possible prosecution of:

- a) Cavalry Captain Glaser (current assignment unknown), who used the following phrase as a squadron commander in the 10th Dragoon Battalion while speaking before his unit, regarding the Jewish soldiers returning late from their leave: 'If the squadron does not settle the score with them, I will punish them harshly.' The above phrase was allegedly intended to provoke hostile reactions in soldiers of other faiths towards their Jewish colleagues.

Testimony of Rifleman Okręt Synaj—8th Rifle Battalion

He was also accused of ignoring the three complaints lodged by Rifleman Okręt Synaj, in an official manner, against Lieutenant Kintzi and against Corporal Kaczor as the squadron commander.

Testimony of Rifleman Okręt Synaj, as above.

b) Cavalry Captain Maliszewski, a squadron commander from the 9th Rifle Battalion, for ignoring a complaint lodged by Rifleman Kiper Joel about Rifleman Kowalewski, who allegedly had assaulted the complainant.

Testimony of Rifleman Kiper Joel of the 9th Rifle Battalion.

(c) Second Lieutenant Swiniarski of the 1st Anti-Air Artillery Regiment, who during an inspection of a barrel cleaned by the gun crew said the following in the presence of the gunners, among whom were also Jewish soldiers: 'This barrel is supposed to be clean, this one looks like an old Jewish woman's ...'²⁵ In addition to that, upon entering a lecture room, where several of the gunners were sitting with berets on their heads, he exclaimed: 'What is this, a synagogue?'

Testimony of Gunner Bykow Abraham, Gunner Chęciński Chajm and witnesses: Bombardier Melko and Gunner Neseruk. All soldiers of the 1st Anti-Air Artillery Regiment.

d) Corporal Langer of the 14th Uhlan Cavalry Regiment, who in the Military Hospital No. 1, in the presence of other soldiers, including Rifleman Landau Srul, often claimed that Poland should have sided with Hitler, since democracy is a Jewish policy and General Sikorski was also a Jew.

Testimony of uhlan Landau Srul—1st Anti-Tank Regiment

e) Captain Hoffmański—Armoured Forces Training Centre, for after being informed of the misconduct of Corporal Langer and of his expressions, described above in point d), refused to settle the matter in an official capacity, allegedly claiming via his chief Sergeant Dunajewski that he would not accept the report because he did not want to get involved in these matters.

Testimony of uhlan Landau Srul and witness Sergeant Dunajewski.

(f) Gunner Ilczuk Ignacy from the 1st Anti-Air Artillery Regiment (7th Battalion) for allegedly boasting in the presence of Jewish soldiers that he 'killed a Jew.'

Testimony of Gunner Rajzman Abraham—1st Anti-Air Artillery Regiment

The Commission requests that the commanders of the units implicated above be instructed to send the information regarding the manner of resolving the above matters to the Policy Department of the Ministry of National Defence.

General conclusions and recommendations for the future

General conclusions, aimed at improving the situation and ensuring comradeship between soldiers of different faiths in the units, were divided by the Commission into:

a) conclusions to be implemented as soon as possible;

²⁵ Vulgarism omitted.

b) conclusions to be implemented in the long-term.

Ad a)

1) The Commander-in-Chief should issue an order to all the Armed Forces. This order in its general content could be based on the attached draft (see enclosure No. 6),²⁶ presented by two Jewish privates, Lachs and Diamand, who were consulted by the Commission in the course of the proceedings.

2) The aforementioned order should be read personally by the commanders of the units, who should then declare that they will personally take great care to make sure that all the directives listed in the order are observed and that those found guilty will be held responsible and severely punished.

3) An officer's order should be issued in connection with the order mentioned above in point 1), which will mandate immediate eradication of all incidents that could be interpreted as symptoms of an anti-Jewish attitude among soldiers, even if only seemingly so. In the event of a criminal offence being classified (for example based on Article 154 § 1, 156, 158 of the Penal Code, in connection with Articles 10 and 111 of the Constitutional Act, Articles 76, 78 and 89 of the Executive Penal Code), acts of this category should be considered by the relevant Courts. Disciplinary or court penalties, together with a description of the incident, should be sent to the Ministry of National Defence (Policy Department).

The above order should highlight the obligatory and mandatory principle of equal and just consideration of the Jewish soldiers in the course and Cadet School assignments, as well as for promotions and commendations in case of outstanding performance of their duties, which some of the Jewish deserters complained about.

4) In connection with the aforementioned order, non-commissioned officer briefings should be carried out in individual units, so that the non-commissioned officers can familiarise themselves with the gravity of the issue at hand, as well as with disciplinary or criminal consequences that may arise from mishandling these orders.

Ad b)

1) Frequent talks should be held in individual units with Jewish soldiers about camaraderie and the harmonious coexistence of all soldiers regardless of religion and nationality, based on Polish historical tradition. These talks should highlight that the Republic of Poland and its Government will always take care of all Polish citizens without any discrimination.

2) Enlisting Jewish soldiers in cooperation with educational officers and organising educational teams cultivating the idea of camaraderie.

²⁶ Not included in this publication.

3) Organisation of special talks for soldiers and former soldiers of the German army and educating them in a democratic way, with special emphasis on respect for human beings and the respectful attitude towards other human beings regardless of their religion or nationality.

4) The Commission believes that the establishment of Honorary Courts for Privates in individual units, which would be tasked with eradicating offences against camaraderie and against the pride and honour of soldiers, which could extensively contribute to the elimination of incidents of inappropriate behaviour among soldiers.

5) Issuing instructions for recruiting officers outside the borders of Great Britain, requesting that care be exercised in the selection of candidates for enlistment in the Polish Army.

6) Issuing an instruction standardising the well-thought out and proper allocation of former soldiers of the German army.

Chairman of the Commission of the Ministry of National Defence
 /-/ Brigadier General Boruta-Spiechowicz
 /-/ Prof. M. Heitzman
 /-/ Major L. Tchórzewski
 /-/ Major S. Szaliński
 /-/ Captain T. Estkowski

Enclosure No. 1

Minutes of the hearing of
 15 February 1944

The Commission of the Ministry of National Defence, consisting of:
 Brigadier General Boruta-Spiechowicz—Chairman;
 Major Szaliński Stanisław;
 Captain Estkowski Tadeusz;
 Prof. Heitzman Marian;
 Lieutenant Smolny Marcin—minute-taker.

Rifleman SZLAMBERGER Tadeusz, soldier of the 8th Rifle Battalion, was summoned by the Commission. Asked whether he had said in the presence of the entire company that 'all Jews must be slaughtered,' Rifleman Szlamberger replied: 'Yes sir!' I said this, because I experienced the behaviour of Jews at the time when, together with the unit of General Maczek we crossed the border in the area of Stanisławów and Worochta. At that time, I had a first-hand experience of the attitude the Jews harboured towards us Christians, when organised groups

of Jews obstructed our passage to Hungary, assaulting and murdering us. Six of us, including myself, were caught near the border, our weapons were taken away, and then we were beaten so badly that we could not stand on our feet. After the assault, we were left there. By chance, a medical car found us and took to Hungary. The band that attacked us consisted of Ukrainians and about 12 Jews, about 30 people in total. I was raised in Stryj, where my father was a railway engineer; my mother took care of the house, and I was a railway trainee. Due to the fact that the matter of what I said has come to the attention of the Company Commander, Captain Maczuba, who was there, I was told in public that I had no right to express myself in such a manner, and that Rifleman Altman, who was also there, is just as much a soldier and that I should not generalise the wrongs I suffered to all citizens, including Jews, who would fight for Poland or were fighting just like other soldiers in uniforms. I would like to point out that among the soldiers, in front of whom I used the aforementioned expression, Rifleman Alt [sic] was not present; however, Rifleman Altman, with whom I had a verbal altercation that resulted in me uttering, 'All Jews must be slaughtered' was present there. Read and signed: /-/ Szlamberger Tadeusz /-/ Lieutenant M. Smolny—minute-taker /-/ Brigadier General Boruta-Spiechowicz

I confirm that the document is a true copy of the original minutes:
 /-/ Major L. TCHÓRZEWSKI

Enclosure No. 2

Since June of 1943 there have been rumours concerning a planned desertion, and as the interrogated soldiers testified, the first date for the desertion was set for the end of September 1943, i.e. the Jewish New Year. In January 1944 all the deserters left at the same time and stayed in London at the same place, called the Ochel. Those who had no money for a train ticket to London received subsidies from the main organiser of the plot, Gunner Rajzman. Upon their arrival in London, the deserters formed a committee and continued to act as one throughout the events. Even the phrases and terms said by the participants in their testimonies were repeated verbatim, in a rote fashion. The fact that the departure for London was not a random occurrence is evidenced by the lack of any drastic incidents or anti-Jewish sentiments preceding the desertion, which occurred in a period when, as a result of a previously issued order, there was a positive change, and the antisemitic incidents cited by the deserters in their testimonies were never fresh but occurred several months or often over a dozen before the day in question. In their testimonies, the deserters cited exact dates of incidents, which took place during the period of their evacuation from Russia and which they had meticulously noted down in their notebooks, along with other facts.

The intent to organise a movement on the largest possible scale is proven by the fact that during the Commission's stay at Tentsmuir Camp, Gunner Rajzman

handed the Commission a list containing 22 Jewish privates who, according to him, also belonged to 'their group' and who had probably been detained by the military authorities in the units and not sent back to the Draft Office No. 1 against the order of the Commander-in-Chief. The Commission believes that by disclosing these names, Gunner Rajzman thought that he would discredit these soldiers in the eyes of the military authorities and cause them to be forcibly included in the group of deserters. After investigating this matter, it turned out that none of the soldiers on this list made an attempt to desert, and only one of them, Dragoon Kucziński—questioned by the Commission regarding a different matter—stated that he had had one incident with the Chief Sergeant a couple of months before, but that otherwise he felt good in the unit and that his colleagues liked him.

Enclosure No. 3

The deserters' testimonies were often biased, as shown by the following examples:

a) Deserter Gunner Bykow testified that he was punched in the face by Gunner Baj, now a cadet, and later it was Gunner Bykow who was punished instead of Cadet Baj. When questioned on the matter, the then-commander of the battery, Lieutenant Nosalik of the 1st Anti-Air Artillery Regiment, testified that the incident involving Gunner Bykow and Gunner Baj was triggered by the unfounded accusation of the theft of toiletries levelled by gunner Bykow against Gunner Baj. Outraged and deeply moved by this accusation, Gunner Baj responded by slapping Gunner Bykow. Later, Gunner Baj was punished for delivering justice on his own, whereas Gunner Bykow was not punished. Gunner Bykow must have been aware of the official reprimand issued to Gunner Baj.

b) Rifleman Kiper (a Jew) testified that Dragoon Kucziński (a Jew) had a spat with Sergeant Szejkowicz, who allegedly told him: 'I will be the first to shoot you on the front line.' Dragoon Kucziński, who was interrogated in connection with the matter at hand, testified that he had a spat with Sergeant Szatkowski, not Szejkowicz. The mentioned officer, upset with Kucziński, who could not perform an exercise correctly, in fact threatened to shoot him saying: 'I will shoot you like a dog, if not today, then tomorrow.' As a result of a report against Kucziński for his previous failure to obey an order and for his complaint against Sergeant Szatkowski, the latter apologised to Gunner Kucziński and in a longer conversation explained himself, saying he had been through so much in the war that his nerves were shaken and sometimes he could not control himself. Dragoon Kucziński additionally testified that since that incident (spring of 1943) he had experienced no harassment or ill will from Sergeant Szatkowski. When asked about relations within the unit, he stated that he believes them to be good, and since Major Zgorzelski took command of the 10th Dragoon Battalion in November 1943, they 'have improved by 200 per cent.'

c) Some of the deserters interrogated pointed out pro-Nazi sentiment within their units, as well as persecution perpetrated by their fellow soldiers—former soldiers of the German army—as the reason for taking this step.

This was mentioned in the testimonies of Riflemen Pfefferkirchen, Szlak and Goldstein. According to the testimony of the latter, he attributed the pro-Nazi sentiment to the praise of Hitler's extermination of the Jews and to the statement: 'we should have sided with Hitler.' When asked by the Commission, Rifleman Goldstein refused to name the soldiers that had expressed their sympathy towards the Nazis.

Rifleman Pfefferkirchen testified that former soldiers of the German army boasted that they had settled scores with Jews in Poland; however, when asked by the Commission whether he had heard such statements in person, he replied that he had only heard about them from his colleagues who were present there. When asked by the Commission to disclose the names of the colleagues who had told him these stories, he stated that he did not remember their names.

Rifleman Szlak, when asked about the pro-Nazi sentiments in the Polish Army about which he testified on 3 February 1944, stated: 'when Hitler was marching on Russia, the soldiers were happy with that. I did not see any other symptoms of pro-Nazi sentiments.'

d) In their testimonies, Riflemen Dorn and Jakubowicz complained about bad treatment of them as Jews by Sergeant Bryła, who was allegedly biased in appointing Jewish soldiers to the latrine-cleaning duty on Sundays. The testimony of Sergeant Bryła, which was corroborated by testimonies of two Jewish soldiers, Riflemen Bireń and Łoszyca, it follows that Sergeant Bryła did not discriminate against soldiers of the Jewish faith in that regard. Out of necessity, the aforementioned necessary activities were—due to existing circumstances of accommodation in the field (concentration in England)—performed on Sundays by Jewish soldiers and others who did not take part in the religious service; moreover all of this was in accordance with the regulations, which were then in force, according to which the work on Sundays ended at 2.00 p.m.

(e) The accusations levelled against Master Corporal Sztakowski, according to which he had organised additional exercises for Jews in the quarters and made fun of Jews by wearing a yarmulke and a fake beard, turned out to be unfounded. It was discovered that the aforementioned master corporal had only one Jewish soldier in the quarters for which he was responsible, and that he wore the costume of a Jew due to playing the role of a Jew in a Nativity play.

Enclosure No. 4

The Commission believes that the deserters might have been motivated to leave due to other factors that had had nothing to do with antisemitism.

a) Rifleman Frankenstein (higher education) testified: 'I have not personally encountered any incidents of antisemitism directed against me, and only trivial incidents concerning other soldiers.' He only complained about not being assigned to the Cadet School; thus, the supposed motivation for his desertion in this case may have been frustrated ambition. It should be noted that Rifleman Frankenstein was one of the leaders of the deserter group.

b) Gunner Goldberg testified that in addition to the incidents of antisemitism, he has 'other reasons' for not wanting to serve in the Polish Army. When questioned further on this point by the Commission, he declined to elaborate, stating that he had given a written list of these reasons to a certain person in London, whose name he would not disclose.

c) Bombardier Brzegowski testified: 'Personally, I have not experienced any particularly unpleasant incidents indicative of antisemitism in the Army.'

The testimony of Gunner Goldberg, as well as the fact that the group desertion was committed at a time of an extremely difficult political situation for the Polish cause, allow us to guess that deeper (political) motives were in play in the case of at least some of the deserters. In the Commission's view, it cannot be ruled out that motives of this kind, probably due to incitement, were the actual cause of the matter at hand, and that the insignificant incidents against Jewish soldiers were used as a pretext. Nevertheless, the reluctance of some Jewish soldiers to serve in the army was also exploited here.

Enclosure No. 5

Taking into account the totality of the testimonies of the Jewish soldiers as well as those of soldiers of other faiths questioned in the course of the investigations, the Commission assumes that there have been isolated incidents of offences against Jewish soldiers which—in the circumstances of agitation—could have been perceived as acts of anti-Jewish sentiments, dictated by antisemitic feelings. The expressions of satisfaction with the persecution of the Jews in the German-occupied territories, expressed in the presence of the Jewish soldiers, could undoubtedly have caused considerable pain. Given these circumstances, they were more inclined to interpret all the other cases of brusque treatment as incidents of antisemitism, although in normal circumstances they would not have been interpreted as more than ordinary quarrels that often take place even between soldiers who belong to the same faith. Taking into account the undoubtedly agitated mental state of the Jewish soldiers, caused by the tragic news from Poland and the uncertainty of tomorrow, similar incidents involving non-Jewish soldiers, exaggerated in rumours and stories by third parties, could cause an unhealthy psychosis among some of the Jews, which leads them to explain every improper and offensive behaviour of a fellow soldier as an antisemitic reaction.

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.901/8

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27 February 1944. Letter from the Minister of National Defence to the Ambassador in London on the desertion of Jewish soldiers

Secret!

London, 27 February 1944

NOTE
for Ambassador RACZYŃSKI

In view of the complaints raised by representatives of the members of the National Council as well as by the army concerning the occurrence of antisemitic incidents in our Armed Forces, I have issued some relevant orders in June and July 1943 (Secret Order for Officers No. 6 and the Order to the Commanders of the Higher Units) in order to prevent all such incidents in the future. In September 1943, we received the messages that a group of (about 150) Jewish soldiers was about to organise a demonstration with the sole aim of getting transferred to the British Army; this demonstration was supposed to take place during the celebrations of Jewish holidays in Glasgow. Thanks to a number of moves (the visit and speech of General BORUTA-SPIECHOWICZ, the issue of a special daily bulletin and the more level-headed soldiers who calmed the situation down) this demonstration did not come to fruition.

Over the next three months, it seemed that the situation calmed down, and it was only on 15 and 16 January this year that 60 Jewish soldiers left their units on their own and went to London. 20 soldiers were detained while trying to leave their respective units.

In London the deserters were lodged in the building of the OHEL Jewish organisation and elected a committee, which established contacts with SCHWARZBART, TARTAKOWER and SCHERER, as well as with representatives of English Jewry.

The deserters' demands included:

- 1) being placed in a camp near London not supervised by military authorities;
- 2) being transferred to the British Army.

They claimed that this step was motivated by antisemitism in the Polish Army.

In his conversations with the Army authorities, Mr SCHERER condemned the action, expressing regret concerning the atmosphere in the Army. Since his persuasions towards the deserters had no effect, he has stopped to intervene in this matter.

SCHWARZBART and TARTAKOWER condemned the action and proceeded to negotiate with the committee elected by the deserters.

In consultation with me, the Commander-in-Chief stated his position as follows:

- 1) He is willing to make the issue of desertion forgotten.
- 2) Deserters do not return to their units but leave to the Draft Office.
- 3) There, they may submit individual applications for transfer to the British Army, which will be approved by the Polish authorities.
- 4) A commission will be appointed to investigate the case.

SCHWARZBART and TARTAKOWER found this position very liberal and presented it to the deserters.

Eventually, after a few days of negotiations, the deserters left for the Draft Office, where they have been staying to date. At the same time the Commission was appointed to investigate the matter at hand, chaired by General BORUTA-SPIECHOWICZ. The results of their investigation will be ready in the first days of March this year. To date, based on the preliminary report²⁷ by one of the members of the Commission, I know that the Commission is arriving at the following conclusions, solidified during the investigations:

- 1) The cases of antisemitism that the soldiers have been complaining about usually date back to an earlier period, and the current situation in this area—especially recently, after the aforementioned orders have been issued—has improved considerably.
- 2) The desertion action was hardly a random occurrence; in fact, it was a premeditated effort that has been in the making for a long time.
- 3) In order to have an excuse for what was about to happen, recently Jewish soldiers have stopped reporting complaints about alleged antisemitic incidents in order to turn them into arguments for the future.
- 4) There were only few incidents of blatant antisemitism, and they were met with an appropriate response. These included almost exclusively the antics of their fellow soldiers.

In my letter to General GRASETT, I have informed the English authorities about the matter at hand.

In his letter from 9 February, General GRASETT stated that the British authorities are willing to take the Jewish soldiers in question in and let them join the British Pioneer Corps, and that their cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

²⁷ Previous document.

On 21 February, there was a case of desertion of another group of 60 Jewish soldiers, who arrived in London. This group was accommodated by the OHEL Jewish organisation; as of now, the liquidation of this matter is being handled.

General M. Kukiel

IPMS, Ambasada Londyn, A.12.901/8

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*3 March 1944. Cable from the Legation in Bern
to the Embassy in Washington:
information on South American passports*

To Washington, No. 11 of 3 March 1944

Sternbuch to the Agudat:

I. We have some good news from internees at Vittel and Tittmoning; the instructions that the passports are to be recognised were received there.

There are several thousand people in the Belsen-Bergen camp near Hannover, including many with Paraguayan passports. We have no names, nobody can send us any letters from there, even the Red Cross has no way to contact the camp. Please investigate this via some American government or the Red Cross.

The Westerbork camp is said to have been partially disbanded, and foreign passport holders are said to have been transferred to Belsen.

II. We have recently received many documents from the Consulate General of El Salvador in Geneva, including 120 for Lithuania, intended for Rabbi Schapiro, among others; however, we do not know his address and we do not know if the documents will arrive on time.

III. The Consulate General of El Salvador in Geneva is protecting thousands of Jews without the express knowledge of its government. The Swiss Legation, which is now representing the Salvadoran interests, requested information from the Consulate. Please intervene immediately with the Salvadoran Government so that it does not make matters worse and so that it recognises the issued documents.

POLMISSION

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 495

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*8 March 1944. Cable from the Embassy in Washington
on forwarding correspondence received from the Legation in Bern*

POLMISSION—WASHINGTON
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 8 March 1944
RECEIVED ON 9 March 1944

No. 149

For a long time, the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern has been sending cables concerning aid for Jewish refugees from various European countries, from the representatives of Jewish organisations in Switzerland to the Embassy, to be forwarded to the Agudat Jewish organisation in New York. Recently, the number of these cables has grown rather significantly. Over the course of the last month, we have received more than 1200 groups of cables of this kind. A significant part of these contain information of a personal nature, concerning particular individuals, which should be conveyed either to A. or to individuals in the United States. It seems that the individuals communicating with Agudat believe that the cables between Bern and Washington are used for regular correspondence. Please consider the above as an information and possible instruction.²⁸

KWAPISZEWSKI

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616

²⁸ In a cable of 13 March 1944 sent to the Legation in Bern, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed: 'The Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington reports that recently, it has been receiving numerous cables from Bern to be forwarded to the Agudat organisation in New York, most of which concern personal matters. While we believe that forwarding crucial information to Jewish organisations is advisable, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs urges you to make sure issue an order not to burden the ciphers with too long cables on individual matters.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616.

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*9 March 1944. Report by the Legal and Political Committee
of the National Council on the situation of the Jewish population in Poland*

National Council document No. 214

REPORT OF THE LEGAL AND POLITICAL COMMITTEE OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

On the motion by Dr Emanuel Scherer of 11 December 1943, the emergency motion by Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart of 20 December 1943 and the emergency motion by Dr Emanuel Scherer of 31 January 1944

During the meetings of 7 and 9 March this year, the Legal and Political Committee considered three motions concerning the situation of the Jewish population in Poland. Two of these motions were made by Council Member Dr Emanuel Scherer and his colleagues, while the other motion was brought by the Council Member Dr Ignacy Schwarzbart and his colleagues.

The Committee decided to merge these motions into one, addressing the individual matters in subsequent paragraphs. In this way all the suggestions made in the aforementioned motions have been taken into account, with the exception of suggestions in item 8 of Dr Scherer's motion of 11 December 1943 and item 8 of Dr Schwarzbart's motion. Concerning the latter, the Committee has found it obvious that the Government had long been collecting materials and documents concerning German atrocities committed against the Jewish population in Poland. Concerning Dr Scherer's suggestion that representatives of the Jewish population should take part in the punishment of German criminals, the Committee supports the laws already present in Polish law and that war crimes are to be punished by state courts; the participation of the representatives of the society might be desirable; however, the Committee did not find it appropriate to consider this question at the present time; this matter is to be decided by a separate decree.

Given the above, the Committee proposes as follows:

The Council is asked to enact the following:

1) The course of historical events of great importance and armed struggle throughout the four and a half years of the ongoing war has led to the fact that global consciousness of the constant war that the Polish Nation has been waging against the German invader since 1 September 1939 has faded considerably. This fight takes place not only abroad but also, and above all, on the entire territory of the Polish State. This fight, carried out in the country with lack of proper weapons, causes incommensurably high casualties among the soldiers of the Polish

underground, at the same time exacerbating the unprecedented German atrocities against the population of the Republic of Poland.

In their resolutions of 10 June 1942, 27 November 1942, and of 7 January 1943,²⁹ the National Council of the Republic of Poland addressed the parliaments of free countries, the governments of the Allied countries and the general public of the civilised world with an official protest against the monstrous mass murders, unprecedented in the history of mankind, committed systematically on the lands of the Republic of Poland by the German invaders against the Polish Nation, against the Polish Jews and against the Jews brought by the Germans to Poland from the whole European continent in order to be exterminated.

A year has passed since the last resolution of the National Council on the aforementioned matter. The Germans did not stop murdering defenceless civilians on the territories of the Republic of Poland. In fact, they did the opposite, they intensified the scope and means of their atrocities, turning the Polish lands into a slaughterhouse. The already immeasurable sacrifices and suffering of the Polish Nation intensified in the last year. The work of exterminating Polish Jews is coming to an end.

Given these circumstances, the National Council of the Republic of Poland once again raises its voice and asks the parliaments of free countries, the governments of Allied countries, and the general public of the civilised world, once again stating before the entire world the fact of the mass murders committed by the German occupying forces against the civilian population, as well as the fact of their use of the most horrible methods of torture and extermination, such as gas chambers, electric chambers, mass murder by machine-gun fire, and the abuse of women, children and the elderly.

2) The Government of the Republic of Poland has on multiple occasions outlined the situation of the population of the Republic of Poland under German occupation to the governments of the Allied countries, demanding that they jointly consider, resolve and carry out an immediate, systematic and decisive action in response to the German atrocities.

In its resolutions, the National Council of the Republic of Poland has pointed out the inadequacy of the measures taken so far to counteract the German atrocities and emphasised the necessity of taking extraordinary measures to curb the German crimes.

Today, the National Council reiterates its previous resolutions and asks the Government to once again take appropriate steps to put an end to the German atrocities. The National Council also stresses the exceptional extent of the murders

²⁹ See doc. 192, 287 and 312.

committed against the Jewish population living in Poland, as its surviving members are facing extermination.

3) Welcoming the resolutions of the Moscow Conference on the punishment of the perpetrators and originators of war crimes, the National Council calls upon the Government to intervene with the united governments in order to establish a permanent inter-Allied body, named the Council for the Salvation of the Occupied Countries, bringing together the interested governments which would join forces of the United Nations to systematically counteract the extermination of whole peoples by the German occupiers.

4) The National Council demands the International Red Cross to investigate and to constantly oversee the conduct of the German occupiers in the lands of the Republic of Poland, and in particular to investigate and publish information about all the events that have taken place behind the walls of the Jewish ghettos in Poland since the beginning of the occupation.

5) The National Council suggests to the Government of the Republic of Poland to take the initiative of reconvening the governments of the Allied States in order to issue a new declaration, addressed to the German people, on punishment for crimes committed in Poland and in other occupied countries.

The National Council also believes that there is a need for adequate, systematic propaganda informing the Germans of all the atrocities committed by them, warning them of the punishment that will be meted out to all, even the most distant culprits and perpetrators of these atrocities, both those who have ordered them, as well as those who acted upon these orders.

6) At the same time, the National Council appeals to the Government to take appropriate steps to warn the countries neighbouring Poland, Germany's satellite states—of the consequences of any collaboration and of taking part in the German atrocities against the population of the Republic of Poland.

7) The National Council holds the opinion that Poland has the right to demand an exception concerning the permission to send food and medicines to Poland, which should be distributed in the country with due regard for the needs of the Jewish population and in such a way as to ensure that the shipments reach their intended recipients, namely the suffering population of the Republic of Poland.

8) Noting the efforts of Polish governmental as well as social actors in Poland and abroad, aimed at providing aid to the victims of the German terror, including the Jewish population of Poland, the National Council appeals to the Government of the Republic of Poland to set up a social body tasked with rescuing people in immediate danger caused by the German occupation, and to collaborate in this area with the newly established American War Refugee Board.

9) The National Council expresses its deepest appreciation to all citizens of the Republic of Poland who fought heroically in such horrible circumstances against

the barbaric German invaders, including the defenders of the Ghetto in Warsaw and other Polish cities, and pays tribute to the memory of all the fighters who fell in that struggle. The National Council also expresses its deepest appreciation to all Polish Christians who supported the Warsaw Ghetto in the struggle and put their lives at risk to give and continue to provide shelter to the surviving Jews. The National Council asks the Polish population in Poland to spare no effort to rescue and keep alive the Jewish population of the Republic of Poland.

Minority conclusions:

Regarding item 1: Remove first paragraph. (Adam Ciołkosz)

Regarding item 3: Replace 'United Governments' with 'European Commission' (Adam Ciołkosz)

London, 9 March 1944

Minute-taker:

/-/ Adam Ciołkosz

Chairman:

/-/ Dr Bronisław Kuśnierz

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 606

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*10 March 1944. Report by the Consul General in Pretoria
on obtaining aid for people in the USSR*

CAPE TOWN, 10 March 1944

Secret

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Referring to the letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 16 November 1943, and to refero No. 16, I would like to report that pursuant to confidential information received from the local Department of External Affairs, the local Jewish organisations have finally obtained permission from the Union authorities to export 5,000 pairs of shoes, 5,000 sheepskins and about 3,150 boxes containing coffee, tea, sugar, soap and clothing to Russia.

This aid is to be distributed by the Soviet Red Cross among Soviet citizens, regardless of their nationality, according solely to their needs. The Soviet Red Cross, however, informed that should the South African Jewish War Appeal provide aid to Soviet citizens, the organisation's wishes regarding concentration of this aid on the individual territories of the Soviet Union will be taken into consideration. Shipments will be duty-free.

Since I have doubts whether we could organise help for Poles in Russia under the same conditions, I will await your instructions regarding this matter.

Dr S. Łepkowski
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 2

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*12 March 1944. Note by the Consul General in Istanbul
on the visit of the Chief Rabbi of Palestine*

Istanbul, 12 March 1944

Secret

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: The visit of the Chief Rabbi of Palestine to Istanbul

After taking part in the talks in Ankara, the Chief Rabbi of Palestine, Dr Herzog, arrived in Istanbul at the end of last month, where he stayed for 3 days. The arrival of Dr Herzog in Istanbul was prompted by wider Jewish circles in Palestine concerned about the fate of their fellow brothers and sisters in faith and their families in Hungary and the Balkans. 'According to local Jewish activists, the Chief Rabbi has come to Turkey to ask for expanding the Jewish transit visa quota, as well as to show the English—whom many suspect of being deliberately not diligent enough in seeking passage for Jews from Europe with the Turks—the importance the Jews attach to this matter, and, should these efforts fail to produce the desired results, to show that everything possible has been done.'

If Dr Herzog's arrival was of the 'ut aliquid fecisse videatur' nature, as some were led to believe, the outcome of his visit to the Ecumenical Patriarch is judged by Jewish circles to be very positive.

Dr Herzog visited both the Apostolic Delegate and Patriarch Benjamin. The latter visit resulted in the first official response to the issue of the persecution of Jews in the South-Eastern Europe by the Head of the Orthodox Church. According to the local Jewish representatives (I was not able to check for accuracy in Fener),³⁰ the Ecumenical Patriarchate has taken a keen interest in moral support for the persecuted Jews in the Balkans by issuing appropriate orders to the local clergy, according to which they should even individually oppose such persecution.

The conversation that Consul Staniszewski, who was in charge of Jewish matters, had with the Chief Rabbi did not result in any interesting details, apart from the fact that my deputy expressed the readiness of our Office to provide any assistance in matters concerning the evacuation of Jewish citizens of Poland from the Balkans and the answer of Dr H. that he has been informed by the representatives of local Jewish organisations about the friendly attitude of the Consulate General.³¹

For the exclusive information of the Ministry, I would like to note that this or any other position of the Consulate General cannot have generally any effect on the movement of Jews passing through Turkey.

Zdzisław Szczerbiński
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Ankara, 102

³⁰ Fener was a district of Istanbul that housed the seat of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

³¹ In the cable of 6 April 1944, Ambassador Sokolnicki sent the following: 'H. is leaving today for the United States for a month to determine the evacuation campaign plan. The Government of the United States wishes to extend this campaign to all refugees, no matter their origin. Strong pressure is being put on the Hungarian Government and indirectly on Germany. H. suggests that we should pressure the English for visas that would enable us to use the American campaign. He had decided to put off discussing technical matters until his return. I think it would be advisable for our Embassy in Washington to take advantage of H.'s stay in the United States.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154.

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[After 15 March 1944]. Note by the First Secretary at the Embassy in London from a conversation at the British Foreign Office

Note

On 15 March, at the invitation of Mr Walker from the Refugees Department, Foreign Office, I had a conversation with him about our efforts to enable Polish refugees in Hungary to leave for the British Empire.

Walker asked me to be more specific about our demands regarding the issue at hand. I explained that what we had in mind was a discreet and gradual campaign, coordinated between our and British representatives and aimed at getting certain categories of endangered Polish citizens out from Hungarian territory, the number of whom was estimated at about 1-2 thousand. Given these circumstances, we asked for support with obtaining visas to any of the British territories; for example, I have mentioned South and East Africa for the Poles and Palestine for the Jews. I emphasised that we would like to treat all our citizens equally and do not discriminate in favour of people of Jewish origin. I also suggested an initial evacuation of a smaller group, a group of about 50-100 individuals, to be carried out first, so as not to draw too much attention. Walker listened to my comments and remarked that as far as the Jews were concerned, there would be no issues with letting them to go to Palestine and asked whether Syria would be suitable for the remaining non-Jewish citizens. He said that he believed that Syria still has ample capacity as an asylum, which should increase as hostilities move further away.

I replied that I thought Syria would be a great place of asylum for us.

At the end of our conversation, I pointed out that the Polish Government attaches great importance to this matter, in particular since the number of Poles in Hungary is steadily growing due to the influx of refugees from Romania and even Poland, who are still endangered there. I added that, in anticipation of unforeseeable circumstances in the near future, we wanted to get all the endangered refugees out of Hungary to make space for the possible new arrivals.

Walker also asked me if it would be possible to provide a list of names of the individuals whom we were considering. He believes that providing such a list to London or, better still, to Ankara or Istanbul could facilitate the matter at hand.

M. Budny

First Secretary at the Embassy

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*16 March 1944. Note by the Ministry of Information and Documentation
on the Jewish population figures in occupied Poland*

London, 16 March 1944

In connection with the increasingly frequent enquiries about the figures concerning the Jewish population, the Ministry of Information and Documentation conveys the following data in order to clarify the answers:

In 1939 there were about 3,400,000 Jews living on the territory of the Republic of Poland. As a result of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, the territory of the Republic of Poland was divided in such a way that 2,250,000 Jews ended up on the German side of the demarcation line and 1,150,000 lived on the Russian side.

The exodus of Jews from Poland started in 1939, immediately after the invasion. One should assume that between September 1939 and February 1940 about 15,000 Jews left Poland and made their way to Hungary and Romania. Some of them managed to get to Palestine and France, from where they went to Great Britain or Lisbon and then to the United States of America, Latin American countries and ultimately to Palestine. There were about 5,000 such Jews. About 10,000 Jews were stuck in Romania due to the lack of additional visas. They were first interned by the Romanians in 1941, and then sent to Transnistria, where they lived in appalling conditions. They have recently been sent back to Romania and their living conditions have supposedly improved.

Between September 1939 and June 1941, the Russians deported about 250,000 Polish Jews deep into Russian territory. Of those, about 10,000 left the territory of the USSR. In April 1943, when the Embassy in Kuybyshev was liquidated, about 90,000 Polish Jews were supported by the Embassy; as of now, they are taken care of by the Australian Legation, but it is probable that there were tens of thousands of Polish Jews in the USSR, who for various reasons could not get to the Polish Embassy. A significant percentage of those deported to Russia died in 1941 and 1942.

As far as it concerns the number of Jews killed in Poland by the Germans since July 1942—that is to say, since the beginning of the extermination—the exact figure cannot be provided, but it most definitely exceeds 2 million. The number of Jews still living in Poland is also difficult to determine and varies quite considerably in various reports from the country. One should assume that there are fewer than one million Jews living in Poland at the moment. This figure encompasses:

- 1) Jews in labour camps.
- 2) Jews in some towns and ghettos not yet liquidated by the Germans, and

3) Jews living in hiding by Polish underground organisations and by people in the countryside and cities.

Only a couple hundred people managed to escape from the German occupation since the extermination began and get to the neutral and Allied countries; they ended up mainly in Turkey, from where they went to Palestine, and some managed to get to Switzerland and Sweden. In addition, a few thousand people currently living in Hungary were saved from extermination, at least temporarily. The number of Jews who crossed the Hungarian border in the last months of 1943 was 3,000 as of January 1944, and this number grows by almost 1,000 every month. The information concerning Jews escaping to Hungary may be provided as confidential but cannot be made available for the use by the press.

MINISTER
S. Kot

AAN, Ambasada Ankara, 102

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*16 March 1944. Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Embassy in Washington
on refugees in Mauritius (with enclosure)*

London, 16 March 1944

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Washington

In response to the letter from the Embassy from 25 February 1944 No. 738/SZ-107 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs encloses information regarding persons interned on the island of Mauritius and claiming to be Polish citizens or citizens of Danzig.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests that this information be used in instances where the Embassy deems it necessary to provide clarification on this matter in response to an inquiry received from appropriate Jewish organisations or activists in America.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
E. H. Czapski

[enclosure]

Of the refugees on the island of Mauritius, there are two groups taken into consideration—one group numbering about 320 people, who identify themselves as Polish citizens, and a group of 140 people, who consider themselves citizens of the Free City of Danzig.

Both these groups contacted the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in London via the Honorary Consulate in Port Louis with the request to establish their citizenship and to intervene with the English authorities for their release from the internment camp.

Due to the fact that these refugees came either from Germany or from countries occupied by Germany, which they left only in August and September 1940, that is, already during the war—which was established according to the investigations carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the basis of their own statements—the Consulate General could not, for understandable reasons, intervene with the English authorities and ensure their release, as the persons were unknown. Such a step would entail taking responsibility for several hundred people whose citizenship was undetermined, and of whom we would have to take great care from the point of view of security.

Therefore, the Consulate General in London (to which the Honorary Consulate in Port Louis on the island of Mauritius reports) adopted the stance that the first step to initiate any action to release these people from the camp was to establish their Polish citizenship and—acting in agreement and on the basis of instructions sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—issued a relevant order in this regard to Mr Rogers, the Honorary Consul in Port Louis.

Out of the total number of 322 individuals belonging to the Polish group, only 190 sent in application forms to the Consulate; this is partially explained by the fact that a number of forms include several people, members of the same family. Out of 190 refugees claiming Polish citizenship, not a single one had documents confirming Polish citizenship when entering Palestine, where passport checks were carried out. 182 people from this group had German documents for stateless persons, the so-called Fremdenpässe issued by the German authorities and indicating their stateless status. Two had German passports, which confirmed their German citizenship, one had a Slovak passport, and five had no documents at all.

Regardless of this information, which the Consulate General received from the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem, the Consulate General through direct correspondence with the Honorary Consulate in Port Louis established that a certain, very small percentage of refugees (only 11) are in possession of certain documents which, while not constituting direct evidence of the citizenship of the persons concerned, could nevertheless serve as a starting

point for additional investigations. In addition, a number of refugees volunteered for military service in the Polish Army and, as a result of this application, the Ministry of National Defence conscripted the following individuals:

HOLZBERG Jakób

HILZBERG Mozes

GEWUERZ Imanuel

IMBERMAN Ignacy

LUBLINER Icek

MUNZER Majer

KOKISCH Adolf

Together with them, a certain DAWIDOWICZ Broch Jefim left for the Middle East, but his name does not appear on any of the lists of the Consulate.

As far as the second group of refugees is concerned, namely those who identify as citizens of Danzig, the investigation has found that out of 140 individuals, 4 are holders of documents for stateless persons issued in Danzig, one had no documents at all, while the rest have passports that confirm their Danzig citizenship.

The question of aid is, however, separate from the issue of their citizenship. The provision of assistance and support to refugees scattered throughout the world is—given the circumstances of the ongoing war—required regardless of establishing the citizenship of an individual, in particular in the numerous cases where citizenship is difficult or sometimes impossible to determine, and where the provision of aid is necessary.

Regarding the aforementioned refugees, from the first days of their arrival on the island of Mauritius, they have been looked after by the Honorary Consulate in Port Louis.

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

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*17 March 1944. Letter from the Embassy in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
information from Bern on Salvadoran passports*

17 March 1944

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
New York

The Embassy requests the Consul General to communicate the content of the following telegram, received on 16 March from Bern, sent by Mr Sternbuch to Agudat in a strictly confidential manner:

‘1) S. awaits further information on Salvadoran passports. This case is very urgent, as police investigations are already underway in Bern. S. points out that these passports can still be issued in significant numbers.

2) A year ago, forged Honduras documents were issued in Bern. The issue of these documents may turn out to be quite unpleasant, as the person issuing them was not a Consul. S. requests urgent intervention to ask for them to be recognised.’

M. Kwapiszewski
Chargé d’Affaires a.i.

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

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*18 March 1944. Cable from the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare
to the Legation in Bern:
information for the Delegate of the Ministry in Hungary*

TO Polmission BERN
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 22 MAR 1944

No. 152

Minister Stańczyk to Sławik

Please continue to provide the utmost care of all the Polish Jews—receptus report on the situation of Jewish refugees. To avoid danger, do not place Jews in separate settlements. I was informed that some of the Committee's officials, in particular Rolecki, were hostile to Jews, refusing benefits and even informing Hungarians that certain people with Aryan documents were Jews. If the information is true, please dismiss them from their positions with immediate effect. All care should be placed in your hands. Please provide a subsidy to the YMCA. I am trying to get it increased.

Polexterne
E. Przesmycki, 18 March 1944

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera*, MSZ, 154

451

*19 March 1944. Dispatch from a member of the National Council
to the Prime Minister of Great Britain:
information of a Jewish organisation in occupied Poland*

Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Downing Street, Lon.

I feel that it is my duty to pass on to you this SOS call sent out from the Secret Headquarters of the Jewish underground labour movement somewhere in Poland 'Live must be saved before it is too late' stop The Jews of Poland go down fighting stop Heroic armed resistance of the ghettos of Warsaw Białystok general strike of 150,000 Jewish workers behind ghetto walls of Łódź armed revolts even in horrible gas-chamber infernos of determination of Jewish underground labour movement

to fight Nazis until the last breath strengthen the demand that world democracies do really their utmost to save the lives of remnants of the Jewish people under Nazi occupation stop We welcome warmly the War Refugee Board created by President Roosevelt³² stop The valuable rescue work it can do is of greatest importance stop Unfortunately the bulk of the tortured Jewish population in Poland will not be able to escape Nazi hangmen and cannot benefit from refugee help stop The only way to keep remnants of the Jews alive is to stop Nazi murderers stop To find means and ways at this zero hour I beg to submit to you the Prime Minister of Great Britain this suggestion on behalf of the people I represent—to create a special interallied body a committee to stop mass murder and to save human lives under Nazi occupation stop Such a committee given high status working in close collaboration with allied military command should explore and apply extraordinary measures to hamper the extermination of any people Jews or non-Jews stop Let me quote these words coming from the gehenna of Jewish martyrdom the death in Poland.

‘The co-responsibility for our fate rests also on the world democracies.’

Emanuel Scherer
Member National Council of Poland
Stratton House London

TNA, FO 371/42790 (ENG)

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*20 March 1944. Letter from the Deputy Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare:
information for a Jewish organisation*

London, 20 March 1944

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

In reference to the letter from 11 March No. 2848/44/Sow/10, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggests using the following arguments when responding to the Jewish Search Centre:

³² The War Refugee Board was established on 22 January 1944.

The Polish Government has always stood and continues to stand for the protection of the rights and property of all its citizens regardless of religion, race or nationality. Following this principle, the Polish Government made efforts to provide the fairest possible care for all Polish citizens from the very beginning of its diplomatic relations with the USSR, namely from 31 July 1941, until they were unilaterally broken off by the Soviets on 24 April 1943.

As is well known, throughout 1941 and in particular in 1942, these efforts were met with increasing obstacles, as the Soviet authorities began to unilaterally recognise Polish citizens—Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Jews—as Soviet citizens on the basis of various criteria—the pronunciation of their surnames, parents' names, and the physical appearance of the applicant in question—despite the many formal and official objections raised by the Polish Government.

For the good of those concerned and in order to prevent discrimination, the Polish Government disapproved of the Soviet authorities changing their treatment of Polish citizens depending on racial, religious and national differences. Polish citizens of Jewish origins were included in the evacuation of the army and military families from the USSR to the fullest possible extent, in spite of the difficulties posed by the Soviet authorities.

The Polish Government continues to persuade the Soviet authorities, through the Allied governments, to allow further evacuation of Polish citizens from the USSR. To this end, the Polish Government agents in the Middle East are in close contact with the Jewish organisations in Palestine and Tehran. These organisations are collecting and structuring all the materials, which can be used for helping Jews, Polish citizens in the USSR, as well as those which could prove useful during an evacuation, the theoretical possibility of which has to be taken into consideration.

If the Jewish Search Centre has any data at its disposal, it would be advisable to send them to the relevant Jewish organisations in Palestine in order to supplement their data sets, which are undoubtedly more complete than those of the Jewish Search Centre in London. Having done that, the information would find a better and most appropriate practical use, for both the aid effort and the evacuation of Jews-Polish citizens from the USSR.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
E. H. Czapski

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/5

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22 March 1944. Report by the Legation in Havana on refugees in Jamaica

Havana, 22 March 1944

TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
IN LONDON

In response to the letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs No. K.718/44 from 3 January 1944, the Polish Legation in Havana informs:

(1) The group of individuals mentioned in the note of the Dutch Embassy to the Polish Government, sent as an enclosure to the said letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has since left Jamaica in connection with the transfer of Dutch nationals from the Gibraltar Camp (near Kingston/Jamaica) to a camp set up for them in Paramaribo (Suriname/Dutch Guiana).

(2) It seems necessary to establish the consular competence regarding these matters, either by an ad hoc delegation of the Legation of the Republic in Poland in Havana (like in Jamaica) or by maintaining the present competence concerning the Dutch overseas territories and possessions; if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decides in favour of the former, the Legation will approach the Dutch authorities in Suriname—after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has previously notified them of such a delegation via the Dutch central authorities, declaring the willingness to investigate the matter of Polish citizenship of these persons on the basis of the submitted, or other proofs and factors that would make their citizenship plausible.

(3) Not having the formal entitlement to communicate directly with the Dutch authorities in South America, the Legation refrains for the time being from deciding how to handle these matters, pending receipt of an appropriate order from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As far as the key matter of the case—the recognition or non-recognition of Polish citizenship of these individuals—is concerned, the Legation informs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the following aspects, based on its previous experience and observations resulting from handling passport matters for people evacuated to Jamaica:

(1) Some of these people have poor documentation confirming their Polish citizenship; their passports were apparently issued to them 'for humanitarian reasons' or to remove them from Portugal in order to enable the transport of more refugees arriving via Spain. Due to the fact that it is not advisable, if only because of the British authorities, to question the Polish citizenship of some of these individuals, the Legation is investigating all of these cases again, either keeping up or introducing the so-called clause in order to find the individual in question and

their passport case at the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Havana. According to the Legation's understanding, in post-war reality, this will enable making the final decision of the citizenship of these individuals, either by revoking the clause or by proving that they were never Polish nationals and that it was the goodwill of the Polish authorities to grant them passports in order to save them from repressions and enable them to evacuate from Europe on humanitarian grounds.

(2) Regarding the holders of Dutch passports, who request their Polish citizenship to be officially recognised, one should bear in mind that the majority of Polish nationals, even if they have lost or destroyed their Polish papers during their evacuation from France, have had the opportunity to settle their passport matters during subsequent investigations carried out in Lyon, Toulouse or Lisbon.

(3) The need for a careful investigation of the passport cases of these individuals also stems from the doubts concerning their identical nature (for example, among 5 families—8 people in total—listed in the Dutch notes, 2 heads of family have two surnames, German or Dutch).

(4) The matter of the revision of the citizenship of these people seems to have been initiated not on the initiative of the Dutch authorities, but by the individuals in question, in connection with the mandatory medical examination ordered by the Dutch authorities to enable drafting them to the Dutch military, as well as—more recently—in connection with the transfer of Dutch citizens from Jamaica to Guiana, which has a harsher climate. These circumstances are unanimously confirmed by the acquaintances of the individuals concerned, who are in camp in Jamaica.

It is the opinion of the Legation that all of the aforementioned factors should prompt the most careful possible investigation of these passport matters; however, they may not affect the decision as to whether or not the Polish citizenship of such people is to be recognised, as long as the evidence pointing to the validity of their claims is deemed sufficient and after an examination of the identity of the person in each individual case. Denying the Polish citizenship of these individuals or adopting a strictly formal and legal stance could be deemed incomprehensible by the Dutch authorities.

IPMS, Poselstwo Hawana, A.62/43

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24 March 1944. Letter from Izaak Lewin to the Envoy in Buenos Aires regarding passports of South American countries

CONFIDENTIAL

New York, 24 March 1944

Minister
MIROSLAW ARCISZEWSKI,
Envoy of the Republic of Poland
in Buenos Aires

Your Excellency,

I decided to take the liberty to address you on the following matter of life or death for several hundred Polish citizens who are in Hitler's clutches, which indirectly affects even more than that.

They are in the internment camps in Vittel, Tittmoning, Belsen-Bergen and Liebenau. Their current official status is that they are considered citizens of certain South American republics, most notably Paraguay.

In the first place, I want to explain, why are we seeing such a situation. When the Germans set about murdering the Polish Jews, a number of people held South American passports, and they used them to confirm their identity to the Gestapo, who sent them to camps in the aforementioned towns, where they have been located for about two years.

The passports are genuine insofar as they were issued by the actual Consuls of the republics in question, albeit the individuals in question were never listed among the citizens of the countries concerned. When the news that the holders of these passports were in the mentioned camps reached the respective governments, there was a danger that the passports would be invalidated and that these people would be immediately shot by the Germans. The Government of the Republic of Poland in London, upon learning of this, immediately intervened to rescue these people by ensuring the recognition of South American passports as genuine. I personally managed to get the Department of State in Washington and the Apostolic Nuncio in Washington interested in this matter. The United States Government intervened with Paraguay and other states at the speed of lightning so that they recognise these passports, and I have received word from the Nuncio that Cardinal Maglione has instructed the Nuncio in Asuncion to intervene in the same way and has received a positive response on behalf of the Paraguayan Government.

The legal status of these unfortunate people is better in the way that there is currently no fear that the South American governments will invalidate their passports; however, this is hardly enough.

From people who arrived recently on board of Gripsholm to the United States from these camps—citizens of the United States who have been exchanged—we have learnt that great danger is still looming over them. The Germans know that something is not right in this case and are keeping these people alive for as long as they think they will be useful as material for exchange. If the Germans came to the conclusion that these individuals will never be exchanged, they would be threatened with immediate deportation to Poland, resulting in their deaths.

I brought up this matter before the War Refugee Board in Washington this week, and I hope that the American Government will do something about it. However, I think that you can also do a lot in this matter, which is why I allow myself to make some suggestions.

If you could intervene in Asuncion so that the Paraguayan Government officially requests the exchange of citizens holding Paraguayan passports, that would be incredibly valuable. Regardless of the outcome of the exchange negotiations, the fate of the families concerned would be secured, at least during the negotiations. Of course, it cannot be ruled out that the exchange would eventually take place and, obviously, none of these people would then need to go to Paraguay or other South American states, as we have Palestinian certificates for them, so they could go straight from Lisbon to Palestine.

I know the matter is extremely sensitive; however, on the other hand, it should not be too difficult due to the fact that the American Government has officially gotten behind it and that the Vatican has supported it through the Apostolic Nuncio in Asuncion. I am well aware that it might be difficult for you to intervene here, since these people cannot be considered Polish citizens for the time being, even though once they are released they would become Polish citizens immediately—nevertheless, I hope that you can find appropriate ways to obtain Paraguay's official request for an exchange, possibly in cooperation with the American Ambassador and the Nuncio in Asuncion, both of whom are well-acquainted with this matter.

Enclosed, you can find a list with the names of the people of whom we know, their locations and the documents they have.³³ Not all of them are 'Paraguayans'—some of them hold Costa Rican passports, and so on. I also must mention that among them, there are some prominent Polish figures, including the wife of Prof. Schorr, senator from Warsaw and more.

³³ Not included in this publication.

If you have any comments on the steps still needed on the part of the American Government—I believe we could make them happen. I am looking forward to your response at your earliest convenience.³⁴

Please accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

Rabbi Dr I. Lewin

AAN, *Poselstwo Buenos Aires*, 252

³⁴ The letter was forwarded through the Consul General in New York, who informed in the covering letter: 'Enclosed, you will find a letter from Rabbi Dr Lewin. These matters have been handled for a while in this office, which serves as a mediator. Dr Lewin is a prominent representative of the Polish Agudat, an organisation of Orthodox Jews. He is also an ardent Polish patriot, for which there is plenty of evidence. Recently, he headed a delegation of rabbis from Poland received by Under-Secretary of State Stettinius, to whom the delegation declared, on behalf of the Jewish population on both sides of the Curzon Line that they see their future entirely and exclusively linked with the Polish state, and that the entire Jewish population concerned declares their opposition against any changes of the Polish borders to the detriment to its territories in the East. I would like to ask you to respond to Dr Lewin, assuring him that you would do everything possible to save these unfortunate souls. Dr Lewin has been campaigning tirelessly among American Jews for the Polish cause. Every official enunciation that confirms the support of the Government of the Republic of Poland for the Jews gives him very valuable arguments to support his cause. The person who delivered this letter, Dr Michael Traub, is a prominent Zionist and activist of the Pro-Palestine Committee. He organised these committees in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. From 1933 to 1938, he was the president of the association of Polish Jews in Germany. In New York, he gave a lecture at the Polish Hearth Club on his experiences, during which he said that he was both a Polish and a Jewish patriot, and that it was necessary to forget about all resentments connected with the past on both sides and build a better future based on trust. Palestine cannot house all the Jews—some of them would stay in Poland, while many Polish Jews will not want to leave it, due to their ties to this country. Thus, we must build a foundation for cooperation. Dr Traub kept in touch with the most prominent members of the governments everywhere, and being a Jew made it easy for him to make them aware of the Polish situation. In Australia, Dr Traub was in close contact with Minister Dr Gruszka, in New Zealand he kept in touch with Dr Wodzicki [see doc. 415], and in South Africa with Minister Łepkowski. I think you could make good use of his stay in South America, and Dr Traub himself expressed the will to do so.' AAN, *Poselstwo Buenos Aires*, 252. See doc. 472.

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*28 March 1944. Instruction by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
for the Consulates in Algiers and Casablanca
on the care for refugees in Tangier*

INSTRUCTION

In agreement with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends this instruction concerning care for Polish citizens in Tangier.

1. The care for Polish citizens in the Tangier zone is ensured by the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Casablanca within the framework of the coordination and authority exercised by the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Algiers.

2. Adequate funds will be sent from Madrid, following the requests of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

3. The Consulate in Casablanca should submit a draft of the first budget estimate for expenses linked to care and support in Tangier, as soon as possible.

4. While drafting the estimate, the following assumptions are to be made:

a) only Polish nationals in need may receive subsidies;

b) war refugees should receive equal and fixed subsidies, and in the case of emigrants who left Poland before 1 September 1939, they are to be set on a case-by-case basis;

c) the subsidies should be limited to covering the essential needs of the individual; some refugees should be paid out only 50 or 75 per cent of the basic rate;

d) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepts requests regarding maintaining or setting new subsidy rates for refugees.

5. Medical care and aid should be included in the budget estimates. This aid would include medical advice as well as reimbursement for medication. It would be most practical for the Consulate to contact one of the doctors in Tangier and decide on a monthly lump sum based on the number of appointments, as well as with the local pharmacy to arrange the reimbursement of the cost of medicines. We would have to closely oversee the visits and the medicines dispensed.

6. The budget will also cover the actual travel expenses of the Consulate representative from Casablanca to Tangier. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers them necessary approximately once every three months.

7. Until the budget is determined, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare will send 24,000 pesetas per month to the Consulate's account with the Bank of British West Africa in Tangier via Madrid; however, in view of the planned departure of a number of Polish citizens from Tangier, as well as the preparation of a list of individuals benefiting from the above-mentioned subsidies, the amount will certainly prove too high and efforts should be made to disburse them as prudently as possible.

8. In order to coordinate the care campaign, cooperation should be established with the Joint in Tangier to:

a) determine what help are they willing to provide to Polish citizens of Jewish descent and to what extent;

b) eliminate the possibility of the same individuals receiving benefits from several sources;

c) receive information on the material situation of Polish citizens in connection with the fair allocation of benefits;

d) obtain possible financial support for departures of Polish citizens from Tangier. In this regard, the Ministry expects to receive a list of individuals who would like to leave Tangier, their destinations, as well as those who possibly already have entry visas to various countries, along with a list of these countries.

9. The Consulate in Casablanca is to submit a monthly report (in 2 copies) to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on budget spending, as well as any budget requests.

London, 28 March 1944

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

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29 March 1944. Circular by the Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi on relations between refugees

Nairobi, 29 March 1944

CIRCULAR No. 106

Some refugee settlements in Africa see cases that show unacceptable attitudes of some refugees towards other refugees, stemming from national and religious differences.

All refugees should remember and constantly have in their mind:

- that the Polish State is the common good of all Polish citizens, whose rights may not hinge upon their origin, religion, gender or nationality;
- that every Polish citizen has the right to preserve their nationality and cultivate their language and national characteristics;
- that every Polish citizen has the right to freely profess their religion, both in public and in private, and to follow the rules of their religion or denomination,³⁵ and that their religion or religious beliefs may not be the reason for limiting their rights granted to other Polish citizens;
- that only by respecting these basic principles it will be possible to unite all Polish citizens in harmonious cooperation for the common good.

These principles constitute the foundation of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, they also underpin democracy, and the Allied Nations are at war for them to prevail.

Those who transgress the principles outlined above do so because they fail to recognise the enormous evil that their behaviour may bring on our country.

If they did it consciously, their actions would have to be considered inspired by some hostile forces, whose aim is to work against the Polish cause.

Being convinced that the aforementioned incidents will no longer occur in refugee settlements, I call upon all residents of the settlements to live together in harmony, and I remind the members of the administration of the settlements—in particular the officers of the Cultural and Educational Care—of their duty to make the refugees aware of the need to behave in a way that would earn us the respect of strangers and contribute to the happy future of our country.³⁶

/-/ Lubodziecki

Head of the General Organisation and Security Department

/-/ Staszewski

For the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/44

³⁵ In the letter from 3 August 1944, the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Alfred Urbański, informed Ignacy Schwarzbart that the Ministry 'approves the visit of a rabbi, delegated on behalf of the Council for Refugee Settlement, to the Jewish settlements to give them religious consolation. The Ministry will simultaneously inform the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi of its decision in order to grant the Council's delegated rabbi all the necessary support. Furthermore, the Ministry requests that the delegated rabbi communicate all the requests and observations to the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.' IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/45.

³⁶ The circular was sent to the heads of the settlements (for implementation), the heads of the agencies (with a request for cooperation), as well as to the Delegate of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education and the director of the Polish YMCA.

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*1 April 1944. Letter from the Embassy in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
information from Bern on situation in Hungary*

1 April 1944

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Dispatch from P. Sternbuch in Bern to the Agudat of 31 March, which reads as follows:

‘The new situation in Hungary has put a stop to our action. To date, we had daily phone calls with the Orthodox office in Budapest and with Satmarer. To clarify the situation, I am sending a courier to Budapest. We will communicate the information received from him by telegraph. The courier has got, among other things, documents long reserved for many well-known rabbis and other key figures. We will be sending out a series of individual information.’

I ask you to communicate the contents of the above telegram to the relevant representatives of the Agudat in strict confidence and without disclosing the manner in which the information was delivered.³⁷

For the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
M. Kwapiszewski
Minister Plenipotentiary
Counsellor at the Embassy

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

³⁷ In the letter from 24 March 1944 to the Consul General in New York, the Embassy in Washington stated: ‘Please communicate the contents of the following telegram from Mr Sternbuch in Berlin to the Agudat organisation in New York, in strict confidence: ‘1) The whereabouts of the following people remains unknown: the Kessler brothers from Brussels, Schmelker from Vienna, Rabbi Baumöl, the Roth family (in July 1943—Bochnia). 2) Symche Klein and his wife are in Cracow—their son is in Hungary. 3) Gottfried Goldschmidt and his wife are interned in Bergen. They have a Paraguayan passport. 4) Claire Perlberg is in Westerbork. She received a certificate. 5) It is possible that the Richter family can be rescued from the camp by legal means. 6) Rawe Idenfeld

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*3 April 1944. Report by the Consul General in Istanbul
on the situation in Hungary*Secret, urgent

Istanbul, 3 April 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in LondonRegarding: The Jewish matter in Hungary and Europe

The subordination of Hungary to Germany's direct wartime demands gives rise to an entirely new situation for the Jews living there.

The local observers agree that the situation of the Jews in Hungary has become precarious after 19 March, and it is going to deteriorate at a rapid pace; however, their predictions differ as to the extent to which the extermination policy will be applied against the Jews in Hungary, the nature of the persecution, and especially the possibility of effective external assistance.

The existing legal acts and the first symptoms of the new agenda do not offer sufficient grounds for drawing far-reaching conclusions for the future; however, certain general considerations connected on the one hand with the social and racial structure of Hungary and, on the other hand, with the hierarchy of German needs, lead us to make certain hypothetical predictions which may be useful to the Government of the Republic of Poland, both from the point of view of the concern for the fate of Polish citizens, as well as our participation in the defence of human rights led by the United Nations.

The Hungarian census of 1910 states the number of Jews at 900,000, or about 5% of the total population of the then Kingdom. After the Treaty of Trianon, the percentage grew to about 5.5%, and the number after the annexation of a part of Hungary by Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia amounted to 450,000. Recently, after Hungary's regaining part of its 1914 territories in 1938, 1939 and 1941, the number of Jews in Hungary, cited by German sources, was about 6.5 per

from Trzebinia together with hundreds of other rescued people are starving in Russia (Malygin 8, Bukhara). Please send money directly via dispatch or food. 7) Rabbi Brisker is in Tasnad, Hungary. There are people from Detroit as well. 8) Please notify Becker, 124 West 93rd Street, that Sauri is in danger. Send \$2500 and communicate with Kroch, Juncae 824, Buenos Aires, mention Dreifus. Carlos Falkwrechner and Bondimerkin and the Kruszkaj family 4000 each, Adler Sachs 1000.' AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506.

cent, or about 800,000, with the exception that this number does not include the large number of people referred to by the terminology of the Third Reich as 'Mischlinge' and baptised. Some German sources put the number of Jews in Hungary on the eve of the recent events at one million.

The same sources, as well as Nazi Hungary's István Barta 'Judenfrage in Ungarn' determined the percentage of Jews in Hungarian social and economic life in the years before the introduction of legislation concerning Jews:

- 60–80% at the big banks;
- 50% in big industry;
- 48% among independent merchants;
- 54% among shop clerks.

The first law (Kálmán Darányi) against the Jews was enacted in 1938 and was aimed at regulating the percentage of Jews in the press, commerce, and industry, bringing their numbers down to 20% in these fields. The second law, enacted in May 1939 (Count Pál Teleki) in theory reduced this share further, down to 6%; however, it did not apply to children in mixed marriages and baptised Jews. The aim of this act was to get rid of Jews from film, theatre, public offices and education, successfully. The laws of summer 1941 were intended to make mixed marriages more difficult and provided for penalties for the so-called Rassenschande.

The fight against the Jews was led mainly by Gömbös, Darányi, Imrédy, Teleki and László Bárdossy. Even Kállay introduced a land law in the spring of 1942, aimed at transferring large rural properties from Jewish hands to the hands of small farmers.

All these measures, however, were not only far from economic extermination and referred to percentages but were mostly based on religious rather than racial discrimination. Violent persecution only occurred in two cases—the formation of Jewish labour battalions in 1941 and dispatching 15,000–20,000 of them to Subcarpathia and Ukraine, where half of them died *wilted*, and the slaughter of Jews in Novi Sad in January 1942 by the occupying Hungarian troops, allegedly instigated by the Germans.³⁸

In this precarious tolerance, until 1942 the Hungarian Government was guided by the considerations of Hungary's social and economic structure, as well as its internal politics. In 1943, there was an apparent trend, stemming from this tolerance, to come up with a political 'alibi' for Hungary, which would prove useful in the case of an expected Anglo-Saxon victory.

³⁸ This is a reference to the massacre in Novi Sad—mass executions of mainly Serbian and Jewish population carried out by the Hungarian army in January 1942, in which approximately 4,000 people were killed.

In the parties that comprised Kállay's government, the struggle between the agrarians and the industrialists was becoming visible. The latter, who had had financial links to the wealthy Jewish circle and believed that the extermination policy against Jews would be a prelude to curbing their own economic opportunities, opposed the anti-Jewish sentiments of the agrarians; however, the agrarians, deeply embedded in all the government bodies, were preparing the ground for an easy and quick seizure of total power at the proper moment by collaborators.

This explains the fact that in March, the seizure of power à outrance by the collaborators and the surrender of the country to Germany went rather smoothly.

Until 19 March, Jews enjoyed complete freedom—many of the large industrial factories were owned and headed by the Jews, and they sat on military supply committees. They owned more than half of urban properties in Budapest, where 25% of the population was of Jewish origin; there were no concentration camps, Jewish refugees from Poland were accepted, and 100–200 people a month made their way through Slovak lands. Refugees were released to Palestine and every month several hundred Jewish refugees passed through Istanbul. Attempts were made—usually without success—to exploit this tolerance in Allied or neutral pro-Allied press. The generals responsible for the Novi Sad slaughter were formally accused and were to stand trial—although they were allowed to escape to Germany. External financial assistance was allowed. Free speech in the press was tolerated.

The Sztójay government immediately set about implementing the Nazi agenda regarding the Jews:

- 1) they arrested a number of influential journalists, politicians and financiers of Jewish origin or known for their pro-Jewish sympathies;
- 2) ordered that Jews wear a yellow six-pointed star, which was compulsory for everybody;
- 3) expelled Jews from the bar, forbade Jews to employ non-Jews as domestic servants, and confiscated their telephones and radios.

At the same time, the Government launched a press and radio campaign, in line with well-known models, already tried and proven in other occupied countries.

As of now, it would seem that Jewish society in Hungary is heading in the same precarious direction as in other countries under German control, except that the decline will be much faster due to the 'expertise' of the Germans in this field and the threat from the East.

Some observers, as well as local representatives of Jewish organisations, believe that a process of extermination similar to what we have seen in other countries under German rule is inevitable for the following reasons:

- 1) Seeing the deteriorating economic situation of Hungary, which Germany is beginning to exploit for their war effort, they need to channel the sentiments of the

general populace towards the easiest and the most desirable direction—the Jews—which simultaneously ‘ideologically’ links the populace with the Third Reich and the aims of the war.

2) Urging the people to defend against the Soviets suggests that it would be advisable to use the undeniable links between Jews and the communist movements (Béla Kun).

3) This would make it easy for the active enthusiasts of the coup to financially prop themselves up at someone else’s expense.

4) There are many Germans waiting for *Treuhänder* jobs, as well as trained oppressors who are temporarily out of work.

5) A new wave of extermination of the Jews in Europe is needed to uplift the German spirits.

In contrast, the few optimists cite arguments to the contrary:

1) In Hungary there is a strong connection between Jewish and Magyar society—family and financial ties, etc., leading to issues with relying on racial criteria in extermination policy.

2) Germany has *d’autres châts à fouetter*, including, above all, mobilising all the economic power of Hungary to aid their war effort, which would be disrupted due to the prolonged unrest and disturbances connected with the extermination of Jews.

3) The last 2 months saw lower German extermination activity in other regions.

Given these arguments, it seems that the following prediction could be made:

1) A period of persecution and rapid exclusion of Jews from political, economic and cultural life has started in Hungary. Seeing the nature of the Hungarian society and the autonomy offered by the Germans (dictated by the objectives of the war effort), the persecution should not take such violent and cruel forms as in other occupied countries. In any case, physical extermination along the lines of what happened in Poland seems completely unlikely.

2) It is difficult to foresee that the definition of the ‘Jew’ will be just as categorical as in other Axis countries under German control. There will probably be many exceptions, as indicated by the exclusion of participants in the 1914–1918 war and recipients of the highest Hungarian distinctions from the new laws. One should not forget that the Nazi leader (Imrédy) had a Jewish grandmother, which is a characteristic fact that is by no means unique to Hungarian relations.

3) The Jewish refugee issue will probably be dealt with separately. To date, there is nothing that would let us predict whether travel permits will be still granted. The work of the Jewish organisations here is geared—by sheer necessity—to carry on with the transports.

Considering the question of the persecution of the Jews from a broader point of view, one can conclude from a number of small yet characteristic symptoms that the Germans decided to halt the physical extermination of the Jews.

In particular, news from Poland, which arrived in late February and early March this year, indicate a breakthrough in persecution there. The unconfirmed but credible reports claim that mass executions have all but ceased. The news of 11 March claim that the SS can no longer issue summary judgements against the Jews, and supposedly there is also a circular threatening those who kill Jews on their own with serious punishments.

There is also news of food coupons being given to Jews and of improving situation in the camps. France and Northern Italy are other sources of news about persecution being less severe.

There is concrete news from Romania received by the Consulate General—the latest from individuals who came here on 26 March and 4 April from Bucharest—that the anti-Jewish agenda has been considerably softened as far as the actual conduct of the German authorities is concerned. In Transnistria, Jews were allowed to evacuate if they had means of transportation; in the camps in Chernivtsi and in the eastern part of Romania, the situation has improved considerably.

The Wehrmacht seems to be in charge of the Jewish issue in these territories. It is well known that the mass physical extermination of the Jews was carried out against the wishes of the military and that the army has always had a utilitarian stance—that Jews should be exploited in labour camps, rather than destroyed, as they were forced labourers who were necessary for the war effort.

In the light of the above, the conclusion is that the position of the military authorities gained importance as a result of the immediate needs of war.

These symptoms, which have become more and more pronounced in German-occupied Europe in the last few weeks, are also signalled by the Consulate General, with one express purpose—if the Government of the Republic of Poland intends to express once more its condemnation of the German atrocities against the Jewish people in one way or another, it should be possible to proceed immediately to the drafting of appropriate declarations, since at a later date, if the suspension of the extermination policy becomes a matter of common knowledge, the most opportune tactical moment for our statement may have passed.³⁹

Reported by Consul K. Staniszewski
Zdzisław Szczerbiński
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Ankara, 102

³⁹ See doc. 501.

459

*11 April 1944. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on the deportation of persons holding passports of South American countries*

TO POLMISSION: BUENOS AIRES, SANTIAGO, LIMA, BOGOTÁ,
MEXICO CITY, HAVANA, WASHINGTON, VATICAN
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 11 APR 1944

Refero 219^x from last year

The Envoy of the Republic of Poland in Bern reports: 'On 20 March, the German authorities ordered the deportation of Jews—holders of South American passports, who were interned in Vittel. They had previously officially stated that they would only consider these people South American citizens under the proviso that they could be exchanged for German citizens.⁴⁰ The lives of these people can only be saved if the South American states officially declare, via states-protectors (Spain, Switzerland), that such an exchange is possible. In reality, this exchange would not take place, but even such a statement can save lives. The United States Legation in Bern has asked its government to intervene, and the Nuncio asked the Vatican to do the same.'

I ask you to raise this matter again with the governments to which you are accredited—*after* communicating with your American counterpart, who will undoubtedly receive instructions from Washington.

To Washington (replace the above paragraph): I ask you to support this matter at the Department of State, so that instructions are sent to American envoys in Latin America.

^x Santiago—54, Lima—17, Bogotá—27, Mexico City—99, Washington—886, Havana—15 [doc. 417—circular sent to several missions with various numbers].

⁴⁰ In the cable of 6 April 1944, the Consul General in Tel Aviv reported: 'Jewish organisations are alarmed by the news that 235 Jewish Polish citizens in Vittel, France, are to be deported to Poland. They ask the Minister: 1) For immediate intervention, which will result in them being granted citizenship of the appropriate American states; 2) That the English Government should notify the individuals concerned and the relevant authorities via the Swiss Government to provide Palestinian certificates; 3) That their exchange needs to be expedited. The list of names can be obtained from the A.G. United Press *Agudat* organisation—agency in London.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616.

To the Vatican: I ask you to intervene with the Secretariat of State, so that instructions are sent to the Nuncios in Latin America, so that they can carry out their interventions with the governments concerned on humanitarian grounds.

To all: Please report on the outcome of your intervention.

ROMER

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616*

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17 April 1944. Cable from the Deputy Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Legation in Bern on financial facilities

To Polmission BERN
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The United States authorities have granted special transfer facilities for 700,000 dollars transferred to Switzerland for purchasing foreign currencies, such as pengő and leu, to help Jews living under German occupation. The amount includes contributions from the World Jewish Congress—100,000, Agudat—300,000 and Joint—300,000. It is advisable to discuss the possible extension of proportional support to Polish Jews in Hungary, Romania and Shanghai with the head of the Joint, Saly Mayer. You may recall that until June 1942, the Joint supported Polish citizens of Jewish origin in Shanghai, and that support was temporarily discontinued due to transfer difficulties, which are no longer an issue.

Please report on the outcome.

Czapski

M. Załęski, 17 April 1944

Pro domo: commitment of the Joint, based on the contents of the confidential report by Minister Romer, No. R/123/42 of 31 August 1942,⁴¹ see file No. 738/Ż.J in the ref. reg.

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 155*

⁴¹ Doc. 235.

461

*20 April 1944. Resolution of the Council of Ministers
on the establishment of the Council
for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland*

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING

Section 1. The Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland is established.

Section 2. The scope of activity of the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland shall include:

1) Cooperation with Polish Government bodies and private organisations in the campaign to save the Jewish population in Poland.

2) Developing ongoing plans for saving the Jewish population in Poland, concerning:

- a) providing food for the Jewish population in Poland;
- b) arming the Jewish population to fight the Germans;
- c) hiding the Jewish people in towns and villages;
- d) providing the Jewish population with documents that can protect them from deportation and extermination;
- e) transferring funds to Poland, to cover spending related to local operations;
- f) organising the transport of a certain part of the Jewish population to neighbouring countries;
- g) securing the existence of those Polish Jews who had made their way abroad;
- h) organising aid to Polish citizens of Jewish descent, who live in territories which are occupied or threatened by the enemy outside Poland;
- i) making every effort to improve the situation of the Jewish population in Poland and to implement these plans using all means available in the territories where this Council is active.

3) Maintaining contacts with international organisations supporting Jews and cooperating in rescuing Polish citizens of Jewish origin, as well as Jews who are foreign citizens and stateless persons deported to Poland, via the Polish authorities.

Section 3. The Council consists of 6 members and 6 deputies appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, after consulting both Polish political bodies, as well as the representatives of the main Jewish organisations. The Council may invite

representatives of Polish and foreign authorities as well as social organisations, both Polish and foreign, to cooperate as advisers.

Section 4. The Council shall elect a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman from among its members. Its internal structure shall be determined by its Rules of Procedure, adopted by the Council and approved by the Minister of Internal Affairs.

Section 5. The Council's executive body is its Office, established at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Head of the Office and the supporting staff shall be appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Head of the Office shall at the same time serve the function of the Secretary of the Council but shall not be a member of the Council.

Section 6. The Council shall cover its own expenses stemming from its activities:

- a) from government subsidies;
- b) from funds obtained by the Council from other sources.

JUSTIFICATION

The process of extermination of the Jewish population by the German occupiers and collaborating individuals is moving forward at a high pace. According to cautious calculations, more than two million Polish Jews have so far died of starvation or were murdered. Unless extraordinary measures are taken, there is a danger that the Jewish population will have been completely eradicated when the time comes and the country is eventually liberated. The Government of the Republic of Poland is called upon to undertake these measures, and the Polish Government has been campaigning in this regard through its Ministry of Internal Affairs. In the matter at hand, it was the only Allied government that offered and actually delivered aid to the best of its abilities. Nevertheless, the Government of the Republic of Poland would like Polish social organisations as well as representatives of the main Jewish organisations to be included in this process. In addition to the intensification of the campaign, this could combine the support by the Polish Government with the activities of Jewish organisations in this field. For these reasons the establishment of a central organisation tasked with rescuing the Jewish population in Poland, in agreement with the appointed representatives of Jewish society, is the necessity at the present moment.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.103/4d (previously published)

462*21 April 1944. Extract from the report by the Legation in Stockholm
on Ecuadorian passports*

Stockholm, 21 April 1944

UrgentExtract

...A handful of Jews residing in Sweden managed to save their families in Poland by getting them Ecuadorian passports, issued by the local Honorary Consul of Ecuador. So far, these passports have been recognised by the German authorities and allowed their holders to leave Poland for France, where they were subsequently interned at their own expense in relatively good conditions; however, the German authorities are now beginning to push for an expedited departure of these people from France (via Spain and Portugal). These passports do not entitle their holders to go to Ecuador. As Mrs Grounes informed us, other refugees already had their opportunities to leave, in particular to Palestine. Grounes had recently received a number of alarming letters from Vittel, which she shared with the Legation. According to these letters, the German authorities have already postponed the departure date several times, which sparks fears that their residence permit may be revoked at any time. Grounes has already contacted the Aliyah Jewish Agency in Jerusalem on this matter (telegram of 30 March) but has not yet received an answer.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

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*24 April 1944. Unsigned note:
media reactions to desertions from the Polish Army*

London, 24 April 1944

NOTE FOR THE MINISTER

The case of deserters from the Polish Army

The issue of Jewish and Ukrainian deserters from the Polish Army becomes the subject of a growing anti-Polish smear campaign.

The BBC has painted us in a particularly unfavourable light in their main evening news service (9 o'clock news) on Saturday, 22 March. It roughly said the following:

'In one Scottish city, a trial was held against 30 Jewish soldiers accused of desertion from the Polish Army. They were tried by a court made up of Polish officers. They stated that they had left the Polish Army because they had been ill-treated and wanted to serve in the British Army. This matter, as you are aware, has been raised twice in the House of Commons. They were sentenced to imprisonment ranging from one to three years.

The trial of 24 non-Jewish soldiers of the Polish Army accused of desertion will soon be held in one of the Scottish cities.'

The message could hardly be painting us in a worse light. The following points are worthy of note:

1) The BBC talks about 'a court made up of Polish officers,' as if to emphasise its bias in advance, instead of simply saying 'military court.'

2) They claim that the soldiers in question complained of ill treatment, but no details are provided regarding the results of the investigation or the Polish position on the matter.

3) A new trial for desertion is announced. Since when are desertion trials announced by the BBC? After all, there are thousands of such trials taking place in every military, Allied or hostile, and they are generally considered a military secret, the disclosure of which could benefit the enemy and their propaganda, especially on the eve of invasion.

I have the impression that the BBC report requires some sort of reaction from the Polish side.

At the same time, a smear campaign against us is brewing in the press. Some of the Sunday papers ('Observer,' 'Sunday Express,' 'Reynolds News') published the

news of the conviction of the Jews and subsequent trials on the front page. Sunday Express added that in the subsequent trials, defendants are Orthodox Ukrainians and Belarusians.

Today's press contains more reports about these matters.

In the first place, several newspapers printed the report of the London-based correspondent of Moscow's Pravda, which was published yesterday on the front page under a two-line headline. It states that 'Polish military officers in Edinburgh tortured imprisoned Ukrainians and Belarusians who did not want to serve in the Polish Army.' 'One of the soldiers, named Alexei Ishak, had his arm broken. They were also threatened that they would be shot, to force them to admit that they were Poles, not Ukrainians or Belarusians.' The report stated that all Polish soldiers of Ukrainian and Belarusian nationality were deprived of leaves.

This report was published on the front page in today's Daily Worker under the huge headline—'Polish Police Tortured Soldiers in Edinburgh.'

The Daily Herald, official paper of the Labour Party, reported this under a similar headline, highlighting broken arm in the lead. The News Chronicle also reprinted Pravda's report.

Furthermore, virtually all newspapers printed the news about the conviction of the Jewish soldiers, as well as the resolution of the representation of British Jews, that is the Board of Deputies, demanding that the verdicts of the Polish military courts be reviewed and that Jewish soldiers from the Polish Army be allowed to join the British military. The Chairman of the Board of Deputies, Professor Brodetsky, delivered an anti-Polish speech. Another speaker, Rossetti, declared that there was no point addressing the Polish Government on the matter, as 'any assurance given by the Polish Government would not be worth even the paper on which it was written.'

The News Chronicle published an extensive report on these matters, stating, among other things, that a delegation of 3,000 textile workers went to Downing Street on Saturday with a letter of protest to Prime Minister Churchill. Yesterday, more delegations of London Jewish organisations were received by Professor Brodetsky.

The Daily Express had a front-page news report that the British Government may 'take diplomatic steps' against the Polish Government, regarding the matter of Jewish soldiers. 'Members of the House of Commons from all parties have been deeply touched by the court rulings and general allegations of antisemitism in the Polish Army,' we read in the Daily Express. 'The matter was raised in the House of Commons several times, and the members of the House declared that the Polish authorities demonstrated the very beliefs against which the Allies were waging war in other countries.'

As you can see, the smear campaign is picking up pace and there is no end in sight. I believe that we need to take quick steps to curb it, or otherwise it will result in great damage to our cause, not only in the eyes of the British. Every day, the Ministry of Information receives dispatches informing that the American press is reporting these things at great length, and that the matter is making the headlines. At the same time all the English keep asking the Poles about it and commenting on that matter.

The matter of the Orthodox deserters is particularly harmful. It is a reminder of the smear campaign against Poland in the second half of the 18th century, concerning the 'dissidents'—the aim there was to drum up support for the partitions of Poland. We are seeing the exact same thing now in the context of the efforts to excise Poland's eastern territories.

It would be better if the trial of these Orthodox Christians had not happened at all, as this would give rise to a new wave of propaganda against us. (N.B. The editorial board of the Daily Herald called our Ministry of Information yesterday, asking that a representative of their editorial board be allowed to attend the trial of the Orthodox soldiers.) Would not it be better to let these Argentinians go if they want to leave? These people have no ties to Poland of any kind.

Besides, the matter of both Jewish and Orthodox soldiers—especially in view of 'Pravda's' report cited above—currently requires an official statement from the Government. Previous communications from the Ministry of National Defence did not serve their intended role, because they were not published by the press (except for one or two papers).

In any case, it turns out that this matter now has a large political significance, and military organisations alone are unable to handle it in a satisfactory manner. Further trials will only make things worse.

IPMS, Ministerstwo Prac Kongresowych, A.21.5/3

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*26 April 1944. Note by Lieutenant Józef Lipski
on the international aspects of desertions from the Polish Army*

26 April 1944

LIEUTENANT LIPSKI'S OPINION

The international campaign against Poland in connection with the desertions of Jews from the Polish Army in Scotland is based—in my personal opinion—on the following:

1) The fact that the 1st Armoured Division, which is a part of an invasion army, is soon to be used for operations on the European continent causes a large number of Jews serving in this unit to feel a natural urge to leave the ranks. Such an attitude of the Jewish soldiers is quite understandable. It stems either from the innate reluctance of Jews to take an active part in military campaigns—and by saying that, I do not mean to belittle the exploits of Jewish soldiers who have distinguished themselves in our ranks—or from the conviction that remaining in Great Britain opens up much more favourable prospects for the future for individual Jews, rather than going back to the continent with the army. The Jews are well aware of the anti-Jewish sentiment, which is prevalent in Europe controlled for a number of years by Hitler, where the long-standing propaganda of racism, even in the least susceptible regions, has taken deep root in the general populace and successfully awakened their lowest instincts.

This makes grounds for the desertion of Jews from our army. (Desertions from the Polish Army in the East stemmed from similar motives, further complemented by considerations about the issue of Palestine).

These attitudes among Jews serving in the Polish Army are exploited:

a) by the Soviets in their campaign aimed at diminishing the significance of the Polish Armed Forces fighting hand in hand with Western democracies;

b) by international Jewish organisations, whose intentions with regard to Europe, especially in the East, are essentially in line with the Soviet policy;

c) the representatives of Polish Jews, fearing that their numbers in the Polish Army would drop, are reluctant to see any of the Jewish soldiers being killed in action while serving in its ranks. This is compounded by the fear of 'making a bad name' for themselves among the British. The situation of the representation of Polish Jews abroad becomes all the more sensitive due to the fact that they have lost a significant part of the represented population due to the extermination of Jews in Poland, thus they serve the role of commanders without soldiers.

The reactions to the desertion of the so called third group of Jews from the Polish Army (the first two groups, due to being taken in by the British army, did not give rise to a smear campaign against Poland in the press).

The representatives of the Polish Jews are the staunchest opponents of desertion, asking for stopping further desertion of Jews from the army with court penalties, if necessary.

Desertion is clearly favoured, as the circumstances surrounding the trial have shown, by Driberg, MP, a typical representative of the Jewish-Soviet agenda.

The Soviets, systematically acting to weaken the Polish Army, started a similar diversion against the Ukrainians and Belarusians.

All three parties put all responsibility for the desertion on Polish shoulders and conduct a propaganda campaign in the press.

The Polish Jews are forced to highlight antisemitism in the Polish Army for tactical and prestige reasons.

It is, therefore, a vicious circle from which there seems to be no way out through qualified solutions, such as postponing or reducing penalties, speaking out against antisemitism and so on.

It is in the interests of both the Soviets and the Jews who support their agenda (Driberg) to keep the matter stewing as long as possible. The Polish Jews, on the other hand, even if they desire the matter to be resolved in the best way possible, will inevitably aggravate the situation if they try and root out antisemitism in the army with legal means.

The stance of the British is another matter that needs discussion. On the surface, it is impartial; however, one should not forget that by banning Jews from being admitted to the British army, our situation was made much more difficult. One could also suppose that seeing the Palestinian-Arab frictions, some individuals in the British Government may find it convenient to shift the interest of Jews worldwide in another direction. One could suppose that if there is further publicity in the press and among the general public, we will soon find ourselves under pressure from the British Government.

The subject of the dispute is quite disproportionate to the international response it has given rise to, all to the detriment of the vital interests of the Polish state. In fact, the whole matter is about several hundred Jews, who still remain in the Polish Army. (We should investigate whether the departure of even all the Jews from the 1st Armoured Division would lead to great difficulties in filling the ranks back up.)

I think that, as things stand, we should decide on a move that would go along the following lines:

Approve the military court verdict against 21 Jewish deserters to maintain the prestige of the court authority.

The Commander-in-Chief should then exercise the right of clemency towards them, as a political decision, with the following justification.

In view of the enormity of the tragedy that befell the Jewish people living on Polish soil during this war, and in the name of the joint struggle against Nazi barbarism, symbolised by the joint action of the Home Army in defence of the Warsaw Ghetto during this memorable bloodshed... as the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces in Poland and abroad, I hereby exercise my right of clemency with regard to 21 soldiers sentenced by the judgement of Military Court No... I am convinced that the arbitrary desertion from the ranks of the Polish Armed Forces took place under the influence of propaganda that stood against the values for which the Allied nations were fighting. I would like this decision of mine to be understood as a public statement that we, Polish soldiers, do not have any hostile feelings towards our brothers-in-arms of Jewish or any other faith, which would be contrary to the age-old tradition of the Republic of Poland.

IPMS, Gabinet Naczelnego Wodza, A.XII.1/65

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*26 April 1944. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on improving the operations of diplomatic and consular posts*

London, 26 April 1944

To the Heads of Foreign Posts of the MFA

CIRCULAR

In the circular of 28 April 1943, No. 738/Og/43, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalled the obligation to take the utmost care of Polish citizens, refugees in particular, and drew attention to the need of dealing with their affairs in a particularly kind and tactful manner, without excessive formalisation and bureaucracy.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to receive complaints about the treatment of Polish citizens. There are many accusations that foreign offices do not answer their letters at all and that they do not inform them about the course of action in cases submitted by letters, which require a longer time for their

consideration. In view of this, I would like to point out the necessity of observing the principle that every Polish citizen should be certain that their request to a foreign office would always result in a prompt and exhaustive response, and that, if their matter cannot be settled by a foreign office, they will be pointed in the right direction or properly informed.

Determining the validity or lack thereof of various complaints and allegations through official channels is sometimes virtually impossible. I do not doubt that in many cases they are not properly justified and that most of them can be attributed to the psyche strained by the experiences of the war.

Referring to the circular of 28 April 1943, I nevertheless consider it necessary to remind you that your present duties differ from their pre-war duties, since the increased need of foreign offices to care for our countrymen, as a result of the misfortunes caused by war and exile, has considerably increased our workload in this area. The presence of representatives from other ministries in the area does not exempt you from your duty of being aware of all the needs of the local Polish populace, as well as making sure that the care of the Polish authorities is available to every citizen of the Republic of Poland as quickly, efficiently and effectively as possible.

The social awareness and fulfilment of the duty of caring for fellow citizens will be considered as one of the most important factors in my assessment of the activities of Polish foreign service officials in the difficult wartime period.

I would like to ask you to inform their colleagues with the contents of this circular and to confirm its receipt to me.

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Tadeusz Romer

AAN, Ambasada Ankara, 81

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28 April 1944. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to Consul General in New York on desertions

URGENT—CONFIDENTIAL

28 April 1944

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

The case of the desertion of a small group of Jewish soldiers from the Polish Army in England, their court martial and its sentences have given rise to a press and radio campaign, letters of protest received by our Offices, including the Embassy, as well as announcements of protest meetings. From the conversations which I have had, as well as the reports from conversations by the officials of the offices I oversee, it appears that *some* of the most significant Jewish circles view this developing campaign with suspicion, as it is being exacerbated mainly by extreme Jewish organisations, inspired by our enemies.

It is extremely important to do everything to stop further campaigning, which unfortunately coincides with 3 May—the day traditionally associated with numerous shows and manifestations of sympathy towards Poland, both in the Congressional circles and in the public opinion. I took the following steps to sort out this issue:

1) I have sent a report by telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, requesting a prompt, direct and clear declaration sent to the American press correspondents and press agencies in London, giving the essential facts of the case and presenting its actual proportions.

2) I am personally holding talks with some of the leading figures in Jewish organisations and I also intend to explain the matter to authoritative figures among members of the Congress of Jewish descent.

3) I took advantage of the strongly worded letter sent to me by Congressman Emanuel Celler of the State of New York, partly printed in 'The New York Times,' to respond in a calm and factual manner. I also sent this letter to the publisher of 'The New York Times,' Mr Sulzberger, requesting it to be published in the newspaper. I enclose a copy of the letters⁴² as an interim directive, until further instructions arrive from London.

⁴² Not included in this publication.

I urge you to promptly explain—using the available information, including information from PTA and other data sent to us concerning Jewish soldiers in the Polish Army, as well as my letter to Congressman Celler—the matter at hand in a factual manner in your conversations with selected individuals, chosen at your discretion from among the American and Jewish press circles as well as in rabbinical circles and Jewish organisations.⁴³

Please also report back to me on the tensions and any changes in sentiment regarding this issue.

J. Ciechanowski

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

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*29 April 1944. Note by the Attaché at the Embassy in London
concerning the debates in the House of Commons
on desertions from the Polish Army*

London, 29 April 1944

Note

on the interpellations of Jewish deserters from the Polish Army⁴⁴

The issue of the Jews deserting from the Polish Army has been raised twice in the House of Commons this week. Just as on 6 April, it was brought up for

⁴³ In the cable of 27 April 1944, the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare sent the following message from New York: ‘To Ministers Kwapiński and Grosfeld: Four days ago, I sent a telegram to the Prime Minister, warning of the growing uproar caused by the accusations of anti-Jewish incidents in the Army. I recommended announcing the results of the investigation and sentences for individuals found guilty of these crimes. Held Dubiński’s telegram repeats these accusations; however, this time it has been done by an organisation that had a friendly attitude towards Poland. The announcement of verdicts against Jewish soldiers without verdicts against those found guilty of anti-Jewish incidents, who—according to the information—are only being investigated, bears the characteristics of one-sided persecution, thus giving rise to a predominantly negative impression. This matter has resulted in considerable damage to Poland, as its scope went far beyond those thirty soldiers. It has to be contained immediately, which is why I ask the President or the Commander-in-Chief, depending on their authority, to pardon the convicts. Please provide the copy of the telegram to the Prime Minister.’ AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 317.

⁴⁴ The note was sent to Prime Minister Mikołajczyk on 1 May 1944.

discussion by Driberg, MP, supported by several Socialist back-benchers, mostly of Jewish origin.

On Wednesday, 26 April, during 'question time,' Driberg asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs two questions. In the first one, he asked whether the Foreign Office had resumed talks with the Polish Government on 'antisemitism' in the ranks of the Polish Army, and whether the transfer of Jewish deserters to the British Army could be raised as part of these talks. In the second question Driberg raised the issue of the sentences recently passed by the Polish Military Court against Jewish deserters, asking the British Government to ask the Polish Government to change these sentences.

Minister Eden's response can be summarised in three points. Minister Eden stated, firstly, that the British Government was following up the symptoms of antisemitism in the Polish Army with great care; secondly, that the Polish Government had kept the British Government informed on the progress of the investigations, which were not yet complete; thirdly, Minister Eden, referring to his reply of 5 April, reiterated that he had no intention of raising the question of transferring further deserters of Jews from the Polish Army to the British Army with the Polish Government. Furthermore, he noted that the sentences against the deserters were the mildest punishment under the Polish military code, even though the last group of deserters committed their act after an order from the Minister of National Defence announcing that any further desertions would be punished to the greatest possible extent. He went on to stress that he had no intention of intervening in the case 'as suggested' by Driberg and that he was confident that the Polish authorities would take extenuating circumstances into account when considering the execution of the sentences. He also denied Driberg's accusations that the conditions in the Polish Army did not improve, despite the 'excellent instructions' (as Driberg described them) issued by the Polish authorities. He staunchly rejected Driberg's request to revise the position of the British Government, referring to the decisions made in the British Cabinet.

During the speech, Driberg was supported by MPs J.D. Mack (Labour), known for his pro-Soviet sympathies, S.S. Silverman, and R.J. Davies (Labour). The Polish position was defended by MPs Ivor Thomas (Labour), Major General Sir Alfred Knox (Unionist) and W.W. Astor (Unionist).

During the speech by Mack, MP, there was an incident, caused by an attack directed against the Polish military authorities: Mack accused them of violating all democratic principles. The House, in particular the conservatives, reacted with screams of outrage and protest. The Speaker interrupted Mack, calling him to order. The indecent attack of Mack provoked the opposite reaction from the House. During the remainder of the discussion, overly demagogic statements directed against Polish interests were interrupted by voices of protest; inadvertently, Mack managed to drum up pro-Polish sentiment in the whole House. Immediately

after the speech, several MPs expressed their indignation at the accusations of antisemitism in the Polish Army. Sir Archibald Southby, Ivor Thomas, Comm. O. Locker-Lampson, Major Lloyd, Prof. Savory, W. Astor, General Knox and Sir Alfred Beit stood up to protest the attacks on the Polish Government, but only a few could speak up. Major-General Knox protested meddling in matters of discipline in the Polish Army, and Mr Astor shouted an unprompted question, whether in the English Army desertion is not punishable by life in prison?

Driberg, dissatisfied with the reply received from the Foreign Office, announced that he would bring the matter of deserters of Jews from the Polish Army back for debate after the close of the session on Friday 28 April in the evening (on adjournment).

He also returned to it on Friday with an almost empty chamber, with about 35 MPs present. The debate was chaired by Major J. Milner (Labour), who substituted for the Speaker. Driberg spoke out vehemently against antisemitic incidents in the Polish Army and cited 'new' ones that had come to his attention, including the suicide of a Jewish doctor who had not been allowed to join the British Army, new sentences in one of Britain's southern cities for Polish sailors of Jewish origin, and a pro-Hitler speech by a soldier who had come from one of Rommel's units. The Speaker interrupted Driberg several times, saying that he could not see how these allegations might apply to the British Government. A number of Driberg's supporters from the Labour Party benches stood up, supporting him with various arguments: D.N. Pritt (a well-known communist), Silverman, G. Strauss, S.O. Davies, A. Bevan. Driberg summed up his argument by demanding that the British Government should intervene to change the sentences passed and accept the deserters into the British Army.

The answer on behalf of the Government was given by the Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, G.H. Hall, who referred to Minister Eden's declaration of 26 April, reiterating the British Government's refusal. He tried to weaken the claim of the existence of antisemitism in the Polish Army by pointing out that from November 1940 to mid-January 1944 there were only 17 incidents of Jewish soldiers deserting from Polish ranks in Britain. Due to his time running out, his speech was cut short and the debate was closed.

One would be hard-pressed not to notice how Driberg keeps bringing this issue back in a conscious effort to undermine the authority of the Polish Government in London. In his Friday speech, he pointed to the lack of discipline in the army and the existence of pro-Nazi sentiments in the Polish ranks several times. His objective can be seen in the way, in which his speeches are supported by well-known pro-Soviet sympathisers such as Pritt (Independent—recently expelled from the Labour Party for his communist beliefs), as well as Mack and Silverman. Some Socialist MPs supporting Driberg, such as R. Davies, seem to be acting in good faith, unbeknownst that they are the tool of an organised campaign. It should

be noted that Driberg is now seeking to have the entirety of the 'statute'—which was passed in the Parliament in 1940 and which serves as the basis of the independent existence of Allied armies in Britain, mainly the Polish Army—reviewed by the House.

Eden's speech shows that the British Government, while not denying the existence of certain symptoms of antisemitism in the Polish Army, will not be let itself be pulled into any action that would undermine the authority of the Polish Government or discipline in the Polish Army. On the other hand, however, spokesmen for the British Government are undoubtedly trying to make sure that the British Government does not take any responsibility for this matter.

The general stance of the House is similar. The MPs, including our supporters, are under the impression that Driberg's allegations are not unfounded. While they perceive them to be a serious harm to the Polish Government and the Polish Army, they believe that the Polish Government should, on the one hand, take a hard stance against antisemitic incidents, and on the other hand, find a way out of the situation that has arisen after the sentences were passed. At the same time, they are not keen to bring this debate to parliament. There is a sense of embarrassment, distaste and resentment among most members towards Driberg for bringing up this issue time and time again. At the same time, a number of MPs are aware of the deeper motives behind this stance.

Furthermore, I know from the parliamentary circles that Driberg is of Jewish origin and the only member of the British Parliament who joined the Communist Party in Moscow, instead of the English Communist Party.

Expect further speeches from Driberg in the House of Commons, and for this issue to be raised in the House of Lords (Strabolgi, Bearsted?).

We need to develop further material in addition to the previous note sent out by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland to about 100 members of both Houses. The material made a very good impression and resulted in a number of very positive responses from the audience.

On Tuesday, April 25, Commander Locker-Lampson made a motion that the House pass a quick resolution to create a Jewish Army, according to a plan established four years ago.

Stanisław Dembiński

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.142

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*1 May 1944. Note by the Refugee Section
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on the dispatch of parcels to the USSR*

Note for Minister Czapski on the memorandum submitted to British and American authorities by Passman, representative of the Joint in Palestine, concerning the dispatch of parcels for the Jewish population in the USSR

At the beginning, Mr Passman cites the number of Polish citizens deported to the USSR, rightly estimating their numbers at 750,000; however, his estimation of the percentage of Jewish citizens among them—40–45%, or about 300,000—was wrong; it is actually 35%. Various Jewish sources have only 20,000 names of Jewish families living in the USSR. This number is steadily increasing through correspondence with parcel recipients who provide the names of their relatives and friends.

We envisage that we are going to reach the number of 40,000 families who will be able to receive a package once every 2 months, which requires 1,200 tonnes of goods per year. Since there is a shortage of goods in Iran, the Joint is making efforts in other countries (India, Egypt, Palestine, South Africa), which has already resulted in obtaining some goods. The Joint has so far shipped about 20,000 parcels, 7,000 of which were shipped in the five weeks of this year, thanks to the establishment of a special parcel shipping committee in Tehran and the far-reaching facilities obtained by the Joint from both the Iranian and Soviet authorities.

The memorandum mentions the Joint's cooperation with the Polish Parcel Dispatch Commission in Tehran and the receipt of 45 tonnes of goods.⁴⁵

The continued shipping of packages by the Joint hinges upon two issues: 1) financial—since the cost of a parcel is 20–30 US dollars, as well as 2) goods—enough goods need to be supplied to ensure steady shipments.

With this in mind, Mr Passman requests some of the L.L. goods intended for Polish citizens in the USSR, explaining that this is the only possible form of assistance available for them today, and bringing up the original purpose of the goods.

The memorandum also states, based on the testimonials of recent arrivals from the USSR, as well as the letters from individuals in the USSR, that as of now, the

⁴⁵ See doc. 430.

vast majority of deportees and refugees in the USSR are in a dire situation—unless they receive outside help, the great majority of them will not be able to survive.

London, 1 May 1944

K. Rudzki

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 148

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*1 May 1944. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation
in Lima on Peruvian passports*

CONFIDENTIAL

Lima, 1 May 1944

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: Intervention on the subject of Peruvian passports issued to Polish citizens

Executing the order from 10 April, received on 23 April,⁴⁶ I have resumed the démarche in the form ordered by you, to have the courtesy passports issued to Polish Jews by the Consul of the Republic of Peru in Geneva recognised by the Peruvian Government. The verbal response to my intervention, even though it is not final, does not leave much hope that the Peruvian Government will change its initial decision, already communicated to me before, which I submitted to you in the telegram of January 27 this year.⁴⁷

In accordance with the instructions given by you and the instruction received from the Ambassador in Washington, I have consulted on this matter with the

⁴⁶ Probably doc. 459.

⁴⁷ This is probably a reference to the undated cipher cable in which the chargé d'affaires at the Legation in Lima, Oswald Kermeńić, notified: "Today, the Secretary of the MFA called me and announced: "The president of the Republic and the Minister of Foreign Affairs ask you to communicate to your government that, regrettably and contrary to their sincere wish, they cannot comply with the request of the Polish Government and recognise passports issued to Polish citizens in Germany by the Consul of Peru in Bern." AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616. See also doc. 542.

Ambassador of the United States in Peru. The Ambassador stated that he personally submitted the case to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but the response was firmly negative. The Ambassador of the United States was given the following reply: 'The Peruvian Government notified in due time the Swiss Government that it did not recognise the passports issued against the law by the Peruvian Consul in Geneva and dismissed the Consul, as the case could easily become scandalous. In such conditions, the Government of the Republic of Peru is obliged by declaration and cannot notify the same Swiss Government that it now recognises the passports.—Which does not mean that the Peruvian Government will not provide any assistance on humanitarian grounds, if only it is in its reach.'

/-/ Oswald Kermenic
Chargé d'Affaires of the Republic of Poland

AAN, *Ambasada Waszyngton*, 3093

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*8 May 1944. Letter from the Envoy in Havana
to the Ambassador in Washington on passports of South American countries*

Confidential

8 May 1944

Dear Mr Ambassador,

I received the letter from you dated 28 April only on Saturday, the 6th inst. (unfortunately, such a delay occurs in the case of air mail) and as the case of holders of passports of South American countries in the camp near Paris is extremely urgent, I send this letter graciously through the authorities of the United States, by way of exception.

In my letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 31 January 1944, sent as a copy to the Embassy⁴⁸—they received it at the beginning of February—you could

⁴⁸ In the aforementioned letter, Envoy Dębicki reported: 'Following today's telegram, I am sending an attached copy of the note by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Haiti, Mr Gérard Lescot, on the subject of Polish-Jewish citizens who are under German occupation and who hold Haitian passports. According to this reply, the Haitian Government would be willing to consider the temporary recognition of these passports provided that the Polish authorities provide it with an inventory of the persons

read that the government of the Republic of Haiti placed certain conditions under which it is willing to consider the recognition of the validity of its passports held by our citizens. Despite the later exchange of telegrams on this subject with London, I have not yet received any reply to this letter from the MFA. I understand that the proposed provision to the Haitian Government of an inventory of the persons concerned and the data on their obtaining of Haitian passports may not be feasible in the absence of technical means of communication with the people in the hands of the enemy. However, without the explanation regarding these conditions, any further intervention from my side was impossible.

Objectively, the position of the Haitian government is to some extent justified. Issuing the passports of this country to European citizens was in a large number of cases not a humanitarian act or act of 'courtesy.' The abuses which took place within this process caused considerable difficulties in several South American governments—including even government crises—and in Haiti they resulted in repressions against some—sometimes senior—foreign affairs officials. The devaluation of the Haitian passport and the danger to the real citizens of this country that goes with it are the consequences mentioned in the document sent to me by the Secretary of State Mr G. Lescot.

Despite the lack of required information that makes it impossible to respond to the note of the Haitian ministry—recognising the importance and urgency of the case—I shall send it today another note on this issue, a copy of which I attach to this letter.⁴⁹ I will use all the means to ensure that this note is delivered to Port-au-Prince in the coming days. Of course, the personal intervention, coordinated with the intervention of my US colleague would be the most appropriate solution in this case. But I have neither authorisation nor resources to go to Haiti. Your just suggestion to agree with the US Embassy on site is unfortunately not feasible at distance, and the change in the position of the US Ambassador in Port-au-Prince (the new one is unknown to me yet) prevents me from addressing him in writing.

concerned. This obviously assumes the possibility for the Haitian authorities to discover the irregularities on the basis of which individual Polish-Jewish citizens received Haiti's passports and may result in repression against the Haitian officials involved in this process. A few days ago, I learnt that the Holy See is sending instructions to its posts in the Latin American countries, including the local nunciature, to intervene in the case of the Polish-Jewish citizens kept in the Vittel camp. If this case were identical to the one concerned by the Ministry's instruction, I could ask the nunciatures to intervene simultaneously in the areas of my competence and along my interventions. However, the telegram of the Ministry does not indicate it concerns the Cuban passports, which are clearly mentioned in the Vatican's instructions.' AAN, Ambasada Waszyngton, 3093. See also doc. 422.

⁴⁹ Not included in this publication.

I would therefore like to kindly ask you to discuss with the Department of State the action to be undertaken by the US Ambassador in Port-au-Prince regarding the steps I have taken with the Haitian Government.

I would like to add in confidence that, both in the case of Haiti and the Dominican Republic—the two additional areas of my competence—the intervention via the posts in Havana gives no results, as my colleagues from these two countries, although still behave as courteously as possible in technical matters, observe the prevailing custom and they ignore the substance of the matters dealt by me with their governments.

Please accept the expression of my deepest respect *and true commitment*.

Roman Dębicki

AAN, Ambasada Waszyngton, 3093

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[After 10 May 1944]. Unsigned note from the meeting of the National Council on the desertions from the Polish Army

NOTE

from the National Council meeting held on 10 May 1944

On 10 May, the National Council held a plenary session with full attendance. The session was chaired by Prof. Grabski.

The morning session, which lasted from 10.40 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., was attended first by the Minister of National Defence General Kukiel.

He presented the historical developments of the Jewish situation in the army, starting with 22 June 1943, when the first news about the manifestations of a certain dissatisfaction among the Jewish soldiers came.

He also mentioned the command by the Commander-in-Chief and his own officer's command No. 6 from 22 July 1943.

On 16 January and 22 February 1944, the first desertions of the soldiers—Jews—took place, reaching the number of 68 and in the second case of 134.

In accordance with the agreement concluded in the Rubens Hotel⁵⁰ (he did not mention here the decision of the Commander-in-Chief) and on the basis of

⁵⁰ The Rubens Hotel in London was the seat of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff.

an agreement with the British authorities, these groups of Jewish soldiers were transferred to the English Army.

On 21 March 1944, the third group deserted, in the number of 24 Jews and 28 Argentinians, mostly Belarusians.

The court treated Jews leniently, ordering for them punishments of 1–2 years, while treating the Argentinians more severely and ordering for them punishments of 1—2.5 years

After the disciplinary punishment of several Jews—the court's delegate suspended it for 11 of them and confirmed for 10 of them.

General Kukiel stated that the issue of antisemitism in the army is entirely false and that there were only some evil, stupid and abusive statements about Jews reported.

Investigations conducted in this case against Poles showed that in the past, six incorrect statements addressed to Jews have been reported and recently there were 17 such statements.

These reported facts mainly concerned privates, non-commissioned officers, and in three cases it was proved that officers had underestimated the issue. The trials are in progress.

At present there are 234 Jewish officers and about 1200 Jewish privates of the Jewish faith in the Polish Army.

Subsequently, 16 members of the National Council asked questions with intention to clarify the case.

In the afternoon, the meeting started at 3.10 p.m. and lasted until 5.20 p.m.

At the beginning of meeting, Colonel Słowikowski explained the number of desertions in Polish Armed Forces in the East, as well as the sentences pronounced.

Then, Ciołkosz took the floor and in his long historical speech argued on the sources of antisemitism. His motto was that it is not about the Jews, but about justice and the State.

He attacked on that occasion former Russian governments as well as the influences of Nazism, and finally came to the present situation.

He mentioned the 'WALKA' publication,⁵¹ saying that this symptom was not fought as it should be done, and he pointed out that he was in favour of fighting antisemitism as well as fighting the negative attitude against the Ukrainian and Belarusian *movements*.

⁵¹ This is a reference to a conspiracy newspaper *Walka* ('Fight') issued in Warsaw by the Central Propaganda Department of the National Party (SN).

In summary, he requested on behalf of the Polish Socialist Party and the Bund:

- a) pardon,
- b) proper education of soldiers,
- c) not to set up separate Jewish divisions, and

d) he stressed that it is not the nation that should be found guilty, but the military circles.

Finally, he demanded consequences to be taken and called upon the Minister of National Defence to resign.

General Kukiel replied that he would not reply to all the arguments of Ciołkosz for the moment, and that 'as far as my resignation is concerned, I think that such a decision would be equivalent to committing to the acts that did not take place and would unleash turmoil. Therefore, if you do not wish to take responsibility for such a situation, please clarify the conclusion so that it is visible to whom responsibility for further steps lies.'

Chairman Grabski states that the National Council has no competence to formulate such conclusions.

Dr Emanuel Szerer gave a long emotional speech, characterising all the Jewish accidents from his point of view, expressed absolute solidarity with the speech of Ciołkosz and called for the resignation of the Minister of National Defence and the Commander-in-Chief.

General Kukiel was very composed during this discussion.

The next meeting will take place on Saturday, 13 May this year.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.142

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16 May 1944. Letter from the Envoy in Buenos Aires to the Consul General in New York on Paraguayan passports (with enclosure)

16 May 1944

Mr Sylwin Strakacz,
Minister Plenipotentiary,
Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Dear Minister,

Referring to your letter dated 25 March, delivered to me by Dr M. Traub together with the correspondence of Dr I. Lewin⁵² on the holders of Paraguayan passports, Jews interned in Vittel, I am attaching my reply, kindly asking you to pass it on to Dr Lewin.

As you will see in this response, we have already been dealing with this interned group in the past by seeking official recognition by the Paraguay Government of the passports, which—in fact—are illegal. I have not yet received answer from there to my last note, in which I suggested an exchange.

I can assure you that no opportunity will be missed when it comes to rescue both this interned group and any others, if only it would be somehow possible.

I am in touch with Dr M. Traub and I must point out that I consider his stay here to be very useful, especially regarding the harmful confusion among the settlements of Polish Jews—too easily getting influenced by the current political situation—that we experience here.

Thank you very much for sending us a package of mail that got misplaced in Natal.

Please accept assurances of my highest consideration.

⁵² Doc. 454.

[enclosure]

16 May 1944

To Dr I. Lewin,
in New York

Dear Sir,

Acknowledging the receipt of your letter from 24 March this year on the issues of people interned in Vittel, I would like to inform you that the fate of these unfortunate persons has already been the subject of our actions before.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, Dr L.A. Argaña, has already written to me in a note dated 3 January this year, responding to my request for recognition as valid passports issued illegally by the Paraguay Consul in Bern, and stated the following:

‘These passports are considered important as long as the war continues in Europe, and their holders are entitled to rights applicable in the location of their issuing. Fulfilling your request, Your Excellence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked His Excellence Chargé d’Affaires of Spain in Asunción to wirecable the Spanish Embassy in Berlin with an official statement regarding the validity of the aforementioned passports.’

Immediately upon receipt of your letter, I have returned to this case and sent the Paraguayan Government the list of citizens interned in Vittel and Compiègne (obviously reduced exclusively to the holders of the Paraguayan passports), asking for them to be included among the candidates for a possible exchange for persons from Paraguay for whom the Government of the Reich would ask.

Our note suggested that, in the event of the impossibility of carrying out the exchange, the mere fact of having these persons included in the list of candidates—provided for acknowledgement to the Government of the Reich—would increase the security of the interned persons.

When I receive a response from Asunción to the above initiative, which I supported also by other means beyond strictly official channels, I will certainly notify you about the outcomes, as usual through the courteous agency of Minister Sylwin Strakacz.

I can also assure you that I will not ignore any possibility of coming with help to any group or even individual from among the people at risk, if only I would have the chance to do so; and I will always be very happy to consider every action undertaken by you in this area, about which I will be informed.

Please accept assurances of my highest consideration.

Mirosław Arciszewski
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

Lista de personas con documentación paraguaya internadas en el campo de Vittel

1. Josef FRAENKEL
y Esposa Paula o Perl FRAENKEL
2. Alexander FRAENKEL
Esposa Jochwet FRAENKEL
e hijos Ruda, Matel o Mata, Leibusch, Pinkas
3. Mathilde FRAENKEL
e hija Doris o Debora
4. Mendel FRAENKEL
y Esposa Rose
5. Schabse o Sami RAPAPORT
Esposa Gitla o Guta
e hijos Matel y Estera
6. Israel RAPAPORT
Esposa Dewora
e hijo Jacob
7. Chajim-Leib BERGLAS
y Esposa Alta
8. Abraham WEINGORT
Esposa Mathilde
e hija Rosa
9. Leo-Osias WEINGORT
y Esposa Estera
10. Samuel o Sami WOLF
Esposa Rosa
e hijos Saul, Leo i Erna
11. Jacob RAPAPORT
e hijas Anna y Rosa RAPAPORT—y su hijo (o hija)
12. Saul RAPAPORT
y Esposa Mina

13. Jacob RAPAPORT

Esposa Rywka-Lea

e hijos Abram-Hirsch-Majer e Izchok

14. Simon o Symche RAPAPORT

15. Aron RAPAPORT

y Esposa Rywka

16. Josef LIEBER

Esposa Frymeta

e hijos Henryk y Frajdl

17. Szyja o Szaja EISENZWEIG

y familia

Internado en el campo de concentración en Compiègne:

18. Josef RAPAPORT

AAN, *Poselstwo Buenos Aires*, 252

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*18 May 1944. Note by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on assistance provided to persons of Jewish
descent by the Polish Government (with enclosure)*

Polish Government's Care for Jews

This care could be divided into the following areas:

I. interventions in favour of Jews,

II. material assistance,

III. evacuation.

Ad I) The Polish Government, and especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its subordinate posts, is constantly using all possibilities to provide Jews in the occupied countries with help. Below are some examples of such initiatives:

1) In Romania, due to a number of MFA interventions carried via Swiss officials, the displacement of several hundred Jews who fled Poland was suspended. It was argued that the Romanian Government should treat all Polish citizens

equally and should not apply any racist practices to the Polish Jews. In addition, it was also possible to have the Polish Jews avoid paying a tax specifically levied on the ~~Romanian~~ Jews *in general*.

2) In Hungary, thanks to the favourable attitude of the Hungarian Government to the Polish refugees, it was also possible to obtain in practice that Polish citizens are not divided on the grounds of race. Thus, Jews were treated there like Christians and often could pretend to be them, thanks to the help of Poles. Therefore, in practice, the anti-Jewish Hungarian laws did not include the Polish Jews. This allowed several thousands of Jews, mostly refugees from Poland, to stay there until the German occupation of Hungary.

3) In Italy, due to a number of interventions by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy, the Vatican took care of and defended the Jews, especially in Rome, against ~~the Germans and~~ deportations.

4) In France, whose democratic culture was always raised by the Jews as exemplary, after the 1940 defeat and the wave of antisemitism, it was mainly the Polish posts that protected several thousand Jews of—let us highlight that—different nationalities, from labour camps and from being deported to Germany by issuing Aryan certificates of origin, by carrying out interventions at the French authorities and by helping them to get abroad. At present, MFA has been making efforts for a long time at several South American governments to have them recognise South American passports held by several hundred Jews in Vittel, France. It is about saving them from being deported to labour camps in the east and from death.

5) In Bulgaria, where only a dozen Jews are present, our Government also managed to obtain for them an exemption from the racial laws, etc.

These are only few examples from the Axis countries. Obtaining an improvement in the fate of the Polish Jews in these areas requires constant interventions and *complicated* procedures to effectively influence the behaviour of individual governments.

Ad II) Material assistance:

Material assistance is the same as the one provided to Poles, there are no differences neither formally nor in practice. Therefore, neither the central nor local authorities have any specific statistics on the assistance provided to the Jews only. Some data can be obtained about this assistance in several points, where there are almost exclusively Jews who receive the assistance, e.g.:

1) In Shanghai, where among the 1,175 Polish citizens covered by assistance, 90% are Jews, who receive about £30,000 a year from ~~the funds of~~ the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

2) Tangier, where all Jews in need of it are using the assistance, i.e. both emigrants and refugees in the number of around 150 people, of which only two

are Poles. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare spends around £7,000 per year on this assistance.

3) On the island of Mauritius there is a group of about 500 Jews, part of which are *unverified* Polish citizens; the other part consider themselves as the citizens of the Free City of Danzig. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare *wants to* take care of them all, even though there is not a single Pole among them.

4) In Switzerland, in the group of about 6,000 Polish refugees coming from France, Italy, etc., 90% are Jews and hence, proportionally, 90% of the budget for care goes to the assistance of Jews, i.e. approximately 1 million Swiss francs a year. Most of the over 100 students-refugees receiving scholarships are also Jews.

(5) Also in Spain and Portugal, a large proportion of the funds devoted to care are directed to Jews.

In addition to strictly material care, one must also take into account various other forms of assistance (medical, scientific, legal, employment intermediation, etc.), in which Polish posts are at the disposal of Jews, who make permanent use of it.

Ad III) Regarding the evacuation of Jews, there is a constant effort to get them out especially of occupied areas.

Examples of actions undertaken include:

1) Efforts by the MFA to evacuate the Polish Jews from Hungary and find them asylum on British territory,

2) evacuation of Jews from Japan to India,

3) assistance and evacuation from France, then from Spain and Portugal to Palestine or America,

4) getting (about 2,000) Jews out from Russia to Persia, and then transferring them to Palestine.

In these actions Polish posts most often cooperate with Jewish associations, such as 'Hicem,' etc., *and the Joint*.

Having listed just a few examples of the Polish Government's assistance provided to Jews, it should also be added that this care is neither rigid nor formal and includes not only Polish Jews, but often also Jews from other countries, especially those from Austria and Germany, or stateless persons. This is particularly evident in the areas occupied or controlled by the Germans, where other Jews also make use of the defence of the Polish Jews by the Polish posts. In these areas, e.g. in France, Hungary, Romania, Polish posts are often the best organised and are thus more likely to come with aid than posts of other occupied countries, e.g. Czechoslovakia, Belgium, etc.

Therefore, it can be concluded based on a huge number of facts that Jews not only receive assistance from the Polish authorities but often receive it more than others—as well as that the Polish authorities make proportionally more efforts to come with the aid to Jews than it would result from the ratio of, for example, Polish to Jewish refugees and emigrants. One of the examples proving that is the evacuation of about 2,000 Jews from Persia to Palestine and the payment of higher allowances than those paid to Poles who were evacuated to East Africa being offered worse conditions. Another example is also the relatively large percentage of Jews who receive allowances (e.g. those in Spain, Portugal, Tangier) compared to the percentage of Poles-emigrants, e.g. in France, who receive such allowances only exceptionally.

In addition, a visibly larger percentage of Jews, compared to Poles, are assisted by the evacuation department. These Jews are mostly unsuited to military service (men unfit for service, women, children, etc.), and by that fact receive assistance for longer rather than Poles evacuated from Russia or from France.

The work of many Polish posts mainly consists of caring for Jews. A common example of this would be our Legation in Cuba, set up, among other reasons, to provide care for Jews who arrived in Jamaica.

Please find attached some approximate figures on the number of Jewish refugees in some countries.

London, 18 May 1944

[enclosure]

JEWS—war refugees

EUROPE:

1. Switzerland	– 5,000
2. Hungary	– 3,000
3. Romania	– 2,000
4. Italy	– 1,000
5. Yugoslavia	– 100
6. Bulgaria	– 100
7. Spain, Portugal	– 300
8. France	– several thousand

AFRICA:

1. North Africa	– 400
2. East Africa	– 200

AMERICA:

<u>Brazil:</u>	- 1,200
1. Rio de Janeiro	- 700
2. Sao Paulo	- 500 (wealthy)
<u>USA</u>	- 1,250
1. San Francisco	- 850
2. Pittsburgh	- 400
Canada:	
Winnipeg	- 39 (Vancouver)
<u>Cuba</u>	- 900 (Havana)
<u>Dominican Republic and Haiti</u>	- 30
<u>Chile</u>	- 20
<u>Peru</u>	- 2
<u>Jamaica</u>	- 200
<u>Mauritius</u>	- approx. 200 Polish citizens + approx. 300 possible citizens of the Free City of Danzig
<u>Argentina</u>	- 81
<u>ASIA:</u>	
Palestine	- 2,000 transferred from Russia
Turkey	- 50

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/681 (previously published)

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*20 May 1944. Letter from the Consulate General in Chicago
to the Consulate General in New York
on the activities of the Representation of Polish Jewry*

Chicago, 20 May 1944

49 E. Cedar St.
Chicago, 11. Illinois

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Regarding: Rescue operation of the Representation of Polish Jewry

In November last year, the American Department of the Representation of Polish Jewry asked the Polish American Council to include in the estimates and budget of the Council an amount of \$500,000—to be allotted for the assistance provided to Jewish Polish citizens remaining in Poland and dispersed in several countries. The Polish American Council proposed to the Representation to hold discussion on this topic. In mid-January, the Representation of Polish Jewry sent the Council a comprehensive memorandum explaining the reasons for the amount requested, and at the end of January this year, delegates of the Representation: Jacob Appenzlak, Moshe Polakiewicz and Zerach Warhaftig arrived in Chicago to present in person the need for rescue aid.—In its previous discussions with members of the Council, the Consulate General supported the demands of the Representation and during the stay of its delegates in Chicago, the Consul General, Mr Ripa, organised a special reception with the participation of the delegates of the Representation and distinguished Poles from the Polish diaspora to bring the two national groups together and create a favourable atmosphere for the demands of the Representation of Polish Jewry. The delegation had a discussion with the president of the Council, Mr Świetlik, who promised to consider favourably the need expressed by the Representation, and then held a joint conference with the vice-president of the Council, Mrs Wołowska, the secretary of the Council, Mr Soska, and its executive secretary, Mr Ziółkowski. At the aforementioned conference, Mrs Wołowska promised to support the request of the Representation of Polish Jewry, and she also expressed the hope that the Council would pay the Representation of Polish Jewry \$100,000 from its funds as an advance for a future budget grant of half a million dollars.

Later it turned out that the National War Fund did not have an adequate cash reserve and that the Council's request for an additional half-million dollars would have no prospect of success. According to the Vice-President of the Council, Mr Midowicz, who conducts all the negotiations with the National War Fund, is well informed about the financial situation of the institution and is familiar with the distribution technique of the National War Fund—the request raised by the Council for \$500,000—for the Representation of Polish Jewry, would probably be solved in such a way that the National War Fund would reduce the demand by 30–40% and recommend to cover the rest from the Council's budget, and in the best case it would pay from its reserves some small part of it, probably not more than one hundred thousand dollars. These concerns dampened down completely the willingness to come with the aid even among the most favourable members of the Council's board. This circumstance caused a delay in the decision of the Council, which although did not take any negative resolution regarding the presentation of the estimates of the Jews to the National War Fund—did not make any positive efforts in this direction either, while Vice-President Midowicz suggested to the representatives of the Representation during his stay in New York to address—in the absence of funds in the National War Fund—directly the Refugees Trustees or to the President's War Relief Control Board. At the same time, Vice-President Midowicz informed the Representation of Polish Jewry that the Polish American Council would be willing to include the demand for Representation in the estimates for the following year (starting from October 1), provided that the demand includes assistance to Polish citizens generally, not only Jews.

The course of this case—confronted with the initial promises made by individual members of the Council—was a source of general bitterness among the Representation of Polish Jewry, which can be seen in the correspondence of the Representation with the Council, the copies of which were sent by the Representation to the local office. The Consulate General therefore politely asks to clarify the Representation—whenever such an opportunity arise—that the Council referred and refers positively to the Representation's request, which is evidenced by the discussions held by the delegates of the Representation and promises of individual members of the Council. However, if the Representation did not obtain the necessary fund, the reason for the adverse course of the case is that the National War Fund does not have a cash reserve and, therefore, any efforts made by the Council would be pointless. The Representation of Polish Jewry refers in its correspondence to the failure to honour the promise made by the Council's executive body. Here, it should be clarified that Mrs Wołowska, Mr Soska and Mr Ziółkowski are not the executive body of the Council, and that even the decision of the executive body is not authoritative if it is not approved by the entire board of the Council, which in this case would be necessary anyway, as we are dealing with the sum of 100,000 dollars, which is a very serious amount in the Council's budget. The Council could not give an advance of one hundred thousand

dollars without ensuring that this advance will be reimbursed by the National War Fund, while it is impossible for the Council to allocate such an amount from its own funds, as this would force the Council to change the entire programme of the rescue mission. Let us mention, as an example, that Mr Super has so far not received from the Council even the increase of \$5,000—i.e. a relatively small amount—of the funds for day room activities, although the Council recognises the validity of this budgetary increase.

On the margin of the efforts of the Representation of Polish Jewry, the Consulate General wishes to add that according to the decision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare—which, by the way, the Polish American Council called for—all demands within the rescue mission should be concentrated in this ministry or by the social counsellor at the Embassy. Therefore, as the Representation intends to make efforts to obtain a rescue fund for the following financial year through the Polish American Council, it should agree on these efforts with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare or with the Embassy.

CONSUL GENERAL
Consul *Aleksander Moc*

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 505

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[Before 22 May 1944]. Unsigned note on assistance provided to people of Jewish descent in the Middle East

Note
on the care for Jews in Persia and Palestine

In Persia, the Jewish population was treated in the same way as the Polish population, but almost all Jews, immediately after their arrival in Persia, were relocated to the city, i.e. in better conditions than the population in the camps. Jewish orphans who were deported from Russia as a well-organised orphanage, which constituted a separate administrative unit, equal to other orphanages; it was subsequently transferred with its staff to Palestine by the Jewish organisations.

2. The transfer of the Jewish population from Persia to Palestine took place by a roundabout way through the Persian Gulf and Suez, as Iraq, due to an agreement with Arabs in Palestine, did not let the Jews pass through its territory. Only during the stay of the late Prime Minister Sikorski in the East did he manage to receive

from the Iranian Government an approval for the passage of a group of 87 children, who were joined in Persia by 20 more children.

3. The following numbers of Polish-Jewish citizens came from Persia to Palestine:

a) to 1 January 1944 through the Persian Gulf and Suez	
men	101
women	269
children	858
	1228
b) by road through Iraq—children	107
c) the last transport from Persia to Palestine	412
	1747

4. The population which came from Russia to Persia was gradually being evacuated to further refugee areas: to Africa, India or Mexico, whereas no one was directed to Palestine, due to both the much higher subsistence costs there and the attitude of the British authorities. However, when the Jewish organisations decided to evacuate Jews from Persia to Palestine by granting them certificates, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare did not raise any objections, although in this way Jews found themselves in much better conditions than the other refugees. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare agreed to extend to all who arrive to Palestine the general care of the Government Delegation and pay them a cash allowance of £4.5 a month for an adult and £4 for a child, which reflected at that time the cost of nutrition in the Tehran camps. Although the Jewish Agency, when granting certificates to Jews, had committed itself to assist them, the ministry, due to the high cost of living in Palestine, agreed to raise, from February 1943, the financial allowance for refugees granted certificates transferred from Persia to £6 per month and, from July 1943, equated this allowance with the refugee allowance, which was then £9, and £12 from 1 October 1943.

5. Initially, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare also offered to pay the Jewish organisations Alliyah and Agudat £4 for each child. However, they organised care over Jewish children on their own, and the ministry paid them £1 per month for a child as a sign of assistance from the Polish Government. However, in view of the condition imposed by the ministry that Jewish children should also be taught Polish, Alliyah gave up on the assistance from the Ministry. The Ministry ordered its delegation to ensure that 107 Jewish children brought to Palestine through Iraq were fully taken care of, same as the group of 412 people who left with the last transport from Persia.

6. Apart from Palestine, a small number of Jews were directed from Persia to other refugee centres; in Eastern Africa, there are 162 Jews in total in all settlements, in Mexico—27, in India a minimal number. In view of the proposals made by the British forces to send also these Jews to Palestine, a common position was agreed on 17 December last year at the inter-ministerial conference in the MFA, which was subsequently passed on in dispatches to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare's delegates and sent to the Ministry of Information and Documentation in the letter dated 28 December 1943, No. 14586/43/Afr.Wsch./1.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

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*22 May 1944. Circular by the Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA:
instruction on sending information on Polish-Jewish relations*

London, 22 May 1944

SECRET

In view of the frequent accusations made in the British press about the unequal treatment of Polish-Jewish citizens and the alleged antisemitism of certain offices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks for a special report to be sent, stating the quantitative and percentage data regarding Polish-Jewish citizens present on the particular territory, as well as the review of the relations regarding the Polish-Jewish citizens.

Notwithstanding the submission of this report, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should, as far as possible, be informed of any data that might present the source of this action, which is probably inspired by external parties.

For SECRETARY-GENERAL
W. Babiński

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

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*24 May 1944. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on improving inter-ministerial cooperation*

London, 24 May 1944

Confidential

Instructions for the Heads of Diplomatic and Consular Posts on their relations
with the delegates of other Ministries

Pending the formal order governing the relationship between delegates and the heads of foreign posts in accordance with the rules of international law and practice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends the following guidelines, constituting confidential information, to the heads of diplomatic and consular posts (Ambassador, Envoy, Consul General, Consul):

1. The bodies authorised to act on behalf of the Polish State and the Government of the Republic of Poland in any other state are—based on international law—only heads of diplomatic and consular posts who replace the interests of all departments of the state administration, bearing in this respect full responsibility towards foreign states and the Polish Government.

2. Neither the law nor international practice recognises the independence of delegates of individual ministries coming for a permanent or temporary stay to a given foreign territory, unless their office in a foreign state has been negotiated in the discussions of the two governments concerned and its scope has been agreed. Any statements by such delegates addressed to the authorities of the foreign state may be accepted and thus permitted (in the absence of a specific bilateral agreement) only if they are made on behalf of the heads of diplomatic or consular posts.

It follows from these essential points that delegates of other ministries, subordinate by office and disciplinary liable to their respective ministers, should—for the sake of the seriousness of the Polish Government—agree with the heads of foreign posts all their ordinances which may give rise to legal effects outside, as well as to communicate with the authorities of the state concerned only through or under the authority of the head of the foreign post, unless the latter case has already been settled differently.

On the other hand, for the good of the cause, the head of the diplomatic or consular post, without acting as the head of the respective delegates, should strive with great care and effort to establish a proper relationship with the local authorities. The heads of the offices shall keep the ministry constantly informed

of any cases of lack of fruitful cooperation and of the occurrence of any friction against this background.

The principles adopted above correspond to the position previously taken by the MFA towards other ministries.⁵³

MINISTER
Tadeusz Romer

Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 2

⁵³ By a circular dated 30 May 1944, the Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA, Hutten-Czapski, added: 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that it is not sufficiently informed by its subordinate foreign offices about refugee matters and related issues. Until the encrypted channel was closed, part of the information was received through the encrypted content sent by individual delegates through foreign posts to the ministry concerned. Currently, in view of the need to use *claris* dispatches, individual delegates may (except the territory of Iran) send their dispatches directly to their department in London, thus bypassing both the foreign posts and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since both delegates and their officials may sometimes be inadequately prepared to work in a foreign country and do not usually have knowledge of the principles of international law and relations, it is to be feared that some of their actions may sometimes become the subject of criticism from the local authorities. Having contact with the heads of foreign offices, the MFA could have respective ministries send them instructions to take the specific position. The Ministry therefore requests to receive on a permanent basis reports and information relating to both the refugee problems (arrival of new transports, financial settlements for camps and maintenance, etc.) and the information on relationship of delegates to the local authorities, Polish foreign offices and delegates of other ministries. Since the contacts of delegates or their officials with the central authorities of the given state and any related interventions should in principle take place via the head of the diplomatic or consular post, the ministry would like to investigate above all the relations between the delegations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare or Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education and the local authorities as well as, where possible, the opinion of these authorities on the overall functioning of the delegation, with especial attention paid to the economic and financial affairs. In the event of written intervention by foreign offices sent to local authorities at the request of the delegations, they must be notified to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Konsulat Generalny (Pretoria, South Africa), 2.

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*25 May 1944. Report by the Legation in Tehran
on cooperation with Jewish organisations on parcel dispatching*

Tehran, 25 May 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The cooperation of the Legation (Department of Assistance) with the Jewish organisations in Tehran in the scope of looking after deported Polish citizens in the USSR is developing successfully. In this respect, the Legation cooperates closely with the following institutions and organisations:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Jewish Agency | —representation in Tehran, |
| 2) Union of Rabbis from Poland | — “ “ “ |
| 3) Joint. | |

I hereby attach a copy of the letter from the Jewish Agency no 6158/44 from 19 May, illustrating this cooperation with a remark that during only one month (from 12 April to 11 May), the Agency received 104 letters from the Legation concerning Polish Jews deported to the USSR. This also shows a significant development in the service department of the Legation of Australia.⁵⁴

The cooperation with the Joint established by the Parcel Committee has been developing successfully. As an example, let us write that in April, the Joint sent 5,153 parcels to the addresses provided by the Committee, of which about 70% were sent to Christians. Moreover, the Joint sent 2,351 parcels to addresses from its own list, verified by the Committee. Therefore, in total the Joint sent in April 7,504 parcels to Polish citizens. Approximately the same number of parcels will be sent in May. Cooperation with the Joint is going well.

⁵⁴ Not included in this publication. By the letter dated 18 January 1944 sent to the MFA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asked ‘to have the following message sent to the Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Palestine and, as a copy to Mr Freyd, Polish Embassy in Washington, and to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Delegation in New York. “Jaroszewski to Jakubski ... We authorise you to determine the rules on parcel dispatch and the receipt of notifications, based on the Delegation Committee ... We consider it necessary to establish close cooperation with Jewish organisations sending parcels. According to information received from Dr Schwarzbart, separate negotiations should be held with the Representation of Polish Jewry (Dr A. Stupp) and the Jewish Agency, whose scope differs to some extent, as well as with the Bund and the Revisionists. Please establish uniform rules with all of them in order to eliminate possible duplication of dispatches. Please provide government assistance to those organisations that need it”’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 148.

The Union of Rabbis from Poland is provided by the Legation with a number of facilities in the scope of the registration of rabbis and rabbinical students deported to the USSR, and the Legation also mediates in sourcing information about them with the help of the Australian Legation in Moscow.

In addition, during his stay in Palestine in February, the head of the Assistance Department established—in accordance with the Ministry's instructions—contact and cooperation with the Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine. The Representation has already provided a first list of approximately 1,000 activists and representatives of Jewish intelligentsia, who were deported to the USSR and to whom it would like to provide assistance and about whom it would also like to obtain the information. This list is currently being analysed by the Legation.⁵⁵

For the POLISH ENVOY
Zbigniew Jakubski
 First Secretary at the Legation

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 148

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27 May 1944. Note by the Refugee Section at the MFA on the assistance provided in the USSR to Polish citizens of Jewish descent

Assistance provided to Polish citizens in the USSR by the Polish Embassy with special attention paid to Polish Jews

More than 1 million Polish citizens were deported from Poland to the USSR, of which about 30% were Jews.

⁵⁵ In an undated letter (drawn up before 6 June 1944), the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Alfred Urbański, asked the MFA 'to send the following dispatch to Mr Jakubski, the Polish Envoy in Tehran, and to Mr Jaroszewski, Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Palestine: "The Representation of Polish Jewry in Palestine informed Schwarzbart, London, that it holds 30,000 addresses of Polish Jews and could send 10,000 parcels per month. They ask to immediately receive £60,000 a month claiming that in our post their percentage is minimal. To enable making decision in this matter, please explain immediately: 1) what is the percentage of Jews in the overall dispatching; 2) how the cooperation with organisations in Palestine is regulated; 3) whether the addresses held by the Representation are not already included in the list held by the Joint; 4) whether the plan of the Representation is realistic and with using which channels; 5) what solution would you propose to avoid duplication?" IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/11.

In 1943, a total number of 265,501 people used the assistance provided within the welfare system run by the Polish Embassy. Despite the request by Soviet authorities from March 1942 that the Polish Embassy stop taking care of Jews, Polish authorities provided the Jews with very extensive assistance, which was used by 104,602 Jews, i.e. 39.4% of the total number of deported Polish citizens provided with assistance.

Similarly, the Soviet authorities tried to limit the number of Jews employed in the welfare apparatus of the Polish Embassy in the USSR. However, Polish authorities successfully overcame these difficulties and on 25 April 1943, the welfare apparatus of the Polish Embassy in the USSR employed 1,828 Jews, which reflected 47.5% of the entire staff of 3,847 people. In the various sections of the apparatus dedicated to looking after Polish citizens, Jews represented a different percentage, in any case very high; for example, Jewish staff in some institutions of assistance in some towns amounted to 77%.

The total amount of aid granted to Polish citizens in the USSR during the period from 1 August 1941 to 25 July 1943 was 111,700,493 roubles, i.e. on average 263 roubles per person. However, in some localities, where, for example, the percentage of Jews was 91% (Shalder, in the south), the average assistance per person was 528 roubles. Moreover, the Jewish population received additional cash assistance from the foreign Jewish organisations.

Commodity aid during the said period was 6,176 tonnes, of which the Soviet authorities confiscated 2,128 tonnes. Polish citizens in the USSR thus received 4,048 tonnes, which reflected on average per person 15.2 kg, whereas in the regions where the overwhelming Jewish population was located, the average aid for goods was 20.1 kg per person.

In the education activities organised by the Polish authorities in the south of the USSR, Jewish students constituted 75% and Jewish teaching staff—70%.

Regarding the issue of evacuation, in view of the well-known position of the Soviet authorities—who limited the number of Polish-Jewish citizens included in the total number of Polish citizens evacuated from the USSR to about 10%—Polish authorities tried to facilitate the inclusion of Jews in the emergency lists and intervened on several occasions with the Soviet authorities in these matters. To quote just one example of the aforementioned attitude of the Polish authorities to this issue, we can recall the fact of a very high percentage of Jews among the staff of the welfare apparatus and the relatively high percentage of Jews admitted to the Polish Army in the USSR and then evacuated with it (to the detriment of Poles who had to remain in the USSR) to the Middle East, where a large number of them deserted.

After Soviet-Polish diplomatic relations were severed and the Polish representation in the USSR was taken over as by the Australian Legation in

Moscow, Polish authorities provided this Legation with several lists of Polish citizens staying in the USSR in order to have them evacuated. These lists were drawn up by the Polish Embassy in the USSR being liquidated in Tehran and were compiled from all available documents. As many as 47% of people on these lists were Jews, although in fact the percentage of Jews in that territory is 30%. This does not include the list of military families, because at the time of its compilation it turned out that after the desertions, only 1% of the Jews remained in the Polish Army and all their reports were taken into account.

Regarding the current parcel aid provided to Polish citizens in the USSR, the percentage of parcels sent to Jews far exceeds their actual percentage presence in the USSR in relation to the total number of Polish citizens deported to the USSR.

In the state of affairs already provided and still being provided by the Polish authorities to Polish-Jewish citizens, it is clear that, in terms of both material and legal matters, Jews were *and still are* in a privileged position in relation to the total number of Polish citizens deported to the USSR.

London, 27 May 1944.

K. Rudzki

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

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*27 May 1944. Message from the Polish Press Agency 'Światpol'
on the German repression of people helping Jews in occupied Poland*

'Światpol' Press Communique
May 27, 1944

Death for Concealment of Jews. Poles Risk Their Lives in Defense of Ghetto Refugees

While conducting their brutal extermination of Jews in Poland by mass executions inside the ghettos, the Germans have issued a number of terroristic decrees in order to intimidate the Poles against helping the Jewish population. They thought that it would be easier to trace and murder people, who would have nowhere to hide and who would be deprived of any possible help.

During the bloody liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto a number of Jews succeeded in escaping and have found refuge among the Poles in the city and its outskirts.

On September 8, 1942, the German authorities in Warsaw issued a proclamation, whereby anyone guilty of concealing Jews, or of giving them food, sleeping quarters or any means of transportation, would be punished by death. The proclamation also promised impunity to Poles, who would reveal the hiding places of Jews to the German police.

An underground publication 'New Roads' (Nowe Drogi) of June 20, 1943, in an article entitled 'Upon the Ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto' writes:

'Governor Fischer in his highly cynical proclamation tries to explain the liquidation of the Ghetto as a necessary step in the war against communism. He calls on us to denounce every Jew before the German authorities and says that "in such instances all ethical considerations can be totally disregarded".

The disgraceful insult to the Poles, contained in that sentence, deserves only one answer from us: Our deeds should prove that we conduct ourselves according to Polish, Christian and human moral codes and not according to German ethics.'

Heroic Death of a Polish Worker

Despite the threat of death, the Poles unhesitatingly chose to act in accord with their conscience and moral principles. Centuries of life with the Jews on the same land—centuries of sharing alike the good and bad turns of fortune, have created a feeling of solidarity and loyalty, which many Poles have sealed with their blood.

In an ammunitions plant in Skarżysko-Kamienna, the Germans have publicly executed a worker, Nowak, accused of aiding the Jews. All of Nowak's co-workers were forcibly gathered in the courtyard, where the execution was to take place. Nowak walked up quietly and bravely to the gallows, set up in the middle of the courtyard. He raised his head proudly and called out: 'Long Live Poland.' The hangmen quickly threw the noose about his neck and Nowak was suspended from the gallows. A moment later the rope broke under his weight and the victim fall to the ground. On seeing this, the Commander of the factory guard, an SS Officer, Krause, ran up and killed the victim with a shot from his revolver.

So died a Polish worker, to whom the order to help the suffering Jews was more important than life itself.

Long List of Polish Victims

The above is by no means an isolated incident—it is only one of many. The list of Polish victims who have lost their lives for helping Jews is a long one. We mention a few such cases:

In the town of Sadowne (Węgrowskie County) the Germans shot the local baker, his wife and son, for selling bread to the Jews.

In the village Antonowska [Antoniówka?] (County of Krasnystaw), the whole family of Pulawski, one of the villagers, was murdered for concealing Jews.

In the village of Kruszec (near Kobylin) a peasant was killed for hiding a Jew.

In another village, the Germans brutally murdered five families under the same accusation as above. The victims were locked in a woodshed, which was then set afire.

In Cracow, Jan Grabiec, tailor, was executed for giving refuge to a Jew.

In Radziejowice, near Cracow, several peasants were shot for the same 'offense.'

Polish Priests in Defense of Jews

The following Catholic priests died a martyr's death for concealing Jews:

Rev. Urbanowicz of Brześć on the Bug, shot in June 1943. Canon Roman Archutowski, Rector of the Warsaw Seminary, was tortured to death in the camp at Majdanek in October, 1943. Dean of the Parish of Grodno and the Prior of the Franciscan Convent were shot in Łomża in the fall of 1943. Rev. Marcei Godlewski, 77 years old person of the Grzybowska Parish, died in the Warsaw Ghetto, which he refused to leave, through he was not even of Jewish descent.

Dr. Raszeja, a distinguished surgeon, Professor of the University of Posen, summoned to the Warsaw Ghetto to perform an operation upon a Jew, was killed during the battle of the Ghetto in July, 1942.

Help for Defenders of the Ghetto

After the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, a number of Jews, hiding in cellars and sewer passages inside the Ghetto were for a long time supplied with food by the Poles. Special units of German police, wearing rubber soled shoes and equipped with apparatus for sound detection, were assigned to penetrate every nook in search of victims still alive. Despite this, the Poles risked their lives, trying to bring help to the Jews as long as it was possible.

Every Jew that fell into German hands at that time was tortured by the Gestapo in order to exhort from him names of Poles who aided him. Each time a victim broke down under interrogation, the Poles whose names he mentioned were doomed to die. Yet the help did not cease. Polish Underground press, voicing the opinions of various political parties, continually appealed to the Poles to give refuge to the desperate Jews and to protect them against the German police. The Deputy of the Polish Government in Exile, inside Poland, issued the following appeal in the paper 'Through Battle to Victory' (Przez Walkę do Zwycięstwa) of May 20, 1943:

‘The Poles act rightfully in sympathising with the persecuted and hunted Jews and in giving them their full support and aid. This aid should continue’⁵⁶.

The above facts, known all over Poland, decidedly contradict the accusations of antisemitism, which harm the good name of the Polish nation and throw a shadow upon the age-old traditions of Polish tolerance. The truth is best illustrated by the fact that Poles have aided Jews in the darkest moments of history, though that aid had cost them much blood and suffering. Risking their lives they have helped the Jews at a time when the rest of the world looked helplessly upon the terrifying tragedy of Polish Jewry, without finding a single practical way to alleviate the sufferings of the Jews.

IPMS, Polish Information Centre in Chicago, A.63/40 (ENG)

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31 May 1944. Report by the Envoy in Buenos Aires on Paraguayan passports

SECRET

31 May 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Following the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to intervene with the Paraguayan Government in favour of the Polish Jews—holders of the illegal Paraguayan passports obtained at the Paraguay Honorary Consulate in Bern, I would like to inform the Ministry of the following course of previous proceedings in this case, thus partially completing the telegraphic communication.

With my note from 23 December of last year, I asked the then Minister of Foreign Affairs in Asunción, Dr Luis A. Argaña, for the recognition of passports issued to the Polish Jews as valid. Minister Argaña replied by note dated 3 January this year, the main part of which—in direct translation to Polish—would sound as follows:

⁵⁶ This is a reference to a statement devoted partly to the Katyn massacre and partly to the killings of Jews in occupied Poland, dated 30 April 1943 and signed by the Government Delegate for Poland. It came out in the magazine *Przez Walkę do Zwycięstwa*, published by the People’s Party, issue of 20 May 1943, no. 11.

‘The passports in question are considered valid for the duration of the war, so their holders have the right to claim the benefits that would result from holding these passports wherever they would be used.

In order to fulfil the request raised by you the MFA has asked today the Chargé d’Affaires of Spain in Asunción to send the Spanish Embassy in Berlin an official declaration regarding the validity of the passports in question.’

On the day of receipt of the note, i.e. on 14 January, I sent a dispatch to the Ministry concerning this outcome of our efforts.

As a result of subsequent telegraphic instructions, I intervened again with the successor of Dr Argaña, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, Dr Horacio Chiriani, with a note dated 25 April supplemented by a nominative list of the Polish Jews interned in Vittel and Compiègne—holders of Paraguayan passports, which I received in the meantime from Rabbi Dr I. Lewin from New York through the agency of the Consul General, Minister S. Strakacz. The note was delivered to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Asunción by our Honorary Consul, Mr Raúl Daumas Ladouce. I hereby attach the copy of his exhaustive report.⁵⁷

The report shows that the U.S. Ambassador—who, at my request, was sent by Consul Ladouce a copy of the note filed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay—already had instructions on this matter issued by the Department of State and that the case is the subject of discussions between the said Ambassador and the Government of Paraguay.

At the time of sending this document, I expect a formal response from Minister Chiriani, the positive content of which is already foreseeable.

Miroslaw Arciszewski
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Poselstwo Buenos Aires, 252

⁵⁷ Not included in this publication. See doc. 493.

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*1 June 1944. Report by the Delegate of the Ministry of Religious Affairs
and Public Education in Jerusalem on the creation
of the office of Rabbi of the Republic of Poland in Palestine*

Jerusalem, on 1 June 1944

Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education
London

In response to document L.dz.2391/XII. of 13 March this year and following airmail L. 897/44 of 6 May on the appointment of the Polish government rabbi in Palestine, I hereby report that:

1) Having thoroughly studied the relations among the refugees of Poland of Jewish denomination, I note that all religious spiritual needs are in any case sufficiently served by local and Polish rabbis.

2) Refugees-Jews are divided into a number of political and religious groups which are not always friendly to each other, and it is simply impossible to find a rabbi who would satisfy all of them. The appointment of a rabbi belonging to a certain group will cause the others to fight against him.

3) Although I did not discuss this issue with the Chief Rabbi of Palestine, I think, however, that he will not allow his authority to be somehow limited by the organisation of a Polish community. As typical example of this situation, let me refer to the relations in Jerusalem's Jewish Community, in which, due to the differences of opinion between the groups of Sephardic, Ashkenazi, Orthodox Jews and 'Mapai,' the elections were postponed for the 13th time to 17 May this year. Despite the finally determined date, the elections did not take place.

4) Currently, due to the clear anti-Polish actions (alleged antisemitism), rabbis do not pressure for a response and are most probably waiting for changes in the political situation.

5) If the Polish government rabbi were appointed and allotted a permanent salary, he would most probably have to transfer a significant proportion of his salary to them for known purposes, which would result only in further requests for an increase in the grant.

Based on the above, I would like to make a request to postpone the nomination of the Polish government rabbi for refugees in Palestine for a certain period.

If the Ministry wishes to come with financial aid for religious life, please order the payment of a permanent allowance to the Union of Rabbis from Poland in the amount of 50 Palestine pounds per month.

I hereby attach the opinion of the Consul General in Jerusalem, with whom I have discussed this case several times.⁵⁸

Delegate of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education
/–/ Józef Follprecht

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/87

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10 June 1944. Resolution of the Special Committee of the National Council on the investigation of the case of desertions

RESOLUTION

of the Special Committee of the National Council⁵⁹
at its meeting held on 10 June 1944

The Committee adopts a resolution to request from the Ministry of National Defence the following acts:

- 1) investigation and judicial files against Jews, Ukrainians and Belarusians accused of desertion, as well as complaints about antisemitism,
- 2) files of the investigation committee led by General Boruta,

⁵⁸ There is no attachment.

⁵⁹ By a resolution of 2 May 1944, the National Council decided the following: '1) The National Council of the Republic of Poland chooses from among its members a Special Committee to examine the reasons for the abandonment of the Polish Army by groups of Jewish soldiers. The Committee will consist of six members and six deputies. The Committee will include representatives of the Polish Jews in the National Council of the Republic of Poland. The National Council of the Republic of Poland authorised the Commission to extend investigations also to cases concerning soldiers of Ukrainian and Belarusian origin. The National Council of the Republic of Poland calls on the Government to provide the Committee with all documents and results of any judicial or other investigation relating to the matter of desertion and to assure the Committee unlimited freedom and full effectiveness in conducting its own investigations. Any depositions submitted by the Commission should be covered with full confidentiality and whoever is submitting them should be held secure against possible repression. 2) In view of the notoriety of the issue of desertions from the Polish Army, the National Council of the Republic of Poland expresses the opinion that the Minister of National Defence should present the entire issue to the National Council in the near future.' IPMS, Akta Rady Narodowej RP i Rady RP, A.5/6A/19.

3) files on the briefing of the Jewish soldiers in London regarding the situation related to desertion,

4) files from the USSR territory related to incorporation or dismissal of Jews, Belarusians and Ukrainians from the Polish Army,

5) files from the Middle East related to the case as at 1,

6) files of the Carpathian Brigade related to the case as at 1,

7) sets of commands, located in the United Kingdom, instructions of the Ministry of National Defence, Commander-in-Chief and the Staff, as well as of commanders of individual entities, related to the educational initiatives dedicated to Jews, Ukrainians and Belarusians, including all secret commands linked to national minorities,

8) Intelligence and Counterintelligence reports from the United Kingdom and the Middle East on these matters,

9) files of complaints by individual soldiers about alleged discrimination, including Jews, Ukrainians and Belarusians,

10) list of judicial and disciplinary decisions in these cases,

11) reports by the commanders and chief military authorities on the behaviour of Jews, Ukrainians and Belarusians,

12) as well as any other files which you consider as appropriate to be attached.

London, 10 June 1944.

IPMS, Akta Rady Narodowej RP i Rady RP, A.5/6A/5

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*13 June 1944. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
information from Bern about the people interned in the camp in Vittel*

13 June 1944

URGENT—SECRET

To Minister Sylwin Strakacz,
Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Please find below the content of the telegram by Mr Sternbuch from Bern, from 12 June, which I would like you to communicate in a strictly confidential manner to the Agudat organisation and to the Union of Orthodox Rabbis:

‘We do not know the place of stay of the persons interned in Vittel from April 20. The rumours that they are in Drancy, near Paris, are probably not true. The American Legation in Bern and the Swiss one in Berlin were unable to investigate the case. On 28 April, the Auswärtiges Amt stated that the case was not known and in mid-May it passed to the Swiss Envoy a list including 163 names, explaining that the persons on that list had been deported in an unknown direction. The Swiss Envoy will try to get some more details.’⁶⁰

I have no idea what more can be done. Maybe we can provide specific names and offer Berlin an immediate exchange? All of them have Palestinian certificates and could travel directly from Lisbon to Palestine without bothering South America. Please, if possible, try to create pressure from the American Legations in Madrid, Lisbon and Bern to make them immediately request the information on the place of stay of these people and propose an exchange.

⁶⁰ In the letter dated 27 April 1944, the Ambassador in Washington informed the Consul General in New York: ‘Referring to the telephone conversation between the Minister and the Embassy on day 26 this month, I am communicating below the content of the telegram of Mr Sternbuch from Bern, which I would like you to communicate in a strictly confidential manner to relevant members of “Agudat”: “All the persons interned in Vittel have been deported. For the time being, they are located in Drancy, near Paris. This message comes from two fugitives, who say that the states-protectors—i.e. Spain and Switzerland—have not yet notified the German authorities about the recognition of identity documents. The responsibility for this falls on “Agudat”. Please cause Spanish and Swiss intervention within 24 hours. Otherwise, all these people are lost”. AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506.’

In Slovakia and Hungary, the holders of Paraguayan and Salvadoran passports are left with no assistance because these two states have not designated a state-protector. Please make Sweden and Switzerland take care of them.

Since April, we have received despairing letters and telegrams on the deportation of Jews from Hungary and Slovakia to Poland—of course to be killed there. They often deport 10,000 to 15,000 people per day. To this date, a total of about 300,000 people have been deported.

We asked the American and English Legations to have the relevant railway nodes (Kaschau–Pressov) bombarded, but so far it brings no result.

All the care initiatives, commissioners, compassion, etc., are pointless if no crucial steps are made.

I would like to ask for immediate intervention with President Roosevelt, with Churchill and possibly in Moscow to make happen, as soon as possible, the relevant bombing that could still save some of these people.

The responsibility for not trying anything is enormous.

Please treat the above as strictly secret.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

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14 June 1944. Report by the Envoy in Havana on the issue of Jewish refugees in Jamaica

On 14 June 1944

To the MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in London

In relation to my report No. 738/Jam of 27 December last year,⁶¹ I hereby communicate that within the six months of my stay in Jamaica, the problem of

⁶¹ In the mentioned report, the Envoy in Havana stated: 'According to the telegraphic instructions, I went by plane to Jamaica on 8 December ... with the opportunity to examine a whole range of individual cases, I had the impression that the camp

the Polish citizens hosted in the Gibraltar Camp II has changed due to numerous departures of the members of this group—mostly to Cuba. Of the 109 people I met there in December 1943, only 64 were still in Jamaica, and more than a dozen have already received visas and will probably also leave soon. There will therefore be about 50 people there, and this number—thanks to the help of Jewish organisations and people who have left Gibraltar Camp—is likely to decrease further by the end of this year.⁶²

Also in material terms, the situation of the residents of this camp has somewhat improved, as I know that there are money collections run by the local Jewish refugees to support them. Although the bitterness that I have felt among those who for the moment have no chance to leave is certainly increasing, I have not recently received too many complaints and requests for aid from Jamaica.

On the other hand, the residence here of several dozens of refugees—even though, if they have no personal resources, their needs are immediately covered by the Joint Distribution Committee assistance fund—is an additional burden for this local post in terms of consular activities, passport and care.⁶³

IPMS, Poselstwo Hawana, A.62/42

management was willing to meet the personal needs of refugees ... Several refugees made allegations that they were misled, being convinced, when leaving Lisbon, that in Jamaica they would enjoy full freedom ... They mostly blame for this disappointment the Joint, whose representative ... apparently ensured them, as they claim, that such conditions await them in their new place of stay ... They attribute the current state of affairs to the Joint and to the Polish Government. ... In summary, I note that while the objective conditions of the existence of a group of Polish citizens in Camp Gibraltar II—given the possibilities offered in Jamaica—are quite decent, the subjective feeling of this group is bad. Prolonged periods of inactivity, tropical climate conditions and the inability to prepare for the future increase their bitterness.' IJPA, Archiwum Romana Dębickiego, 40/9.

⁶² In the letter from 1 April 1944, the Legation in Havana addressed the group of refugees in Jamaica, informing them: 'The Polish Legation in Havana hereby sends 18 passports, according to the attached list of the names, extended until 31 March 1945. At the same time, the Legation notifies that it has granted a 50% discount on the passport charges currently in force, while the remaining 50%, i.e. \$3.00 per passport, were paid by Centro Israelita in Havana.' *IPMS, Poselstwo Hawana, A.62/42*.

⁶³ A copy of the report was sent to the Embassy in Washington and the Consulate General in London.

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19 June 1944. Note by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on obtaining passports of South American countries for people of Jewish descent

Confidential

Note

on Jews—Polish citizens holding passports issued by Latin American countries

Due to the efforts of foreign friends, many Polish Jews obtained passports from Latin American countries issued by their consuls in Switzerland. This included mainly passports of Paraguay and El Salvador, but also of Haiti, Peru, Honduras, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela and Costa Rica. It can be assumed that the consular authorities issuing these passports derived personal profits from this activity and that different intermediaries also drew their profit. Following detection of the illegal issuing of passports by the Latin American countries' consulates, some of these posts were exempted from service (Peru, Paraguay). Not only did the detection of the case prevent further passports from being obtained this way, as both the countries involved and Switzerland took vigorous steps to prevent such practices, but it made the German authorities, who must have learnt about everything, become suspicious towards Jews—holders of passports of the Latin American countries. So far, the Germans have directed Jews from non-European countries to special camps, mainly in Vittel, France, where living conditions were relatively acceptable. Holding passports from the Latin American countries has protected these people from being deported to Poland and inevitable death.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was informed for the first time of the possibility of receiving such passports by the Polish Envoy in Bern and by the Jewish organisations in May 1943. The Ministry did not manage to collect accurate data on the quantities of passports obtained from each Latin American country this way. Only in the case of the Republic of El Salvador it is known that there are about 1,000 of them. The case of the illegal acquisition of passports was very much criticised, particularly by the US Legation in Bern, who were afraid that it would facilitate German agents to leave Europe. Without being deterred by these difficulties, the Ministry tried by its representatives in Paraguay and Brazil to obtain the consent of these countries to carry out the exchange of Polish citizens holding Latin American passports for German citizens residing in these countries. Unfortunately, these initiatives did not produce the desired results despite the fact that the International Red Cross agreed to act as mediator in the exchange (August 1943).

In December 1943, the Legation in Bern reported that the Spanish Embassy in Berlin (Spain is caring for the interests of Paraguay in Germany) announced

its intention to cancel the passports issued by the Paraguayan Consulate in Switzerland to the Polish Jews. As a result, the German authorities started taking away passports from the nationals of the allied [neutral?] states to have them checked by the representations of the states-protectors. At this stage of the case, the ministry asked (22 December 1943⁶⁴) the Latin American countries' posts to file a *démarche* with their governments to have them notify the powers responsible for their interests in Berlin that they consider the passports issued to be valid. In their *démarche*, the Polish Envoys stressed that it was a matter of saving human lives and that the recognition of passports for the time of war by the respective governments would not entail any obligations after the war. The Ministry also instructed the Polish Ambassador in Washington to request support for this action from the representatives of the United States in the capital cities of Latin American countries.

On 11 April 1944, due to the alarming messages received from Bern,⁶⁵ stating that the German authorities ordered the deportation of persons interned in Vittel to the interim camp in Drancy, near Paris, the Ministry has again recommended intervention with the governments of Latin American countries. The German authorities were supposed to state that they would only recognise the interned as citizens of Latin American countries if they were to be exchanged for German citizens interned in America. The lives of these people could only be saved by the official declaration of the Latin American governments, transferred via the states-protectors (Spain, Switzerland), that such an exchange is possible. Even if the exchange would finally not happen, the statement of readiness itself could, in the opinion of the Polish Legation in Bern, save the lives of the interned. In this situation, the Ministry instructed its posts to intervene for the second time and ask the Latin American governments to declare their readiness to carry out the exchange. The Ambassadors in Vatican and in Washington were supposed to get the support of the papal nuncios and the representatives of the United States in their respective capitals.

The position taken by the governments of Latin American countries as a result of both Polish interventions was as follows:

The Governments of Paraguay and Haiti responded the most favourably. In response to the first intervention, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay announced to the Polish Envoy that Paraguay had never intended to invalidate the passports issued and that he instructed the Spanish Embassy in Berlin by telegraph to confirm the validity of the passports in question (3 January 1944). Paraguay has not yet responded to the second intervention.

⁶⁴ Doc. 417.

⁶⁵ Doc. 459.

Haiti, raising a number of reservations, has given a generally favourable response, asking for specific cases. The reply to the second démarche, expressing the agreement to the request of the Polish Government, does not contain details of the intervention proposed by Haiti in Berlin.⁶⁶

Chile, although it did not provide a completely positive response, showed an extensive understanding of the case and asked the Swiss Legation to send details, indicating that specific cases would be dealt with favourably. However, there is no confirmation as to whether Chilean passports would be part of the agreement anyway.

Venezuela stated that it had not granted any such passports and declared it would take a position in the event of specific cases.

Peru and Ecuador took a negative position.

So far, no response has been received from the Central American republics (El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama), which belong to the territorial competence of the Polish Legation in Mexico City.

Notwithstanding the above action, the Ministry received a message that the Irish Government had received from the German Government an assurance that the deportations of persons kept in Vittel would be suspended until the démarche of Ireland was considered (mid-May 1944). However, it is not known whether this applies also to other camps, especially since according to information received from America, the people interned in Vittel were to be transferred to the interim camp in Drancy, near Paris.

The Ministry keeps the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees in London (Mr Kullmann) informed about the actions aimed at saving the lives of Jews—holders of South American passports. In addition, regarding this case, the Polish Government has been—via the Ambassador in Washington—in constant contact with the government of the United States, which has on several occasions presented it to the governments of the countries concerned, taking advantage of the different routes it disposes. Recently, the US Department of State has suggested to present this issue to the Advisory Committee for Political Defence of the American

⁶⁶ The Envoy in Havana, Roman Dębicki, reported on 22 August 1944: 'Following my letter No. 727/44 from 24 May this year, I am sending an attached a copy of the note by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Haiti, who informs me, as announced in a previous correspondence on this subject, of the issue of ordinances in accordance with Polish intervention and demands regarding Polish-Jewish citizens interned by the Germans. At the same time, Mr G. Lescot cites the content of a declaration made via Switzerland to the German Government on the recognition as nationals of Haiti of persons unable to meet the terms of the Decree of 4 February 1942, i.e. those who would lose their right of citizenship under normal conditions.' AAN, Ambasada Waszyngton, 3093. See doc. 422 and 470.

Continent in Montevideo in order to make recommendations for actions in the appropriate direction to be taken by the American republics—members of the Committee. Due to the fact that only an American country is allowed to raise a matter before the Committee, it is currently under consideration which of them will make a proposal.

According to information received from the American government circles, twelve holders of Latin American cover passports are among the persons to be exchanged for German citizens in America.

Since 20 April this year, as reported by the Polish Legation in Bern, there has been a complete lack of reliable information on persons previously interned in Vittel. About May 15, the Swedish Envoy in Berlin was informed by the Auswärtiges Amt that 163 people about whom he was asking, were displaced in an unknown direction.

The Ministry spares no effort to trigger an effective action that could protect Jews who were provided with courtesy Latin American passports from deportation to Poland and extermination. What makes it difficult is having only residual data on the number of people concerned and the number of passports of individual American republics. Already in March, the Ministry demanded the Jewish organisations in Switzerland to provide as complete data as possible, but it has not yet received it.

London, 19 June 1944

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616

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*[Before 20 June 1944]. Report by the Envoy in Tehran
on the organisation of the parcel support action*

Tehran, June 1944

SECRET

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

In addition to the information sent by telegraph, I am going to present the course of the parcel campaign crisis which began in February this year.

On 15 February, the Soviet commercial agency in Tehran, via Inturist, refused to sign the customs license previously issued to the company Cracovie and covering a batch of 10,000 transit parcels. At the same time, the head of Inturist was called to Moscow, where he stayed for about two months. It should be clarified that Inturist took part in the parcel action as an intermediary, issuing the import licenses on behalf of Torgpredstvo.

During March and April, the situation regarding the shipment of transit parcels remained unchanged; moreover, the shipment of quota parcels (from goods purchased on the Iranian market) was also suspended. Those wishing to send the quota package had henceforth to file the documents to the Torgpredstvo, who would issue them a license to send the parcel if they prove that the parcel was intended for a Soviet citizen. The need to appear in person in Torgpredstvo to send each parcel has prevented the Parcel Committee from sending quota parcels. This situation has not changed so far, and these are mostly the Soviet citizens living in Iran who benefit from the sending of quota parcels.

From April onwards, the Committee has undertaken to implement a previously concluded agreement with the Joint by sending parcels with goods purchased from the government funds that were transferred to the Joint for this purpose. It should be emphasised that the Joint is so far the only organisation having its own transit storage in Tehran and capable of sending parcels to the Jewish population in the USSR without restrictions. The results of the cooperation with the Joint will be presented in a separate report, and at this point I would just like to raise the point that the parcels sent by this organisation from government goods were directed 50/50 to Christians and Jews. Due to the special political conditions, all parcels sent by the Joint included only the name of the organisation as the sender, without giving the parcels the characteristics of Polish government aid.

In April and May, the situation regarding the parcel campaign remained unchanged, although the Soviet circles were spreading rumours that the ordinances restricting sending parcels are temporary. However, the attempts made by the Committee to send small quantities of quota packages by private agents for Christians have been thwarted by Torgpredstvo.

The head of Inturist, who returned from Moscow, has brought the notice that the Tehran branch of the Union of Polish Patriots (UPP) in the USSR has obtained the exclusive right to send parcels to Poles in the USSR.⁶⁷ Representatives of the UPP have long tried to organise the shipment of parcels on their own, but they have not been able to launch the campaign. The reason for this was the lack of goods, money and records of Poles in the USSR.

⁶⁷ This is a reference to the political organisation set up in March 1943 by the Polish communists in the USSR, dependant on Joseph Stalin and acting as an instrument of the Soviet policy on Polish issues; the UPP did not recognise the Polish Government-in-Exile.

Following unsuccessful attempts to organise the action on their own, UPP representatives asked the Delegation of the Polish Red Cross in Tehran to hold a discussion in order to organise the joint collaboration.

Director Kollat, Delegate of the PRC to Iran, held on 29 May a discussion with the UPP delegates. The report on this conversation was sent to the Ministry by telegraph via the Foreign Office.

Representatives of the UPP stated at the time that they obtained the exclusive right from the Soviet authorities to send any number of parcels to Poles in the USSR without paying any duty. The parcels would be packed in Tehran and then shipped, for a fee, by the Soviet-Iranian transport company *Iransovtrans* to Pahlevi from where they would be sent via Baku by post. It would be possible to send, among others—especially—used clothing, which is banned by Soviet customs regulations when sent in ordinary parcels. Representatives of the UPP pointed out that the goods and money for the operation should be provided by the PRC, but only the UPP can be mentioned as the sender, whereby the UPP is prepared to send parcels to all addresses provided by the PRC; however it will also send parcels to its own addresses—submitted to the attention of the PRC. After the discussion, representatives of the UPP stated that the International Red Cross could possibly be included as a parcel sender—via the UPP. The head of the UPP, Mr Olszewski, has not participated in the conversation, as he was in Moscow at that time. The representatives of the UPP showed complete ignorance on what concerns the technical side of the campaign, stressed the lack of sufficient credentials and the need to coordinate the action in detail with the Board of the UPP in Moscow.

The meeting was terminated with a statement that both parties will return to the case after having received the instructions from competent authorities.

On 9 June, Mr Passman, an American citizen residing in Jerusalem, head of the Joint, arrived in Tehran.

On 11 June, accompanied by the head of the Peltours company, he had a discussion with the head of *Inturist* in Tehran, Mr Travkin. It should be noted that Peltours, a Palestinian transport office and travel agency, is the Soviet customs agent for the Middle East. As a result of the contract with the Joint, Peltours obtained the exclusive right to send parcels to the USSR and other countries under its control on the account of the Joint. Peltours is currently working exclusively for the Joint and—according to the agreement with the Joint—on its own it can only send small quantities of parcels that it sells to private individuals. Packages sold by Peltours to private individuals are only dispatched if the Joint agrees to the addresses presented by Peltours.

In the conversation from 11 June, the head of *Inturist* stated that according to the instructions received from Moscow, Peltours cannot send parcels to non-Jews from now on, nor should it use the sources of addresses held by the Polish

authorities and the PRC, also on what regards the Jewish population. When sending packages to non-Jews, Peltours becomes the agent of the Polish Government and conducts propaganda which the Soviet authorities do not accept, which could expose it to the termination of the agreement binding it with Inturist and thereby withdraw the customs concession.

The head of Peltours explained that he was not acting alone but solely for the account and responsibility of the Joint, and that the Soviet authorities' objection should be directed to the Joint, rather than to Peltours.

The conversation continued on the 12th day of this month and then Mr Passman explained thoroughly the working principle of the Joint, stressing that this American charity organisation would like to help all those who need help, all the more so because the American and English authorities from which the Joint obtained or purchased goods for the parcel campaign emphasised that the Joint was supposed to send parcels also the non-Jews addressees. In view of the Inturist objections, Mr Passman is forced to present details of the case to the American and English Embassies.

At the end of the meeting, the head of Inturist added that the Soviet Embassy in Tehran would certainly not present the case as honestly as he did, but this would not change the situation, as the Soviet authorities do not want the Joint to cooperate with the Polish Government. Mr Passman added that the Soviet authorities' position discriminates against not only Poles but also, partly, Jews, since a certain percentage of the parcel recipients include persons whose nationalities cannot be definitely determined, neither by the Joint nor by the Polish authorities. It is mainly about those with names of German origin, and in part also of Polish, whose nationalities, from the very wording of the name and first name alone, cannot be determined.

On the same day, Mr Passman had a conversation with Mr Ford, the American Chargé d'Affaires, whom he informed about the whole case. Mr Ford explained that he once had talked with the Soviet Ambassador about the parcel campaign, but the case of the Joint sending parcels to non-Jews had not been raised then. Mr Ford advised to clarify the matter now, directly at the Soviet Embassy.

On 13 June, Mr Passman had a conversation with Mr Emelyanov, the Soviet Consul General, whose competences cover the matters of relief. Mr Passman discussed, among other things, the matter of mass relief, namely:

(a) the dispatch by the Joint, at the beginning of this year, of goods from America worth \$500,000 to be distributed among the Jewish and non-Jewish population in the USSR without the control of the Joint (this matter was once reported to the MFA by telegraph),

b) the issue of planning new transports which the Joint wishes to direct to Siberia to be distributed under the control of its representatives.

Mr Passman, in turn, presented the difficulties which the Joint met in sending parcels to non-Jews and asked the Soviet Embassy to find a solution for this situation, otherwise the Joint would not be able to meet the obligations it had entered into with the US and English authorities, which asked it to send parcels to non-Jews as well.

Mr Emelyanov stated that he could not take any position on this issue, but he was aware that the UPP branch in Tehran was authorised by the Soviet authorities to send parcels on a broader scale and that it would be good if the Joint could agree with the UPP on this issue. On this, the conversation ended.

On that day, there was a typical incident illustrating the specific Tehran conditions. The incident developed as follows: in the evening, several Soviet heavy trucks with troops armed with tommy guns under the command of an officer arrived at the house occupied by a certain Mr Dawidowicz, a reserve officer, currently employed by the Joint. The soldiers checked the documents of all the residents of the house, occupied mostly by Polish citizens, and stated that they had received an order to take goods which were deposited in the cellars of the house, as these goods are the property of the USSR government. It should be clarified that due to the Joint taking over about 250 tonnes of goods from the warehouses of the Legation's Transport Department, which the Joint obtained in the Lend-Lease delegation, there was no longer any free space in the Joint's warehouses. Therefore, some of these goods were temporarily deposited in the cellars of the house where the Joint employee lived.

Due to the absence of Mr Dawidowicz, the soldiers left, leaving some guards in front of the house. During the night they checked several times whether the goods were in place, and taking the goods was postponed until morning. Mr Dawidowicz alerted in the morning the management of the Joint, who arrived on the spot, when the goods were already being taken out by soldiers and loaded onto trucks. After a lot of efforts, Mr Passman reached the Soviet command in Tehran and explained that the goods are of American origin and are owned by an American organisation. When almost all the goods were loaded on trucks, several Soviet officers gave the order to the soldiers to unload the trucks and to get the goods back into the cellars. Mr Passman notified the American Embassy of the incident which then submitted a protest to the Soviet Embassy and received, together with apologies, an explanation that the incident was caused by the Soviet authorities' excessive zeal. The incident was most probably due to the denunciation by a Russian woman, owner of the house in which the goods were placed, but it should be added that the goods intended for bulk transports to the USSR were once labelled 'for Poles in USSR.' However, Mr Passman is deeply outraged by this incident, being convinced that it was an attempt to put pressure on him to stop cooperating with the Polish authorities.

He emphasises that the Soviet unit commander did not come to the offices of the Joint but went directly to his warehouse and issued an order to load goods on trucks, but did not present any written command. Mr Passman also argues that he is constantly tracked by Soviet agents in Tehran. The US Embassy has notified the Department of State in Washington about the incident.

A discussion took place on 15 June between Mr Passman and representatives of the UPP. The representatives stated that they received from the Soviet authorities an exclusive right to send, free of duty, parcels to the Polish citizens in the USSR. This time—as opposed to the project to send parcels via Pahlevi–Baku (the UPP meeting with Mr Kollat of 29 May this year)—they raised a project to send parcels via Iransovtrans transports to Ashgabat, from where they would be routed through Soviet post offices. The UPP is ready to obtain for the Joint the duty-free exemption for all packages sent to Polish citizens, provided that it would be mentioned as a parcel sender. In exchange for the duty exemption, the UPP wishes to obtain a certain number of unaddressed parcels, which can be determined later.

Mr Passman stated that he represents a charity which cannot take part in political action, as this would be contrary to its principles and spirit. He was already accused of being an agent of the Polish Government, although the packages of Polish goods he sent had no characteristics of Polish Government aid. The proposal to mention the UPP as a sender on the packages is clearly political and therefore the Joint cannot take part in it. He is more willing to give up the benefits offered by the UPP, continue to pay duty and send the packages via the existing route, i.e. Pahlevi–Baku. Mr Passman added that the relief that would result from the duty exemption does not present a specific advantage, because the most difficult thing is to obtain goods, not money, and even with the largest financial means, it is not always possible to obtain goods suitable for parcels under the current conditions. So, if the Joint was supposed to give part of its goods to the UPP in the form of packages, the UPP offer would not be as good as it appeared. In addition, the Joint was not satisfied with the idea to send parcels to the post office in Ashgabat, because it would need to have a representative there and it is questionable whether the Soviet authorities would agree for that. The Joint must report to its donors and the final proof of parcel delivery are the receipts of Iranian post and the policies of the Soviet insurance office Gosstrach in Tehran. Under these conditions, the route via Ashgabat is unworthy and cumbersome for the Joint, as the organisation would have to completely change its working system.

Mr Passman proposed that the UPP obtain for it the duty-free exemption for the parcels sent at the Tehran post office, with maintaining the current route of shipment (Pahlevi–Baku), and abandon the idea of placing the UPP label on parcels. Only under these conditions could the Joint give the UPP a certain number of unaddressed parcels at the exclusive disposal of the UPP.

After an exchange of views, Mr Passman did not definitively reject the UPP's proposal and stated that he must agree with the American and English Embassies before taking his final position.

In talks with the members of the Legation, Mr Passman stressed that he would not make any decision without agreement with the Polish authorities and mentioned two possible solutions:

a) The Joint will possibly cooperate with the UPP while keeping the previous cooperation with the Parcel Committee in such a way that the Committee will not need to contact the UPP directly. The Joint would thus deal with all technical matters directly with the UPP. To apply this solution, the Joint would first have to obtain the Committee's agreement.

b) Establishing open cooperation of the Joint, PRC and UPP, which, according to Mr Passman—despite the reservations made by the UPP—seems possible.

On 17 June, the head of the Joint in Tehran met with the UPP to state that the next conversation with Mr Passman will have to be postponed because he has not yet reached an agreement with the American Chargé d'Affaires due to the sickness of the latter. At this time, he had a longer discussion with Mr Olszewski, head of the UPP in Tehran, who recently returned from Moscow.

Mr Olszewski stated that he brought from Moscow instructions regarding the parcel campaign. He regretted that the position of the Joint did not allow the UPP to establish cooperation at the present time, but added that the position of the UPP on the parcel campaign was dictated by the necessity resulting from its position in the USSR. The UPP is only a 'guest' in the Russian territory and must comply with the wishes of the Soviet authorities, who do not wish the Joint to continue its cooperation with the Polish Government in the field of the parcel campaign.

Mr Olszewski argued that the UPP was not interested at all in sending packages on its behalf; it only wanted to get from the Joint a number of unaddressed parcels in exchange for the duty exemption. However, all the Joint packages intended for Polish citizens would have to go to Ashgabat and would only be sent in the post office there.

The conversation was postponed until an agreement can be made with Mr Passman.

In connection with the instructions received in the meantime by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Kollat, Delegate of the PRC, asked the UPP to continue the talks launched on 29 May. Mr Passman therefore postponed the date of his conversation with the UPP until the organisation reached an agreement with Mr Kollat.

I hereby attach a note from the conversation held by Mr Kollat with the UPP on 20 June.⁶⁸ In addition to this note and the Legation's telegram on this case of 23 June, it should be stressed that the privileges obtained by the UPP do not actually apply to the parcel campaign in its current shape. Statements of the representatives of the UPP suggest that its proposals, limited to requesting certain amounts of unaddressed parcels, are, in fact, a form of mass relief which is normally exempted from the duty. Apparently, the UPP has not been given exemption from custom duties on parcels addressed and dispatched from abroad, as this would have to lead to a change in the Soviet customs legislation. It should be assumed that packing goods into packages in Tehran and sending them as packages without addresses by collective transports to Ashgabat would be de facto a hidden form of mass relief. The fact that the packages would be picked up in Ashgabat by the mixed Polish-Soviet commission would exclude all Polish government bodies from the operation, all the more so because the UPP did not agree to open cooperation with the PRC nor to label the packages on behalf of the latter. The UPP's proposal to accept goods from the PRC anonymously, via the IRC, without disclosing the donor, speaks for itself. However, it is to be assumed that the rejection of this proposal by the representative of the PRC can be used in the propaganda action of the UPP directed against the Polish Government.

While talking to Mr Kollat, it turned out that the UPP holds no records of Poles in the USSR, which is why it wants to send parcels without any personal addressees from Ashgabat to Polish gatherings, where they would be distributed by the local welfare committees of the UPP.

Mr Olszewski stressed the value of the records held by the PRC in Tehran but expressed the view that it would become increasingly obsolete due to the transfer of the Polish population from the north (mainly with the Komi Republic) to the Volga regions.

The meeting was concluded pending new instructions to be received by the UPP, whereas Mr Olszewski promised Mr Kollat—at his request—to send a dispatch to Moscow with a proposal to set up a provisional solution which would allow the Joint to continue sending parcels to non-Jews on a current basis until another solution is found.

During conversation between Mr Passman and the UPP, held on 21 June, the UPP once again requested a certain number of unaddressed parcels. It is typical that the UPP condition taking steps to obtain duty-free exemption for packages sent by the Joint via Tehran–Pahlevi–Baku on the determination of the number of packages it will obtain in return from the Joint. Mr Passman, on the other hand, stated that it would be possible to determine the number of packages which the UPP could obtain from the Joint, if any, only after the UPP had successfully

⁶⁸ Not included in this publication.

completed the fundamental issue, i.e. obtaining the duty exemption for parcels sent by the Joint to Polish Jews and non-Jews via Pahlevi–Baku.

This position of the UPP undoubtedly demonstrates its very limited possibilities of obtaining relief goods.

Mr Passman believes that it would be possible to obtain a duty-free exemption for the Joint's parcels sent from Tehran, for example, by quota determination of the number of packages that the Soviet authorities could exempt from the customs rules in force. This depends, of course, on whether the UPP will really want to push the matter forward and whether it has sufficient influence from the Soviet authorities.

It should be added, however, that the position of the UPP delegates in Tehran regarding cooperation with the PRC in the field of parcel campaign is strongly reluctant, although they present it as a result of the attitude of the Soviet authorities, not the attitude of the Board of the UPP in Moscow in relation to the aid provided to Poles in the USSR.

Further possible discussions with the UPP, by both PRC and the Joint, were postponed until the UPP receive additional instructions from Moscow.

ENVOY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

Karol Bader

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 148

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[After 20 June 1944]. Note by the Legation in Lisbon: information from the representative of the Jewish Agency on the organisation of post-war emigration to Palestine

Note from the conversation with Mr Eliyahu DOBKIN
Head of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency

On 20 June 1944, I had the opportunity to speak to Mr Dobkin, Head of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency in Palestine, during a lunch organised in his honour by the Jewish organisation Hicem. Mr Dobkin arrived in Portugal from Palestine on the ship Nyassa on 10 June; he now intends to go to Spain, and subsequently—through Portugal, Tangier, French North Africa—to reach Italy. The direct purpose of his journey is to select around 800 applicants for emigration to Palestine from the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa, whereas

he counts on 50 candidates from Portugal, about 400 from Spain, about 200 from Tangier and the rest from French Morocco. On the other hand, the trip to Italy is linked to the issue of trying to rescue Jews from the Balkans and Hungary. According to the calculations of the Jewish Agency, in the recently liberated southern part of Italy⁶⁹ there are some 15,000 Jews and new arrivals from Yugoslavia and Hungary that can be expected. The calculations assume that about 1,200,000 Jews, present in the Balkans and Hungary, are running the risk of extermination similar to the one that happened to the Polish Jews.

Mr Dobkin, who, by the way, speaks Polish pretty well, calculates the number of Jews remaining in Poland, mostly in hiding, at 150,000.

As a follow-up action plan, scheduled for the next few years, the Jewish Agency aims to prepare the ground in Palestine and bring 600,000 Jewish families to settle them on farms. The cost of irrigation of the necessary land is currently calculated at 300 Palestine pounds per family, which is within the limits of the financial capacity of the world's Jewry.

Since the Jewish Agency is aware that Jews from the USA will not want to emigrate to Palestine at all, South-Eastern Europe remains for it the only reservoir to provide immigrants to Palestine. For this reason, the biggest efforts will now be made to save as many Jews living in these countries as possible.

Although the Jewish Agency is also aware of the difficulties that their policy might encounter from the part of the British Government, which is unwilling to irritate the Arab world, it hopes to overcome these difficulties with the help of the USA.

Mr Dobkin added in confidence that recently, the English Labour Party voted a resolution on the basis of which it would demand the full resettlement of the Arab population from Palestine to Iraq after the war, which apparently seems quite feasible.

K. Zdziarski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 155

⁶⁹ In July 1943, the Allied forces attacked Sicily, and in September 1943 the invasion on mainland Italy began.

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*23 June 1944. Letter from the Secretary-General
at the MFA to the Ambassador in Washington
on Jewish persons holding South American passports*

London, 23 June 1944

Secret

To the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland.
in Washington

Referring to dispatches No. 886 of previous year and 257⁷⁰ and to your No. 56⁷¹ and to the report No. 738/SZ-28 of 26 January 1944, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends attached a note outlining the current state of affairs of the Polish-Jewish citizens holding passports of the Latin America republics, who have been interned so far in the camp in Vittel.⁷²

Please use the attached note in a discrete way in contact with the relevant Jewish organisations to highlight the Polish Government's actions aimed at saving the lives of the Jews at risk and the difficulties it encounters.

Following the letter no 94/Rap from 5 June, from the Polish Legation in Bogotá to you, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asks you to raise this issue once again in the Department of State and within the War Refugee Board.

In particular, please be so kind, Mr Ambassador, and emphasise that, in view of the German government's position, only the relevant action of the Department of State towards the Latin American republics, supported by the United States' readiness to provide this category of war refugees with shelter in line with President Roosevelt's message to the Congress of 12 June this year, could give a positive

⁷⁰ This is a reference to circulars (doc. 417 and 459), which the Embassy in Washington received as cables no. 886 and 257.

⁷¹ In the cable no. 56 of 26 January 1944, the Ambassador in Washington informed: 'As a result of our intervention, the Department of State notified us that it had received the statement by the MFA of Paraguay that the passports in question were not invalidated and that the Paraguayan Government did not intend to invalidate them. The Department of State communicated this to the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees in London, requesting to notify the German Government via the Swiss Government.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 273.

⁷² Doc. 486.

outcome.⁷³ The decision by the governments of the Latin American republics to exchange these persons for German citizens interned in Latin American countries would encourage the United States Government to ensure that those persons will find shelter in the United States during the war and will not become a burden for the states whose passports they hold. This is evidenced by the information received by Mr Arciszewski from the American Ambassador in Paraguay, Wesley Frost, which shows that negotiations on a possible exchange take place on the basis that it would be undertaken by the Government of the United States, and that this approach has already been accepted by almost all the Latin American governments concerned, including Paraguay.

I also ask you to discretely inspire the Jewish circles so that they try to act on official American factors in the same spirit.

Our intervention in the capital cities of the Latin American countries is hampered by the fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has only very residual data on the number of people who have obtained passports of particular states. In some cases (e.g. Chile, Venezuela) it is unclear whether the passports of a given country are in any way considered valid, while in others the request to exchange unknown numbers of persons makes the whole intervention pointless. Reports by both Mr Dębicki and Mr Arciszewski show that they received, from you or Consul General Minister Strakacz and Dr I. Lewin in New York, more detailed figures for interventions and even lists of names of the people interned in the Vittel, Compiègne and Drancy camps. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs therefore asks you to send all the information in your possession and to inform us of the outcome of your actions.

SECRETARY-GENERAL
F. Frankowski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616

⁷³ In the speech ('Message to Congress on Refugee') President Roosevelt announced the granting of assistance to refugees in danger of Germany, and the start of preparations for the immediate hosting in the United States of some 1,000 refugees who fled Italy.

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*30 June 1944. Report by the Consul General in New York
on contacts with Jewish communities*

30 June 1944

ConfidentialTo the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Related by: Vice-Consul Jan Pogorzelski.

Execution of the Ministry's circular No K. 297/44 of 22 May this year.⁷⁴
Consulate General reports:

It is rather difficult to determine with such a precision the number of Polish Jews present in the region of our local Office.

The official statistics, drawn up every 10 years, show the number of Polish citizens without a division into nationalities. The 1940 population census showed 443,000 Polish citizens throughout the United States. Half of this figure is assigned to the eastern states, covered by our local Office. Probably the third part of this half—i.e. around 70,000—were Jews, residing mostly in the large cities in the east: New York, Jersey City, Newark, Philadelphia, Washington and Buffalo.

Over the last few years of war, as a result of intense naturalisation, a large majority of them have taken American citizenship, which is why the mentioned number got largely reduced.

However, as far as contacts with the Consulate General are concerned, most Polish refugees who came here many years ago, including Jews, cannot be counted for the case raised in the circular. They have managed to have their things done and usually do not need any consular assistance.

The 'clients' of the Consulate General are Polish citizens who came here because of the war, i.e. war refugees. During the five years of war, about 15,000 of them arrived in the United States. This group is largely dominated by Jews who represent an exceptionally high share, reaching at least 85%.

As indicated above, they constitute almost all the applicants of the Consulate General. They request assistance in obtaining a prolongation of stay in the United States, receipt of an immigration visa, passport, school, military matters, finding a job or getting an allowance. For example, during this time, 1,726 new passports

⁷⁴ Doc. 476.

were issued and 4,940 old passports were extended. Without any exaggeration, it can be claimed that Jews constitute nowadays the largest number of applicants of our local post.

However, in this respect, it is absolutely clear that the office as a whole, as well as individual officials, do not discriminate against these Jews in any way. Their affairs are dealt quickly, efficiently and nicely. On a daily basis, when reviewing the local Jewish press, the Consulate General did not notice any complaint or unfavourable note. On the contrary, it received much acknowledgement from the Jewish refugee organisations for its friendly attitude towards their co-believers.

The Jewish refugee and social organisations cooperate with the Consulate General as closely as possible on helping refugees. The most distinguished representatives from among the Jewish refugees—artists, writers, poets, journalists—participate in Polish national celebrations, academies and other events. Representatives of the Consulate General are constantly invited and take part in celebrations and services organised by Jews on various occasions. Lectures are organised, very often in the building of the Consulate General, and are followed by exchanges of views on various topics, including discussions of the question of Jews in the future Poland. Personal social contacts between outstanding representatives of the Polish Christian and Jewish societies, in which the officials of the Consulate General take part, are also very lively.

That is how it looks as far as relations and numerical data from the area subject to the local Consulate General are concerned.

However, a few general remarks need to be added to explain to a large extent the sources of the accusations of antisemitism.

With such a large proportion of Jewish applicants, it is understandable that some misunderstandings or, let us say, disputes may, for various reasons, occur between the officials of our consular offices and the applicants, which relate also to the Jewish applicants.

If the dispute takes place with a Christian applicant, they will raise complaints with the superiors of the Polish office, the editor of a Polish newspaper, or—eventually—will consider themselves to have been the subject of injustice on the part of an ‘unfair’ Polish official. There are no signs of any tribal or even regional animosity here. In turn, in most cases, the case is presented differently when it concerns a dispute with the participation of Polish-Jewish citizen. It is somehow similar to a dispute with a foreigner. Most often, the Jew feels affected not as a Polish citizen, but as member of a separate, broader whole. He will complain about it to his co-tribal or co-believer organisations, which do not have much to do with Poland; he will complain to the editorial boards of magazines, sometimes taking hostile positions towards Poland, and the dispute in question is usually explained by ‘antisemitism.’

It is this kind of trauma (mania) over antisemitism that should be considered as one of the sources of accusations of antisemitism raised by Polish-Jewish citizens.

Another reason may be a kind of calculation—once again, not completely unfounded—on the part of some Jewish activists, that persistent accusations of antisemitism against Polish officials will terrorise them and result in some privileged treatment of their co-believers, who are supported by mighty protectors.

Of course, the propaganda hostile to us is willing to promote or even make up such disputes, if only they can be used to accuse the Polish officials of antisemitism, which is today a sin as popular as fascism and reactionary attitude.

To sum up the above, it should be said that it seems more than questionable that antisemitism in our foreign offices could be something other than just an isolated exception. Moreover, even the least experienced official knows that the slightest sign of antisemitism will bring them troubles, but above all that it would harm the good name of Poland and the Polish cause.

Sylwin Strakacz
Minister Plenipotentiary,
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 505

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30 June 1944. Resolution of the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland: an appeal to the Polish Government to send notes to the governments of the Allies and neutral states to halt and punish German war crimes

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE RESCUE OF THE JEWISH POPULATION IN POLAND
passed on 30 June 1944

In recent days, the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland has received new information about the further wave of crimes committed by the German occupier in the Polish territories.⁷⁵

In particular, Germany began the deportation of Jews from Hungary to Poland, where they are to be exterminated. Recently, 100,000 Jews from Hungary were victims of this action and ended up in the death camp in Auschwitz. The Council notes that all these German crimes meet with too weak reaction from the part of the civilised world and are even treated with doubt and disbelief.

The Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland considers as its duty to ask the Government of the Republic of Poland:

1. To ask the Vatican to influence the Hungarian people, so that they oppose the active deportation to Poland and killing of Polish citizens, especially Jews, and Jews in general, and not to cooperate in this new crime. A similar appeal should be made to the neutral states.

⁷⁵ On 30 June 1944, the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland passed another resolution stating: 'The Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland, having received new information about the German crimes committed on the Jewish population in Poland and the mass deportations of Jews from Hungary to Poland, where they are mercilessly murdered, adopted the following: Ask the Government of the Republic of Poland to: 1. Give instructions to heads of our diplomatic posts in Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Portugal to take all possible steps to notify and move public opinion in these countries. 2. Instruct the Polish Envoy in Stockholm to speak to the Swedish Envoy in Budapest who was supposed to have arrived in Stockholm in order to obtain precise information on the situation in Hungary as well as the possibilities of taking on-the-spot measures of counteraction. 3. Take steps to initiate a forceful radio campaign in German and Hungarian languages directed at German administration and military officials in Hungary and Poland, warning against the expulsion of Jews, and at the same time ensuring that the assistance presented to Jews will not be forgotten. The draft of one such speech is hereby attached by the council, but it should be repeated on a daily basis. 4. Take steps to drop the appropriate leaflets in Poland and Hungary by the Allied aviation.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.40.

2. To apply to the Belgian, Czech, Greek, Dutch, Yugoslavian, Luxembourg, Norwegian governments and to the French Provisional Government to send a joint démarche to the great powers to make them express once again a joint declaration condemning these crimes, and to announce a penalty for all the perpetrators, whoever they are.

3. Apply to the great powers alone or together with other governments listed in point 2) and ask that those German prisoners of war, who are on the list of war criminals or regarding whom there is certain evidence that they have participated in the violation of the law and crimes committed against the civilian population, get separated into dedicated detention camps to secure them until the trial takes place. Such ordinances should then be made public, particularly by radio in German.

By submitting this to the Government of the Republic of Poland, the Council expresses its conviction that the Government will do everything it can to act immediately and to reach positive outcomes.

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.40

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[June 1944?]. Note by Julian Hochfeld on the desertions from the Polish Army

EXTERNAL INSPIRATION OR INTERNAL REASONS (ON THE DESERTIONS OF THE SOLDIERS-JEWS FROM THE POLISH ARMY)

In the very first newspaper I picked up after landing in the United Kingdom, I was struck by the big titles of articles that report on the desertions of Polish soldiers—Jews from Polish units in Scotland, on the proceedings and judgements in connection with this case, on antisemitism and on national discrimination in the Polish Army. A few weeks later, after the Battle of Monte Cassino, the press was full of references to the heroism of soldiers of the 2nd Corps, quite often raising with particular emphasis both the excellent performance of the Jewish soldiers from the Corps and the evidence of recognition of this performance by the commanders.

However, it is no secret for anyone that the mass desertions of the Jewish soldiers became at a certain time a problem in the 2nd Corps as well. Moreover, they were of a much more mass nature and included many more people than in the Polish units in Scotland.

I think that an attempt to carry out an unbiased analysis of the causes of the desertions of Jews from the 2nd Corps can contribute to understanding the

important motifs of this phenomenon also in this case. According to my conviction, the essence of the issue is not whether antisemitism is present in the Polish Army; it lies rather in the question whether the sufficiently common symptoms of national, religious or racial discrimination were indeed an important cause of desertions, or do the reasons lie elsewhere?

Why is that?

Denying the existence of antisemitic sentiments in certain circles of Polish society would be nonsense. They exist among us in the same way as they exist—I would risk such a statement—even in certain parts of the Anglo-Saxon societies. This phenomenon, by the way, is not at all uniform in our case. We have to make a distinction between the disrespectful attitude of the nobility towards ‘kikes,’ the mistrustful and jealous-competitive attitude of the lower middle class, and finally the different demoralising results of Hitler’s ideology, which has poisoned the social atmosphere of almost all European nations. The fight against antisemitic feelings cannot be conducted by means of laws, administrative orders, circulars, instructions. This way of combatting antisemitism has often given paradoxical results. The effect of the circular on the necessity of a good attitude towards Jews in the army might be, for example, that the officer is hateful towards Jews but, afraid of being suspect of not implementing such order, he will tolerate even the most harmful extravagances of some individuals just because they are Jews, whereas the officer-Jew or officer-democrat will eradicate any attempt to abuse such a circular. I firmly believe that if the Minister of National Defence were a socialist or a declared democrat, all the desertions would have to be treated with all the stringency and ruthlessness of democratic law and democratic customs, just as, consequently, he would have to pursue a policy of democratic reform and democratic education in the army.

It may be that these democratic reforms and this democratic culture were not present and still do not exist in our army. However, I doubt whether this case concerns only our military circles. The administrative pressure to ensure that antisemitism ‘does not rise to the top’ and that national, religious or racial antagonists do not emerge in military life was strong in our army both before 1939 and after 1939—in exile. Thus, abusing Jews or displaying external and sufficiently universal manifestations of antisemitism in other areas are out of the question. The claims regarding lack of promotion, recognition, too frequent allocations of sentries, services or works, improper tasks, etc.—unconnected with one another, individual, not universal and not especially characteristic to Jews only—are not a sufficiently legitimate reason for mass desertion, which often includes those who actually had no reason to complain.

* * *

I was a soldier of the 2nd Corps. Today I am a private (gunner), I served all the time in a front-line unit, I never had anything to do with secretarial or administrative work in the army, I never enjoyed any privileges for my education. I feel authorised to say that I know the simple soldier's affairs from the inside, all the more so that my colleagues not only liked me but also trusted me.

Among the dozen or so soldiers—Jews of the battery in which I served—only two were left at the time of our departure from Palestine to Egypt. The first case of desertion occurred already in Iraq. It concerned an extraordinary cunning type, with an unclear record, who used to run some unclean business in the army as well. Such cunning guys in the army are lucky; so, the tolerance with which his business and arrogance was treated was surprising. One day he just disappeared, and the investigation showed that he fled to Palestine.

A few days after our regiment reached Palestine, mass desertions began. At first, two guys fled. They were lads with secondary school education, both very friendly and liked by the whole battery, favoured by the commander and the first candidates for promotion. One of them shortly before that wanted to move to the commando unit, but the commander asked him not to do so because he was an indispensable member of the battery. I know that the defection of these two was a personal blow to the battery's commander.

Subsequent desertions concerned several guys, whose battery situation was neither better nor worse than in the case of others. They were rather bad soldiers, the battery's 'lame ducks.' Their flight left the battery without any impression.

Later on, desertion was committed once again by two excellent soldiers, liked by their colleagues and valued by the commanders. This time, comments were raised, often unpleasant, but the battery command calmed down these sentiments by a strict reminder that acts of desertion were the responsibility of individuals only and that those who stayed had all the rights to respect.

I once got a leave together with a future deserter. I was going to Jerusalem, he to Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem. I would never believe if someone told me that he was not going to come back. I also think that his desertion, after all, was not planned in advance. He left too many private things in the battery, which he could and should have taken if he wanted to flee.

Once again, the desertion left the others with no particular impression. The last desertion concerned a soldier—a Jew, about whom we thought that he would be the first one to flee. He was a young and highly capable lad, with secondary school education, very liked by officers and non-commissioned officers of the battery, however disliked as hell by his colleagues, both Jews and non-Jews. He was, by the way, too arrogant to feel this aversion of his colleagues and to get concerned by it. He was twice in Palestine on leave and always returned. It could be seen that he is

tormented and worried by something. They did not want to assign him the second leave, precisely because they were afraid that he would flee. He finally obtained it thanks to the personal intervention of the commander of the division, whom he promised he would come back. He kept his word, returned and then fled the same evening.

One of those who stayed was my very close friend. He was a Zionist, a man of conviction and activist of youth organisations, a very capable lad and an excellent soldier, respected, but undervalued by commanders, which, by the way, was a source of bitterness for him; apparently nothing really connected him to Poland (he knew that his family was dead), while everything—both the idea and a woman he loved—connected him to Palestine. Colleagues liked and appreciated him very much. I often talked with him about desertions. He was very critical towards the army and towards Poland; he could not and did not want to condemn the desertions. However, he himself did not flee because he was unable to turn his bitterness and pessimism into a conclusion that would lead him to break the oath.

In many respects, the relationships in our battery were quite typical to the subdivisions of the 2nd Corps. The human element was quite average; many officers and non-commissioned officers came from Scotland. I know from the talks that there were units in which the relations between soldiers as well as between soldiers and commanders were better than in our unit. I think there were a few units in which these relations were much worse.

I know that many of the soldiers in our battery did not like Jews. However, I cannot recall any dispute between my colleagues in which one would insult the other with words that offend the Jewish nation, religion or race, although I cannot exclude that such a thing could happen, either. In any case, it was impossible for an officer or a non-commissioned officer to do so, just as it was impossible to have two camps, one Jewish and the other non-Jewish emerge in the case of a dispute between a Jew and a non-Jew. This problem simply did not exist; it was entirely blended in with the issue of general relations between colleagues.

In the 2nd Corps, there were a number of Jewish officers, cadets and non-commissioned officers. As far as I know, their situation was quite diverse. It seems to me that there was some reluctance in the command to assign Jews with front-line functions in officer and non-commissioned officer positions, but I do not think that the fact of assigning Jews administrative and auxiliary positions caused some more serious claims from the interested party. I can also say that I noticed a similarly disproportionately large number of Jews on administrative and auxiliary functions in the British army. The reasons behind these difficulties in assigning Jews the front-line officer and non-commissioned officer functions also caused reluctance to admit Jews to the cadet schools. As proved by the Italian campaign,

and as it could have been learnt from the general history of Jews' participation in the Polish liberation fights throughout history, this reluctance was unjustified and finally had a detrimental effect.

By the way, in the regiment in which I served, the number of officers and non-commissioned officers of Jewish origin was insignificant. As regards the issue of national (religious, racial) discrimination in the case of promotions, I would have to get too deeply into the ambitions, traumas and psychological attitudes of my individual Jewish colleagues, to see antisemitism in the inevitable cases of some sort of injustice.

To paint you a picture, I would quote the impression heard from a soldier—a Polish-Jewish citizen serving in the British army, recently transferred to the Polish Army on his own request. He told me a lot about relations in the British army; that cases of a disrespectful attitude towards Jews are more common than a casual observer could think. My interlocutor went through the Libyan Campaign and was well aware of relations in the English units stationed in Egypt and Palestine. Apparently, the aversion to Jews was particularly strong among the English soldiers in Palestine. It is also difficult to claim that there have never been any cases that would prove the existence of a certain antisemitic discrimination. All this together, however, does not authorise any more general conclusions to be drawn. Therefore, without denying the existence of antisemitic sentiments in the Polish Army, I would hesitate to explain with antisemitism these or other injustices. Practice says something else. This is not the way to explain this, to understand certain important matters in ordinary military life.

* * *

Were the desertions of the Jews of the 2nd Corps provoked by the command? Were the Jewish soldiers encouraged to flee or were they deliberately not disturbed?

I will answer these questions honestly. I am not sure whether there were some people in responsible positions who would be very satisfied with such a solution, from both the political and the psychological point of view. However, I know that before we went to Palestine, the deputy commander of the regiment in which I served called all the Jewish soldiers and warned against the desertions in a very reasonable and convincing way. I also know that at the same time the same deputy commander after the Sunday service spoke to the Catholic soldiers, calling on them not to do anything or say a word towards their colleagues—Jews—and Jewish people in Palestine so as not to stain Poland's name. I know that after the first desertions in Palestine, there was some reluctance to grant leave to Jews who were suspected of fleeing. I know that at a certain moment the commander of the regiment, to which my battery was assigned, called on Jewish soldiers for longer

talks, trying to persuade them individually. And I know that upon arrival in Egypt, those Jews who remained were surrounded by extra respect and favour, and many of them were immediately promoted.

It is characteristic that a number of Jewish deserters returned to their units after some time. There was no general amnesty announced, but there had to be some general instructions on this matter, as everywhere they returned, they were warmly welcomed and not criticised at all; they used to be punished with 14 days of arrest for arbitrarily leaving the troops, and the execution of the sentence was most often postponed, probably... *ad calendae Graecas*.

* * *

So why did the Jews flee? The reasons are, similarly to the case here, in the United Kingdom, to be sought outside, although they were different. There, an important cause was the organised and widespread moral tension in the Palestinian Jewish community. It did not result by any means from any negative position towards Poland. However, the part of the opinion that was influenced by the illegal and paramilitary organisations of the Palestinian Jews was very much promoting the idea that the Jews had responsibilities only towards Palestine. Knowing that the fate of post-war Palestine will soon be at stake, they claimed that every Jew, especially the young and military-trained Jew, has a duty to stay on his Palestinian land and risk his life for Palestine only. This pressure of the public opinion was extremely strong and felt by every contact, in every meeting, in every conversation; it was stressed by all means. I saw the people who returned from their leave; they suffered from dilemmas, were contemplating a lot, discussing the issue with one another. I talked with many of them and could draw the right conclusions.

The ground was fertile. Many of them have long dreamed of moving to Palestine. Others, when they learnt about the tragic fate of Jews in Poland, did not know where to go back to. Many simply did not want to serve in the military or go to the front. Many assessed in a highly pessimistic way the position and prospects of the Polish cause, taking into consideration the position of Russia. Finally, almost all of them, at that given moment, wanted and managed to systematise all the reluctance, injuries, disappointed ambitions, unpleasant memories, traumas. A separate boost was certainly constituted by all the unpleasant experiences of the Jews, which were due to the damaging policy of certain circles of our army already in Russia, provoked with full premeditation by the NKVD. But only external pressure was able to liberate all these doubts, traumas and reluctance—and turn them into mass desertions.

It is characteristic that there were basically four categories of Jewish soldiers that were able to resist this pressure. The largest and most ideologically defined

category includes members and supporters of the Bund. The Bund has a separate history of fighting for Poland's freedom in this war; it therefore seems unnecessary for me to explain why once again the Bund activists showed ideological clarity, rigidity of their position, as well as character and discipline. The second category consists of those Jews who were so indissolubly associated with everything that was Polish, that it actually makes no sense to speak about them as Jews; they do not share the Jewish national sense, language, culture, social environment and often even the Jewish religion. The third category includes people like my friend, whom I mentioned earlier: people who have a very strong character and strict moral principles who have not been able to convince themselves to break the oath. Finally, the fourth category of people stayed in the army because of some personal interest. It could be a political interest—a conviction that, as political activists at a higher or lower level, they must have 'clean records' to continue their activities; it could also be a normal material interest whereby people stayed in the military by fear of losing land or property left in Poland; sometimes it was also about a good post in the military and good personal relationships, which is not generally conducive to making a rash decision and challenging the uncertain.

* * *

I do not know what the relations look like in Polish units in the United Kingdom. However, even after the brief insight that I had the occasion to have, I can conclude that the mode of life of the soldiers of the 2nd Corps, much more laborious and rough, gave us in many respects an advantage over other colleagues: commanders had a better understanding of the life of his subordinates; friendship created during our desert life was warmer, simpler and direct; we were very interested in political issues, but we could not afford to follow dirty political gossip (where would we get it from?) or to tarnish everything with cynicism; completely aware, we made ourselves certain obsessions, symbols that we decided not to speak about, because what would we have been left with in our desert's spleen if we had stopped believing in them?

Under these conditions, it would not be difficult to conduct in the army a policy of sound democratic reforms and democratic education. This is the way by which it would be possible to eradicate antisemitic feelings and prejudices, not by circulars or laws.

Those who inspire these desertions here, and then use them for completely defined purposes at a very specific moment, only continue the provocation to which the 2nd Corps was subject at its early stage in Russia. Only a democratic Poland can be independent. The provocateurs are doing everything to undermine

the Polish democracy. After all this is the best way to lose Poland in the bear hug of the 'guarantor.'

Julian Hochfeld

IPMS, Akta Rady Narodowej RP i Rady RP, A.5/6A/19 (previously published)

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*6 July 1944. Letter from the Honorary Consul in Asunción
to the Envoy in Buenos Aires:*

note verbale by the Paraguayan authorities on the recognition of passports

Asunción, 6 July 1944

To Mirosław Arciszewski
Envoy of the Republic of Poland
in Buenos Aires

Dear Minister:

It is a pleasure for me to communicate to you the text of the note verbale from 6 June 1944, addressed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the US Embassy on the exchange of persons holding Paraguayan passports, kept in the German concentration camps:

'Political and Diplomatic Head Office, N. 483. Note Verbale. The Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs sends courteous regards to the Embassy of the United States of America and acknowledge receipt of the note N. 282 from 5 July and has the honour to communicate to it the following:

1. The Paraguayan Government has recognised the validity of passports issued by consular representatives of Paraguay to Polish citizens, of Jewish and other descent, who are currently kept in German concentration camps, thus extending the care of Paraguay to those persons; 2. The Paraguayan Government has taken steps via the Spanish Government to get the said persons out of the European territory occupied by Germany; 3. The Paraguayan Government authorises the Government of the United States of America to negotiate an exchange of persons currently detained in German concentration camps and holding Paraguayan passports. However, these people will not be able to enter the territory of Paraguay—they should be directed to places designated by the American authorities; 4. Striving to have the exchange carried out, Paraguay is asking for priority to be given to

the citizens of Paraguay who would be staying in the European territory occupied by Germany and who should be repatriated to their Homeland. The Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs takes this opportunity to certify the Embassy.'

Please accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

/-/ Raúl Daumas Ladouce
Consul of the Republic of Poland.

AAN, *Poselstwo Buenos Aires*, 252

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11 July 1944. Report by the Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi on antisemitic incidents

Nairobi, 11 July 1944

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

Based on the dispatch of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, the Representation of Polish Jewry received a letter by Dr Ania Samelsdorf stating that during the journey she found that in Masindi, Jews were exposed to bullying by school staff; moreover, the said dispatch mentions complaints and discrimination, in particular regarding 14 Jewish children who came from Africa to Palestine and who complain about the brutal treatment of their colleagues in school and the different treatment by the administration on what concerned the distribution of clothes and nutrition.

In order to clarify whether and to what extent these allegations are grounded, we have sent questions to the head offices of all Polish settlements in Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia.

All head offices except Masindi, which will be mentioned separately below, said either that there are no Jewish children in their facility, or that there were no transports of Jewish children; or that there were no cases of discrimination against persons of the Jewish nationality.

The school inspectorate in the Masindi settlement reported that copies of letters from Jewish children (the original letters are held by the school inspectorate) prove that teachers and other students are concerned by the issues of the national minorities.

The head office of the Masindi settlement explained that the way in which children were distributed in individual households was and is dependent strictly on sex, age and school class—regardless of nationality or religion. Food, clothing supplies and education (except religion and church attendance, which did not concern Jewish children) were and are distributed on an equal basis, without any exceptions. Treatment and education of children took place and continues based on absolute equality between all children, without any differentiation.

The very few cases of minor childhood misunderstandings on the national background were promptly condemned by the educational staff, resulting in increasingly collective, and even friendly, relationship between the Jewish children and the rest of the students. This can be proved by the fact that at the time of leaving the settlement by the Jewish children going to Palestine on 20 January 1944, regret and tears could be seen among students: both those that were leaving and those of Polish and Ukrainian nationality remaining in the settlement. Another example is the exchange of correspondence that is currently going on.

On 20 January 1944, the following children went to Palestine: Zygmunt Ereinreich, 15 years old, Anna Ereinreich, 14 years old, Pepa Brandt, 10 years old; Rozalia Brandt, 10 years old, Alicja Rotfeld, 14 years old, Maria Sieniecka vel Zilbersztein, 10 years old. The children left under the care of Mendel and Bluma Lieblich, who also had with them their child Awiwa.

There were no more transports of Jewish children.

The letters received came from: Zygmunt Ereinreich—2 letters, Anna Ereinreich—3 letters, Alicja Rotfeld—3 letters.

We hereby attach copies of these letters.⁷⁶

Let us add that we constantly watch over the compliance of total religious and national tolerance and emphasise the necessity of this both in personal contact with the management of settlements and with refugees, as well as in circulars.

/-/ Staszewski
For the Delegate of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
/-/ Lubodziecki
Head of the General Organisation and Security Department

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 137

⁷⁶ Not included in this publication.

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[After 13 July 1944]. Note by the Ambassador to the Holy See listing the Embassy's interventions in the Secretariat of State in defence of the Jewish population

Chronological table

of the interventions by the Embassy of Poland by the Holy See undertaken in the period from 30 March 1940 to 13 July 1944 to defend Jews

30 March 1940—Verbal intervention by the Ambassador at the Secretariat of State of His Holiness.

5 April 1940—Verbal intervention by the Ambassador at the Secretariat of State of His Holiness.

15 May 1940—Note addressed to the Cardinal Secretary of State with a brief memorandum by the Prime Minister General Sikorski attached.

23 August 1940—Note verbale on the persecution of Jews in Poland.

March 1941—Verbal démarche by the Ambassador to make the Secretariat of State aware of all material that was to be published in London as a book entitled 'The German New Order in Poland.'

September 1942—Correspondence of the Ambassador with the General of the Jesuit Order, Father Władysław Ledóchowski on the order's assistance and aid provided to Poles and Jews remaining in Romania.

19 December 1942—Note verbale by the Ambassador on the systematic extermination of Jews in Poland. The note was personally handed over by Ambassador to H.E. Monsignor Tardini.

23 March 1943—Note on the Warsaw Ghetto and the 'death concentration camps' in Poland, like Treblinka and the others.

7 May 1943—Personal intervention by the Ambassador with the Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione to ensure the security of Poles and Jews in Italy. Positive response given the following day, 8 May, by Monsignor Tardini.

6 June 1943—Aide-mémoire from the Embassy 'Situation in Polonia' with a special chapter dedicated to the last fighting in the Warsaw Ghetto.

13 July 1944—Note to Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione concerning the threat of the extermination of Jews in Hungary. Cardinal's reply dated 22 July 1944:

‘The Holy Father addressed a special appeal to Regent Horthy⁷⁷ and received in reply with reassuring statements, which were repeated to the Primate of Hungary, Cardinal Serédi.’

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/195

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*14 July 1944. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to the Consulate General in New York: information about current events*

CONFIDENTIAL

14 July 1944

I will provide below confidential information received by telegraph from London on 12 July 1944:

I. On 22 June 1944, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of USSR issued a decree which regulates for the sixth time in a row the issue of the citizenship of Poles under Soviet authority.

I would therefore like to ask to base the comments on this issue on the PTA message from London of 12 July 1944 (the opinion by ŚWIT).

II. On 1 July 1944, the Union of Polish Patriots in Moscow announced a resolution containing, in addition to the usual accusations against the Polish Government and the underground movement in Poland, two following statements:

(1) that the Government of Poland is not a legal government, because it is based on the illegal constitution of 1935,

(2) that the National Council⁷⁸ provides the basis for the creation of a temporary government in Poland.

⁷⁷ By the letter from 12 August 1944, the Embassy in Washington addressed the Consul General in New York with the following request: ‘By order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy asks to draw the attention of the Jewish circles, emphasising our efforts taken towards the Holy See to make the Holy See defend the Jews, including the Pope’s personal appeal to Regent Horthy regarding the deportation of Hungarian Jews, as well as the Vatican’s intervention with the Hungarian and German Governments, which triggered the protest of the Hungarian Episcopate and led to the suspension of deportations.’ AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506.

⁷⁸ State National Council—a conspiracy political body set up by the Polish Workers’ Party at the turn of 1943 and 1944 in Warsaw. Its aim was to take over the state authority

When highlighting this issue, it should be emphasised in the talks that the Government of Poland has been recognised as a legal government since 1939 by all Allies and neutral powers, as well as by the Soviet Government as a result of signing the agreement of 30 July 1941 and establishing diplomatic relations.

Among the 24 people who signed the mentioned resolution, there is not a single serious political personality, and the announced names of members of the National Council are completely unknown.

III. The Polish Government recently received news according to which some 400,000 Hungarian Jews, including many Polish citizens, were deported to Auschwitz, where they are being exterminated.

In addition, some 350,000 Jews are also to be executed. Therefore, the Polish diplomatic representatives in the Vatican, Sweden and Switzerland were instructed to intervene against the Hungarian Government to warn it against participating in these atrocities.

At the same time, in the notes to the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom, the Government of Poland drew attention (referring to the United Nations Declaration of 17 December 1942 on persecution in Poland) to the need for the United Nations to think urgently about a way of helping the Jews, and to define more precisely the responsibilities which Germany, and in particular the National Socialist Party, should bear.

Please inform the Jewish organisations and other organisations cooperating on the propaganda basis about this undertaking by the Polish Government.

IV. The news provided by the German press and radio stating that some officials of the MFA were seriously injured or killed as a result of enemy actions is completely false.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

in Poland after the entry of the Red Army; the Council did not recognise the Polish Government-in-Exile.

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*14 July 1944. Cable from the Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA
to the Legation in Bern on the evacuation of Jews from Romania*

TO Polmission BERN
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 20 JULY 1944

No. 279

Ankara reports on organising the evacuation of Jews from Romania on Turkish ships from Constanța to Istanbul and Haifa.⁷⁹ The ships are under IRC protection and have been awarded Bulgarian and Romanian *sauf conduit*, however not the German one. The lists of evacuees are unknown in Ankara and London, as they depend on the decision of the German authorities. Please investigate by the IRC and the Swiss Legation in Romania whether the evacuation covers Polish Jews, indicate the number of Jews and determine where and who presents to the Germans the list of evacuees for approval—whether these are Jewish organisations, whether the participation of the Swiss Legation is possible and to what extent. We want to use this opportunity to evacuate as many Polish citizens as possible from Romania ~~not just Jews~~. Urgent matter, please keep me informed, because one ship is about to leave Constanța and the other is coming from Istanbul for a new transport.

CZAPSKI
E. Przesmycki 14 July 1944

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 155

⁷⁹ Ambassador Sokolnicki reported in a cable of 3 July 1944: 'The case of ships for the evacuation of Jews has been pending for many months. The Turkish Government agreed to lease them under the guarantee of the US Government, so that, in the event of flooding, it would receive new ones. One ship is supposed to leave Constanța soon. There is hope that the second will leave Istanbul tomorrow—despite the efforts of Papen, Germany refused to issue a *sauf conduit*; these ships will be under protection of the International Red Cross, having Bulgarian and Romanian *sauf conduit*. The list of evacuees is not known, as it depends on the decision of the German authorities. It is expected that it also includes Polish citizens. The Jewish Agency will notify the Consulate in Istanbul on arrival of the ships.' Subsequently, on 22 July 1944, he updated: 'The case of the evacuation of Jews from Romania remains at a standstill. All efforts made by the IRC to obtain a *sauf conduit* from Romania or Bulgaria met opposition from Germany and have produced no results so far. Therefore, no ship bound for Constanța or Bulgaria left Istanbul. Partial evacuation is carried out by small Turkish motor vessels under very severe conditions and in limited quantities.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 155.

498

*15 July 1944. Letter from the Embassy in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
information from Bern about the situation in Hungary and Romania*

15 July 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

The Embassy communicates below the content of the dispatch from Mr Sternbuch and Mr Donnebaum from Bern dated 14 July—asking for notification to Rabbis Kotler and Kalmanowitz from the Union of Orthodox Rabbis in New York:

I. Neutrauer is begging once again to bombard Kaschau and Pressov.⁸⁰ These still are transit points for deportations. He has already addressed this matter to you and to London. We ask for immediate intervention in Washington, London and Moscow. Maybe Russia would like to threaten officially with bloody repression?

II. According to information received from Bucharest, Romania has recently been a shelter for about a thousand people, including many distinguished personalities, as a result of our action. Please transfer money quickly, as further action requires immediate deposit.

III. We need to use part of the money for bribery to save people, but we cannot talk about it to McClelland.

For the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland:
M. Kwapiszewski
Minister Plenipotentiary
Embassy Counsellor

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

⁸⁰ This is a reference to the attempt to stop the so-called second wave of deportation of Jews from Slovakia to the death camps, which began in mid-1944. The first wave took place in 1942, and both of them resulted in about 100,000 Slovak Jews being murdered.

499

15 July 1944. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy in Rome on the establishment of the post and care of refugees

Rome 15 July 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

I am sending the requested list of Polish-Jewish citizens.⁸¹

I am happy that I have the first opportunity to contact the Ministry in writing, as I do not know whether my first telegrams have already reached the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The post has been in operation despite the difficulties since the first days of occupation of Rome by the Allies and I will strive to send a report on its functioning in the near future.⁸²

Maciej Loret
Minister Plenipotentiary

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154

⁸¹ There is no attachment. On 4 July 1944, in a cable addressed to the Embassy to the Holy See, the Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA, Hutten-Czapski, requested: 'Please indicate the number of Polish-Jewish citizens, refugees and emigrants liberated in Italy. If possible, please provide a name list.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 154. In response, Ambassador Papée informed that Maciej Loret would draw up the list.

⁸² Following the seizure of Rome by the Allied troops, the Polish Government-in-Exile reopened an Embassy in Rome, initially headed by Maciej Loret. The post operated until July 1945, when the Italian Government recognised the Provisional Government of National Unity in Poland and exchanged diplomatic representatives. See footnote 19 to doc. 554.

500

*21 July 1944. Letter from the Consulate General in Chicago
to the Polish Information Center in New York
about Ludwik Seidenman's visit*

21 July 1944

To Mr Director of the Polish Information Office
in New York

Regarding the stay in Chicago of Dr Ludwik Seidenman

The Consulate General would like to thank you for sending Ludwik Seidenman to us here. He is supposed to look after contacts with American-Jewish organisations, the Jewish press, as well as the major Jewish and American-Jewish leaders.⁸³

During a 13-day stay in Chicago from 5 to 18 July 1944, Dr Seidenman held a number of conferences and provided explanations to the editors and co-workers of two local Jewish journals; he also established friendly contacts with the American-Jewish organisations, about which the local Office cares and with which the local post would like to cooperate, i.e.: the representatives of the American Jewish Congress board (who then organised for him a dinner on July 18 in the well-known American-Jewish Covenant Club); the well-known American organisation Round Table of Jews and Christians (he held two conferences with the executive director of this institution, Mrs J. Councilbaum, who then held for him a conference with the prominent social leader known in Chicago, Rabbi Solomon Goldman); the conference of Dr Seidenman with the representatives of the American Federation of Polish Jews delivered positive results and the recently elected chairman of this organisation, Mr Metzger, has already expressed his willingness to cooperate with the local Office. Dr Seidenman also met American publicists of Jewish descent, having lunches, dinners, etc. with them; these included:

⁸³ In the letter dated 18 January 1944, the Ambassador in Washington informed the Consulate General in New York: 'Dr Ludwik Seidenman, Vice-Consul of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem, is going to Chicago for about 10 days on my order to hold information talks with political activists and representatives of organisations and journalists whose names he will present to the Consulate General in person, explaining also the purpose and further details of his stay. I would like to ask you to provide Dr Seidenman, where necessary, with assistance and care, and to facilitate him with certain contacts, as well as to make Mr Seidenman's stay in Chicago as purposeful as possible, but at the same time discreet due to the current political situation.' IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Chicago, A.59/106.

Dr Melchior Palyi (journalist and radio commentator), W.M. Fodor (from 'Chicago Sun'), Leon Stolz (Chicago Tribune), etc.

By contacting these journals, organisations and persons, Dr Seidenman tried to explain that:

1) The case of alleged Polish antisemitism is an artificial political creation made by elements hostile to Poland, and that the case of the antisemitic incident in the Polish Army is exaggerated beyond all proportion.

2) As far as the Americans of Jewish descent in particular are concerned, he tried to explain to them that it would be in their interest to help Jews in Poland (who, after the end of the war, would be at least a million in number), while attacking the Polish Government or individual members of the Government and the Polish Army command for antisemitism can only make the Polish-Jewish coexistence in the post-war Poland more difficult.

3) Knowing many of the members of the Polish Government in London personally, and having also received a statement from Prime Minister Mikołajczyk on Polish-Jewish relations, Dr Seidenman, in a tactful and skilful manner, explained to the American-Jewish leaders in Chicago that their suspicions and accusations regarding the alleged antisemitism of individual members of the Polish Government are unfounded.

Of course, I list only a few basic arguments that Dr Seidenman used, as his conferences were of an individual nature in each particular case.

After Dr Seidenman left Chicago, the Consulate General was informed that the initial contacts of Dr Seidenman with the Jewish leaders in Chicago resulted in some comments in certain Jewish circles, as Dr Seidenman was viewed with suspicion and referred to with reserve. However, after a few days of his stay, he was able to gain from all those with whom he had contact not only respect for himself and his views, but also great trust.

Before leaving, Dr Seidenman provided our local Office with many valuable insights. At the last conference—held with the attendance of the PIC Delegate in Chicago, Mr Stamirowski; representatives of the local Office: me, hereby undersigned, Vice-Consul Staniewicz, and Mr Witold Sworakowski—Dr Seidenman stated that it was necessary for the local Office to continue drawing up periodic reports monitoring the Jewish jargon press (we have here four newspapers of this kind—two in Chicago, one in Milwaukee and one in St. Louis, MO). According to Dr Seidenman, we should continue the review of Jewish journals and draw up weekly press reports, prepared by Rabbi Gliksman from 26 February 1944 and then suspended from 25 May 1944 at the request of Consul General Ripa.

Generally, the stay of Dr Seidenman in our local area has greatly facilitated the cooperation of both the Consulate General and the PIC Delegation with the Jewish and American-Jewish circles.

For the Head of the Consulate General
Aleksander Moc
Consul

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Chicago, A.59/106

501

*22 July 1944. Report by the Consulate General in Istanbul
on the situation of Jews in Hungary*

Istanbul, 22 July 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: Jews in Hungary

Since the German occupation of Hungary and its isolation from the rest of Europe, and particularly in the south-east, the information that flows to Istanbul concerning the situation of the Jews in Hungary is sparse, divergent and very difficult to be verified. The local Jewish organisations began to make substantial use of information coming from Hungary through Switzerland.

In its report on the situation of Jews in Hungary dated 3 April 1944, No. 271/4/44⁸⁴ the Consulate General tried, on the one hand, to present the state of affairs on that which concerns the situation of the Hungarian Jews of 19 March 1944, and on the other hand—on the basis of the relatively rich material available to both the Jewish organisations and the Consulate—to present a whole range of possibilities for further development.

Now that the events envisaged by the extreme pessimists have become a well-known fact, it seems advisable to make some critical remarks about a number of deportees from Hungary in particular and to highlight certain moments more characteristic as the relatively meagre local possibilities of obtaining accurate information allow to do so.

⁸⁴ Doc. 458.

The provisions of the Consulate General (page 5 of the aforementioned report), namely 1) the beginning of the period of persecution in Hungary and the likelihood of physical extermination taking place in Hungary, 2) the flexibility in applying the definition of a Jew—have been confirmed by real cases.

However, the potential major breakthrough in the use of persecution by the Germans, which had been signalled, did not come to an end.

The number of people deported from Hungary is widely reported by our local and other Jewish organisations at 400,000. Swiss Jewish sources report it to be 335,000, while our local representatives of the 'Free Hungarians' (among others, the Consul General in Istanbul, Mr Ujvary) evaluate it at less than 180,000; some of the Allied sources are very sceptical about these figures. The Consulate General heard for example claims that no more than 10,000 or 15,000 people were deported.⁸⁵

In Istanbul there is no information available that would report in it with certainty that the deported Jews were exterminated. The fact is that deported people are sent to both Germany and Poland and that many Jews are used by the Germans for forced labour. One of the well-working Jewish organisations work mainly with statistical German material, which does not at all lower the maximum figures provided. In this state of affairs, the Consulate General could not, for its part, determine with greater probability the number of Jews deported and their fate after the deportation.

Action advised by the Government of the Republic of Poland—instructions to intervene with the Hungarian Government to warn it against participation in such a crime and a note to the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom, referring to the United Nations declaration of 17 December 1942—was properly applied to the local organisations. It seems that it has received much recognition. A representative of the American War Refugee Board Hirschmann, informed in detail on this matter by Consul Staniszewski, expressed his appreciation and confirmed the effectiveness of this action with a number of different interventions against Hungary, and announced that he will communicate this to his US principals.

Also, the special interest of our authorities in the fate of Jewish refugees from Poland who are in Romania is well known to these organisations and assessed as real steps taken on the local grounds by the Polish circles.

As signalled by the Consulate General in other communication, the difficulties experienced so far in having more Polish citizens evacuated via Constanța–Istanbul resulted from the malfunctioning of the delegation of the Jewish Agency in Romania, which has recently been substantially improved.

⁸⁵ The number of Hungarian Jews deported to the concentration camp in Auschwitz is estimated at about 430,000, of which more than 360,000 were murdered.

As far as the situation in Hungary is concerned, according to the latest information (of 20 July 1944) coming from the best—in our local circumstances—sources, the deportation was suspended by the decision of the Hungarian Government. It is attributed to external interventions, in particular by the Holy See which so far has had the largest possibilities to help in this matter.

As we know, the creation of a union of ‘baptised Jews’ and mass baptisms were a clear symptom of the effectiveness of the past aid provided by the Holy See—the effectiveness of which is, of course, limited to Catholics. At present, it covers a large number of persecuted persons.

Zdzisław Szczerbiński
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Ankara, 102

502

*[Before 26 July 1944]. Report by a former prisoner of the camp in Vittel:
information on holders of passports of the South American countries*

The people of the following list⁸⁶ arrived in the camp of Vittel, part in January 1943 and the rest in May 1943. They are all Jews of Polish origin possessing certificates of citizenship of the various South American States issued by the consulates of the respective States, mainly from Berne⁸⁷.

These certificates were generally given to cover an entire family, without even the detail of names.

⁸⁶ Not included in this publication.

⁸⁷ On 26 July 1944, the Chargé d’Affaires at the Legation in Portugal, Gustaw Potworowski, sent the report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stating in the covering letter: ‘The Embassy encloses a copy of the report submitted to the British Embassy by Sophie Skipwith concerning the Jews interned in the Vittel camp. Mrs S. arrived in Lisbon four days ago with a transport of English internees, consisting of four hundred and several dozen people, and she had stayed in Vittel for about four years.’ Potworowski also sent a letter to the Legation in Bern [?], informing: ‘I allow myself the liberty of sending you the enclosed letter from Sophie Skipwith, recently arrived here from Vittel after a four-year stay there. The letter is accompanied by letters from people staying there, with details and requests for rescue and intervention. I would therefore like to send them to you as soon as possible.’ Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 12.

In December 1943 all Jews in the camp of Vittel had to give up their identity papers, which were never returned to them. All others British and American internees remained in possession of their papers.

From January 1944 certain families received certificates from a Zionist Organisation in Geneva saying that they were on 1-st or 2-d repatriation list for Palestine. But as these had not been ratified by London, they were considered worthless by the German Authorities.

In March nearly all these people were moved at 24 hours notice to a hotel outside the precincts of the camp and deprived of all communication with the camp for a week, until a passage had been constructed. The Commandant assured the Camp Committee that this was purely an internal measure, but added that unless their papers were recognised within a short time, these people would all be considered as 'Staatenlos' and sent back to Poland to share the fate of the other Jews there. Messages were sent to Switzerland and also to London to acquaint the powers of the situation.

Mrs Tamara Schorr was guaranteed of their safety by the Kommandant, so it was on her word that they agreed to move. It was as a result of the broken promise that Mrs Schorr finally committed suicide.

Four weeks later the gate connecting the hotel with the camp was closed and the people told that they were being sent to Drancy, a Jewish sorting camp near Paris—from which regular deportations of French and other Jews were made to Poland. There were 17 attempts of suicide, of which 5 were fatal officially. Mrs Thompson, head of the British Nursing Service, informed me there were 4 others, but names unknown, the others being transported to hospital. The scenes of panic and despair are undescrivable as also the consequent impression on the camp.

The first transport for Drancy took place on the 18-th April and comprised 173 men, women and children including infants in arms. They left in a train with windows boarded. It was subsequently learned that they left Drancy on the 29-th April for an unknown destination.

Recognition had meanwhile arrived from Chile, but as yet no news has been received of the subjects.

Four weeks later on 16-th May, the second transport took place, when all except 2 or 3 families and the absolutely untransportable cases in hospital, of which there were 10, were taken. Thus for example one person whose both legs were paralysed in consequence of attempts poisoning, was removed on stretchers etc etc.

A fortnight after this 2-d transport, on the 6th June the Commandant informed the Committee that a collective list for repatriation to Palestine had arrived for the whole group and had been accepted by Berlin, which was now only waiting for the ratification from London. The No of this collective certificate is 438. Up to the moment of our departure from Vittel no such affirmation had been received

from London. Shortly after came further news that each South American State had accepted all those papers as bona fide, thus placing their holders on an equal status with any other American internee. In spite of this, the Kommandant said that he had an order from Berlin to deport those yet remaining in Camp, which I believe to have been done about the 18th of July. The Kommandant also informed the Committee that they had been sent to Bergen Belzen, a camp to which some 2000 similar cases had been sent in May 1943. But this was proved to be untrue as a transport arrived from there and had never seen them [sic].

The Kommandant also said that neither the recognition of the papers nor the certificate for exchange to Palestine would have any validity in the eyes of the German authorities unless an exchange either to Palestine or to South America actually took place. It is therefore essential and most urgent now to find those people, who are probably in some Jewish Camp in Upper Silesia (such as Birkenau, Auschwitz, Sosnowitz, Kattowitz, Frodorf, Innsbruck, Treblinka, Bełżec, Trawniki, Monowitz) and to afford them the full protection of the Red Cross and the protecting powers. Also to demand them by name for an exchange against Germans. This is the only way of saving even this handful of lives. The gravity of the situation cannot be exaggerated neither the urgent need for immediate action.

The undersigned have been eye witness of the above events.

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 12 (ENG)

503

28 July 1944. Letter from the MFA to the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland on passports of the South American countries

London, 28 July 1944

To the Office of the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland,
to the hands of Dr Manfred Lachs
care of the Ministry of Internal Affairs
in London

In the light of the Vittel case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs notifies that, according to the information received from Bern on 26 July, the courtesy passports were issued by the following states and in the following quantities:

Peru	about 100,
Haiti	10–15,
Honduras	400–500,
El Salvador	about 3000,
Costa Rica	about 10,
Chile	about 10,
Paraguay	200–250,
Venezuela	a few
Nicaragua	“
Ecuador	“

For the SECRETARY-GENERAL
K. Kraczkiewicz

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616

504

1 August 1944. Cable from the Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA to the Consulate in Algiers on evacuating Polish citizens of Jewish descent

TO Polconsul ALGIERS
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED ON 5 AUG 1944

No 104

Lisbon states that Dobkin, Head of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency in Palestine, comes to Tangier and Morocco to organise the evacuation of around 200 Jews from Tangier and as many from Morocco to Palestine. Please contact him and obtain as much quota as possible for the Polish Jews.

Czapski

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

505

2 August 1944. Report by Tadeusz Chciuk-Celt on the situation in occupied Poland

NEWS FROM POLAND⁸⁸

In recent weeks, German terror in concentration camps has taken on unprecedented proportions. The messages on the basis of which I am writing this report come from the most reliable people who have been in close contact with the camps and received reports from there—of which the last came in the first half of July.

Auschwitz. In the camp, the Germans began a new phase of extermination of prisoners. This is a reminder of the terrible days of August, September and November 1943. They first gassed the Jews, then the Soviet prisoners of war and, finally, the so-called 'sick ones.' It is going to be a truly massive, horrific murder of all political prisoners in all the concentration camps. New transports of still naïve and bemused Hungarian Jews continue to arrive to Auschwitz. The newly arriving

⁸⁸ Tadeusz Chciuk-Celt stayed in occupied Poland (for the second time) as a courier and emissary from April to July 1944.

people talk about the posters hung in Hungarian cities which call on Jews to report in order to be exchanged for German prisoners of war held in camps in England and America. Other announcements talk about the 'internment' of Jews on some islands between England and Germany, from where, after the war, Jews can either return to Hungary or leave for abroad. Elsewhere, the Germans promise Jews legal passage to Switzerland. However, the destination of all these transports is only Auschwitz.

The SS-men in Auschwitz are currently working for up to 48 hours, working under the cover of machine guns scattered throughout the camp and prepared for possible rebellion or escaping Jews. It is difficult to keep up with the gassing. On average, 3-4 trains wait by the 'death ramp' to be unloaded. Therefore, the duration of the stay of victims in the gas chambers was reduced from half an hour to 10 minutes; they are packing up to 1,000 people in the chamber at once. For savings and better, faster ventilation of the chambers, the amount of gas has been reduced from 12 doses to 6. The effect is terrible. Most of the victims are just dazed, and these people who are thrown on the pile regain consciousness and often try to get out. Living victims are pushed with pike poles straight into the fire. The new rule is that young children are not gassed at all. Older children are stunned or sedated with gas from a nozzle. In the case of smaller ones, they smash their heads, and the babies are thrown straight into the fire. All of this sounds like pure fantasy, but it is true. These are facts illuminated by the bright flame of burning piles of the dead and the living. They burn continuously, with no interruptions, day and night, complementing the work of the crematoria which lack space. In the darkness of the night, they create a ghostly image of raging flames and quivering bodies, around which jump the silhouettes of Germans, bathed in bloody light, with iron tools used for the cremation of human corpses.

There were only two incidents of rebellion. On the night of May 25 to 26, several hundred Jews tried to escape from the newly arrived transport. They hid in a nearby forest and trenches. Lagerführer Hössler in person was leading the chase in which all those who fled were shot in the spotlight. Two days later, a similar story took place. No one managed to escape.

One of the transports included about 100 English Jews with English documents, who had been interned in Hungary, people known in the financial circles. They were treated with particular precision and sophistication. They could not be exterminated with the others, and they were taken into the hands of the main perpetrators, without the participation of the Sonderkommando. In the gas chamber, armed with cat o' nine tails and pistols, with a hundred naked, defenceless bodies as opponents, the German SS men 'fought' with the English Jews.

In the next phase of extermination, the wealth of the main perpetrators, i.e. Lagerkommandant Höss and his adjutant Grabner, increased in proportion to the number of victims killed. In May alone, and only from the teeth extracted from the gassed corpses, they obtained about 40 kilograms of gold and white metal. Due to the current war situation, Germany intends to evacuate all Poles from the camp. Finally, the evacuation will include the camp experts, i.e. kapos and food columns for the SS. All Jews are supposed to be gassed. Some of the 'Haftlings' are supposed to be used to escort the ammunition trains leaving to the front.

If the gassed Jews have some Aryan relatives, the latter are informed that the victims, who were gassed in the camp, 'died of a heart attack.' The evacuation of the Aryans from Auschwitz is running at full speed. Recently, a transport of 2,000 Poles left for Buchenwald.

Płaszów near Cracow

This camp is also becoming a place of execution, which consumes thousands of victims burned on pyres. A transport of Jews from the camp in Borysław, which was liquidated recently, came there some days ago. Several dozen Poles were brought to Płaszów from Auschwitz (such a thing happened already for the second time), as well as three hundred Hungarian Jewish women, of which a selected few were given uniforms and sent in an unknown direction. In May, Płaszów was visited by the chief commander of the 'Erziehungslagers.' He arrived straight from Berlin to review all prisoners in the presence of the camp's administration and doctors. The prisoners 'paraded' naked. The purpose of the review was to eliminate those who, according to the opinion of the commander, are not fit for purpose. More than 1,000 Jews and dozens of Poles, from the crowd of naked men, women and children, were left alive. In the second half of May, a transport of 1,200 Jews and 300 children left Auschwitz. This transport also included Prof. Rowid. Such transports subsequently left the camp several times. Lists for further transports are being prepared.

Nowadays, Płaszów is a permanent place for the extermination of political prisoners brought from various prisons. After shooting, the bodies are burnt on pyres. On 1 May, 100 men were brought and shot, on 12 May—50, on 27 May—54, on the same day they also brought to the camp 300 corpses, which were burned. On 28 May, 75 people were shot. In total in May, around 600 Poles, political prisoners, were shot in Płaszów.

Pustków

The Erziehungslager in Pustków is dedicated to political prisoners and people sentenced for economic sabotage. Inside, in the Aryan camp, there is also a strictly separate Jewish camp. In mid-May, a transport of prisoners from this camp left to the camp in the village of Rzemień near Mielec. The fate of those deported is

unknown. In the surrounding area, the control was tightened to cut the contact with the camp. Several people, who wanted to smuggle some packages into the camp, were arrested and shot.

London, 2 August 1944

/-/ Celt

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji*, 137

506

*[Before 9 August 1944]. Note by the Legation in Lisbon:
the account of the Swiss Legation in Berlin on the Vittel camp*

In the Vittel camp, there was a larger number of Polish Jews with the most diverse American passports. All the documents were very carefully verified and, as a final result, in April 1944 two hundred and thirty-eight people were left, whose passports were considered false. In view of the non-recognition of these passports, the Swiss Legation in Berlin dealing with the case of these Jews was informed by the Auswärtiges Amt that the persons mentioned, who do not qualify for the status of interned civilians, would be excluded from the internment camps and transferred to the relevant authorities. Indeed, 224 persons were sent to the Reich in two transports, the last of which left Vittel on 18 April. These people were excluded from the competences of the military authorities and Auswärtiges Amt and handed over to the Gestapo. In the meantime, the Swiss Legation in Berlin received the approval of the US Government to include the mentioned persons in the exchange lists and immediately contacted the Auswärtiges Amt on this matter. This intervention has not given a practical result so far, and the Auswärtiges Amt has informed the Swiss Legation that, from its perspective, it does not see any difficulties in including the mentioned persons in the exchange list; however, due to the fact that they have already been transferred to the Gestapo, this case is now fully dependent on the latter; whereas it now has to go through all higher levels, to Himmler himself, who must approve the solution to this question, no matter what it will be. The Swiss Legation tried to find out where the Jews were deported, as there were different versions regarding this matter. The non-binding response received from the Auswärtiges Amt claims that all these people are in one of the camps near Hannover and are waiting there for further instructions. The Auswärtiges Amt promised the Swiss Legation to continue to deal with the case, however without any liability whatsoever. In the first days of July, when x

left Vittel, there were still 14 people who were severely ill, some of whom tried to commit suicide.⁸⁹

Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 12

507

*14 August 1944. Letter from the Embassy in Washington
to the Consul General in New York: information from Bern
about the situation in Hungary and Romania*

14 August 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

I ask you to pass on the content of the following telegrams from Bern dated August 11 and 12, to whom it may concern:

I. For the Agudat and Rabbis Kalmanowitz and Kotler:

Budapest reports that it is about 1,896 people, not 1,200. They are likely to be in Bergen-Belsen. Negotiations on exchange are ongoing and entry into Spain is ensured.

II. For Rabbis Kalmanowitz and Kotler:

Wisner from Bucharest complains that during the evacuation from Romania to Istanbul, religious Jews were constantly being disadvantaged. Only a few were accepted on the last ship. He is asking for immediate intervention with Jewish agencies. He has the capacity to rent special ships and asks for 100,000 Swiss francs for this purpose. This is urgent because the opportunity will pass. In addition, he asks whether the rabbis in Romania can be provided with help and asks for an immediate response.

⁸⁹ The note was sent to the MFA and the Ministry of Information and Documentation on 9 August 1944. In the covering letter, the Legation in Lisbon informed: 'Following the letter No. 297/2 from 26 July 1944 the Legation sends in attachment a note from the discussion with Dr René Faessler, Attaché of the Swiss Legation in Berlin (who was leading the English group from Germany), on relations in the Polish Jews' camp in Vittel.' Hoover Institution, Poland. Poselstwo (Portugal), 12.

III. For Rabbis K. and K.:

Wisnitzer in Bucharest was handed over 100,000 Swiss francs for the rental of ships. The first one takes 1,500 people on board and leaves on 20 August. In response to the urgent appeals of Neutrauer, we sent him 200,000 Swiss francs. Please send us further funds immediately.

IV. The situation in Hungary is still unclear. The promises of the Hungarian Government should be taken sceptically. It is only an apparent improvement, and in fact the Hungarian authorities are under constant pressure from the Gestapo. Deportations are still ongoing—on smaller scale. The deported people are given false promises about the alleged exchange. Therefore, please do not stop the protest action by radio, press etc., and by the members of Legations of Switzerland, Sweden, Spain and Portugal.

V. Strictly confidential: Our people in Hungary and Slovakia are in contact with agents of G., who need to be constantly bribed. They threaten us that if we do not satisfy their requests, the rest of the Jews will inevitably be lost and the responsibility for the delay will fall on us.'

For the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland:
 /-/ W. Arlet
 Counsellor at the Embassy

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

508

18 August 1944. Dispatch from the politicians of the Bund to the National Council on the participation of Jewish soldiers in the Warsaw Uprising

Warsaw, 18 August 1944

Dispatch of the Central Committee of the Bund:

For 18 days,⁹⁰ the people of Warsaw have been engaged in an uneven struggle with the barbarian invader, and together with the whole of Warsaw, the remaining young Jewish contingent has been fighting.⁹¹ We are fighting for our common

⁹⁰ The Warsaw Uprising broke out on 1 August 1944; it ended with the capitulation of the insurgent troops on 2 October 1944. See doc. 528.

⁹¹ On 17 August 1944, the head of the Directorate of Civil Resistance, Stefan Korboński, reported: 'On 3 August, the headquarters of the Jewish Combat Organisation issued

cause, the Polish cause, against the enemy. Do everything in your power to get help as soon as possible.

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 147 (previously published)

509

18 August 1944. Letter from the Consulate in Algiers to the posts in Casablanca, Tunis, Dakar and Brazzaville regarding the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland (with enclosure)

Algiers, 18 August 1944

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland sends herewith a copy of Lord Vansittart's letter⁹² to the editor of the 'Daily Mail' for potential dissemination, as well as an information note in French about setting up the Council to Aid Jews in Poland to be disseminated in the Jewish activists' circles.

Consul General of the Republic of Poland
T.S. Ullmann

[enclosure]

The Committee for the Defence of Jews has just been formed in London.⁹³ The committee, which is analogous to an existing committee in occupied Poland, consists of six members, including three representatives of the Jewish political parties (Bund, the Zionists and the Orthodox) and three Poles.

The committee, responsible for the defence of the cause of the Jewish population living in Poland is the latest in the list of efforts that the Polish Government and Polish people have been taking since the beginning of the war in order to provide moral and material relief to the Jewish population of Poland condemned by Hitler to be exterminated.

The Polish Government and the Polish nation have done everything humanly possible to relieve the Jews and to draw the attention and conscience of the world

an appeal to all survivors to participate in insurgent fights.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 147.

⁹² Not included in this publication.

⁹³ This is a reference to setting up the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland; see doc. 461.

to their misery. This new initiative is a supreme effort, as we are at the last limit of the time when it is still possible to save Jewish lives in Poland. Hitler, who already knows he has lost the war with Allies, wants at least to win the war he has declared on the Jews, no matter the costs.

The Polish Government clearly sees that every delay in rescuing the Jews of Poland is fatal and irreparable and that soon any aid could become aimless.

It was this immediate necessity that led to the establishment of this new committee in the hope that the full mobilisation of Polish-Jewish forces abroad could become a new element of action that would obtain all the possible assistance that can be provided to the Jewish population in Poland from abroad.

The formation in England of the Committee for the Defence of Jews is not due to a new idea, nor are Poland's efforts to save Jewish lives during the war based on some new sentiments. It is based on a tradition that dates back seven centuries, a tradition that the reverend Dr Chief Rabbi of the British Empire characterised this way in one of his speeches:

'As long as Poland was independent and strong, Jews there enjoyed autonomy and freedom that their peers did not find elsewhere. Moreover, one cannot stress enough that Poland was the first country in Europe to adopt religious and cultural tolerance.'

Tradition obliges. It obliged Poles in distant times when the persecuted Jews throughout Europe were finding in Poland asylum and hospitality. It obliged them after they regained their independence, when the strong antisemitism coming from outside the western border managed to infiltrate some social classes but never broke through to the public opinion.

Poles remained committed to their tradition in the terrible times, when the German invasion and occupation brought a wave of hatred, a series of woes, and the death sentence to their country.

The atrocious murders committed by the Germans on the Jewish population of Poland found a resounding echo in all the hearts of the oppressed nation.

Poland's underground press has never stopped shouting to the world its indignation and solidarity with the suffering and massacred Jews.

Polish underground authorities and the Polish Government not only announced these barbaric crimes to the world; they did everything in their power to save and defend the Jews. The entire Polish nation has stood up to facilitate and support this action. At the price of many sacrifices, and often at the price of their lives, Poles of all social classes and of all ages took part in a fierce resistance, a heroic struggle against German savagery towards Jews.

Under the German occupation and the enemy's constant vigilance, a Polish-Jewish organisation for the protection of Jews was created secretly in Poland.

For more than two years of its functioning, this organisation has saved the lives of many Polish Jews. Material and resources needed are provided by the Polish Government and special sources.

These continued efforts of the Polish Government and the Polish nation have established deep solidarity, not only a human solidarity but also a community of citizens, a brotherhood of all against the common oppressor.

These deep and sincere sentiments between the Polish Jews and the Polish Catholics will serve Poland's cause when it regains its independence.

AAN, Konsulat Honorowy Tunis, 29

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*26 August 1944. Letter from the Director of the Presidium
of the Council of Ministers to a member of the National Council
on assistance to the Jewish population in occupied Poland*

26 August 1944

Dr IGNACY SCHWARZBART

In reference to the letter from 18 August 1944,⁹⁴ I inform you, under the instructions of the Prime Minister, that the issues raised by you were the subject of the discussion of the Council of Ministers, which on 25 August 1944 and on 18 August 1944 passed the following resolutions:

ad 1) the Council of Ministers expressed its support for a suggestion to address the Commander of the Home Army to consider the possibility of breaking into

⁹⁴ In the letter, Schwarzbart stressed that 'the case of actions against the camps has not yet been implemented. Some of them are located on the territory already occupied by the Soviets, but some other, very important, such as Auschwitz, Płaszów, Starachowice, ... Bliżyn and probably camps in the Radom, Kielce, Piotrków and Częstochowa districts, are still full of prisoners subject to German tortures ... I would like to ask you to issue orders that would make this case executed, as it may soon be too late for victims who are abused in these camps. ... The second case relates to material aid for the remaining Jews in Poland. In December 1943, the National Council voted, at my request, to allot from the state budget for 1944 an amount of £100,000 as a special assistance operation for Jews in Poland. The efforts, lasting several months, to get this amount have not ended with a positive result.' AYV, Archive of Dr. I. Schwarzbart, M.2/80.

concentration camps and releasing political prisoners before they got murdered or deported. *The Commander-in-Chief issued the appropriate order.*

ad 2) the Council adopted the following motion from the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare:

‘Extraordinary expenses in connection with the war provided for in Article 1.4 of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Poland of 31 December 1943 on state expenditure and revenue for the period from 1 January to 31 December 1944 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland No 1. § 2. from 3 January 1944) in the amount of £12,134,240 (twelve million, one hundred and thirty-four thousand, two hundred and forty) are increased by £100,000 (one hundred thousand).

This expenditure will be covered by a simultaneous reduction of £100,000 of the credit foreseen in the 1944 budget for ordinary expenses, Part 12, Sec. 2, §. 9.

The Minister of Treasury is authorised to notify relevant amendments when the National Council of the Republic of Poland considers a draft decree amending the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland, recently issued to the National Council of 21 December 1943 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland No 1. Item 2 from 3 January 1944).’

At the same time, let me note that the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare stated in his justification of the above motion that the amount £100,000 included in part 12, Sec. 2, §. 9, dedicated to parcel assistance to the Jewish population in Poland, cannot be used for its intended purpose due to the development of the war situation. However, there is still place for other forms of assistance to the Jewish population in Poland at present and there is therefore a need to make substantial funds available to the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland, in cooperation with the Council to Aid Jews by the Government Delegate for Poland. In this state of affairs, the request to transfer credits from the Ministry of Social Welfare to extraordinary expenses related to war is justified.

DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDIUM
ADAM ROMER

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.40

511

*9 September 1944. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador in Washington on punishing German war criminals*

TO Polmission Washington
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 9 SEPT 1944

URGENT
Statim

No. 448

Receptus 339⁹⁵

The crimes in Majdanek are currently being investigated by the Commission of the Lublin Committee,⁹⁶ which asked the Soviet representatives to participate and recently invited foreign correspondents from Moscow. If we come up with the initiative of P., we would certainly be at risk of this initiative being directed by the Soviet government straight to the Lublin Committee, which is very keen to seek contacts with foreign nationals and wishes to enter the international forum. So, the initiative of P. in its present form is inadvisable.

⁹⁵ In the cable no. 339 of 5 September 1944, the Ambassador in Washington reported: 'The President of the American Jewish Committee Proskauer wrote to me on behalf of the Committee requesting the appointment of a Commission of representatives of all the allied and neutral countries of Europe for an immediate visit to Poland and for the investigation of German crimes, especially Majdanek. In my answer to him: I). I recall the precedent of all efforts and initiatives of the Polish Government to rescue the Polish Jews and to mobilise world public opinion without any effective results. II). I inform that his request will be telegraphed by me to the attention of the Polish Government. I believe that the matter is of paramount political importance, provided that the Polish Government takes the initiative of creating such a commission into its hands, inviting all interested governments and the Red Cross to participate. Otherwise, the Soviet Government may set up such a commission. If the Soviet Government would raise reservations about the trustfulness of this Polish initiative and would not want to allow representatives of the Polish Government to participate, we could obtain political support from the powerful American Jewish Committee and mobilise public opinion. The Soviet Government has no formal basis not to let the Commission enter Poland, as the provisions of the Moscow Conference mention the investigation of war crimes in one's own right only in the territories of the states concerned.' AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617.

⁹⁶ This is a reference to the Polish Committee of National Liberation—a temporary government exercising authority in the territories of the Republic of Poland occupied by the Red Army, dependant on the USSR.

However, I see the following way of making some profit from it. Please be so kind and speak privately to P. (if it is impossible, I suggest having Ropp deal with it on your behalf), so to explain to him that the Polish Government has been taking part in the Inter-Allied Commission for war crimes (Great Britain, America and all the allies of the European continent). It would be inappropriate if the creation of the proposed special commission was to take place outside the framework of the activities of the Commission, which was set up precisely for this purpose. It would therefore be appropriate if the Jewish Committee asked the Polish Government to set up a Special Commission via the existing inter-allied body. The government, which is already considering a similar initiative, will have an additional formal motive for the intervention before the Inter-Allied Commission. I suggest that the potential letter from the Jewish Committee cover not only Majdanek but all the other camps in Poland (Auschwitz). However, the government would be against the proposal to appoint representatives of neutral states to the research commission, which would have no chances of being accepted by the Inter-Allied Commission.

I would like to inform you that the Soviet Government does not participate in the work of the Inter-Allied Commission because it was not agreed with its intention to have introduced representatives of the five Soviet Union republics. The referral of P's initiative to this commission allows it to ~~play~~ carry out its positive sides and at the same time avoiding the ~~dangers~~ difficulties mentioned above.

Please keep me informed by telegraph on the further course of the case.

Romer

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617

512

14 September 1944. Note by the Chief of the Nationalities Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the appeal of the Polish Committee of National Liberation on the organisation of assistance for Jews

London, 14 September 1944

Note for the Minister of Internal Affairs

The Bulletin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in London dated 14 September 1944 states:

London, 13 September 1944 (JTA):
AID FOR SURVIVORS IN POLAND.
DR SOMMERSTEIN'S APPEALS

A touching appeal to Jews in free countries calling to provide support to Jews who survived in Poland came from Dr Emil Sommerstein, chairman for the issues of war reparations of the Polish Committee of National Liberation. Jews of all branches and political directions—calls the appeal—Zionists, Socialists, members of the Bund fought together and fell together, and now there can be no difference between the Jews in the matter of helping those who survived in the struggle against Hitler.

Describing the atrocities of mass murder in Poland, Dr Sommerstein emphasises that such a catastrophe has no equivalent in the history of martyrdom of Jewry. The aid must be quick and complete. Millions got killed. Thousands, or maybe tens of thousands, have survived. Every moment of delay means death for many members of our survived nation.

Dr Sommerstein is asking to provide the survivors with food, clothing, medical assistance, as well as temporary or permanent shelter, tools and machinery to enable them to work individually or in crafts cooperatives.

BRITISH JEWS RESPOND TO THE APPEAL OF DR SOMMERSTEIN

The United Jewish Committee for Aid is organising a special aid action in response to Dr Sommerstein's appeal, under the chairmanship of the Chief Rabbi Dr J.H. Hertz.

Chief of the Nationalities Department
Prof. Dr O. Górka

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 137

513

*18 September 1944. Note by the Polish Government
to the British Government on prisoners in the Auschwitz concentration camp*

12, Hyde Park Crestent,
W.2
18th September, 1944

His Excellency
Sir Owen St. Clair O'Malley, K.C.M.G.
etc., etc., etc.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,

On previous occasion the Polish Government had the honour to communicate to His Britannic Majesty's Government information in regard to concentration camps in Poland, in particular to that at Oświęcim (Auschwitz) in which Polish citizens and other Allied nationals have been subjected to brutal treatment and systematic extermination at the hands of the German authorities. The latest known figure reveals that there are about 45,000 prisoners at Oświęcim, and that of these about 95 per cent are political prisoners.

The Polish Government have now received a message from Poland, dated September 15th, to the effect that the German authorities now intend to proceed with the mass murder of the prisoners, probably in connection with their approaching evacuation of Polish territory. In addition to Polish citizens, there are in Oświęcim nationals of France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Greece, as well as Jews of different nationalities.

The Polish Government are of opinion that a joint declaration by His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States of America warning the Germans against carrying out such murders on the prisoners at Oświęcim, under threat of the gravest consequences, might restrain the German authorities from proceeding with their monstrous plan.

I should be grateful if Your Excellency would communicate the above information to His Majesty's Government and convey the urgent request of the Polish Government that, jointly with the Government of the United States of America, the British Government make a public declaration in this matter.

I am sending simultaneously an analogous request to the Government of the United States of America and I am also communicating the above information to the Allied Governments concerned.

I avail myself of this opportunity, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration⁹⁷.

AAN, *Ambasada Paryż*, 308 (ENG)

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*18 September 1944. Report by the Chargé d'Affaires
at the Legation in Madrid
on the activities of the PRC Delegation in Barcelona*

Madrid, 18 September 1944

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

In connection with my stay in Barcelona for a few days, I add to my report No. 52/19/44 of 13 September a few words about the local Delegation of the PRC. I have the impression that, even though they abandoned their efforts in evacuation, it should be, possibly in a narrow frame, maintained, both because of the need to care for refugees of other categories who have been staying there for several years (about 80, almost exclusively Jews) as well as the possibility of other assignments. I am referring mainly to the possibility of transporting through this port relief goods, food, medicines or other, and to the need for local control of our Delegation in this respect.

For example, I would like to provide information acquired by the local Delegation of the PRC, namely that the US authorities are currently involved in organising truck transport from Barcelona via France with parcels for prisoners

⁹⁷ On the following day, a copy of the note was also sent to the French authorities with the following information in the covering letter: 'I have the honour to send you herewith a copy of a note addressed to the Government of His Britannic Majesty and to the Government of the United States concerning the German plan to exterminate all the prisoners in the concentration camp in Auschwitz. It goes without saying that the case raised by the enclosed note is of particular gravity and requires vigorous joint action on the part of the Allied Governments and in particular of the interested Governments whose nationals are imprisoned in Auschwitz. I therefore request you to kindly inform your Government of the initiative taken by the Polish Government in this matter, hoping that it will be willing to take part in a joint action undertaken by all the Governments concerned.' AAN, *Ambasada Paryż*, 308.

of war in Germany. A fleet of 50 seven-tonne trucks, received by the IRC from American organisations, have been assigned for this purpose, 26 of which are already in Spain, and the rest, according to the information provided by the local Delegate of the IRC, in Portugal. Steps are now being taken to provide petrol and to complete the necessary formalities in connection with this case.

This information shall be provided simultaneously to the General Board of the PRC and to the Delegation of PRC in Lisbon.

Chargé d'Affaires
Józef Potocki
Minister Plenipotentiary

IPMS, Poselstwo Madryt, A.45.52/2

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*21 September 1944. Cable from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Ambassador to the Holy See and the Consul General in Rome
on prisoners of the concentration camp in Auschwitz*

Cable No 131
From Ministry of Internal Affairs in London

21 September 1944

Urgent
Individual

To the Ambassador
and to the Consul General Wierusz-Kowalski

The Government received information from Poland that Germany was preparing the mass extermination of prisoners in Auschwitz, i.e. some 45,000 people, of which 95% are political prisoners.

Among the Auschwitz prisoners, there are Polish citizens and citizens of other allied states, but also Italian citizens.

I ask the British⁹⁸ and the United States governments to issue a public declaration warning against murdering the prisoners, threatening with the most severe consequences. To the interested governments to work together.

I ask you to notify the Secretariat of State, and I ask the Consul General to notify the Italian Government about this issue verbally, in the way you consider most appropriate.

ROMER
POLEXTERNE

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/33

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*28 September 1944. Note by the Polish Government
to the British Government on the concentration camp in Auschwitz*

URGENT
CONFIDENTIAL

12, Hyde Park Crescent, W.2.
28th September, 1944

His Excellency
Sir Owen St. Clair O'Malley, KCMG.,
etc., etc., etc.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,

Pursuant to my Note of September 18th⁹⁹ I now have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency a further message which the Polish Government received from Poland on September 23rd, in connection with the German plan for the extermination of prison camps at Oświęcim (Auschwitz). It reads as follows:—

‘The Germans plan to exterminate the prisoners at Oświęcim (Auschwitz) and Brzezinki (Birkenau).

⁹⁸ Doc. 513. See also the following document.

⁹⁹ Doc. 513.

The commandant of the camp at Oświęcim, Hess¹⁰⁰ by name and Hitler's henchman, has called upon various S.S. leaders to submit to him plans for the liquidation of the camp together with those imprisoned there.

In the camp at Brzezinki there are 16,727 men and 39,125 women. Moll, the commandant of the camp, has submitted a plan for the liquidation of the camp and has asked for motorized units of the S.S., artillery for shelling the blocks and 6 bomber planes, together with a personnel adequate to raze the camp to the ground.

The plan has been accepted in principle but Moll has demanded instructions from Berlin in writing.

This hideous crime must be frustrated, but we in the Home Country have no means to do this. The prisoners are waiting for their deliverance—every day's delay in bringing them succour is a death threat to them.'

In bringing this to Your Excellency's notice I should like to add that the above information undoubtedly shows that the German leaders are now planning to carry out the threat which they have repeatedly enunciated, that if they were ever compelled to quit the territory of Poland, they would exterminate the most valuable elements of the Polish nation.

A very large percentage of those imprisoned in Oświęcim and Brzezinki certainly do belong to this strata, both the men and the women. I may mention that the camp at Brzezinki is situated alongside that at Oświęcim.

I have to honour to request Your Excellency to endeavour to obtain in the shortest possible time a favourable decision of His Britannic Majesty's Government in the matter of a declaration jointly with the Government of the United States of America cautioning the Germans against carrying out their abominable plan against the prisoners in the camps at Oświęcim and Brzezinki. The lives of the prisoners in the two camps depend upon speed of action.

I am sending simultaneously an analogous request to the Government of the United States of America, and am also communicating the above message to the Allied Governments interested.

I avail myself of this opportunity, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration¹⁰¹.

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617 (ENG)

¹⁰⁰ Rudolf Höß (Höss).

¹⁰¹ The Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a copy of the note to the Ambassador in London, stating in the covering letter: 'Following my letter from 19 September 1944, I am sending

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*4 October 1944. Letter from the Embassy in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
information from Bern about current actions*

4 October 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Telegram of 3 October from Bern to Rabbis Kotler and Kalmanowitz, the Union of Orthodox Rabbis in New York. I would like to ask you to inform the addressees by the usual means:

1) The Germans are planning to murder all interned in the concentration camps at the last minute. These plans were drawn up by Himmler and the leaders of the Auschwitz (Höss) and Birkenau camps. An immediate warning addressed to Germany by the United States is absolutely necessary.

2) Valobra and Donati are going to Germany, once it is seized by the Allies, to find the deported Italian Jews. They already have Italian service passports. They could also look for Belgian Jews. Please provide me with instructions.

3) With the consent of the Government of the Republic of Poland, we intend to send Dr Juliusz Kühl, Head of the Office of Refugees at the Legation of the

you the text of a further note delivered today to Ambassador Sir Owen O'Malley on the basis of additional information from the country about the intention of the Germans to exterminate the prisoners of the Auschwitz and Birkenau camps. I kindly ask you to take a personal interest in this important matter and to discuss the question of a joint Anglo-American declaration at the appropriate level in the Foreign Office.' In the note of 2 October 1944, Ambassador Raczyński wrote: '1) The Polish Government is counting on a joint Anglo-American declaration to deter the Germans. 2) The Polish Government propose to appeal to the President of the Swiss Confederation for his intervention with the authorities of the Reich. They are looking forward to the support of His Majesty's Government for such a step. 3) Information has been received in the course of the last two days that the Germans are emptying prisons all over Poland by sending prisoners to concentration camps the "liquidation" of which is being prepared. Thus up to 300.000 persons are in danger of being murdered.' AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617 (ENG).

Republic of Poland in Bern, to France and Belgium in the near future, to have him examine the situation of Jews in these countries.¹⁰²

For the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland:
M. Kwapiszewski
 Minister Plenipotentiary Embassy Counsellor

AAN, *Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork*, 506

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*12 October 1944. Cable from the Ambassador to the Holy See:
 the reply of the Secretariat of State to the Polish Government's note
 on the concentration camp in Auschwitz*

To the MFA in London

12 October 1944

Cable No. 269

Refero 246 and 257¹⁰³

My démarches on the camps in Auschwitz and Birkenau were met with a reply in the form of a note signed on 11 October on behalf of the Congregation for Extraordinary Affairs by Monsignor Tardini, in which he ensures that the

¹⁰² The circular of 16 October 1944, addressed to 'ALL THE POLISH POSTS in France and Belgium' by the Legation in Bern, stated: 'I would like to ask for all possible assistance and facilitations to Dr Juliusz KÜHL, Head of the Refugee Section at the Consular Department of the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern, visiting France and Belgium on an official mission to examine the possibilities of returning to France and Belgium of Polish-Jewish citizens staying in Switzerland and the conditions of the existence of Jews in the territories of the two countries concerned.' AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 292.

¹⁰³ In the cable no. 246 of 28 September 1944, the Ambassador to the Holy See informed: 'On 25 September, I filed a note with the Secretariat of State and on 27 September, I returned to this case in a discussion with Monsignor Tardini. The latter informed me that the Nuncio in Berlin had received instructions to undertake preventive intervention with the Government of the Reich. In the Secretariat of State, the Auschwitz case was treated very seriously, especially that news about the executions in the Płaszów camp near Cracow and reports from German camps in Lublin appeared almost simultaneously in the press.' He added by the cable no. 257 of 7 October 1944: 'I discussed the case of the camp in Birkenau in the Secretariat of State. New instructions were sent to the Nuncio

Secretariat of State referred with most great care to the fate of the people interned in these camps. The Holy See expresses frank and deep concern about the harsh experiences that continually befall the unfortunate Polish people and tries all available means to come to its aid and support in an effective way. As recently as in his speech on 15 September, the Holy Father gave the public assurance about this. The events of recent weeks, which drew the attention of the whole world to the Polish bloodlands, are reason to intensify, as far as possible, any action aimed at defending and saving law and justice.

I think that this important text can be published.

PAPÉE

Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/34

519

*16 October 1944. Report by the Embassy in Ankara
on the Swiss care provided to Polish refugees in Romania*

Ankara, 16 October 1944

Confidential

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
in London

One of the main issues concerning Poles in Romania is the assistance Polish citizens are provided by the Swiss Legation in Bucharest. This Legation is headed by Minister René de Weck and the affairs of caring for citizens of different countries (Belgians, Yugoslavians, Greeks, Poles) are dealt with by the Legation's Special Section under the direction of the Legation's Counsellor, Mr Paul Ritter.

Mr de Weck and Mr Ritter some time ago took care of the Polish affairs with enthusiasm, anticipating that would not be an easy task and maintaining close and friendly contact with Mr Kazimierz Świdorski, Director of the Committee for the Care of Polish Refugees in Romania, based in Bucharest, the former American Commission for Polish Relief, Bucharest.

in Berlin without delay. I am convinced that the Vatican will do its utmost.' Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, Ambasada Watykan, 2/34.

These relations began to deteriorate after some time. Mr Ritter was from the very beginning treating cases in a rather bureaucratic manner, but he used to accept all the intervention suggestions by Mr Świdorski and he loyally carried them out.

In recent weeks, before my departure from Romania, when I was helping Mr Świdorski in translating letters into French and English, and having his full confidence, I have learnt that Mr Ritter refused to assist in the following three cases:

1.—During the period when Russian troops were coming closer to the northern border of Romania, Mr Świdorski asked Mr Ritter either to send an officer of the Swiss Legation to the endangered areas (mainly Chernivtsi) or to authorise a Swiss consular agent in this area to check the Polish citizenship of a large number of people requesting to be issued a Polish passport. Among them were many people who fled the German occupation zone and did not have any documents. Mr Ritter refused to act in this matter, explaining that Romania refuses foreigners to enter this area, which is a hostile territory.

As a result, many Poles, after the Soviet army took over the territory, were left without documents and those who sent their identity papers to Bucharest could no longer get them back.

Later, Mr Świdorski learnt that all those who could prove their Polish citizenship by holding a passport were treated by the Soviet army and administration as foreign nationals and released from certain burdens (forced labour).

2.—During the close cooperation between Romania and Germany, Mr Świdorski asked the Swiss Legation to issue for the aforementioned Polish Commission the so-called 'Acte de protection.' Such an act was supposed to protect against all kinds of interference from German agents. Mr Ritter then, perhaps not without a reason, refused and explained that such 'Actes de protection' are placed by the Swiss Legation only on the edifices that it directly administers (edifices of the English Legation, etc.).

When the Soviet army entered Romania,¹⁰⁴ the Swiss Legation and partly the relevant national organisations began to issue 'Actes de protection' to their citizens to protect them from being robbed by soldiers and having their properties seized, etc. So, for example Mr Ritter has issued such acts to Belgian citizens on the Belgian Legation forms.

Mr Świdorski then addressed Mr Ritter, asking for 'Actes de protection' to be issued by the Swiss Legation for premises occupied by the Polish Commission and Polish citizens. Mr Ritter refused to do so.

¹⁰⁴ The Red Army took Bucharest on 31 August 1944.

3.—By order of the Romanian military authorities, but on the initiative of the Soviet Command, all owners of radio-receivers were ordered to return them to the police stations as soon as possible.

This order was further eased by allowing the receivers to be kept by the Romanian government officials, officials of Romanian public institutions and foreigners. However, as a result of the interventions by some of the legations, the latter were only supposed to retain the receivers if their legations assumed the responsibility for them using the receivers. There is no doubt that this responsibility was of purely formal nature.

The Swiss Legation, after some hesitation, accepted this responsibility for certain categories of the people under their protection. The Greeks, by the way, obtained this earlier and by themselves, directly from the Soviet Command.

When the matter was referred to Mr Ritter by Mr Świderki on behalf of Polish citizens, Mr Ritter refused; he was unwilling to charge the Swiss Legation with responsibility for Poles. Mr Świderski intervened on this issue several times, until finally, a few hours before the deadline for bringing the receivers to the police station, they refused to meet with him at all.

At that time, the Delegation of the Polish Commission went to the Romanian military command in Bucharest, explained the whole case very frankly, and they also informed them about the position of the Swiss. The Romanian command had no doubts, so it dealt with the Soviet command and the Poles obtained the relevant permission.

A few days later, receiver permits were to be limited, as far as foreigners are concerned, to English, American and Soviet citizens.

Representatives of the interested parties managed to intervene and have this limitation waived, however, only when the relevant intervention did take place.

Mr Świderski then sent his delegates directly to the Soviet Command and received a written permit for Poles to keep the receivers.

This incident which vividly points to the attitude of either the Swiss Legation, or perhaps only Mr Ritter himself, towards Polish affairs—is, in my opinion, a classic example of how far the discrimination of Poles by the Swiss went in relation to other nationalities under their protection. Mr Świderski must have understood it in the same way, as he wrote a letter to Mr Ritter, describing the three mentioned points as examples of how the Swiss Legation treats Polish cases, asking him to explain the reasons and expressing hope that, although he was refused a meeting recently, their personal relationship would improve.

A day or two later, Mr Ritter called Mr Świderski and received him, without greeting him, standing behind his desk, very upset and hitting the table with his hand, and making bitter excuses. He explained his behaviour and then struck

down the arguments of Mr Świdorski, naming the aforementioned letter an act of blackmail aimed at him. Mr Świdorski kept his cool but did not manage to convince his counterpart to anything. Finally, Mr Ritter stated that he considered the meeting to be finished and called the usher. Mr Świdorski had to leave his office.

A few days later, Mr Świdorski asked me to translate his report to the Swiss Envoy, Mr de Weck, in which he described the incident and asked for clarification. I do not know if he sent this report.

If not, he probably did a good thing, because in a few weeks later I learnt from one of my good Anglo-Saxon friends that he talked to Mr de Weck about Poles and heard many complaints from him about the Polish emigration in Romania. My friend understood that Mr de Weck was unfriendly to Poles, and—as he himself was a friend of Polish people—defended them as much as he could. As a result of this discussion, he decided not to maintain personal relations with Mr de Weck.

Moreover, I know that Mr Świdorski, when he submitted a comprehensive information note on the position of Poles in Romania to the British Mission in Bucharest, asked, among other things, for the protection of Poles in Romania by the United Kingdom until the arrival of the Polish Diplomatic Representative.

It is worth noting that Mr Świdorski is a man of completely exceptional merits towards Poles in Romania; a man of a firm character, very balanced, very calm in the judgement of events and people, very experienced in his work, very courageous personally and highly resistant to persuasion, favours and protections. In the circumstances in question, he is an indispensable person, a type of perfect consular officer. He has many enemies, who by their nature and values are usually his exact opposite, however.

Doman Rogoyski

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 142

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*19 October 1944. Note by the First Secretary at the Embassy in London
from the meeting at the Foreign Office*

19 October 1944

NOTE FOR THE AMBASSADOR

On 19 October, following your instructions, I paid a visit to Frank Roberts at the Foreign Office and—referring to his request expressed during our discussion on 11 October—I handed him a list of names of German officials belonging to the administration of the Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps, as well as translations of two telegrams from Poland dated 14 October. I then added that, according to the messages received from Poland, there are a number of British citizens in Auschwitz. Mr Roberts expressed his assumption that it was probably people of Jewish descent.

I asked him to use the mentioned materials as widely as possible in the press and on the radio, if possible without disclosing the source, and I underlined the request of some figures from the homeland to appoint hostages.

Mr Roberts responded contently that the British declaration of 10 October was met with an unexpectedly rapid reaction from the Germans, in which they denied the content of this declaration. Therefore, he asked me about our radio communication from yesterday. I had the impression that Roberts assessed the moment of broadcasting this communication as not quite appropriate, but he did not say it explicitly.

As for the case of the hostages, Roberts stated that, as we know, this matter was completely obsolete as it contradicts the essential principles of the Allied military policy. Furthermore, it is clear that any possible repression regarding hostages would not have the desired effect, as the German Government would not have any interest in their fate at all. For example, Roberts said that if they had threatened to execute Hess,¹⁰⁵ this threat would not make any impression on the current German policy-makers. The only reaction to all the German cruelty is to intensify the war operations further, which was the case at this time.

Michał Budny

FIRST SECRETARY AT THE EMBASSY

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617

¹⁰⁵ Rudolf Heß (Hess), one of Hitler's closest associates. In 1941 he used a fighter plane to fly to the United Kingdom, where he was kept captive.

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*19 October 1944. Note by the Ambassador in London
on the meeting with the Permanent Under-Secretary of State
at the Foreign Office*

The subject matter of the attached note by Secretary Budny¹⁰⁶ was also raised by me on 19 October in a conversation with Sir Alexander Cadogan, the Under-Secretary of State.

Just like Roberts, Mr Cadogan found it unfeasible to keep some Germans as hostages that were responsible for German atrocities committed in Poland. However, Mr Cadogan promised to consider the idea for the British Government to announce the names of the German criminals. He explained that there were no essential reasons to oppose to such an announcement. However, there is a concern that the names announced will be inaccurate or even entirely wrong. In this case, one could fear that the action would completely miss its objective.

Mr Cadogan accepted the list I gave him and the two telegrams of the Government Delegate from the Cracow district dated 14 October 1944.¹⁰⁷ He promised that these letters would be handed over to specialists in German matters in order to decipher any unclear words. At the same time, he asked us to obtain from Poland—if possible—a more detailed version of the names, which in the telegram of the Government Delegate are quite misspelled and in most cases barely legible.

London, on 19 October 1944.

Edward Raczyński
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617

¹⁰⁶ Previous document.

¹⁰⁷ The first telegram reported the following: 'On 7 October, prisoners in Auschwitz were supposed to be gassed. In despair, Poles attacked the perpetrators and killed six of them. 200 prisoners fell in the fight. 500 fled. The flight of the Allied planes made the pursuit more difficult. Mass executions are expected. We request the designation of hostages.' In the second one, the Government Delegate for Cracow district informed: '156,000 prisoners of Auschwitz and 12,400 people brought from Warsaw are at risk of death. Mobile gassing facilities, called *sonderkammer*, are already exporting transports in the direction of Maczki. ... We have the lists of prisoners.' AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617.

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[After 19 October 1944]. Unsigned note from the meeting of representatives of the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Internal Affairs with representatives of the Jewish Agency

NOTE

from the conference held with representatives of the Jewish Agency on the creation of the Jewish Brigade on 19 October 1944

Present: For the Jewish Agency: Prof L. Namier, Mr B. Locker and Mr J. Linton.

For the Ministry of Internal Affairs: Prof O. Górka, Dr A. Serafiński and Mr L. Sokołów.

For the Ministry of National Defence: Prof M. Heitzman and Second Lieutenant M. Lachs.

1. The conference was supposed to establish by mutual agreement the attitude of the Polish authorities towards the case of recruitment of soldiers to the Jewish Brigade.¹⁰⁸ An initial discussion in this direction had already been held with Mr Shertok and Mr Golomb who had in the meantime gone to Palestine and instructed the Agency delegates in London to finalise their talks. An important issue was the resolution of the case of Polish-Jewish citizens who wanted to join the Jewish Brigade.

2. Polish authorities presented the legal status of the various groups of Polish Jews taken into consideration:

a) Polish Jews in the liberated areas of the European continent: In this area, the Polish authorities took the view that, since there is no forced recruitment, the case could be dealt under the decree of President the Republic of Poland of 1941, i.e. by obtaining individual permits to join the Brigade by interested parties. The representatives of the Agency pointed out that the organisational structure in France, etc., is not yet established, but that they took into consideration the possibility of such recruitment.

It was agreed that: the Polish authorities will in principle take a favourable position towards those who, in these areas, have completed the relevant formalities in accordance with the Polish law and declare their willingness to join the Jewish Brigade. However, formal authorisation is obligatory.

b) The second group are Polish Jews who did not comply with the orders of the Polish authorities in the United Kingdom to apply for military service. This

¹⁰⁸ The Jewish Brigade, counting about 5,000 soldiers, was founded by the British authorities in July 1944. It took part in the fights in Italy and was dissolved in 1946.

group includes those who, in other words, have waived their obligation to provide military service and are therefore in conflict with the Polish law. Under the English law, these persons, under the Allied Forces Act, had the right to apply to the Polish Army within two months. And since they did not make use of this right, they come under English conscription rules and are treated equally with English citizens.

The representatives of the Agency expressed their wish that the Polish authorities would facilitate their joining the Jewish Brigade, either through a special amnesty or by means of an appropriate letter to the English authorities.

The Polish authorities emphasised that at the moment, apart from the fact that these people are in conflict with the provisions of Polish law, the Polish authorities have no influence on their attitude towards military service in the English army. However, the Agency expressed the opinion that using an appropriate formula would facilitate them joining the Jewish Brigade, while the issue of their relationship with the Polish law would not be addressed. The representatives of the Agency suggested that they would present to the Polish authorities a list of people in question and would expect the Polish authorities to state that 'There is no objection to their joining the Jewish Brigade. Their position is assimilated to those who join under the Allied Forces Act, which does not settle the question of their relation to the Polish State.' Such or similar formula, with the addition that their joining of the Jewish Brigade will have such a legal effect, was supposed to be used in the reply of the Polish authorities.

It was agreed that: the Polish authorities are considering the case of such a letter and the formula it will contain.

c) The third group consists of Polish Jews who have not yet been subject to military service, because they have not reached the age of 18.

It was agreed that: the Polish authorities will accept from interested parties applications for authorisation to join the Jewish Brigade and these applications will be processed favourably.

d) The following group are amnestied soldiers who were convicted of desertion and have now been assigned to English industry and mines. They are currently in the competence of the British authorities. If these soldiers have used amnesty, they have the right to apply for permission to join the Jewish Brigade.

It was agreed that: Such applications will be processed favourably by the Polish authorities, but from the legal point of view these persons are now in the hands of the British authorities.

e) The deserters in Palestine, numerically the most important problem, are a separate issue. They did not use the amnesty and therefore stay in conflict with the Polish law.

The Polish authorities cannot grant them any concessions at the moment, as this would be immoral and also incompatible with the law.

It was agreed that: this matter cannot be the subject of any agreement, as having it settled would require legal sanctions. The matter is to be left out of discussion.

f) The last issue are soldiers in active military service. The Agency would like the Jewish Brigade to be as diverse as possible so that it includes Jews of all nationalities. It would therefore welcome the consent of the Polish Government to have at least a small group of soldiers from the Polish Army be part of it. Participation would be symbolic, being a kind of a delegation. In the first place, the Jewish Brigade will need a certain number of paramedics and gunners.

On the part of the government representatives, it was emphasised that a significant part of our army is in action and that it would be difficult to release them from the army during the fighting. In addition, it was pointed to the negative impact that such transfers would have on the attitude of the soldiers remaining in the army and on the possible repercussions that this could have on Jews who did not join the Jewish Brigade.

It was agreed that: this matter will be considered by the Polish authorities and the decision will be communicated to the Jewish Agency.

3. The discussion has been concluded at this point. Representatives of the Jewish Agency expressed their sincere gratitude to the representatives of the government for their positive and favourable response to the issue of the Jewish Brigade. The Polish authorities also pointed to the need for the Agency to issue a communication on the above question in order to prevent misunderstandings and possible complaints from soldiers—Jews—to the Polish authorities. Such a communication would authoritatively state the situation and explain to what extent the Brigade can include the Polish-Jewish citizens. The representatives of the Agency agreed that the content of such a communication would be agreed with the Polish authorities.

IPMS, MSZ, A.11E/87

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21 October 1944. Letter from the MFA to the Legation in Mexico City
on holders of Honduras passports (with enclosure)

London, 21 October 1944

To the Legation of the Republic of Poland
in Mexico City

Following the Vittel case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends an attached list of the Jews who, via the Honduras Consulate in Switzerland, acquired passports of that country. This list, which contains a number of non-Polish persons, was provided to the Ministry by the Jewish organisations in Switzerland. The Ministry has not been informed whether this list is complete and final, nor about the locations of the persons included.

The Ministry asks the Legation to forward this list to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Honduras and to notify the Ministry whether Honduras agreed to recognise the passports issued for the time of war and whether it joined the United States action aimed at exchanging Jews holding Latin American passports for Germans interned in America.

The Ministry does not yet have a list of passports issued by El Salvador, Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

For the MINISTER
L. Koziębrodzki

[enclosure]

List of Jews in Possession of Honduras Passports

(Number in brackets denotes number of family members included in the passport.)

1. AJZENWASSER Mosze, Warsaw, (2).
2. ALEKSANDROWICZ Israel Nusen, Będzin, (2).
3. BIERZWINSKA Ida, Będzin, (1).
4. BLACHARZ Abram, Będzin, (1).
5. BECKENROTH Tulek, Drohobycz, (3).
6. BLITS Alfred, Amsterdam, (1).
7. BLATT Leon, Sosnowiec, (1).

8. BORENSTEIN Icek, Sosnowiec, (1).
9. BORENSZTAJN Zyskin, Będzin, (3).
10. BRANDYS Aron, Będzin, (2).
11. CHMIELNICKA Cypojra vel Cecylia, Sosnowiec, (1).
12. DIAMENT Israel, Będzin, (1).
13. FELDBERG Aron, Będzin, (4).
14. FERSZTENDIK Hersz Mendel, Warsaw, (2).
15. FISZELSON Jakub, Warsaw, (3).
16. FLEISCHHACKER Leopold, Bruxelles-Ixelles, (2).
17. FRANK Zachariasz Dr, Wołomin, (1).
18. FROST Szymon, Będzin, (1).
19. FRYDMAN Majer Hersz, Sosnowiec, (3).
20. FRIEDMAN (widow), Drohobycz, (1).
21. FLEISCHER Ruchla Sara, Sosnowiec, (1).
22. FEDER Estera, Będzin, (1).
23. GAFTEK Baruch, Będzin, (1).
24. GELBARD Paulina, Będzin, (1).
25. GLICENSTEIN Aleksander, Sosnowiec, (1).
26. GOLDBRUM Alter Symcha, (1).
27. GRAUBART Beer, Będzin, (1).
28. GRUNDLAND Jakub Joel, Warsaw, (2).
29. GUTENSZTAJN Małka Rojza, Będzin, (1).
30. GRUSZKA Perec, Dąbrowa Górnicza, (3).
31. GINZBERG Benjamin, Amsterdam, (1).
32. GANZ Stanisław, Warsaw, (1).
33. GARFINKIEL Julian, Będzin, (2).
34. GOSLAR Hans.
35. HASENBERG Leib Arieh, Będzin, (1).
36. HERZBERG Dwojra, Będzin, (1).
37. HIRSZMAN Józef, Będzin, (1).
38. HERTZ Artur, Warsaw, (2).

39. HIRSCH Georg, Dresden, (2).
40. KUPFERMINC Abram, Sosnowiec, (3).
41. KATZ Fajga, Sosnowiec, (1).
42. KERNER Leib, Sosnowiec, (2).
43. KOZŁOWSKI Dawid, Będzin, (2).
44. KLEE Alfred, Amsterdam, (2).
45. KNOLLER Aribert, Amsterdam, (3).
46. KROLL Jan, Warsaw, (1).
47. KUTTNER DE BRENNER Tauba, Będzin, (1).
48. LANDAU Jakub, Sosnowiec, (1).
49. LANDAU Emmanuel, Amsterdam, (2).
50. LIEBERMAN Chiel Hersz, Amsterdam, (3).
51. LENCZNER Chava Laja, Będzin, (1).
52. LIWER Dawid, Będzin, (3).
53. LIWER Szlama, Będzin, (2).
54. LUSTIGER Hersz, Będzin, (2).
55. LIPSZYC Abram, Będzin, (4).
56. LEIFER Beila, Sosnowiec, (3).
57. LEWY Jakob, Amsterdam, (2).
58. MILRAD Misza, Warsaw, (3).
59. MIRANDA Dawid Dr, (5).
60. MULSZTAJN Eliezer, Sosnowiec, (3).
61. NAJER Szulim, Będzin, (4).
62. NAJMAN Ajzyk, (1).
63. NEUMAN Salomon Zelman, Tarnów, (5).
64. NOTOWITZ Samuel, Amsterdam, (3).
65. OSIEK Maurycy, Warsaw, (1).
66. PERELSTADT Max, Będzin, (1).
67. RAUCHER Pinkus, Będzin, (3).
68. RECHTMAN Romuald, Będzin, (2).
69. ROGOZIK Luba, Warsaw, (1).

70. ROSENBLUM Chanina, Będzin, (3).
71. RUBIN Chaskiel Israel, Będzin, (1).
72. RUBINSTEIN Sara, Będzin, (1).
73. ROSENTHAL, Amsterdam, (2).
74. ROSENTHAL, Amsterdam, (3).
75. SAMET Abram Hersz, Warsaw, (2).
76. SAMET Rudolf, Warsaw, (2).
77. SPIRA Bernard, Przemyśl, (1).
78. SZPIRO Mordka, Warsaw, (2).
79. SZTULMAN Dawid Dr, Sosnowiec, (3).
80. SZULDINER Symcha, Warsaw, (2).
81. SZPORN Fajga, Będzin, (1).
82. SZENBERG Hana, Będzin, (1).
83. SZPILFOGIEL Maurycy, Warsaw, (2).
84. SCHOENBERG Lazar, (3).
85. TENENBAUM Heinoch, Będzin, (3).
86. TENENBAUM Israel, Będzin, (1).
87. ULRYCH Teresa, Warsaw, (1).
88. WERNER Jadwiga, Warsaw, (3).
89. WERNER Helena, Warsaw, (1).
90. WYSZEWIANSKI Leon, Warsaw, (2).
91. WEINZIEHER Salomon Dr, Będzin, (2).
92. WROCLAWSKA Estera, Będzin, (1).
93. GRUEN Maria, Altendorf, (1).
94. OPPENHEIM Mojżesz, Będzin, (2).
95. ZABNER Hilel, Będzin, (7).
96. BUCHWAJC Pinkus, Będzin, (3).
97. STEIN Fritz S. Dr, Amsterdam, (3).
98. BRODMAN Samuel, Haag, (4).
99. VAN MEEKREN Jakob, Amsterdam, (3).
10. MEYER Salomon, Hamburg, (4).

- 101. FRANK Hans, Quedlinburg, (1).
- 102. KATZ Leo, Giesen, (4).
- 103. KISCH Rosalie, Niederohmen, (1).
- 104. SZEJNTAL Israel, Będzin, (2).
- 105. ROTSCCHILD Julius, Amsterdam, (1).
- 106. BLUMENTHAL Markus, Amsterdam, (1).
- 107. SUESS Sigmund, Amsterdam, (1).

AAN, Poselstwo Meksyk, 171

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*23 October 1944. Letter from the MFA to the Ministry
of Internal Affairs regarding persons of Jewish
descent holding passports of South American countries*

London, 23 October 1944

‘Following the letter from the Ministry dated 21 June and regarding the Polish Jews who acquired passports from Latin American countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hereby sends attached the list of names of the Jews who hold Paraguayan passports, as well as those with passports from Honduras, Haiti and Peru. This list, which contains a number of non-Polish persons, has been provided to the Ministry via the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Bern by Dr A. Silberschein; the Ministry was not informed whether the attached inventory was complete and final, nor about the locations of the persons included.

The Ministry asks the Ministry of Internal Affairs to forward this inventory to the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland.’¹⁰⁹

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Dokumenty Stanisława Mikołajczyka, 41

¹⁰⁹ The attached list (including 399 names) is not included in this publication.

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*28 October 1944. Cable from the Consul General in Istanbul
on the situation in Romania*

ISTANBUL
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 28 OCT 1944
RECEIVED ON 30 OCT 1944

No 215.

Based on the testimonies of Jewish refugees recently arrived from Romania (the first transport from 23 August, about 160 people, including 19 Polish citizens, arrived by land):

1) The Romanian authorities retain all attributes of independence in the case of refugees, as in other cases, but in mid-October there was a tendency to separate refugees from the areas which the USSR considers its own. The relevant police circular urges them to register to facilitate departure to the places of origin.

2) Jewish organisations are currently facing major difficulties in having such persons leave for Palestine, especially men of recruiting age.

3) Representatives of the Polish authorities, in cooperation with the USSR, are developing activities, calling to join the Polish Army and to register. Tito's delegate, recently arrived, is also developing activities in the same direction.

4) Until 20 October, the Polish department at the Swiss Legation was issuing Polish passports. On that date, it suspended this issuance, refusing explanations for reasons of professional secrecy. Among Jewish refugees, this is explained by the fact that the general reorganisation of the legal care of Polish citizens is underway. Details to be included in a report.

Sent to London, for the attention of Ankara.

KORSAK

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 142

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*30 October 1944. Report by the Consul General in London
on the transfer of subsidies to the Federation of Polish Jews*

30 October 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the letter from the Ministry dated 9 October¹¹⁰ and to report that the amount £250 mentioned in this letter has already been sent to the Consulate General by the Ministry of Treasury. At the same time, I transfer this money to the Federation of Polish Jews.

At the same time, I have the honour to explain that I cannot undertake the function of supervising the activities of the Federation of Polish Jews for the following reasons:

1) The said Federation is a British association, which is made up, in the vast majority, of British citizens.

2) The Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London reserved for itself exclusive competence in all political Jewish matters already before the war. The Federation of Polish Jews is also a political organisation above all; the activities of the association before the war, and also during the war, were aimed primarily at defending the political interests of Jews in Poland; all other activities of the association were of additional or secondary nature.

Dr Karol Poznański
CONSUL GENERAL

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A.42/242

¹¹⁰ The MFA asked in its letter 'to pay the Federation of Polish Jews in the United Kingdom 250 pounds in a one-off subsidy granted to it by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and passed on to the Consul General. At the same time, the Ministry of Internal Affairs asks the Consul General to supervise the activities of the Federation, within the limits of his capacity.' IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Londyn, A.42/242.

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*7 November 1944. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
to the Prime Minister: the actions of the MFA
undertaken to rescue prisoners from the concentration camp in Auschwitz*

London, 7 November 1944

SECRET

To Mr Stanisław Mikołajczyk
Prime Minister
in London

In the light of the news from Poland stating that the Germans plan the mass murder of prisoners in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camps, *my* ministry has undertaken a broad action with the Allied governments in the interest of rescuing prisoners. The United Kingdom and the United States governments also announced on 10 October a public declaration, warning the Germans against this intention and announcing that the perpetrators will be held accountable. The governments of France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia *and Yugoslavia* subsequently joined this declaration.

In any case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has asked the Vatican and the Swiss Government to take action against the Reich authorities. The Vatican gave two instructions to the Nuncio in Berlin to make a proper *démarche* at the Reich Government.

Ambassador E. Raczyński notified the Foreign Office about our request which was sent to the Swiss Government, asking it to support our efforts in Bern, so to have the Swiss Government intervene in the name of humanitarian principles with the highest decision-makers within the Reich. The Foreign Office approached the Swiss Envoy in London on this issue, combining it with the matter of another Allied nation (the Netherlands). In mid-October, there was also a Swiss Envoy leaving for Bern to present these matters to his government, about which I notified Envoy Ładoś to maintain contact with Mr Ruegger and to carry out joint actions.

Minister Ładoś informs me that the Swiss Government has instructed its Envoy in Berlin to join the action of the Papal Nuncio, but he does not think that the Swiss government intended to make a substantial *démarche* to the highest Reich decision-makers—in the first place, there is no one to talk to in Berlin today, and secondly to avoid encountering a refusal.

In Switzerland, however, there is a more general action in progress, which is formally initiated by a refugee—an Italian Jew, the well-known banker Angelo

Donati, who is working in close consultation with the Nuncio and Envoy Ładoś. This initiative aims to obtain:

1) Collective intervention by all the neutral states under the patronage of the Vatican on the fate of civilians in the war countries (deportations, concentration camps, forced labour, etc.). Of course, the intervention would cover the Auschwitz and Birkenau camps. The Nuncio is in contact with the Holy See on this issue, which would take formal steps.

2) The creation of a body acting analogous to the International Red Cross, named the International Committee for the Protection of the Civilian Population. This would be a committee composed of Swiss nationals (as it is the case with the IRC), with the task of filling the gap of the Geneva Convention, which does not provide for the coverage of the civil population by the activities of the IRC, while this group today probably needs more care than the prisoners of war and the military.

Forwarding the above to your attention I would like to note that I instructed Envoy Ładoś to continue the action ad 1) if it is intended solely to obtain intervention with the Government of the Reich; as far as ad 2) is concerned, I consider it late in the current phase of the war, but I do not see any objections against it.

I will keep you informed of further developments.

MINISTER
Tadeusz Romer

AAN, Ambasada Londyn, 1617

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*14 November 1944. Unsigned note on the assistance
to the civilian population following the fall of the Warsaw Uprising*

Note on assistance to the population of Warsaw

Immediate assistance may be given to Poland by Switzerland via the International Red Cross.

At the moment, it is possible to buy on the Swiss market food products and clothes for 34 million francs; moreover, the offer also includes medicines and dressings, which in total is equivalent to some 50 million francs.

If the relevant funds are available, we should:

- a) obtain a waiver of the blockade from the English authorities to have those goods exported from Switzerland,
- b) obtain authorisation for a transfer to Switzerland.

Food, clothing and medicine are under the control of the IRC and are directed to Cracow, to the Central Welfare Council. The IRC delegates on-site are the best and adequate guarantee of proper distribution of items sent to Poland.

The best guarantee of efficient and quick resolution of this urgent case would be to concentrate all the action in the hands of one man who would lead negotiations on behalf of the PRC (possibly the Government of the Republic of Poland) with the English authorities.

The person would have to agree on the action with the heads of all the departments concerned.

Apart from the International Red Cross, no other institution can reach Poland under enemy occupation. That is why all cases in the field of providing assistance to Poland under occupation—without distinction as to whether the aid comes from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of National Defence, Ministry of Treasury or the MFA—would be negotiated and dealt with in the IRC by a PRC Delegate, as the International Red Cross accepts as contractor on the Polish side only its sister institution in Poland, i.e. the Polish Red Cross.¹¹¹

London, 14 November 1944

IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.Z.6

¹¹¹ The following text was supplemented in another non-signed note from 14 November 1944 devoted to the assistance to the population of Warsaw: ‘During the fighting in Warsaw and four weeks after the fighting, the entire population had to leave the city. The reports of the International Red Cross state that assistance to the Warsaw population must be organised immediately if the tragic consequences are to be avoided. The population is exhausted beyond all human measure, its physical state and moral depression cannot be expressed in any words. The scope of this assistance must encompass the entire population of Warsaw, which has survived.’ *IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.Z.6.*

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*16 November 1944. Report by the Military Attaché
at the Legation in Rio de Janeiro to the Head of the Second Department
of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff regarding Krzysztof Skowroński*

Rio de Janeiro, 16 November 1944

Dear Colonel,

At the end of September 1944, an incident occurred in Rio de Janeiro, which, although it was of a minor nature, had serious political consequences and affected the Polish-Jewish relations in Brazil and in particular in Rio de Janeiro.

Because I have the reason to suppose that the echoes of this case will reach New York and London, and that you can hear about this issue in London in an exaggerated and untrue form, as it usually happens in such cases, I think it would be useful to shed some light on it.

In the mentioned period, there was an altercation between two school colleagues: 13-year-old Krzysztof, son of the Envoy of the Republic of Poland in Brazil, SKOWROŃSKI and his peer WEISSMAN, son of a Jew—Swiss citizen (born allegedly in Tarnów). During this altercation, the young SKOWROŃSKI allegedly insulted the Jews and ‘expressed his antisemitic opinions.’ According to the version presented by the Minister’s son, he only replied to the offensive statements made by WEISSMAN against Poland and Poles. Of course, it is now almost impossible to determine the course of the event between two 13-year-old boys.

The conclusions drawn by the Jews from Rio from this case are greatly exaggerated and disproportionate to the event itself. These Jews have treated words of the Minister’s son as an expression of the views common in the household of the Envoy and of the general ‘fascist’ attitudes of the Legation and of all the Poles who had something in common with the Legation.

Although the Minister has taken all possible steps to ease the case, some ‘hidden circles have done everything to have it spread as widely as possible. To clarify the case, the Legation Secretary ZANIEWSKI was sent to the school principal, the Minister sent two letters with apologies to WEISSMAN, but even after the second letter, when WEISSMAN replied that he considered the incident to be explained and that there were no more resentments—the case was still circulating in Brazil and was being spread with particular viciousness in diplomatic circles and foreigners’ settlements.

The first consequence of the described incident was the withdrawal of the METRO GOLDWYN MAYER company (where the father of the ‘offence’ boy

works) from a promise given to the Legation to donate the income from the pre-release of the film CURIE-SKŁODOWSKA to the victims of the Warsaw Uprising.

Subsequently, the Mexican Ambassador in Rio (and a METRO GOLDWYN MAYER shareholder at the same time) also interfered in this matter and for several weeks during talks conducted in political circles, constantly commented on the incident, condemning the fascist views of Envoy SKOWROŃSKI. This Mexican Envoy expressed his attitude also in talks with Poles (Prince Olgierd Czartoryski and Prince Konstanty Czartoryski). The Chilean Envoy (GABRIEL GONZÁLEZ VIDELA, wife ROSA MARKMANN de GONZALEZ) was allegedly particularly active in spreading this affair in Brazil, and according to the information received, he was the main driving force of publicising this issue in diplomatic circles.

– The Swiss Envoy was also interested in this matter; it was also commented on by some of the members of the US and UK embassies and by the MFA of Brazil.

According to information provided by one of the senior officials of the diplomatic protocol, the ‘MFA has a lot of trouble with this issue.’

The facts presented above have had a huge impact on the attitude of Jews towards the Polish cause. Many of them refrain from taking part in Polish celebrations and events and from attending Polish organisations in both Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

There were also cases of withdrawal of declarations which covered the commitment to pay monthly contributions for the aid to Polish war prisoners (Sao Paulo).

I know that there were sent some dispatches sent by Jews to the USA, including by a certain war refugee Roman LANDAU.

In the last two weeks, the mood has calmed slightly, and some people took the view that they were moving too far in this anti-Polish action, which could have undesirable consequences.

This is not the result of a change of views, but only a political tactic, which can be best proved by the fact that the mentioned positions are represented by Jews who are known for their hostile attitude towards Poland.

Despite this relief, I suppose that it will find its resonance at the Congress of Polish Jews in USA, which is due to take place in January 1945—and it can be commented on in both the United States and England.

Therefore, I believe that our military authorities should be informed this type of actions may take place.

Personally, I am convinced that the whole trivial incident—for which Envoy Skowroński is not guilty in any way—has been deliberately taken up by the

communist circles, which are currently very active in mobilising Jews against us and in convincing foreigners about our 'intolerance' and 'fascist' attitudes.

The entire affair is analogous to the one launched just a few weeks ago (my letter L.dz.1528/44) against the Government, and General Sosnkowski in particular, the aim of which was to discredit our top officials.

I would like to suggest that you make use of this letter only if necessary.

I would not like my letter to be commented on as a report against the Envoy.

/-/ KARA
Stanisław Kara, Diplomatic Lieutenant Colonel

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/142

530

*19 November 1944. Letter from a social organisation in Rio de Janeiro
to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare on assistance
to the victims of the Warsaw Uprising*

Rio de Janeiro, 19 November 1944

To the Ministry of Social Welfare of the Republic of Poland
in London

Referring to 40 cases of used clothing for victims of the fighting in Warsaw

We would like to kindly inform the Ministry that we have sent to the Polish Red Cross and on behalf of the Ministry forty cases of used clothing (men's and women's clothes, shoes, underwear), disinfected under the control of the Brazilian sanitary authorities, which we are allocating to the victims of the Warsaw Uprising.

The mentioned 40 cases of clothing were donated by the Jewish Committee for Assistance to the Victims of War, Rio de Janeiro, to Polish citizens regardless of their origin and religion.

The transport was loaded on the SS Empire Ray, leaving for one of the ports of the UK.

Please find attached¹¹² the list of contents of the cases, confirmed by the Brazilian Red Cross and the Brazilian sanitary authorities, and the loading document.

¹¹² Not included in this publication.

We kindly ask that you notify us where this transport has been dispatched and send us a confirmation of receipt by the distribution institution in the territory of Poland.¹¹³

Sincerely,
Czesław Sokulski
Secretary-General

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/26

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*21 November 1944. Letter from the Secretary-General
at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the MFA:
information to the Delegate in Bombay on Jewish refugees from the USSR*

21 November 1944

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asks for the following dispatch to be sent to Dudryk-Darlewski, Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Bombay:

‘Receptus 140 and refero ~~dispatch no 148~~¹¹⁴ (~~letter L.dz.11523/44/Pal/27 from 19 October 1944~~), the interested parties dispatched again to confirm

¹¹³ In the reply of 5 January 1945, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare replied on 5 January 1945: ‘Following the letter from 19 November 1944, the Ministry of Social Welfare confirms receipt of 40 cases of clothing sent to London at the address of the Polish Red Cross. At the same time, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare expresses its thanks to the Jewish Committee for Assistance to the Victims of War for this gift and reports that it will be sent with one of the nearest transports to Poland for distribution among citizens irrespective of origin or religion. Confirmation of receipt by the distribution institution in Poland will be sent to the Committee upon arrival.’ IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/26.

¹¹⁴ The Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Bombay, Stanisław Dudryk-Darlewski, reported in the cable no. 140 of 29 September 1944: ‘Six Polish Jews who recently left the USSR on the basis of Palestinian visas arrived in Bombay. They want to connect with families in Palestine, they have no resources. Should I finance their journey?’ IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381. In response to the cable no. 148 of 21 October 1944,

their interest in covering the cost of travelling to Palestine and the cost of living on site. Please explain whether the Jewish Agency in Palestine agreed to the travel charge. Until the time of departure, we order the paying of care allowances on the same basis as for all the refugees. Pollabwelf.

SECRETARY-GENERAL
Alfred Urbański

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/381

532

*23 November 1944. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to the Consul General in New York: information
from Bern about negotiations with Heinrich Himmler*

23 November 1944

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

Following the previous correspondence, I would like to inform you about the content of a dispatch sent by Sternbuch from Bern on 21 November and ask you to pass it on, as usual in confidence, to the Union of Orthodox Rabbis in New York.

‘Our representative reports after the end of the negotiations with Himmler that for twenty million Swiss francs, three hundred thousand Jews could be evacuated to the neutral states. Such an evacuation would take place in batches of fifteen thousand people a month, while the money would be deposited in a Swiss bank in proportional instalments, i.e. one million Swiss francs after the evacuation of each relevant group.

the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare requested: ‘Please notify the Jewish Agency in Palestine of the request of the supplicants. So far, the Agency has covered the costs of travel for all Jews who obtained the right of residence in Palestine on the basis of certificates received.’ AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 265.

We have basically accepted this proposal. We note that our representative is a highly influential and serious person. Please do not ask us to cooperate with the Joint. We did so at your request on the Hungarian case and the result was disastrous, as evidenced by the 16-page (?) by Neutrauer [sic].

The morbid anti-religiosity and alleged patriotism of the Swiss representative of the Joint make any cooperation with him impossible. The Swiss and American authorities like him because he is not demanding.

I strongly urge for an answer and address it only to us, so as to use this only opportunity to save a large number of Jews. We now only need your basic telegraphic consent via the American Legation, then our representative will return to Berlin immediately.

Please give further details via the Polish Legation.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, *Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork*, 506

533

*7 December 1944. Letter from the Ambassador in Washington
to the Consul General in New York:
the lack of IRC funds to help prisoners of concentration camps*

7 December 1944

To the Consul General of the Republic of Poland
in New York

On the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I ask you to notify the Jewish Labour Committee in New York, in connection with the telegram of this Committee to the Prime Minister regarding the dispatch to the International Red Cross for the care of Jews in concentration camps, that the International Red Cross does not dispose of any of its own funds for the purchase of goods. The increase of existing aid is only possible by transferring the relevant funds to Switzerland. In the territory of the General Government, the Central Welfare Council is the only aid institution, authorised to receive supplies from abroad and distribute them

among the population. The Jewish population benefits on an equal footing from the goods distributed by the Central Welfare Council.

J. Ciechanowski
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Konsulat Generalny Nowy Jork, 506

534

13 December 1944. Letter from the Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Delegation in Nairobi on counteracting the mistreatment of refugees

13 December

Delegation of the Ministry of
Labour and Social Welfare
in Nairobi

Due to the unequal and sometimes even improper treatment by the administration of individual settlements of Polish citizens according to their nationality or religion, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education and the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a joint instruction to have these matters regulated properly.

Although this instruction, as the Ministry is aware, was sent by the Delegation in the circular No. 197, the news currently coming to the Ministry from East Africa proves that some incidents still occur on the part of the administration of care and education in some settlements. This is also indicated in the additional ordinances issued by the Delegation and in one of its last letters (dated 5 October 1944 No. 8943/9), which mentioned the further existence of antisemitic sentiment in certain areas. As far as the events brought to the attention of the Ministry are concerned, we can quote, for example, the allegation cited by the Ukrainian journal (published in Chicago) that 'the Ukrainians in Northern Rhodesia have to write letters in Polish' and also the memorandum by Fr Bożerianow to the Prime Minister (sent in a copy to the Delegation), in which the facts of the mistreatment of national minorities are raised (point c, paragraph 2, point 4, paragraphs 5 and 6 of the memorandum).

Under these conditions, the Ministry must submit that it is not sufficient for the Delegation to send out these or other orders, and that it must not only ensure that

they are implemented and remedy any shortcomings, but also work on the right attitude of the administrative staff and the refugees themselves in these matters. This result can be achieved by scheduled work in various fields and, above all, in the cultural and educational section. It is equally important to create some positive traditions, such as respect for the language, customs and celebrations of national minorities, both regarding groups and individuals. If any anti-minority currents are rooted among the refugees themselves, it is the administration's responsibility to make this attitude disappear through appropriate procedures and examples. This problem is not naturally limited to the apparatus of care, but also applies to education staff, and therefore it is necessary to reach an agreement with the Religious Affairs and Public Education Delegation in order to initiate cooperation.

According to the mentioned instruction issued by the three Ministers, the Ministry will expect the Delegation to provide information on the action aimed at preventing any undesirable accidents or sentiments, as well as information about such events and reactions to them by the Delegation. In particular, the Ministry asks for clarifications regarding the allegations made by the Ukrainian journal and Fr Bożerianow.

SECRETARY-GENERAL
Alfred Urbański

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/44

535

*18 December 1944. Report by the Consul General in Istanbul:
the situation in Bulgaria and Romania*

Top Secret

Istanbul, 18 December 1944

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: Jewish emigration from areas controlled by the USSR.

Large amounts of information received by the Consulate General from the Bulgarian and Romanian territories, the messages communicated confidentially by Jewish activists, and finally the information provided by the English and American sides on the Jewish emigration from the Balkans, are in line with the fact that the

fundamentally positive attitude of the USSR towards Jewish emigration from the Balkans has not changed.

This is proved by the Romanian and Bulgarian decrees of 22 September treating favourably the question of Jewish emigration to Palestine; the declaration of the USSR Ambassador Gusev directed to the representatives of the Jewish Agency at the end of October, stating that USSR does not want to interfere with the Jewish emigration from the Balkans; allowing Jewish delegates to enter Bulgaria and Romania; and above all the actual consent given to Jews to leave these two countries.

The USSR must attach great importance to maintaining good relations with Jews, since despite military reasons (the possibility of information leakage, passing information from the area of Red Army military operations, and finally the departure of people who can lead the anti-Soviet propaganda), they actually allow emigration to Palestine, even though, during the war, the suspension of such departures from the areas to the rear of the territories of military operation could seem justified. In the last three and a half months, three periods could have been observed, in which a basically positive Soviet attitude could be brought into question: 1) the period during which Romania and Bulgaria were the territories of effective military operations (23 August—1 October) and the Bulgarian and Romanian authorities controlled by the Soviets did not grant collective travel permits; 2) the short period immediately after the assassination of Lord Moyne,¹¹⁵ when the arrival of the chief of the Zionist Executive Ben Gurion (vide dispatches in this matter) was suspended; and 3) when the restrictions on the departures began to be clarified for Jews considered by the USSR as Soviet citizens, or whose departure was questioned for some other political reasons (stopping the transports in Stara Zagora and pulling back the transports from the Romanian-Soviet border).

The difficulties that Jews encountered in emigrating from the Balkans can be divided according to the following points:

I. Position of the United Kingdom II. Transport issues III. Turkish transit IV. Position of the USSR V. Local considerations in countries under the control of the USSR VI. Issues with the emigrants' citizenship.

Ad I. As I reported in the report of 30 October, No. Rum.X.44, upon the retreat of the Germans, it must have been considered that the privilege granted by the British Government to the local Jews, which assumed that any refugee who had escaped the German occupation to a neutral country may be granted the right to enter Palestine independently and above the immigration quota established on the White Paper basis, would cease to be valid.

¹¹⁵ Walter Edward Guinness (Lord Moyne) was assassinated in Cairo on 6 November 1944 by a radical armed Zionist organisation, which accused Guinness of not providing assistance to the Jewish population and opposing the settlement of Jews in Palestine.

The British authorities drew consequences from the cessation of the threat quite late, namely at the end of September or the beginning of October—in the form of an agreement with the Jewish Agency Representative Shertok, who was in London at that time; according to the said agreement, the process of unrestricted entry into Palestine of Jews who fled the German occupation is suspended, whereas a quota of 10,000 Jews who are allowed, similar as in the White Paper, to travel to Palestine from the liberated countries is fixed for six months, starting from 1 October 1944. Among this number, 5,000 was awarded to the Balkans: 3,500 to Jews from Romania and 1,500 to Jews from Bulgaria. Therefore, all the transports to Palestine after 1 October 1944 are taking place under this quota.

According to confidential information provided by Jewish activists, this amount did not satisfy them and they hope to obtain either an increase or a change after 31 March 1945. Therefore, the fact that the Soviets did not restrict their departures is also relevant to them as an argument to be raised in talks with the British Government. As, if it turned out that the possibilities on the other side are also limited, the claims for an increase of the 5,000 quota would lose their basis.

As regards the increase in the emigration quota, the Jewish initiatives are carried out in three directions: attempts to provoke intervention by the US Department of State via the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (the relevant general resolutions have already taken place), direct efforts towards the British Government, and, finally, avoiding the actual reduction of emigration for technical reasons (lack of means of transport) or other reasons (restrictions by the Soviet, Bulgarian or Romanian authorities). The issue of the transit through Turkey also plays a role here.

Ad II. The Turkish border and port authorities allowed entry to every Jewish refugee on their way to Palestine. If this rule was changed in the sense that Turks would start to allow entry to only a certain number of them (according to the number of Palestinian visas issued by the British authorities), that would be an additional difficulty in extending the quota, since, according to some Jewish activists, if the quota was extended by the English authorities, it could be expected that the Turkish authorities would prevent the use of this surplus in the form of a refusal to further transit. These risks were taken by some of the Jewish representatives quite seriously, which can be proved by the fact that they both offered us their help to transport the non-Jewish Polish citizens from Romania and tried to motivate our interest in the issue of sea transports. According to their reasoning, if the English authorities agreed to assign each of the non-Jewish Poles brought here, either an army allocation or a visa to the Empire, it would be necessary to keep the free transport through Turkey for all the people transported by the Jewish organisations and the risk of the Turkish authorities freezing the quota would be postponed. They may also be interested by our aid in the field of obtaining transport means.

Ad III. Transport issues

The suspension on 17 November of transports in Stara Zagora does not seem to be related to any technical or communications issue. The capacity of railway connections from Romania to Istanbul, the question of rolling stock, etc., do not seem to play any major role. However, the land connection can fail for other reasons, which are yet difficult to predict. That is why the emigration organisations (the Jewish Agency, Hicem, and the US War Refugee Board) attach great importance to the maritime route.

Under the terms of the ceasefire agreement with Romania, all ships in its territorial waters, both the enemy vessels and those belonging to the United Nations, have been handed over for the use by the Soviets. For the time being, Turkish vessels, treated as neutral, are taken into consideration. The only larger Turkish ship finding itself in the Romanian waters arrived at the beginning of December with 907 refugees on board. The head of the local branch of the War Refugee Board has been investigating the possibilities of obtaining with the aid of England some vessels for the evacuation of Polish youth wishing to join the army. Obtaining such a ship would also be important for the issue of the Jewish evacuation. However, it currently appears that transport difficulties are not the most important ones.

Refugees arriving by land tend to stay a few days in Istanbul and then travel in groups to Palestine by train. Refugees arriving by sea are isolated from the surrounding area and stay on the vessel until a special train or more wagons can be provided. (Last week, for example, there was a special train composed of 16 wagons that took 907 refugees arrived by sea). Only some Jewish representatives have access to them—although for example, the American intelligence gained such an access by sending people who accompany these refugees in their journey from Istanbul to Ankara and beyond.

Ad IV. The position of the USSR regarding Jewish emigration from the Balkans was outlined in the introduction.

As the Ministry was informed by another channel, on 17 November in Stara Zagora and Kazanlik in Bulgaria the local Soviet military authorities halted the transport of Jews who travelled from Romania to Palestine. On 12 December, there were 660 refugees who were still waiting for decisions on departure or return to Romania. Among the approximate number of 300 refugees staying in Stara Zagora, women and children have been housed in the town, while men have been living in carriages for three weeks. The diseases are spreading and the complaints by the refugees—suspended in the communication void by the decision of the local Soviet military authority, despite the Jewish intervention at the American and British Embassies in Ankara, the Foreign Office in London and the State Department, as well as the Soviet authorities—remained unanswered.

Among all the refugees staying in Stara Zagora, 70% are supposedly Polish citizens, who apparently were deliberately selected at the phase of departure in such a way so that the group consisted of people coming from the territories situated on the west of the Curzon Line. All the information received on this group shows that the decision on suspending their movement came from the local Soviet military authorities, which triggered the need for a decision by the Soviet authorities in Sofia and in Bucharest, as well as led to the withdrawal of a number of small transports from the Romanian-Soviet border and, due to the complexity of the case in relation to the fundamental issue (citizenship of the halted refugees), finally resulted in referring the case back to Moscow, which has not yet given a response. About 3 December, the head of the Zionist Executive Ben Gurion arrived in Sofia. In addition to the other Jewish affairs that B. resolved with a partially positive result, he was also supposed to intervene on the halted transports with the Soviet general, who has exclusive competence on this case in the territory of Bulgaria. As the case regards Polish citizens, the general stated that Ben Gurion has to ask the Polish Committee of National Liberation in Lublin, and when B. noted—these details were forwarded to my deputy by the Head of the War Refugee Board after his talk with Ben Gurion, who did not receive a Romanian visa and thus returned to Jerusalem directly from Sofia, via Istanbul—that the Committee probably could not decide on this case without Moscow, he replied that indeed only Moscow could decide and he would ask the central authorities for a decision. In any event, during the stay of B. in Sofia, the citizenship of the refugees was not established.

As regards the journey of B.: upon his arrival in Istanbul, it turned out that he did not have a Romanian visa, so he went to Sofia so as to enter Romania from there, whereas the visa came to Istanbul and B. was forced to return for the visa, so he put aside the plan of travelling to Romania. Although all the local Jewish activists claim that the reason for the delay regarding the visa for B. to Romania is purely technical in nature and provide very detailed explanations, it seems strange, and who knows whether this is not related to the stay of Vyshinsky, who may have not wanted to meet with B. The Consulate General in Jerusalem may be better placed to advise on the reasons for B. not completing his travel. However, it must be noted that the incident in Stara Zagora does not alter the substance of the Soviets' attitude regarding emigration, as during that period, Jews were still leaving Bulgaria, and there were 907 refugees that left Romania at the beginning of December, as referred to in point IV.

In total, from 1 October to 15 December 1944, there were more than 2,200 people who left Romania and Bulgaria (including those leaving Hungary and Yugoslavia via Bulgaria and Romania) and travelled via Istanbul, i.e. proportionally to the quota.

Ad. V. Local considerations in the emigration countries

These difficulties include for example the unfavourable attitude towards emigration among the Bulgarian communists, who, soon after the entry of the Soviet army, took over the Jewish kehillas and exert pressure on the government, afraid of competition from the Zionists who offer journeys to safer places. Difficulties such as the obligation of military service in the country of origin, foreign currency and economic rules do not appear to affect the number of emigrants, as there is always a surplus of people willing to leave among the categories not covered by these obstacles. At the same time,

Ad. VI. difficulties related to the citizenship play a major role.

The Jews realise that the main groups at risk are: a) Soviet citizens who managed to hide and want to escape, b) those whom the Soviets consider their citizens and c) those whose citizenship has not yet been dealt with by the Soviets but is supposed to be dealt with soon.

The tendency was to use the confusion and lack of established criteria and constant control to enable the departure of all these people at risk in the first place. The quotas of Polish citizens from eastern Poland and Jews from part of Romania abandoned to the Soviets were therefore treated with priority. The general rule is that in the first place we should take care of the refugees, i.e. people who have left their place of residence and work and are deprived of their source of subsistence and have no support in the place of their current stay.

In addition to the facts cited in the report of 30 October 1944, No. Rum.X.44, a number of new circumstances have occurred regarding the exit restrictions based on the place of origin.

The Soviet (Romanian) authorities prohibit the departure of Jews whom they are entitled to consider as their citizens. This concerns first and foremost Jews from the Romanian areas that were abandoned to the USSR in 1940. These authorities have begun to deport such persons. In particular, a significant proportion of the 1,300 orphans and children from Transnistria, Bessarabia, Bukovina grouped in Bucharest in the case of which the Jewish organisations were particularly engaged to have them transported to Palestine have been deported deep into Russia (only just over 300 of these children were allowed to be transported by ship at the beginning of December, based on a proven place of origin outside the USSR). Other deportations of such citizens are also taking place. The only incident of mass deportation of people whom the Soviets do not regard as their citizens, known to the Jewish organisations here, took place in Chernivtsi, from where the authorities deported deep into Russia more than 100 Jewish refugees holding German citizenship. The authorities explained that it is a form of internment of citizens of a hostile state and that these people should work where the authorities indicate them to work.

2) The Soviet position regarding Polish citizens has not been defined so far. There is no law that would qualify as Soviet citizens the refugees born in Poland from the territories east of the ~~Curzon~~ Ribbentrop-Molotov line, who, however, were not staying on these territories on 1 and 2 November 1939 and did not accept the Soviet citizenship. If the Soviets considered all the citizens born in eastern Poland as Soviet citizens regardless of the period of their stay there, a large number of citizens of the United States would have been covered with such a Soviet qualification. Several hundreds of refugees born east of the Ribbentrop-Molotov line were staying in Lithuania between 17 [September] and 1 November 1939 and later, in 1940 or 1941, each as a stateless person, passed through the USSR to Japan with transit Soviet visas. We know nothing either to this day about the unambiguous treatment of Polish citizens born east of this line or the Curzon line by the Romanian authorities or the Soviet authorities in Romania as Soviet citizens.

On the other hand, the authorities did not allow a single Polish refugee to be included in the maritime transport of 907 refugees and halted the Polish citizens in Stara Zagora together with others.

If the legal and administration disorder regarding the citizenship and the difficulty of taking decisions may play a certain role here, it seems that the desire to secure human resources of at least average value can also play a major role. For example, the local Jewish activists are unanimous in the opinion that the Soviet dispute over the issue of orphans from Bessarabia and Transnistria was dictated not so much by the issue of prestige or by the fear that it could serve as a precedent, but more by the need for a work force of young people in the depopulated areas. It is known that deportations take place and that the Jewish press reports about them and the high mortality rate of the deported people.

Our cooperation with the organisations dealing with the emigration of Jews from the Balkans is stable and satisfactory. Since my deputy, Consul Staniszewski, arrived in Istanbul in September 1943, he has established close relations with them and cares very much about maintaining the atmosphere of trust and to making sure that the benefits of these relations are not unilateral. Bearing in mind the general objectives, such as 1) showing the particular interest of the Government in the fate of all citizens, irrespective of their origin or religion, 2) highlighting our participation in the struggle for human rights conducted by the United Nations (Government intervention regarding the Hungarian Jews, report of 3 April, No. 271/4/44), Mr Staniszewski has both easier access to confidential information of these organisations and, if necessary, the possibility of exerting influence in specific cases.

As regards the attempts to include Polish non-Jewish citizens into Jewish transports, this case was once (on 17 August, before Soviets entered Romania) generally agreed upon between the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland

in Istanbul and a delegate of the War Refugee Board. In view of the change in situation, this issue has remained open, and so far, there are no conditions to either give up on the Jewish assistance in evacuating Poles or count on it as something solid and reliable.

The assistance that organisations responsible for evacuating Jews from the Balkans can give us in this respect can be of a different kind:

1) Action by Jewish delegates in Bucharest

The activity of Director Świderski regarding the care for the Jewish refugees being Polish citizens before the arrival of the Russians should be assessed positively. In particular, Mr Świderski tried to prevent discrimination of Polish citizens based on race or religion. He intervened, and was effective in his interventions, not to separate Jews for forced labour, put them into camps, etc. The Romanian authorities have given a positive response to these interventions, also because of other general political objectives, but his merits with the Jews are undoubted. A month ago, my deputy was visited by Mr Jacobson, Delegate of the Emigration Association Hicem travelling to Bucharest, who came with a letter of recommendation from Lisbon and with whom my deputy held two conferences, recommending that he closely cooperate with Director Świderski. In Bucharest itself, the Jewish Committee is interested in the possibilities of including Poles in the Jewish transports, which is, by the way, dealt with by the Delegate of the Red Cross, Mr Kolb (he assisted in bringing the families of the former Minister Ulrych and of Mr Schatzel with a transport of Jews). The possibilities of the Jewish organisations there are very flexible in this respect.

2) Interventions regarding the issue of prohibiting Polish citizens from leaving Romania and Bulgaria

The Jews and the local Delegation of the War Refugee Board only intervened in the case of Polish-Jewish citizens being prohibited from leaving, but these interventions are obviously not irrelevant to the basic attitude towards the departures of other Polish citizens.

The detention of refugees in Stara Zagora was considered in a dispatch sent by the head of the local War Refugee Board to the Department of State, which presented the situation of Polish citizens detained there and asked to defend them against the Soviets.

3) Action of the Jewish organisations in London and America

In addition to the action undertaken by the Zionists who want to maintain or expand immigration, special attention should be paid to the action of the Agudat. The Consulate is informed in detail of the importance that the Jewish religious organisations place on bringing as many faithful as possible from the territories controlled by the Soviets and of the efforts they make in this direction. As the main obstacle in bringing these people now seems to be the issue of their citizenship,

their action is in line with our efforts and should be conducted in agreement with the Polish circles.

4) Technical help of a conspiratorial nature. It is about enabling the departure of Poles thanks to Jewish documents. The Consulate General does not deal with this issue for fundamental reasons and my deputy did not mention it in talks with the Jewish organisations, leaving it so far to posts appointed to such activities, which also have contact with Jewish organisations and experience in this field.

The overall impression, however, is that such assistance, which is a heavy burden and a danger for these organisations, can only be effective if the conditions for leaving are substantially improved and checks are not tightened, and it would affect individuals rather than groups.

The reports from the areas of Poland occupied by the Red Army are very limited. It is known that the former Deputy Sommerstein issued an appeal calling on Jews to register and that the reaction was weak. They explain it by the small number of Jews remaining alive in the areas occupied by the Germans for a long time.

The situation in the field covered by the present report is extremely fluid. Therefore, the Consulate General considers this report rather as a background and a basis for a proper assessment of phenomena which appear in the course of everyday life and which the Consulate reports on a regular basis, depending on whether they may be relevant as a characteristic of the general relationship of the USSR with the outside world; have some impact on evacuating Poles from Romania; or, finally, serve the Ministry as a source for our political and propaganda action.

The entry of Russia into Central and Eastern Europe is important for the Jews from all over the world not only as a promise of a rapid and imminent defeat of their deadly enemy and perpetrator, i.e. Nazi Germany. It is the arrival of totalitarianism, the machine of which must present an important menace to Jewish individualism and to the economic and penetration values of the Jewish society. Religious spheres consider it as the automated enemy of spiritual life; moreover they can still remember the experience of extracting rabbis from the depths of Russia.

As Germany moves away from areas inhabited by the Jewish population and these are subsequently covered by the Soviet control, the interest of the institutions, persons, and broader public opinion in the fate of their co-believers and compatriots must shift to the new power, which they will have to deal with and which may or may not stand in the way of natural tendencies of the Jewish societies, or it can replace their existing ideological and economic hierarchy, the aims of which will be closer to the *raison d'état* of the USSR than to the programmes of those whom the Jews consider as their spiritual and economic or national leaders.

Our active interest in our sphere of friction or cooperation between Russia and the Jewry is therefore of value not only from the point of view of our evacuation tasks. I would very much appreciate if the Ministry, as well as the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington and the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Jerusalem, could inform me about the issues raised in the present report, in particular the position of the Jewish organisations in the mentioned territories, as well as their intervention and press action.

Reported by Consul K. Staniszewski
Witold Ryszard Korsak
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/88

536

*16 January 1945. Letter from the Envoy in Brussels
to the Embassy in Washington
on the situation of the Jewish population in Belgium*

BY COURIER

16 January 1945

To the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in Washington

The Legation of the Republic of Poland in Brussels reports that Mr David FERDMAN, a Polish citizen residing in Brussels and the treasurer of Association d'Aide aux Juifs Victimes de la Guerre, will be travelling to the United States in the near future. This association is chaired by a Belgian citizen, Professor Emile ALLARD, who recently participated in an aviation conference in the United States. The objective of the departure of Mr Ferdman to the United States and of his stay in France, Switzerland and England is to obtain financial and material assistance for the Jews in Belgium, among which there is a large number of Polish citizens or Jews originating from Poland.

For your concern, the Legation provides some details below regarding the Belgian territory:

Before the war, the number of Jews in Belgium amounted to about 90,000 people, including about 40,000 to 42,000 Polish-Jewish citizens. In May 1940, some 2,000 Jews remained in Belgium, the rest of whom sought protection in France and Switzerland, from where, after some time, 45,000 Jews returned and registered at the request of the German authorities in the Association des Juifs de Belgique. Around 5,000 people did not register and remained hidden. In 1942 and 1943, Jews were deported from Belgium, so at the time of the liberation of Belgium in September 1944, there were only 20,000 of them remaining, including about 8,000 Polish Jews, of whom about 3,000 were children. The remaining group of 12,000 Jews consists of around 10,000 Jews from Germany and Austria, as well as 1,000 to 2,000 from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other countries.

In comparison, it should be added that there were 50,000 Jews in Antwerp before the war, of which only about 1,000 remained.

The Jewish society in Belgium has always been wealthy. In order to stay alive, some of them liquidated their assets. The diamond-grinding industry has been partially confiscated by the Germans; craftsmen are among the first to try to relaunch their workshops.

Unemployment, the general symptom in Belgium, has also affected the Jewish population.

During the war, there was a Comité de Défense des Juifs, residing at 33 rue de la Casserne in Brussels. The Secretary-General of this organisation was Mr Chaim Perelman, whose deputy was Mr B. Furstenberg, a Polish citizen. On 15 October, this committee evolved into the Assistance [sic] d'Aide aux Juifs Victimes de la Guerre, headed by Prof. Allard, with Pels acting as Secretary, and David Ferdman as the Treasurer; the childcare section was directed by Mademoiselle Nèvejean. Mr Perelman and Mr Furstenberg, known for their Zionist beliefs, do not belong to the board of the Association, which wishes to care for all Jews in Belgium, regardless of their citizenship or country of origin.

The Belgian Government is said to not to grant any financial assistance to the Association.

On 12 November 1944, Sir Herbert Emerson, head of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees in London, was visiting Brussels together with his deputy Dr Kullmann; they granted the Committee a credit for 3,500,000 Belgian francs on the hands of Mr Perelman. This aid, however, is supposed to be directed only to Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria. Thus, due to the situation caused by the fact that the Belgian authorities make a clear distinction between their Jewish citizens and Jews from other countries, as well as because of the criteria imposed by the Intergovernmental Committee, the Jewish organisations are, according to their representatives, forced to organise assistance for particular groups of citizens. That is their justification for asking the Polish Government for assistance for Polish citizens. They do not have a complete personal list. They expect to obtain it from the Belgian authorities at the beginning of 1945. They assume that most people have personal documents that are kept hidden. Rejecting the racial criteria, they accept that anyone who wants to be a Jew can declare it. In November 1944, they received with gratitude the message about the assistance reflecting £35,000 voted by our Council of Ministers, of which 10,000 was provided to them on the spot by the Government in London.¹ They expect two million dollars from the Joint for

¹ This is a reference to the adoption on 2 November 1944 by the Council of Ministers of the motion prepared in October by Minister Stańczyk of the following content: 'The Council of Ministers decided that: the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare shall pay the Association d'Aide aux Juifs, Victimes de la Guerre the amount of £35,000—to assist Polish-Jewish citizens located in Belgium, whereas £10,000 will be paid in cash and £25,000 from the loan applied for by the Polish Government at the Belgian Government. This expenditure will be covered in the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare by virement. JUSTIFICATION. There are about 10,000 Polish Jews citizens in Belgium who lived illegally during the German occupation and are therefore deprived of their jobs, livelihoods, housing, etc. During the occupation, they were taken care of by the Association d'Aide aux Juifs Victimes de la Guerre, which spent on this purpose 35 million Belgian francs. According to a letter from the Association, submitted to the

the 'reconstruction of the destroyed workshops.' They claim that their situation is worse at the moment than during the German occupation, when they benefitted from aid provided secretly.

They address the issue of repatriation of Jews to Belgium rather reluctantly until the Jews currently residing in Belgium normalise their financial situation.

The above information was obtained by the Legation both from Mr Allard and from Mr Ferdman, as well as (separately) from Mr Perelman and Mr Furstenberg, supplemented with additional messages from the Belgian authorities.

In all talks with representatives of the local Jewish circles, the Legation pointed out that it fully understood their uneasy situation and that it would make efforts to present its demands to the Polish and Belgian Governments independently of the assistance action run by the Legation and covering all Polish citizens in Belgium. The first request for assistance to the Jews in Belgium was submitted to the Legation by Mr Allard and Mr Ferdman on 2 October 1944 and sent immediately to London, where it found full support and understanding. Currently, in January 1945, the Legation supported, at the Belgian MFA Mr Ferdman's travel to Switzerland, France and the United States, where he was supposed to go thanks to a special Belgian service passport.

The Legation would like to ask to use the stay of Mr Ferdman in the aforementioned countries to emphasise among Jewish international organisations the fact of specific and friendly assistance with which Polish decision-makers relate to the issue of Polish-Jewish citizens in the territory of the liberated Belgium.

Envoy of the Republic of Poland
Stefan Glaser

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 516

Legation of the Republic of Poland in Brussels, the living expenses of this group of Polish citizens by the end of this year and on the necessary rehabilitation (housing, workshops, etc.) shall reach 92 million Belgian francs. The Association wished to obtain this amount from the Belgian Government, from the Jewish organisations in the United States and in the United Kingdom; it also asked the Polish Government to participate. This request, together with the budget etc., will be presented to the Government by the Chairman of the Association, Prof. Allard (chairman of the Belgian Government delegation going to the international Aviation Conference in Washington) and to the Polish citizen, Mr Ferdman, recommended by the Polish Organisation for the Struggle for Independence in Belgium. After the laborious negotiations, it was agreed that the Association would take over the maintenance until the end of 1944 and the rehabilitation of the entire number of Polish Jews, and that the Polish Government would pay the Association £35,000 or 5,125,000 Belgian francs, which reflects only 6% of the required amount.' IPMS, Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.K.102/76b.

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*19 January 1945. Circular by the Head of the Jewish Section
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the acknowledgements
of the Agudat Israel for the assistance provided by the Legation in Bern
(with enclosure)*

London, 19 January 1945

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends a copy of the letters from the London headquarters of the Agudat Israel World Organisation to Dr Manfred Lachs, Secretary of the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland (London), for your concern, and asks to use it in a confidential way for information purposes in talks with local, serious Jewish activists. The attached copy is not yet suitable for wider sharing because the rescue action via Switzerland it still ongoing.²

J. Bociański

HEAD OF THE JEWISH SECTION

[enclosure]

Agudat Israel World Organisation

London, January 2nd, 1945

Dear Dr. Lachs,

Our Swiss Branch Organisation have written to inform us of the very active assistance and rescue work which your colleagues in Bern

Councillor of Legation Ryniewicz,

Dr. Juliusz Kühn, Refugee-Attaché,

Polish Minister Aleksander Ładoś,

Consul Rokicki

have rendered.

Without their cooperation this work which has been the means of rescuing many hundreds of Polish Jews, would not have been achieved.

² The circular was sent to the posts in London, Washington, Bern, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Stockholm, Jerusalem, New York and Pretoria.

I am writing therefore on behalf of my Executive to express to you our sincere appreciation of their efforts and I trust you will convey this to you colleagues³.

/signed/ H.A. Goodman

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 562 (ENG, enclosure)

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25 January 1945. Cable from the Legation in Bern: information of the PRC Delegate in Switzerland on assistance provide to people imprisoned in the concentration camps

POLMISSION—BERN
TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 25 JANUARY 1945
RECEIVED ON 26 JANUARY 1945

No. 29

Receptus cable No. 22

The Polish Red Cross Delegation continuously sends clothing packages and occasional medication and linen, all to Polish citizens in concentration camps in Germany without distinction of their religion, whose names and places of residence were established via the International Committee of the Red Cross. Furthermore, the Congrès Juif Mondial helps Jews in concentration camps irrespective of nationality, via the International Red Cross or the Swedish YMCA. This second route is more advantageous and therefore the Delegation of the Polish Red Cross will, from February onwards, be transferring the delegation of the Congrès Juif Mondial the amount of 8,500 Swiss francs a month to help one thousand citizens

³ Almost a year earlier, on 31 January 1944, Harry Aharon Goodman sent similar acknowledgements to Karol Krackiewicz (the then Head of the Jewish Section at the MFA): 'Our Swiss organisation has repeatedly referred to the most helpful attitude adopted by your Minister in Berne, Dr Ładoś, and by his assistant, Dr. Kühl. I feel in my duty, therefore, to convey to you our most sincere thanks for the invaluable assistance which your Minister has rendered. He has been helpful in every possible direction and without his assistance many of the activities which we have undertaken could not have been fulfilled. We are glad to express our appreciation particularly to Dr. Kühl, a Polish-Jewish citizen, who has shown understanding for our many efforts. Mr. Sternbuch, a member of our Swiss Executive has found him ready to help in every way and we are most grateful.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 616 (ENG).

in Belsen Bergen. We will send a list of these people to London in the near future. At the same time, the Delegation asks the MFA to cover the costs of helping Jews from its funds.

RADZIWIŁŁ

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 586*

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*[Before 29 January 1945]. Letter from a group of Polish-Jewish citizens
on the situation in occupied Poland*

To the CONSUL GENERAL
OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
in Jerusalem

Mr Consul General,

The group of Polish-Jewish citizens who managed to get from Poland to Palestine in 1944 learnt about the propagation in the world of information that the Polish Underground and the Polish Home Army were allegedly helping the Germans in the extermination of the Jewish nation on Polish territory.

The signatories, who for five years have witnessed in person all that was happening in Poland under the occupation, declare that all such statements are a shameful slander, as Jews never suffered the slightest harm from the Polish Underground and the Polish Home Army.

Palestine—January 1945

Signatures:⁴

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Waszyngton, 66*

⁴ Document published on the basis of a copy on which the signatures are missing. See the following document.

540*29 January 1945. Report by the Consul General in Jerusalem
concerning press publications on the situation in Poland*

Jerusalem, 29 January 1945

*Confidential*To the MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
in LondonOn the alleged persecution of Jews in Poland
and the Zionist action against re-emigration

In mid-January, almost the entire Hebrew press in Palestine carried out an action aimed at stating that antisemitism in Poland not only did not get eliminated but is increasing rapidly and that the return of Jews to Poland is not possible for these reasons.

The Jewish press took as a point of reference the statement made by the chairman of the Polish Jews Committee, Dr Sommerstein, in which he stressed that 98% of Polish Jewry were murdered by the Nazis and that,

‘the remaining few live in a poisoned atmosphere full of bacillus of hatred. The Nazis retreated, but Nazism remained.’

Some newspapers (HABOKER) highlighted the openness and simplicity with which Dr Sommerstein talked about this situation.

The second point of reference—taken, to be frank, only by some of the journals—was information provided by the public lectures of a certain Awraam Licki, recently arrived from Poland, originating from Baranowicze, and who, according to his own words, had been a Jewish partisan for some time. His enunciations reach the levels of the most extreme demagogy and fantasy not supported by the facts. Although only two or three of the journals shared his statements with readers, these statements had a certain impact on articles that appeared in other journals. The interest of the Jews in the information spread by Licki is proved by the fact that his lectures were very well attended.

To illustrate the tone of the press, I will quote some examples:

DAVAR (dated 10 January): ‘Although Jews in Poland currently account for only 2% of the population, there is an open antisemitism and hostility towards the remaining Jews.’

The head of the Lublin Government⁵ said he would do everything in his power to remove the plague of antisemitism. General Zawadzki declared to a correspondent of United Press that antisemitism is deeply rooted in the ranks of the Polish Army and within the Polish population. However, efforts will be made to eradicate it. Many of the 300,000 Jews living in Russia want to return to Poland, but in view of this situation they cannot be repatriated...'

Then, according to DAVAR, General Zawadzki allegedly declared,

'that Jews are demanding their property which in the meantime passed into Polish hands, and meet with a lot of resistance from Poles in this respect. The nationalisation of land leaves no space for Jews who were mostly small merchants.'

HAARETZ (dated 9 January) emphasises that Dr Sommerstein, in his statement given to English and American correspondents, stressed that the greatest hope of the Jews was emigration to Palestine and that the authorities of the 'Polish People's Army' are fighting antisemitism in its ranks. On 11 January, HAARETZ returns to this topic and in the editorial entitled 'A Voice from Lublin' writes, among others:

'...for these few remained, there will be no place in a country that is demolished in the material sense and mentally poisoned. There is no other way apart from emigration to Palestine.'

'...A small group of Jewish activists in Lublin see that from all sides it is surrounded by graves and an atmosphere which does not allow for the return of a few half-dead people, who were hiding in forests, caves and basements.'

HABOKER (dated 11 January) in the article of J. Heftman regrets that the representatives of the Jews in London, who are members of the Polish National Council (a Zionist and a representative of the Bund), still live 'in a world of illusions.' The author of the article then attacks the 'assimilators' among the Jewish refugees from Poland,

'prostrating to London and dreaming of the Vistula,'

as well as Jews being 'Lublin patriots' who,

'pack suitcases, believing that the democratic Polish nation will welcome them in the port of Gdynia with open arms and flowers. Here, in Palestine, we have even some truly comical types of baptised Jews who put on crosses larger than any pious Christian would... Not mentioning the ridiculous attitude of "our capitalists"

⁵ This is a reference to the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland—a Soviet-controlled puppet government established in December 1944 by Joseph Stalin's decision in place of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (see footnote 97 to doc. 511). At the beginning of February 1945, the seat of the government was transferred from Lublin to Warsaw.

from Poland, who wish to return as soon as possible to collect the due rent from the homes, which maybe still exist.’

‘Those Jews from Poland who reached Palestine need to understand that they are chosen among many, survivors of the flood, because—as the author points out—they have reached their “country and Homeland”’

On January 22, HABOKER, once again treating the same topic in a longer article, claims that there is no chance for Jews to resettle in the future ‘democratic’ Poland, that there is,

‘Only one hope for the remaining Polish Jewry, to emigrate to Palestine or to other countries. These unambiguous words came from the mouth of the leader of the Zionists, they were known to and approved by the Soviet authorities; according to them, even the converts or semi-converts, who appeared here as ‘Polish patriots,’ are not desirable in the “Lublin” Poland.’

HAMASZKIF (dated January 12) includes an article on antisemitism in which it states that,

‘...half of the Polish Jews were murdered by Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Poles; that antisemitism exists among the partisans; that in Kiev, after the city was liberated from the hands of the Nazis, there were pogroms that lasted two days.’

The most biased information was published in the tabloid YEDIOTH AHRONOTH on 23 January, providing a summary of the speech of the alleged Jewish partisan from Poland who recently arrived at the meeting of the United Committee of Polish Jews. He allegedly said, among others, that,

‘The average Pole in liberated Lublin does not want to sit at a table with Jews. The Pole does not want to employ Jews. The seeds of Nazi hatred have developed deep roots that cannot be eradicated. There are only two things that lift the spirit of the persecuted and miserable Jews: Synagogue and Palestine. When they gather in synagogue, they are “happy”... All their hopes are of emigration to Palestine... This deadly hatred of the local population against the Jews did not, of course, emerge one day, just like that. The Ukrainians and the Belarusians, Poles and Lithuanians, living in these areas, during most of the period of the Nazi occupation exceeded in their cruelty towards Jews even the Germans. Every Jewish partisan who managed to escape from the ghetto was straight away denounced to the Nazis, if only he was captured by the local Poles and Ukrainians. At a time when, in the ghetto, 17 families were pressed in a single room, the ghetto gate was guarded by one German soldier who pointed a finger at the Jews leaving. Pointing to the right meant that the given Jew is still fit for forced labour, while pointing to the left meant that the Jew is sentenced to death. In these days, there were entire ranks of Ukrainians and Poles—men, women and children, with bats and axes in their hands, ready to kill and torment every Jew before even Germans sentenced him to

death... These perpetrators did not change, of course, even after the arrival of the Red Army. There is no place for Jews in Poland, and this is why Dr Sommerstein from Lublin launched his moving appeal. This is why we need to speed up the assistance to our brothers, above whose heads there is still a sword hanging, who are threatened by hunger and pogroms.'

The question is: what is the purpose of this action? The answer is not difficult. The Zionist circles, due to the cleansing of almost all Poland from the Germans, fear that it would be easy for some Jews, especially the Polish ones, which are the most numerous in Palestine, to leave Palestine. The press action claims that:

1) Antisemitism in Poland is so great that it outweighs with its cruelty 'even the German behaviour towards Jews.'

2) Jews will not be given back their enterprises and property, which in the meantime passed into the hands of Poles.

3) Jews in Poland were not farmers, so they cannot benefit from the agricultural reform undertaken.

4) The Soviet authorities will probably agree to the emigrating of Jews from Poland, while being reluctant to the return of Jews to Poland not only from Palestine but even those deported to Russia.

5) Dr Sommerstein is on his way to America to organise the issue of the emigration of Jews from Poland.

The above suggests that when returning to Poland, the Jews risk their lives, and that there is no hope that they could regain their property, so only emigration to Palestine provides them with peace, security, life and prosperity.

In view of the departure to Egypt of Mr Shertok, Head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, I have invited his deputy and, having stressed the anti-Polish tone of the Jewish press in recent days, I stated quite clearly to him that I understand the efforts of the Zionist circles to bring to Palestine the biggest possible number of Jews, as well as the fears of these circles about the possibility of returning a certain number of Jews to Poland; I also understand the willingness to conduct a press campaign that would deter people from leaving Palestine, but I firmly protest against this being done by issuing calumnious statements about the Polish Nation. At this point I referred to the Prime Minister's recent statement on the future of Jews in Poland, stressing that this is the attitude of the decision-makers towards the issue of Jews in Poland.

For his part, Dr Kleinbaum agreed that this action took in some cases an inappropriate form; that, however, the Jewish Agency cannot be held responsible for the entire press, especially since the most anti-Polish position was taken by a tabloid, the content of which is problematic also to the Jewish Agency itself and

which cannot be considered a serious journal. He stressed, however, that a large share of the Jewish society in Palestine were positive about Polish affairs.

During the talk we had, Dr Kleinbaum repeated—the position of the Jewish Agency that is, by the way, well-known—that, from the perspective of the Zionists, every Jew coming to Palestine, by whatever way—whether it was an immigration certificate or as a refugee or even illegally—is considered to have arrived in his home country as a permanent resident. For this reason, any action supporting immigration and the halting of re-emigration is in line with the Zionist policy.

The next day I talked to the Head of the Information Centre, Mr J. Tabaczyński, suggesting that the Information Centre could send a proper letter to the editor of YEDIOTH AHRONOTH, which published the most anti-Polish article, full of unjustified statements and slanders. At that time, I received the declaration of a group of Jews who managed to leave Poland as late as in 1944. It states that Jews in Poland did not suffer harm from the Polish Underground and the Polish Home Army (vide attachment).⁶

In agreement with the Head of the Information Centre, this declaration was transmitted by the PTA to America and England.

Given that this action was driven by the willingness to increase and strengthen the force of the Zionist movement (I would like to recall here my reports No. 52/Pl of 31 January 1944 and No. 233/Pl/2 of 27 January 1945, which deal with the difficulties within the Zionist movement and the departure of Ben Gurion to the Balkans in order to determine the possibility of Jews going from there to Palestine), I would like to add that the most engaged supporters and promoters of Zionism in Palestine are the young people already brought up in Palestine and the idealists mainly coming from the circles of the intelligentsia.

Some middle-class groups support Zionism, seeing in it their class interests. Workers, as far as they are part of the Zionist movement, can get their jobs more easily in a number of companies that are influenced by the HISTADRUTH (General Organisation of Jewish Workers in Palestine), which is one of the main bodies building up Zionism. It is the largest and most influential workers' organisation, with about 140,000 members and which accounts for about 70% of all Jewish workers. HISTADRUTH covers not only blue-collar but also white-collar employees. However, there is a large number of workers who are not interested in Zionism. Some other groups of Jews are also indifferent towards Zionism; these mainly include Jews from Austria and partly from Germany, who fled from Nazism and who wish to return to their home countries after the war. Taken into consideration such conditions, the Zionists are afraid of weakening the population foundations of their action.

⁶ Previous document.

In the margins of these comments, it should be noted that at times when the interests of Zionism and its further development, as well as the fundamental interests of Jewry are at stake, it is always assumed that in any action aimed at defending or promoting these interests we will meet with the most ruthless behaviour, deprived of scruples or limits.

CONSUL GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
A. Wdziękoński

IPMS, Konsulat Generalny Chicago, A.59/228

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*10 February 1945. Report by the Consul General in Istanbul
on the evacuation of Jews from the territories controlled by the USSR*

Istanbul, 10 February 1945

Secret

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Regarding: the departure of Jews from areas controlled by the USSR

Since 18 December 1944, when I sent a report on this subject (No. 851/E/XII/44),⁷ new circumstances had arisen which had a significant impact on Jews leaving the Balkans: 1) introduction on about 20 December of special authorisation issued by the Inter-Allied Control Commissions in Bucharest and Sofia for departures from these countries, and 2) abolition of Turkish facilitations which allowed any Jewish refugee with a Palestinian certificate to travel through Turkey on their way to Palestine.

Ad 1) I have signalled this to the Ministry another way (on 9 October and on 16 January)

The authorisation of the Control Commissions is required from everybody, even for Bulgarian and Romanian diplomats. The order number of the authorisation shall be entered on the visa issued by the relevant Bulgarian or Romanian post.

⁷ Doc. 535.

On departure, the military border authorities shall compare it with the list of authorisations for departure which they hold.

In this way, collective trips on the basis of Palestinian certificates serving as the only travel document have been prevented.

The Jewish organisations of course wanted the new orders to be applied in such a way that these departures could continue. Interventions were conducted in London and, via Ambassador Steinhardt, at the Department of State as well as directly with the Soviet Ambassador in Washington. In mid-January of this year, Ambassador of the USSR Gromyko allegedly officially declared to the Jewish representative Mr Goldmann that Russia does not interfere and does not intend to interfere with the Jewish emigration from Romania and Bulgaria to Palestine. However, this statement has so far remained a theoretical encouragement, since the local authorities (Control Commission) do not grant the aforementioned authorisations for departure, due to the 'security issues,' as they say.

The intervention of Jewish circles in this case is still ongoing, but the situation remains deadlocked, and not only because of the absence of the Commission's authorisation. It is also technically linked to the British procedure for granting authorisations to enter Palestine and to the Turkish transit.

Ad 2) The concerns referred to in point II of the report of 18 December have proved to be right. Roughly at the same time as the authorisations of the Control Commissions were introduced, the approximate number of 640 Jews (including 255 Polish citizens) detained in Stara Zagora since 16 November were authorised to leave and directed to the Turkish border. However, the Turkish authorities have suspended their entry, referring to the cancellation, which was only revealed at the time, of the visa-free transit privilege of each refugee. The need for appropriate visas issued by the British authorities appeared. However, it turned out that this transport constituted a surplus, as in agreement with Shertok (referred to in point I of the said report), it was agreed that during the six months from 1 October 1944 to 31 March 1945, it was possible for 5,000 people to go from the Balkans to Palestine, however not in excessive quantities in the scale of one month (there were specific figures established). Now, a group of people arrived at the border who do not have regular Palestinian visas and who have been refused visas because they exceeded the quota. Negotiations on this issue in Adrianople, then in Ankara and finally in Jerusalem, lasted about two weeks; eventually, the transport was allowed to enter Turkey and after isolation for sanitary reasons near Istanbul it was released to Palestine.

The cancellation of visa and transport privileges has made it necessary to standardise the emigration procedure:

Palestinian visas are to be issued in Bucharest and in Sofia by the appropriate passport officers of British posts, who are to go to these cities. However, since (in

the absence of diplomatic and consular representation, as well as for other reasons) these officials have not been sent so far, the issue of Palestinian visas has not yet commenced.

Although there is no doubt that the reason for stopping Jews leaving Romania is not the absence of Palestinian visas, in the opinion of the people competent in these cases the absence of a procedure for issuing these visas makes it impossible to state that the responsibility for suspension lies solely with the Control Commissions (the Soviets). The Jewish efforts are therefore made in two directions: to have the British authorities determine the arrangements for the procedure and start working in Bucharest, as well as to have the Control Commissions start issuing departure authorisations.

In this state of affairs, since the end of December last year, with the exception of a group of about 640 people from the city of Stara Zagora, the arrivals of Jews from Romania and Bulgaria are barely taking place.

Only few arrivals of emigrants from Bulgaria are known: the arrival of a few Jews as members of the Romanian trade delegation for negotiations with Turkey and the arrival of a few people in recent days (including a Palestinian citizen Mr Rosing, a journalist and correspondent for American journals, but probably a Soviet agent—coming back soon to Romania).

The emigration forecasts formulated by the local migration activists are consistent in the following statements: the departures will be halted for another one to one and half months, after which they will be limited by on-site formalities. Some people think that after some time, if there are no specific political surprises, the departures will take place in quite a large size, but in general significant constraints are to be expected.

One of the clear symptoms is the instruction sent from Washington on these days to Mr Katzky, Head of the local Delegation of the Board of War Refugee, ordering him to close this delegation and return to the United States. Although his activities and interests will be taken over in part by the US Consul General in Istanbul and by the American Embassy in Ankara, Washington decided that the further maintaining of a delegation of the War Refugee Board for the Balkans is pointless. Mr Katzky, who is leaving at the end of February this year, will report with a letter from my deputy to Minister Wszelaki; further contact with him may be of some importance (he was informed here about the attitude of the Soviets to the population in Romania and Bulgaria).

The Jewish representatives in Romania and Bulgaria remain in place. The Jewish organisations do not want to call them here even temporarily to report on the situation, fearing that they will not be granted return entry authorisation, which was so easily and generously granted four or even three months ago. Only people like Mr Rosing travel easily and would like to deal with issues of Jewish

emigration as well; however, none of the competent Jewish organisations has confidence in them. In their opinion, the cooperation with the Soviets is inevitable but it should take place by the agency of their 'own' people and not by 'their people.'

In view of the interest in the possibility of Poles leaving Romania based on the Palestinian, so-called Christian certificates, I informed the Consulate General in Jerusalem that the Jewish representatives here promised technical assistance in Romania with organising departures on the basis of such Christian certificates.

However, the procedure for obtaining such certificates must start in Jerusalem. If an adequate number of Christian certificates are obtained for Poles, we would need to obtain an instruction for the British passport officer in Bucharest (if he would already be there) on the granting of visas.

In addition to being good destination visas, it seems that these certificates present the advantage of including their holders in a certain category of people for whom, so far, it has been easier to leave Romania.

Regarding the political conclusions drawn by people responsible for evacuating Jews from the Balkans, based on recent experience, they are summarised in the following opinion repeated in various versions by the more serious activists: the Soviet border passes through Svilengrad, as it went through Stara Zagora two months ago. Within this Soviet zone, there is a sanitary cordon protecting against the Western infiltration: the Romanian-Soviet border and the administrative interstate borders, such as the Bulgarian-Romanian one. The border disorder on this side ended on 20 December 1944. The facilitation in crossing this border will actually only be possible if it proves to be convenient for Russia or necessary for inter-allied reasons, and it will only take place then.⁸

Witold Ryszard Korsak
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Waszyngton, 66

⁸ The copy of the document was sent to the Embassies in Ankara and Washington.

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*6 March 1945. Report by the Envoy in Lima
on the issue of Peruvian passports*

Lima, 6 March 1945

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

Concerns: Intervention on the subject of Peruvian passports issued to Polish citizens

In the execution of the Ministry's rescript of 23 October 1944, No. Z-851-/Vit/44, which I received by courier post with considerable delay, I once again addressed to the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs the following previous requests (my reports of 4 February 1944, No. 49/Pe/3/44 and of 1 May 1944, No. 49/Pe/10/44⁹) the note which I passed personally to the Secretary-General of the local MFA. The Secretary-General replied to me that the Peruvian Government had already once notified the British Government, in response to its request, that it is ready to recognise the validity of passports once issued by the Peruvian consular authorities in Switzerland to Jews interned in Germany for their journey to Palestine, provided that the holders of the passports will be supplied by the British authorities with a Palestinian residence permit and the relevant visas. This ordinance is not limited to the possession by the people concerned of a specific citizenship, so that Polish citizens can enjoy this facility on an equal footing with others. In the opinion of the Secretary-General, it would be advisable for the Polish Government to communicate on this matter with its British counterparts. The Secretary-General announced he would send the aforementioned reply in writing; however, because despite the passing of two months and putting pressure on the matter, the note concerned had not yet come, I hereby allow myself to report to the Ministry on the aforementioned oral declaration.

Oswald Kermenić
Envoy of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/150

⁹ Doc. 469.

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*6 March 1945. Letter from the MFA to the Embassy in London
on the dispatch of parcels to people imprisoned in concentration camps*

London, 6 March 1945

To the Financial Counsellor
at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland
in London

Following your letter dated 26 February, No. 4542/40/Szw/45, addressed to the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Treasury, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gives below the data which may form the basis for the talks with the Ministry of Treasury, especially as the arrival in London of Mr Stanisław Radziwiłł, Delegate of the Polish Red Cross in Geneva, has been temporarily postponed.

The information received by telegraph state that the quantitative data which the International Red Cross recently provided are no longer relevant due to the large relocations regarding the political prisoners deported to the labour camps.

Supplying the concentration camps is only possible by means of collective parcels. Parcels from Switzerland will be directed to Dachau as a distribution camp for all camps located in southern Germany.

The distribution camp for the northern camps is Hamburg Neuengamme. Since the packages can only be sent there from Gothenburg, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington received instructions to obtain, via the War Refugee Board and the Polish American Council, a fixed quota of parcels which would be sent from the United States to Sweden.

Taking into account only the territory of Switzerland and based on the figures of the Polish Red Cross Delegation in Switzerland, the minimum amount of aid for Poles imprisoned in concentration and labour camps in Germany should be considered in the period of the six following months:

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------|
| 1. 36,500 food packages per month, 12 Swiss francs each | | |
| | | – 2,628,000 Swiss francs, |
| 2. 4,000 parcels per month with medicine and dressings, 20 Swiss francs each | – | 480,000 –” – |
| 3. 30,000 sets of men's and women's underwear, 12.50 Swiss francs each | – | 375,000 –” – |

4. 27,900 parcels per month to labour camps, 12 Swiss francs each	- 2,008,000	-”-
Total	- 5,491,800 Swiss francs	

For clarification, the Ministry adds that already in January, the International Red Cross also provided for the transport of 36,400 parcels in addition to sending 12,708 individual parcels for collective dispatch to the address of the trusted representatives in the camps and for distribution among the Poles. For these purposes, there was a need to place at the disposal of the Division des Prisonniers et Internés Civils, dealing with concentration camps, an amount of 589,290 Swiss francs, which was however not achieved for budgetary reasons.

As far as the labour camps are concerned, the Delegation of the PRC in Switzerland has in its registry 279 labour centres in Germany, which have already been contacted by correspondence via the Warsaw Assistance Committee operating in Geneva. According to the Ministry, the allocation of 100 parcels per month to one camp could be considered as a minimum amount of aid in this field. On the part of the International Red Cross, these camps are dealt with by the Division d'Assistance Spéciale.

Sending the above information, the Ministry would like to ask you to continue on their basis the negotiations with the Ministry of Treasury regarding the transfer of the amount of two million Swiss francs to Switzerland.

HEAD OF THE CONSULAR DEPARTMENT
Z. Szczerbiński

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/26

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*10 March 1945. Circular by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
on obtaining support from Jewish organisations
in the fight against the provisions of the Yalta Conference*

TO Washington, Paris, Ottawa, Buenos Aires, Brussels,
Jerusalem, Pretoria, Johannesburg, New York, Chicago, Sydney

FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 10 March 1945

No. *Circular 19*

Among the press appeals, dispatches and protests of the Polish diaspora against the provisions of the Crimea Conference¹⁰ and in defence of Poland and the Polish Government, there are no statements from the Polish Jewry, apart from the dispatch of 60 rabbis from Jerusalem addressed to Mr President (PTA service of 1 March). I would like to ask you to investigate in a discreet way whether the local representatives of the Polish Jews would not be able to make similar appeals to British, American and local statesmen, Jewish organisations and influential Jewish activists who would condemn the Crimean provisions, demand justice for Poland and declare their loyalty to the Mr President and the Government. Such appeals will have a positive impact on current Polish-Jewish relations. The content of the appeals should, as far as possible, be published in the press, in particular the Jewish one.

Sent to Washington, Paris, Ottawa, Buenos Aires, Brussels, Jerusalem, Pretoria, Johannesburg, New York, Chicago, Sydney

Tarnowski¹¹

AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 274

¹⁰ This is a reference to the Yalta Conference held from 4 to 11 February 1945 by the leaders of the USSR, Great Britain and the United States. During the sessions, it was decided to include Poland in the Soviet sphere of influence and to accept the shifting of the eastern border of Poland (which meant the loss of about half of the pre-war territory of the country) and to grant Poland parts of the former German territories in the north and west.

¹¹ At the end of November 1944, Stanisław Mikołajczyk resigned from his post. Adam Tarnowski took the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs in the newly created cabinet of Prime Minister Tomasz Arciszewski. Prime Minister Arciszewski, in his exposé delivered on 13 December 1944 at the meeting of the National Council (published in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Information Review *Polska i Zagranica* of December 1944) declared: 'I would also like to stress that national minorities in Poland will enjoy

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*21 March 1945. Report by the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare in Geneva on the assistance provided to the prisoners
of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp*

21 March 1945

Confidential

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

The cable of 17 February 1945¹² authorised the spending of 200,000 francs from the total amount of 2,500,000 francs handed over to Poland in January 1945 for the rescue of the Polish Jews in the Belsen-Bergen camp in Germany by the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population.

The aforementioned amount has not been paid to the representatives of the Council who came here from London, as the Polish Jews in Belsen-Bergen are to arrive on the nearest transport from Germany, including a total of around 1,500 Jews whom the Germans agreed to release following the special attempts undertaken by the Jewish organisations, which bear all the expenses associated with it. (Well-known initiative of the Swiss Musa). There are no other possibilities of rescue on the basis of material benefits at the moment. The delegation, at the disposal of which the aforementioned rescue amount of 200,000 francs was to be put, arrived in Switzerland without any money, had to stay longer than it intended and undertook several trips from Geneva to Bern, to the Legation and Consulate and to other Swiss localities in

complete equality. They will have not only obligations but also rights on an equal footing with the Polish people. Special attention will be paid by the Government to citizens of the Jewish nationality who have suffered the biggest and most painful losses in the fight against the occupants, and who have not only suffered but also managed to fight against the Germans, as evidenced by the ghetto defence in Warsaw in 1943. Reiterating its sympathy for the persecuted and its condemnation of the perpetrators, the Government declares that in accordance with its repeated statements, all German laws against Jews in Poland are illegal and inapplicable. The Government will make every effort to correct the evil caused by the German barbarians as far as possible and restore the situation in line with the best traditions of Polish tolerance.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Londyn, 76.

¹² In the mentioned cable, the MFA informed: 'The Ministry of Treasury authorises the payment to Jurkiewicz the sum of 200,000 Swiss francs for the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland from the amount of 2.5 million, which was transferred in January as the aid to Poland. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare asks Jurkiewicz to retain this amount at the disposal of the Council for the purpose of rescuing 300 Polish Jews in the Bergen Belsen concentration camp.' AAN, Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 586.

order to contact Jewish organisations. It then referred to the cable mentioned at the beginning and asked for assistance covering all the mentioned needs and reflecting in total 2,250 francs. Since this amount could not be paid from the funds for care in Switzerland, and on the other hand it would be quite difficult to include it an expenditure for rescuing Jews—Polish citizens in Belsen-Bergen—it was paid out as a loan from the fund mentioned in the cable, given that, according to the statement of the member of delegation, Mr Szerer, at least £1,000 was to be returned by the Jewish organisations to the Treasury in London.

Notifying the Ministry about this, I would like to ask for the approval the aforementioned expenditure and the reimbursement of the aforementioned amount to the local Legation.¹³

Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare:
Dr *Stanisław Jurkiewicz*

AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 516

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*21 March 1945. Report by the Consul General in Johannesburg
on the mourning celebrations commemorating the Jews murdered
during World War II*

Johannesburg, 21 March 1945

St. Andrew's buildings, Rissik Street
To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in London

On 14 March 1945, the local Jewish population celebrated a solemn mourning of the Jews who were victims of Nazism in Europe.

¹³ In the letter addressed to the Legation in Bern on 14 April 1945, the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Geneva reported: 'In agreement and with the consent of Minister Aleksander Ładoś, I would like to ask you to pay Dr J. Kühl the amount of: 2,250 (two thousand two hundred and fifty) francs as a reimbursement of the amounts released by him to the representatives of the Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population. The mentioned amount is to be treated as a loan from the Fund of 200,000 francs allocated according to the Ministry's cable of 17 February to the rescue of the Polish Jews in the Belsen-Bergen camp in Germany *or in general from the funds for the assistance to Poles in Germany.*' *AAN, Poselstwo Berno, 516*. In the original document and footnote the name 'Belsen-Berger' was consistently used.

On this occasion, I ordered to have our state flag on the building in which the Consulate is located flying at half-mast, and I have sent a letter of condolences to the local Jewish Board of Deputies.¹⁴

I attach a copy of this letter together with the reply I have received.

S. Zaleski
Consul General of the Republic of Poland

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/151

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*21 March 1945. Report by the post of the Ministry of Internal Affairs
in Rome on the acknowledgements given by the people of Jewish
descent to the Delegation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare*

Rome, 21 March 1945

TO THE NATIONALITIES DEPARTMENT
Ministry of Internal Affairs
in London

A group of Polish-Jewish citizens is leaving for Palestine in the near future. A letter regarding this departure was received by the Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare; it contained acknowledgements expressed by Polish-Jewish citizens for the care they received in Italy.

The Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare has sent me copies of these letters.¹⁵ I attach them for the attention of the Nationalities Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

¹⁴ In the mentioned letter (of 14 March 1945), the Consul General in Johannesburg reported: 'In the day in which the South African Jews honour the memory of so many Jewish victims of Hitlerism among whom are the terrible victims of Polish Jews, I have given out orders to fly the Polish Flag half-mast on the building of the Polish Consulate in Johannesburg. At the same time on this day mourning I join my thoughts and feeling with those of the local Jewish Community. I am convinced that these enormous sacrifices have not been offered in vain and that they will serve the holy cause of freedom of nations and individuals.' IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/151 (ENG).

¹⁵ The attached letter dated 7 March 1945 stated: 'I hereby have the honour, on behalf of the Jews from Poland staying in Rome, to express our acknowledgement for everything that the Delegation has done for us since the liberation of Rome. We are very moved that

In general, I have to say that Polish citizens of Jewish nationality staying here are not only treated not less favourably than Poles but are even more privileged in a sort of a way, which is a particular concern for the local Delegate of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

...¹⁶

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/745

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*23 March 1945. Report by the Government Delegate
for relief matters in the United States for the Ministry of Labour
and Social Welfare about the dispatch of aid to Poland*

NEW YORK 4, N.Y. 50 BROAD STREET

23 March 1945

To the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
in London

From the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, regarding the departure of Mr Joseph C. Hyman, Executive Vice-Chairman, I have received today from his clerk, Mrs Henrietta K. Buchman (being also Chairman of the Committee on Poland, American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service), the following current news:

1. Dr Joseph Schwartz has not yet received a visa for entry into Poland as a delegate of the JDC, but efforts are ongoing;

2. So far, the JDC has sent to Poland to the address of Dr Emil Sommerstein,

a. from Tehran: 150 to 200 tonnes of well-grouped transports of relief goods containing clothing, food, medicine and three hospital sets with 100 beds each, which have been in Tehran for a long time, as they were originally intended for the people deported from Russia;

so far we have been treated as equal citizens and that the Delegation has never made any difference based on religion. Now that we are leaving Rome to travel to Palestine, this treatment remains to us a pleasant memory. We express the hope that your work will be continued not only in Rome but also in the liberated Poland, a country that the Polish people merit for their sacrifices. Sincerely, Chairman of the Polish Zionist organisation, residing in Rome. /-/ Joseph Templar. IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E.745.

¹⁶ Illegible signature.

b. from the United States: clothing, food, medical supplies, etc., reflecting the total value of \$150,000–200,000;

c. from Sweden, by air, the most urgently needed medical resources.

While for the first 100 tonnes of goods sent from Tehran it was reserved that they are intended exclusively for the Jewish population, with all the further transports from Tehran, coming at a rate of 30–50 per week, it was noted that they can be used for the 'non-sectarian distribution' and the same applies to the use of three 100-bed hospital sets.

3. Regarding the progress of the action of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, Committee on Poland, Mrs Buchman was unable to provide any new information apart from the content of the confidential note by Mrs Wojciechowska attached to my letter A.Z.557 dated 12 March.

Next week, after my return from Washington, I will try to meet with Mr Joseph C. Hyman or Mr Moses A. Leavitt, the secretary.

Aleksander Znamięcki

IPMS, Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, A.18/26

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*10 April 1945. Note by the Head of the Second Department
of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff about the travel restrictions experienced
by people of Jewish descent in the territories controlled by the USSR*

10 April 1945

Jewish affairs

On 2 March 1945, the Waad Leumi Council¹⁷ was held, at which Moses KLEINBAUM (SNEH) made a statement on Soviet Russia's response to the issue of Jewish emigration from Eastern European countries.

KLEINBAUM stressed that:

1) for two months, no Jew has been authorised to leave the countries under Russian influence;

¹⁷ This is a reference the Jewish National Council, a specific body representing the Jewish community in Palestine.

2) despite the promises made by the Soviet authorities, no authorisation was given to any representative of the Jewish Agency to visit these countries;

(3) BEHAR from the Migration Department of the Jewish Agency has been waiting for a number of weeks in Istanbul to obtain visas for entry to Bulgaria and Romania, even though the Soviet authorities had previously given their consent to his arrival.

On 1 March 1945, not being able to obtain the mentioned visas, he returned from Turkey to Palestine.

KLEINBAUM strongly criticised the unfair and perverse attitude of the Soviet authorities to this most vital issue for the Jewish Palestine.

He also stated that in the near future, accidents could force Waad Leumi to adopt a resolution demanding from the Soviet Government a clear definition of its attitude on the immigration of Jews to Palestine from the Soviet zone of influence.

At the current moment, Russia is the only power which closes off immigration to Palestine.

KLEINBAUM stated that the fate of Palestine can only be decided in London, not elsewhere.

HEAD OF THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF INTELLIGENCE OF THE
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S STAFF
Colonel *Gano*

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E.88

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17 April 1945. Cable from the MFA to the Consulate General in Jerusalem: information for the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Palestine on the dispatch of parcels to Poland

TO POLCONSUL JERUSALEM
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SENT ON 21 APRIL 1945
RECEIVED ON 23 APRIL 1945

No. 154

Ministry of Social Welfare for Jaroszewski. Receptus 88¹⁸

Please verify 1. Is it possible to ship parcels to Eastern and Western Poland? 2. Would the duty be paid by the consignee? 3. What are the guarantees of a receipt? 4. What is the overall cost of one parcel? 5. Do you have the current addresses of Christians and Jews and how many there are of them?

17 April 1945

Polexterne

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 582*

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30 April 1945. Circular by the Head of the Consular Department on caring for citizens of the Free City of Danzig

London, 30 April 1945

Regarding: The citizens of the Free City of Danzig

I. In connection with the numerous inquiries by the posts concerning the citizens of the Free City of Danzig, the Ministry recalls below the rules of conduct with respect to these citizens in accordance with the agreement between Poland and the Free City of Danzig of 1924. This agreement provides:

¹⁸ In the cable no. 88 of 9 March 1945, the Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Palestine, Kazimierz Jaroszewski, reported: 'In view of the anticipated possibilities to send from Palestine to Poland individual two-kilogram parcels, please decide whether we can prepare such an action.' AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, MSZ, 582*.

1) that the right of the Consulates of the Republic of Poland to issue passports is subsidiary, i.e. that alongside the Consulates, it is above all the Danzig Senate that has the right to issue and extend passports to the citizens of the Free City of Danzig, whether they are currently staying on the territory of the Free City of Danzig or abroad. So, there is a fundamental difference between the powers of the Danzig Senate and the powers of our national authorities, which have no right to issue or extend passports to citizens of the Free City of Danzig who stay abroad;

2) the performance of this subsidiary right by our Consulates is conditional upon the presentation by the citizen of the Free City of Danzig of a passport which would be still valid or which expired within the last three months, or of a valid certificate of affiliation;

3) an exception to this rule is included in point 5 of the agreement, which provides that in cases of extreme urgency, the applicant who can prove their citizenship of the Free City of Danzig in any form, may obtain a Danzig passport valid for three months, except that such passports cannot be extended for a further period of time and that the Danzig Senate must be informed immediately of the issuing of such a passport.

It would result from the above provisions that, under the present conditions, in the total absence of representations of the Free City of Danzig, which could be considered a legal successor to the Danzig Senate, the Consulates of the Republic of Poland, if we are to stick precisely to the provision of the agreement, are authorised only to:

a) extend Danzig passports which are still valid or which have expired in the last three months (i.e. in practice, passports regularly extended in the Consulate of the Republic of Poland);

b) issue new passports in the cases highlighted under a);

c) in all other cases, only issue passports for a three-month period, except that these passports cannot be further extended by the Consulate of the Republic of Poland.

Due to our obligation to provide care for citizens of the Free City of Danzig, the Consulates' practice has currently gone beyond the formal framework of this agreement. In practice, Consulates extend the validly issued Danzig passports on the same terms as Polish passports, regardless of when the validity of the Danzig passport expired. In addition, they issue new Danzig passports to those who prove that they had a Danzig passport and that they subsequently lost it.

II. There have recently been people applying to the consular posts of the Republic of Poland, claiming their citizenship of the Free City of Danzig, among whom two categories can be distinguished:

a) people who can provide evidence of their citizenship of the Free City of Danzig,

b) people whose right to the citizenship of the Free City of Danzig is questionable.

It should be stressed here that the assessment of the citizenship of the Free City of Danzig of the given person is by no means affected by their nationality.

Ad a. As long as the old Danzig passport is presented by a citizen of the Free City of Danzig, the consular post of the Republic of Poland should extend such passport.

The Ministry points out that it does not have a stock of Danzig passport booklets; if the citizen of the Free City of Danzig cannot submit their old passport for justified reasons, the Consular Post of the Republic of Poland may declare in a letter addressed to the local authorities that the person in question has submitted evidence of their citizenship, stressing at the same time that the post did not issue new passport only because it did not hold a Danzig passport booklet.

In the event that the citizen of the Free City of Danzig, whose citizenship does not raise any doubts, applies for a passport for travelling outside the country of residence (on grounds of necessity of such departure), the consular post of the Republic of Poland will ask the local authorities to issue such a document on the basis of which they could travel outside the country of residence and possibly return (return visa). The local authorities should be made clear that the Government of Poland is offering normal consular care to the citizens of the Free City of Danzig, as it did before the war, but the Danzig passports were provided by the Senate of the Free City of Danzig and this explains the fact that the Foreign Post of the Republic of Poland is unable to provide the citizens of the Free City of Danzig with the appropriate passports.

Ad b. The procedures for proving plausibility of citizenship in the strict sense cannot be applied to the citizens of the Free City of Danzig, because the Consulates may not have sufficient elements to assess this citizenship in accordance with the Danzig law. In addition, such a procedure would not lead to the desired objective, i.e. to the issuance of a Danzig passport, as the consular posts of the Republic of Poland do not have Danzig passport booklets. However, since the citizen of the Free City of Danzig or the person claiming such citizenship is entitled to the care of the Polish consular posts, the Ministry considers it appropriate to apply the following procedure in case of doubt:

At the request of people who claim the citizenship of the Free City of Danzig and who do not hold a passport or proof of their citizenship, it should be stated in writing (and preferably submit it to the competent local authorities) that the person concerned has presented to the consular post indirect evidence (metric, witness evidences, testimonies, etc.) which justifies the presumption that they are

a citizen of the Free City of Danzig and therefore take advantage of the consular protection of the Polish Foreign Offices.

Such proceedings will undoubtedly help the people concerned, under the international agreements in force, to deal with matters with the local authorities.

These guidelines should be applied rigorously [only] to people for whom the Consulate has evidence that they acted in harm to the United Nations' cause.

HEAD OF THE CONSULAR DEPARTMENT
Z. Szczerbiński

AAN, *Poselstwo Berno*, 397

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*2 June 1945. Circular by the Head of the Jewish Section at the MFA:
information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs
on the accusations addressed to the Home Army
and actions concerning the punishment of German war criminals*

TO New York, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro
FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Very urgent

To the Minister

The Ministry of Internal Affairs would like to ask you to provide ~~the following information~~ to B. Margulies, head of the delegation of the Federation of Polish Jews to the Convention in New York, *the text submitted at the same time by claris*:

Due to repeated attacks on the Home Army (including the attack by Tennenbaum), General Bór-Komorowski, at a press conference held on 19 May, replied to the questions of the Jewish journalists with the following words: 'There is no single word of truth in the reports that members of the Home Army in Poland attack Jews or behave in a hostile manner towards them.' Talking about Jews, the General stated that 'very many Jews were in the ranks of the Polish Underground Army and fought together in the Warsaw Uprising with their Polish companions and were treated without any differences as Poles.' Moreover, I would like to draw attention to the interview with General Bór published in the London weekly 'European Jewish Observer' on 1 June, transmitted by telegraph by the PTA, and to the interview with General Chruściel shared in the JTA's London service on June 1.

In connection with the issue of war crimes raised at the Convention of the Polish Jews in New York, the MFA communicates:

1. Since June 1944, there has been a Jewish section in the Polish Office for War Crimes operating within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

2. The number of perpetrators accused by this section of crimes committed against the Polish Jews and already accepted by the International Commission is 97. Several hundred others are currently accused.

3. The list of the accused includes Hitler. Among the accused by the Jewish section, there are Field Marshals: von Keitel, von Brauchitsch, von Rundstedt, Blaskowitz, von Kluge, List; politicians: Hermann Göring, Hans Frank, von Ribbentrop, Albert Forster, Alfred Rosenberg, Dr Frick, Schwerin von Krosigk, Dr Thierack, Globotschnigg—a special accusation is being prepared for Julius Streicher.

4. Indictments have already been prepared against those who ordered and contributed to the expropriation of Polish Jews from their property. This act was adopted in its entirety by the International Commission.

5. The head of the Jewish section is one of the three representatives of Poland at the International Conference on War Crimes, held currently in London.

Sent to New York, *for the attention of* Jerusalem for Tel-Aviv, Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro

Bociański
Polexterne

IPMS, MSZ, A.11.E/142

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*25 June 1945. Note by the Chief of the Nationalities Department
at the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the policy
of the Government-in-Exile towards Jews*

25 VI 1945

Prof. Dr. Olgierd Górk
Chief Nationalities Dept.
Ministry of Interior
Polish Government

Poland's policy towards her Jewish citizens in principles and practice.

The policy of the Polish Government during the present war with regard to the Jewish problem in its widest aspects and towards Polish citizens of Jewish faith or of Jewish nationality, has followed a decided course from the first moment of Gen. Sikorski's premiership. This course was conceived as far back as the establishment of the Polish Government-in-exile in France and has been developed and put into broad active practice in England.

The Nationalities Department, of which I am the head, has been the executive organ of this policy. Created as a section of the Ministry of Information and Documentation, and later transferred to the Ministry of Interior, the Department unites in its scope the sum total of all problems of Polish Jewry in Poland and works in full accord and collaboration with the corresponding sector of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The principles of the policy of the Polish Government as regards the Jewish problem and Poland's Jewish population are very simple. Their aim is to bring into being and full realization the principles stated in Polish Constitutional law providing for the absolute equality of all citizens regardless of creed, nationality or origin. Naturally the Section does not deal with those Polish citizens who, while preserving their Jewish religion, consider themselves nationally Polish. Such a citizen of Jewish creed or Jewish origin—to use a deceiving terminology imposed upon present day though by Nazism—is for the Polish State and its government quite as much a Pole and member of the Polish Nation as a Pole of the Catholic, Protestant or Greek Orthodox faith. The group does not therefore form a problem nor does it lie within the competency of the Government nationalities policy.

There is, however, no doubt that these problems do exist so far as citizens who look upon themselves as Jewish nationals of the Jewish religion are concerned. And here—as we all realize—it is not enough to issue declarations of principles—what is needed is action, the realization of these principles in everyday life. While

declarations are needed to give expression and countenance to the policy—it is practice that is the real test.

Steps towards the realization of the principles of full equality of rights for all Polish citizens taken by the Polish Government in France have been pursued during its longer and more regulated existence in England. All anti-semitic acts have been systematically combatted, frequently through decisions and penalties imposed by Courts, as for instance in the Army. Polish citizens of Jewish religion or Jewish origin play an important part in the Government machine and are extremely active in the planning and preparations being made for Poland's postwar economic life. Pages of instances could be quoted to prove the truth of this statement. I wish to give here only one characteristic example. For a time rumors circulated in certain Jewish circles of the exclusion of Jews from the list of employes of the Polish Relief organized by the Polish Embassy in Soviet Russia. The opposite was the truth. Because the majority of Polish citizen refugees in Southern Russia in 1941 and 1942 were of the Jewish faith or of Jewish nationality—the great part of personnel employed in this work was Jewish. The percentage of Jews was 52.8% and in certain districts as high as 82% of the total of Polish citizens employed by the Polish Government in this relief work. I repeat that many such instances could be found in various Government Agencies, and in problems of Jews in the army such as the ratio of Jewish officers to soldiers of Jewish origin, the Jewish part in receiving relief, all kinds of scholarships etc.

I am speaking of those facts, which I consider natural and sound, not because I want to emphasize them as a special merit of the Government. My aim is only to correct rumors which—the contrary facts notwithstanding—crop in public opinion, time and again.

But I do consider a decided merit on the part of the Polish Government the fact that, during the war, it defined clearly and precisely its stand on the Palestine question, a question which is so close to the hearts of millions of Jews. I am not concerned here with discussions on the question of Jewish State in Palestine—but the Palestine question does concern Poland as a problem of emigration and the future of Jews from Poland. The Polish Nation and Government deeply appreciate the patriotic platform of the Bund which considers Poland its Motherland and the attachment to Poland and the traditional cooperation of adherents of the Agudat. At the same time the Polish Nation and Government in no way question the Polish patriotism of Jews whose ideological trends extend beyond the borders of the Polish State. The sympathies of the Polish Nation, which has always fought itself for freedom and its own independent state, towards the aspirations of the Jews for a homeland, are generally known and undoubted. We have no intention of calling on Polish citizens, whatever their origin, to leave Polish soil—on the contrary—we shall open wide the door of Poland unrestrictedly to all Jews-Polish citizens, regardless of place of birth, returning to the country of their birth, to their home

and properties. At the same time, however, in a declaration announced by me some time ago on behalf of Prime Minister Sikorski and the Polish Government, I stated that Poland consider emigration to Palestine a right or an additional privilege of every Polish citizen of Jewish nationality—and not a duty. The formula ‘right, not duty’ is without doubt the clearest definition that any Government could issue concerning its attitude; Poland welcomes her citizens of Jewish faith and Jewish nationality but at the same time appreciates and understands their longing for a national home and state.

Although tremendous importance is attached to the above questions by the Jewish emigration permitting sometimes even to overshadow all other problems, I personally consider them of secondary importance, for the time being. During this war, the problem of Polish Jewry has never been for the Polish Government one of declarations, or of satisfying secondary claims however just or unjust. For the Polish Government the problem of Polish Jewry has been, above all, a problem of bringing aid and succor to those masses of Polish Jewry in far-off Poland whose unique tragedy has no equal in the annals of history. This is the crux of the matter and this is its whole import. And here, I may state that it is the Polish Government which gave the first initiative for counter-action as an intermediary for spreading information concerning the fiendish persecutions and mass murders of Jews in Poland throughout the world. It was the same Government which, through the intervention of Minister Raczyński, initiated world official and diplomatic action in this field.

But more important than the activity of the Polish Government abroad or its work in the realm of world opinion is its activity within Poland itself. It is generally known that the Jewish combat organization of the Warsaw Ghetto was enabled to undertake genuine armed resistance only after receiving arms and supplies from the Polish Underground Movement. But the most important fact was the organization in Poland of the Polish Council for Jewish Relief, a secret and imposingly active institution attached to the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Polish Government in Warsaw. The Council, with its seat in Warsaw and branches in other cities, consists of most prominent representatives of Polish political parties and various-Jewish parties from the National Committee to the Bund. It did tremendous work in rescuing and hiding members of the Jewish population and we must remember that in general the problem of supplying identification papers, hiding Jews in Polish homes etc.—was perhaps more vital than financial aid.

As to this latter problem i.e. financial aid, it must be stated that in spite of the chief difficulty of currency transfer, the Polish Government shares no effort to supply as large sums as possible to the Polish Council for Jewish Relief attached to the office of the Plenipotentiary of the Polish Government in Warsaw and its branches. These sums were drawn from the Polish Government funds in addition to

generous contributions on the part of many Jewish institutions, both national and Bundist, who did all they could in this respect. I do not hesitate to state, however, that, as we were more familiar with conditions in Poland than other agencies, we chose only the illegal and underground form of relief for Jews in Poland, realizing that all other kinds of relief were independable and abused by the enemy and so were vehemently condemned by our Jewish compatriots in Poland. In all this work we have followed the demands and directives of the Polish Jewry at home and not those of Jewish emigrés.

The future will permit a gradual unveiling of the true picture of the not only gigantic but truly realistic assistance extended to Polish—and often non-Polish Jews—on Polish soil by the Polish Government. I know that discussions on this subject will never cease, that in this matter too, as in all others, endless discussions will be possible and many suggestions will be offered proving how much more could have been done in spite of handicaps. But I know too, that other facts will be brought to light showing what really was done in actual deeds,—not in words or similar manifestations—by other Governments and non-Jewish factors for the Jews in Poland who are being so ruthlessly murdered. I do not doubt that the result of this comparison will be to our greatest advantage. I do not claim it as basis for glory or boasting, but it is an irrefutable fact that the Polish Government has fulfilled its civil and humanitarian duties towards our Jewish co-citizens and compatriots in Poland. With them we have been united by many centuries of a common life on a common soil—and now we are even more closely united through this greatest tragedy in world history when millions of Poles have died beside millions of Jews on the common soil of Poland.

And in this connection I wish to mention briefly a most important fact. I accuse none here but the Germans. Above and beyond the Government there is the Polish Nation. Their hands are clean with respect to the Jews. Without dwelling on the question as to who helped murder Jews in East Europe, I state with the greatest pride in the Polish Nation that our hands are not stained with the blood of massacred Jews and that there has not been a single incident of Polish participation in the murdering of Jews anywhere in Europe or on Polish territory. Against the background of all that has been happening in Europe—the future will fully show how glorious and spotless is this page in the history of the Polish Nation. Those who are busy hurling second-rate accusations, forget that the judgment of the future will be based, above all, on facts, who actually took part in the shedding of innocent blood.

In closing, one more statement regarding the war period and that following the war. There is no doubt that there will still be a large number of Jews in Poland and, therefore, the Jewish problem will continue to exist in that country after the war. Polish policy as regard Polish citizens and the Jewish problem cannot be incidental, cannot be the result of advantages or disadvantages to this or another

Cabinet. It did not change after the tragic death of Prime Minister Sikorski and it will not be changed by any successive shifts in government. This policy is an integral and all-essential part of democratic Poland and no other Poland, excepting a fully democratic and progressive one lies within the realm of our future historic possibilities. I do not deny that symptoms contrary to this principle of full and fundamental democracy have appeared in Poland in the past and have sporadically appeared during the present war. These symptoms are systematically seized and blown to fantastic dimensions by groups unfavorable to Poland. Nevertheless no future constellation, no possible changes will leave even a trace of probability that in the coming European world, evolving out of an Allied victory, these symptoms can ever again develop to any extent or reach the executive authorities of the Polish State. It is easy to take advantage of existing prejudices and frequent ill-will to harass Jewish opinion with the boogy man and predictions of a return to anti-semitism and anti-Jewish activities in postwar Poland. But common sense and sound vision prove beyond all doubt that the Poland which will arise as result of this war will be and will have to be an essentially and integrally democratic nation, in accordance with her 1000 year-old tradition as a good mother to all her children, regardless of nationality or creed.

AAN, *Instytut Hoovera, Ambasada Waszyngton, 66 (ENG)*

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*6 July 1945. Note of protest by the Polish Government
to the British Foreign Office regarding the recognition
of the Provisional Government of National Unity (extracts)*

The R. Hon. Anthony Eden, M.C.
Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office, S.W.1

July 6th. 1945

Sir,

In view of the recognition on July 6th. 1945, by the British Government of the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity¹⁹ I have the honour to

¹⁹ The communist-dominated Provisional Government of National Unity was created on 28 June 1945, with its members also including politicians centered around the former Prime Minister of the Polish Government-in-Exile, Stanisław Mikołajczyk. The

declare that I was accredited as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James's by the constitutional President and Government of the Polish Republic, to whom I owe allegiance and that, consequently, I am not in a position to delegate my functions, powers and office to anyone, without appropriate instructions from the President and Government of the Polish Republic, who continue to be the sole constitutional and independent representative of Poland.

Acting on the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to bring to your knowledge that:

1. The authority of the President and Government of Poland, to whom I owe allegiance, derives from the constitutional laws of the Polish Republic enacted by the nation through a freely elected Parliament which remain of unimpaired legal validity and which could not be changed in conditions of duress under which the nation exists today.

...²⁰

2. The territories of the Polish Republic remain under a foreign military occupation and under ruthless control of foreign military and police forces. The accomplished facts which have taken place in Poland since the outbreak of war are not the result of the will of the Polish people expressed either by constitutional or revolutionary means. The war which began in defense of the integrity and independence of Poland, ended in depriving Her of that independence and in placing the country under the control of an alien Power.

3. In these circumstances, neither I myself nor my Government are in a position to recognise the accomplished fact unilaterally enacted in Poland.

The persecutions which thousands of Poles are enduring in Poland today and which afflict with particular severity all those citizens of Republic who have actively demonstrated their devotion to the cause of freedom and independence by the implacable struggle against the German invader, prove beyond any doubt that the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity in no way represents the will of the Nation, but constitutes a subservient body imposed on Poland by force from without.

4. The first attribution on the independence of a State is its freedom to choose a Government. In the present circumstances the source of the authority of the Government headed by Mr. Osóbka-Morawski is a decision made not by the Polish nation but by three foreign Powers, one of which controls de facto the whole administration of Poland through its army and police forces. The legal basis of

Provisional Government was recognised by most foreign states (including France, Great Britain and the United States), which simultaneously withdrew their recognition of the Polish Government-in-Exile.

²⁰ The omitted extracts concerned details of the Polish-British relationship in the war time.

the authority of that Government can be compared with the legal basis of the authority of the so-called governments set up in occupied countries during the war by Germany. In both cases they are based on the will of a foreign Power.

5. In such circumstances and acting on instruction from my Government, I most solemnly protest against the recognition by the British Government of a Government imposed on Poland by force by an alien power, which amounts to the recognition of the suppression of Poland's independence. Once more in history, the Polish Nation is being deprived of its independence, though this time not as a result of events which took place in Eastern Europe alone, but after a war which the United Nations waged in defense of law and justice. Notwithstanding the recognition by other powers of its present subjection, The Polish Nation will never give up its right to independent existence and will never cease to struggle for it.

6. As a protest against acts of violence inflicted on the Polish Nation, I am obliged to refuse to delegate my functions, without the approval of the constitutional Government of Poland, and to regard as an impostor any person pretending to be authorised to claim my office.

I have the honour to be, Sir, with the highest consideration.

Your obedient Servant,

/-/ Edward Raczyński
Polish Ambassador

IPMS, AMSZ, A.11.49/Sow/6 (previously published; ENG)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAN	-	Archiwum Akt Nowych [The Central Archives of Modern Records]
AG	-	Agudat
a.i.	-	ad interim
AJDC	-	American Joint Distribution Committee
AK	-	Armia Krajowa [Home Army]
ASSR	-	Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
AUCP(b)	-	All Union Communist Party (bolsheviks)
AYV	-	Archives of Yad Vashem
BBC	-	British Broadcasting Corporation
BIP KG AK	-	Biuro Informacji i Propagandy Komendy Głównej Armii Krajowej [Bureau of Information and Propaganda of the High Command of the Home Army]
CAR	-	Comité Aide aux Réfugiés
cc	-	cubic centimeter
Centos	-	Centralne Towarzystwo Opieki nad Sierotami [Federation of Associations for the Care of Orphans]
CDF	-	Central Decimal File
CO	-	Colonial Office
CO	-	commanding officer
c/o	-	care of
Comm.	-	commander
Comporel	-	Commission for Polish Relief
CRB	-	Central Reserve Bank [of China]
DC	-	District of Columbia
DELASEM	-	Delegazione per l'Assistenza degli Emigranti Ebrei
Excmo.	-	Excelentísimo
FO	-	Foreign Office
Fr	-	father
Fr.	-	franc
G., G-o	-	see: Gestapo
GAPF	-	Groupement d'Assistance aux Polonais en France

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Gestapo	-	Geheime Staatspolizei
GG	-	General Government
Gosbank	-	Gosudarstvennyi bank [SSSR]
Gosstrach	-	Gosudarstvennoe strakhovanie
GPU	-	Gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie
HIAS	-	Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
HICEM	-	HIAS-ICA Emig-Direkt
ICA	-	Jewish Colonisation Association
IG	-	Interessengemeinschaft
IJPA	-	Instytut Józefa Piłsudskiego w Ameryce [The Józef Piłsudski Institute of America]
Inturist	-	Inostrannyi turist
IPMS	-	Instytut Polski i Muzeum im. gen. Sikorskiego [The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum]
IRC	-	International Red Cross
JDC	-	Joint Distribution Committee
JTA	-	Jewish Telegraphic Agency
Judr.	-	Juris Utriusque Doctor
JUS	-	Jüdische Unterstützungsstelle
KCMG	-	Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George
Kol.	-	kolekcja [collection]
KSSR	-	Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic
lbs	-	pounds
LL	-	Lend Lease
MC	-	Military Cross
MFA	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MO	-	Missouri
MP	-	Member of Parliament
M/S	-	motor ship
MSW	-	Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych [Ministry of Internal Affairs]
MSZ	-	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych [Ministry of Foreign Affairs]
Mudr.	-	Medicinae Universae Doctor
NACP	-	National Archives at College Park
Narkomindel	-	Narodnyi komissariat inostrannykh del
NB	-	nota bene
NCO	-	non-commissioned officer
NKVD	-	Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del
NKW	-	Nowy Kurier Warszawski

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NSDAP	- Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
NY	- New York
NZ	- New Zealand
Oblono	- oblastnoy otdel narodnogo obrazovaniya
ONA	- Overseas News Agency
Orpo	- Ordnungspolizei
ORT	- Obshchestvo remeslennogo truda
OSE	- Œuvre de secours aux enfants
OSS	- Office of Strategic Services
OSZ	- see: TOZ
Pa.	- Pennsylvania
PALCOR	- Palestine Correspondence Agency
PIC	- Polish Information Centre
Pollabwelf	- Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
POW	- prisoner of war
PPR	- Polska Partia Robotnicza [Polish Workers' Party]
PPS	- Polska Partia Socjalistyczna [Polish Socialist Party]
PRC	- Polish Red Cross
PRM	- Prezydium Rady Ministrów [Presidium of the Council of Ministers]
PTA	- Polish Telegraphic Agency
pcs.	- pieces
Pts	- peseta
RAF	- Royal Air Force
revkom	- revolyutsionnyi komitet
RG	- Record Group
RM	- Reichsmark
RP	- Rzeczpospolita Polska [Republic of Poland]
Rs	- Indian rupee
Rt. Hon.	- Right Honourable
RŻP	- Reprezentacja Żydostwa Polskiego [Representation of Polish Jewry]
SB	- Sonderbehandlung
SD	- Sicherheitsdienst
Sgd.	- signed
SPD	- Stronnictwo Polskiej Demokracji [Polish Democracy Party]
SS	- Schutzstaffel
SS	- steam ship
SSE	- Service social des étrangers
SSR	- soviet socialist republic

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TASS	-	Telegrafnoye agentstvo Sovetskogo Soyuz
TNA	-	The National Archives
Torgpredstvo	-	torgovoe predstavitelstvo
TOZ	-	Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia (Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce) [Society for Safeguarding the Health of the Jewish Population]
UK	-	United Kingdom
UNRRA	-	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
UPP	-	Union of Polish Patriots
US	-	United States
USA	-	United States of America
USSR	-	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VE	-	Vuestra Excelencia
WRN	-	Wolność, Równość, Niepodległość [Freedom, Equality, Independence]
YMCA	-	Young Men's Christian Association
ZL	-	Zentralleitung der Arbeitslager

SUBJECT INDEX

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Polish Consul General in Beirut (from April 1940 to April 1941 and from November 1941 to June 1942), Consul General in Istanbul (from April to November 1941), later Envoy in Tehran (from July 1942) 515, 920, 927, 928

Badior, Roman

Counsellor at the Polish Legation in Lisbon,
Head of the evacuation post 606, 607

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Soldier, Polish Armed Forces 828

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to 1905) and British Foreign Secretary
(from 1916 to 1919) 493

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First Secretary, later Counsellor at the Polish
Embassy in London 72, 73, 132, 195, 210,
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Polish lawyer, member of the International
Committee of the People's Party (from 1940),
Vice Chairman of the National Council
(from 11 March 1942), later Minister
of Internal Affairs (from 14 July 1943
to 24 November 1944) 744, 800, 801, 969, 972

Banasiński, Eugeniusz

Polish Consul General in Bombay (to June
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Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs
(from January 1941), later Prime Minister
(from 3 April 1941 to 7 March 1942) 860

Barlas, Chaim

Employee of the Migration Department
of the Jewish Agency, later its Representative
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Barnes, Fels Joseph

American journalist, Deputy Director of the
Office of War Information (from 1941 to
1944), Secretary of Wendell Willkie during
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Journalist of *The Jewish Chronicle* 174, 177

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Economist and Zionist activist, co-founder
of the World Jewish Congress and member
of the Board of Deputies of British Jews
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Bearsted → Samuel, Walter (Lord Bearsted)

Beck, Józef

Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs
(to 30 September 1939), interned in Romania
(from 18 September 1939), died 5 June 1944
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Beckenroth, Tulek

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Behar, J.N.

Employee of the Migration Department
of the Jewish Agency 1040

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Beit, Alfred

British politician, member of the House
of Commons 879

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Belev, Alexander G.

Bulgarian lawyer, official at the
Ministry of Internal Affairs, Head of the
Commissariat for Jewish Affairs (from 1942
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Bellido, Hernán C.

Peruvian diplomat, Secretary-General at the
MFA 471

Ben Gurion, David

Zionist activist, Chairman of the Executive
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- Berglas, Chajim-Leib**
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- Bergman, D.**
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- Bergson, Peter H.** → **Kook, Hillel**
- Berle, Adolf Augustus**
American lawyer and diplomat, Deputy State Secretary for Latin America, later Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro (from January 1945) 690
- Berman, Adolf Abraham**
Zionist activist, Head of CENTOS, resistance activist in the Warsaw Ghetto, Secretary of the Council to Aid Jews 'Żegota', member of the communist State National Council (from March 1944) 732, 735, 745
- Berman, Izaak**
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- Bernacki, Lucjan**
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- Berry, N.**
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- Berson, Jakób**
Jewish activist in occupied Poland 746
- Berson, Włodzimierz**
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- Best, Werner**
Head of Department at the Reich Security Main Office, then in the military administration in occupied France (from 1940), later the German Plenipotentiary in occupied Denmark (from November 1942 to May 1945) 754
- Bevan, Aneurin**
British politician, member of the House of Commons 879
- Beveridge, William Henry**
British economist and politician, author of a memorial on social welfare 629
- Biddle, Anthony Joseph Drexel, Jr.**
Ambassador of the United States to Poland (to December 1943) 76, 337, 533, 614, 749
- Bienenstock, Erwin**
Officer, Polish Armed Forces 707, 708
- Bieńkowski, Witold**
Politician and publicist, Head of the Jewish Section in the Internal Affairs Department of the Government Delegation for Poland (from February 1943) 685
- Bierzwinska, Ida**
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- Birenbaum, Mordka**
817
- Bireń**
Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 829
- Birom, M.**
681
- Bitner, Waclaw**
Polish lawyer and politician, Legal Counsellor to the Prime Minister, later acting Consul in Toulouse (from June 1940), then in the United Kingdom (from 1941 to 1942), founder and Head of the Catholic News Agency in New York (from 1942) 89
- Blacharz, Abram**
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- Blair, Frederick Charles**
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- Bloch, Eliezer Lipe**
Jewish activist in occupied Poland, died 1944 745
- Blum, Aron**
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- Blum, Léon**
Former Prime Minister of France, from 1940 imprisoned in the Buchenwald concentration camp 649
- Blumenthal, Markus**
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- Blusztajn, Helena**
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- Blusztajn, Isaak**
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Bociański, Jan

Deputy Head of the Communication Section of the Polish MFA (from 15 September 1943 to 15 November 1944), later Head of the Jewish Section (from 1 December 1944) 1019, 1044, 1045

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Member of the Joint Distribution Committee 35

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Boger, Wilhelm Friedrich

German official of the Political Department in Auschwitz (from 1940 to 1945) 704

Bogomolov, Aleksandr J.

Head of the First Western Department of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR (from 1939 to 1940), Ambassador in Paris (to June 1941), later Ambassador to the Allied Governments in London (from August 1941) and Representative to the French Committee of National Liberation (from 1943 to 1944) 324, 325, 607

Boheman, Erik Carlsson

Secretary-General of the Swedish MFA 165

Bohlen, Charles E.

American diplomat, employee at the Embassy in Tokyo (from 1940 to 1941), later in the Eastern European Division of the State Department (from 1942), Chief of the Eastern European Division of the State Department (from 1944) 690

Bohr, Niels

Danish physicist, Nobel Prize winner 754

Bohusz-Szyszko, Zygmunt

General, Commander of the Polish Independent Highland Brigade, participant in the Norwegian campaign (1940), Commandant of the Central Camp for Training of the 1st Corps of the Polish Armed Forces in Crawford, Scotland (from September 1940 to August 1941), Chief of the Polish Army Staff in the USSR, Commander of the 5th Borderlands Infantry Division (from 1942 to 1943), later the Deputy Commander of the 2nd Corps 495, 496, 500, 565

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Austrian writer and publicist 391

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Boruta-Spiechowicz, Mieczysław

General, member of the Polish Organisation for the Struggle for Freedom (from September 1939), Soviet prisoner (from November 1939 to July 1941), Commander of the 5th Wilno Infantry Division (from September 1941), later Commander of the 1st Polish Corps in Scotland (from September 1942) 826, 827, 831, 832, 912

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Polish politician of the People's Party, member of the National Council 510, 555

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Orthodox priest deported deep into the interior of the Soviet Union (February 1940), later evacuated with the Polish Army in the USSR, carried out pastoral and publishing work in Tanzania (from March 1943) 1005, 1006

Bór-Komorowski → Komorowski-Bór, Tadeusz

Bracken, Brendan

British politician, member of the Conservative Party, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister (from 1940), Minister of Information (from 20 July 1941 to 25 May 1945), later First Lord of the Admiralty 474

- Brandes, Georg**
(1842–1927) Danish philosopher and writer 754
- Brandes, Wiktor**
Polish journalist 361
- Brandschart, Aron Ber**
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- Brandt, Karl Georg**
Head of the Jewish Department of the Gestapo in Warsaw 682, 781
- Brandt, Pepa**
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- Brandt, Rozalia**
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- Brandys, Aron**
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- Brauchitsch, Walther von**
General, Commander-in-Chief of the German Army (to December 1941) 1045
- Braude, Markus**
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- Bregman, Emilia**
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- Bressy, Pierre**
Deputy Political Director of the French MFA (from 1942) 415
- Brinquis → González Brinquis, Policarpio**
- Brisker [?]**
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- Brodetsky, Selig**
Zionist activist, Chairman of the Board of Deputies of British Jews (from 1940) 280, 755, 870
- Brodman, Samuel**
992
- Brod, Shemu'el**
Zionist activist, rabbi of Antwerp (to 1941), later rabbi in New York 295, 296
- Bromberg, Abraham Icek**
Rabbi in the Polish Army in the East 356
- Bronia [?]**
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- Brown, Brenton S.**
Polish Honorary Consul in Vancouver 133, 134
- Brühl, Oswald**
Trusted representative of the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev in Samarkand 272
- Brüll**
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- Bruner, Waclaw**
Delegate of the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev in Sverdlovsk (from September 1941), Head of the Embassy's Care Office (from January 1942), Head of the Embassy's Intervention Section (from July to September 1942), later Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare 705, 771, 777, 778
- Bruton, Ivor**
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- Bryła**
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- Buchman, Henrietta K.**
Member of the Joint Distribution Committee in New York 1038, 1039
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- Budny, Michał**
First Secretary of the Polish Embassy in London 841, 984, 985
- Bukier, Moritz**
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- Buksbaum, Antoni**
Jewish activist in occupied Poland 745
- Bullitt, William Christian, Jr.**
American diplomat and writer, Ambassador in Paris (to 11 July 1940) 691
- Bulmer-Thomas, Ivor**
British politician, member of the House of Commons (from 13 February 1942) 878, 879
- Burakowska, R.**
681
- Burhardt-Bukacki, Stanisław**
General, Head of the Polish Military Mission in Paris (from 3 September 1939), Chairman of the Regulation Committee in the Polish Armed Forces (from November 1939 to June 1940), Head of the evacuation of the Polish Army to the United Kingdom (June 1940),

- later Commander of the training camps and troops of the Polish Army in Scotland (from June to August 1940), died 1942 4
- Burke, Thomas Michael**
Polish Honorary Consul in Melbourne, Australian businessman and philanthropist 237
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- Bussel**
Physician of Jewish descent 301
- Butler, Horace Somerset**
Polish Honorary Consul in Rangoon 228–230
- Buxton Jr., Gonzalo Edward**
American Colonel, Deputy Director of the OSS (from 13 June 1942 to 30 June 1945) 690
- Bykow, Abraham**
Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 824, 828
- Byrnes, James Francis**
Judge and politician, US Senator (to 8 July 1941), Deputy Judge of the Supreme Court (from 25 June 1941 to 3 October 1942), Director of the Economic Stabilization Office (to 27 May 1943) and Director of the War Mobilization Office (to 3 July 1945), later Secretary of State 689
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British diplomat, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 17, 985
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- Calle Escajadillo, Manuel T.**
Peruvian politician 472
- Carol II**
King of Romania (to 6 September 1940), later emigrated 317
- Castañeda → Ruiz Castañeda, Maximiliano**
- Celiński, Bolesław**
Official of the Secretariat of the League of Nations, activist of the Polish Committee for Assistance to the Victims of War in Switzerland 348
- Celler, Emanuel**
American politician of the Democratic Party, member of the House of Representatives 876, 877
- Celt → Chciuk-Celt, Tadeusz**
- Ceresole, Ernest**
Colonel, Swiss Army 348
- Chałupczyński, Mieczysław**
Counsellor at the Polish Legation in Budapest (from 1 April 1940), then Counsellor (from 1 October 1940) and Chargé d’Affaires (from January to December 1941) at the Legation in Buenos Aires, later Envoy in Bogota (from 1 April 1942) 215, 216, 241–243, 527, 528, 814
- Chamberlain, Houston Stewart**
(1855–1927) German philosopher 587
- Champenois, Jean**
French journalist, Correspondent of Havas and Agence France-Presse in the Soviet Union 276, 277
- Charwat, Franciszek**
Polish Envoy in Kaunas (to October 1939), emigrated to Brazil, died 1941 47
- Chciuk-Celt, Tadeusz**
Courier of the Union of Armed Struggle (to April 1940), later in the Polish Armed Forces in Great Britain, ‘Silent Unseen’ paratrooper, Courier to the Government Delegation for Poland 960, 963
- Chęciński, Chajm**
Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 824
- Chichaev, Ivan A.**
First Secretary of the Soviet Legation in Riga (to 1940), Counsellor at the Legation in Stockholm, later Counsellor at the USSR Embassy in London, responsible for contacts with governments of European countries in exile (from September 1941) 325
- Chiczewski, Feliks**
Consul General in Brussels (to May 1940), later President of the Polish Red Cross Executive Committee in France (from June 1940) 50, 51, 186
- Chiriani, Juan Horacio**
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay (from 1944) 910
- Chmielnicka, Cypojra (Cecylia)**
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- Cholerton, Alfred T.**
British journalist, Correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* in the USSR 276, 277
- Chonen, Rachyel**
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- Chruściel, Antoni**
Colonel (from 1942), later General (from 1944), District Commander of the city of Warsaw of the Union of Armed Struggle–Home Army (from 1941 to 1944), Commander of the insurgent forces in Warsaw, then in German captivity 733–735, 1044
- Chrzastowski**
403
- Churchill, Winston**
First Lord of the Admiralty (from 3 September 1939), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (from 10 May 1940) 84, 193, 323, 363, 408, 419–420, 457, 518, 534, 594, 847, 848, 870, 915
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius**
(106–43 BCE) Writer, speaker and Roman politician 586
- Cicognani, Gaetano**
Italian Bishop, Papal Nuncio in Madrid 294
- Ciechanowski, Jan**
Secretary-General of the Polish MFA (from September 1939 to December 1940), later Ambassador in Washington 22, 49, 61, 67, 116, 117, 129, 155, 182, 204, 207, 236, 240, 241, 244, 245, 272–275, 286, 288, 388–390, 419, 423, 424, 427, 458–460, 462–465, 495, 509, 524, 525, 599, 606, 607, 613, 656, 688–694, 731, 748, 749, 771, 792, 793, 796, 798, 809, 810, 858, 864, 876, 877, 882–885, 914, 915, 918, 919, 930, 931, 947, 948, 952, 970, 971, 1003–1005
- Cieplak, Jan Feliks**
(1857–1926) Polish Archbishop, show-trialed in Moscow in 1923 691
- Cieślik**
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- Ciniewicz, Franciszek**
Major, Polish Armed Forces 602
- Ciołkosz, Adam**
Member of the Foreign Committee of the Polish Socialist Party, member of the National Council (from 4 March 1940) and of the Committee for National Affairs (from 28 January 1941 to 14 June 1942) 175, 510, 838, 886, 887
- Cohen, Benjamin Victor**
American lawyer and politician, Counsellor at the Embassy in London (from 1941), Deputy Director of the Office of Economic Stabilization (from 1942 to 1943) and General Counsellor at the Office of War Mobilization (from 1943 to 1945), later at the State Department 689
- Copernicus, Nicolaus**
(1473–1543) Astronomer, physician, lawyer and economist 622
- Councilbaum, J.**
952
- Cowles, Gardner, Jr.**
American publisher, Deputy Director of the Office of War Information (from 1942), Secretary to Wendell Willkie during his journey to the Middle East, USSR and China (1942) 456, 457
- Cox, Oscar Sydney**
American lawyer and judge, employee of the Treasury Department, Counsellor at the Lend-Lease Administration and Office of Emergency Management (from 1941 to 1943), later in the Foreign Economic Administration (to 1945) 689
- Cranborne → Gascoyne-Cecil, Robert (Lord Cranborne)**
- Creel, George**
American journalist and politician 690–692
- Cripps, Stafford**
Ambassador of Great Britain in Moscow (from May 1940 to January 1942), Lord Keeper of the Great Seal and Leader of the House of Commons (to November 1942), later Minister of Aircraft Production (to May 1945) 211, 325
- Curzon, George Nathaniel**
(1859–1925) Politician of the Conservative Party, British Foreign Secretary (from 1919 to 1924) 854, 1010, 1012
- Cylkowska, Janina**
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- Cytrynbaum, Wolf**
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- Czapski → Hutten-Czapski, Emeryk**

Czapski, Józef

From September 1939 in Soviet captivity (imprisoned, among others, in the Starobielsk camp in the Soviet Union), soldier of the Polish Army in the USSR (from 1941), Head of the Department of Propaganda and Information at the Polish Army Staff in the East (from April 1942), later in the 2nd Corps 332

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Son of Olgierd 1000

Czartoryski, Olgierd

Prince, interned by the Germans, released as a result of international intervention, Polish activist in Brazil (from 1940) 1000

Czechańska, Grażyna

779

Czerniakow, Adam

Acting President of the Jewish Religious Community in Warsaw (from 21 September 1939), President of the Jewish Council in Warsaw (from 4 October 1939), committed suicide 23 July 1942 443, 444, 516, 520, 536, 537, 781

Czerwiński, Paweł

Counsellor at the Polish Legation in Belgrade 3

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Dalton, Hugh

British politician, member of the House of Commons, Minister of Economic Warfare (from 15 May 1940 to 22 February 1942), later President of the Board of Trade (to 23 May 1945) 337

Darányi, Kálmán

Former Prime Minister of Hungary, Speaker of the House of Representatives, died 1 November 1939 860

Davies, Rhys John

British trade union activist and politician, member of the House of Commons 878, 879

Davis, Forrest

American writer and journalist, editor of *The Saturday Evening Post* 690–692

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Dell'Acqua, Angelo

Italian Catholic priest, official of the Secretariat of the Holy See 172

Dembiński, Stanisław

Attaché at the Polish Embassy in London 877, 880

Dembus, Sara Ida

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Dębicki, Kazimierz Roman

Polish Envoy in Belgrade (to 6 April 1941) and to the Yugoslavian Government-in-Exile (to 30 July 1942), later Envoy in Havana (from October 1942) 3, 7, 8, 10, 84, 85, 130, 182, 736, 737, 796, 883–885, 915, 916, 919, 931

Diamand

Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 825

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Dinawska, Szmit

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Długoszowski-Wieniawa, Bolesław

Polish Ambassador in Rome (to 10 June 1940), later in the United States, nominated for the position of Envoy in Havana (March 1942), committed suicide 1 July 1942 3, 4, 30, 31, 48, 49, 62, 86

Dmowski, Roman

(1864–1939) Polish politician, leader of the National Democracy 155

Dobkin, Eliyahu

Zionist activist in Palestine, Head of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency 928, 929, 960

Dogilewski, Marceł

Lawyer, Jewish Affairs Assistant at the Polish Ministry of Information and Documentation (from July 1943 at the Ministry of Internal Affairs), member of the Council of the Polish Jews in Great Britain 89, 148, 175

- Donati, Angelo**
Italian banker and diplomat, involved in rescuing Jews in occupied France 978, 996, 997
- Donnebaum, Hugo**
Jewish activist in Switzerland, involved in aid actions 950
- Donovan, William J.**
American General, Director of the Office of the Coordination of Information (from July 1941), later Director of the OSS (from June 1942) 690
- Doński, Ignacy**
Physician and Polish diaspora activist in Switzerland 346, 348
- Dorner, Cecil Francis**
Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Polish Government-in-Exile (from 6 May 1941 to February 1943) 323–325
- Dorn**
Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 829
- Drechsel, Elsa Margot**
German SS overseer in the concentration camps 703
- Dreifus**
859
- Drexel-Biddle → Biddle, Anthony Joseph Drexel, Jr.**
- Drexler → Drechsel, Elsa Margot**
- Dreyfus, Louis G.**
Envoy of the United States in Tehran (from 18 December 1940 to 12 December 1943), later Envoy in Reykjavik (from 14 June 1944) 457
- Driberg, Tom**
British journalist and politician, member of the House of Commons (from 1942) 873, 878–880
- Drohojowski, Jan**
Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Washington (from 1939 to 1942), Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in Havana (1942), Government Representative in China (1942), later Deputy Minister of Information and Documentation (from 1943 to 1944) 424 [?], 530–532
- Dryszko, Jerzy**
602
- Dubicz-Penther, Karol**
Polish Envoy in Lisbon (to 31 August 1943), died 15 January 1945 9, 10, 12–14, 118, 120–125, 144–146, 149, 151, 152, 206–208, 257, 421
- Dubiński, Held**
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- Dudryk-Darlewski, Stanisław**
Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Bombay (from November 1943) 1002
- Dunajewski**
Soldier, Polish Armed Forces 824
- Dunkel, Jerzy**
Military Intelligence Officer, former Representative of LOT Polish Airlines in Helsinki 545
- Dunn, James Clement**
Employee of the US State Department, Deputy State Secretary for Europe, Far and Middle East and Africa (from December 1944) 691
- Durbrow, Elbridge**
Assistant Chief (from 1941) and later Chief of the Eastern European Division of the US State Department (from 20 December 1944) 690
- Duval, Raymond**
French Colonel, then General, Military Attaché at the Vichy Government in Ankara (from September 1941 to October 1942), later with General de Gaulle (from May 1943) 202
- Dzierżykraj-Morawski, Kajetan**
Head of the Political Department of the Military Aims Research Office (from 1939 to 1940), Polish Envoy to the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile (from 22 May to 1 September 1941), Secretary-General at the MFA (to August 1943), Ambassador to the French Committee of National Liberation (from 10 September 1943), later to the Provisional Government of the French Republic 182, 245, 255, 285, 290, 300, 301, 303–305, 307–310, 559–561, 617
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- Easterman, Alexander Levvey**
British journalist and lawyer, activist of the World Jewish Congress 391, 392

Echandi, Montero Alberto

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica
(from 8 May 1940), died 28 September 1944
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Eck, Nathan

Journalist and Zionist activist 645

Eden, Robert Anthony

British Secretary of State for Dominion
Affairs (to 10 May 1940), Secretary of State
for War (from 12 May to 22 December 1940),
later Foreign Secretary 325, 466, 533, 539,
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SS Officer, one of the main organisers of the
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Trusted representative of the Polish Embassy
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Eisenzweig, Szyja (Szaja)

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Eiss, Chaim

Agudat activist in Switzerland,
died November 1943 793 [?]

Eiss, Joseph

Jewish activist in Switzerland, son of Chaim
792

Eliasberg, Jakow

Industrialist from Pińsk, in 1940 deported
to Kazakhstan (USSR), evacuated with the
Polish Army in the USSR, from 1943 in Tel
Aviv 500

Eliasz [?]

810

Emelyanov, V.V.

Consul General of the Soviet Union
in Tehran 923, 924

Emerson, Herbert William

British official, Director of the
Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees
1017

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Lawyer, trusted representative of the Polish
Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev in Tashkent
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Soviet writer and publicist 277

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Erlich, Henryk

Polish-Jewish activist, politician of the Bund,
arrested by the NKVD, committed suicide
in prison (according to other sources was
murdered) in 1942 251, 254, 266–268, 276,
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Errázuriz Ovalle, Carlos

Director of the Consular Department of the
Chilean MFA 215

Estkowski, Tadeusz

Captain, Polish Armed Forces 826

Estreicher, Karol

Art historian, Secretary of the Polish Prime
Minister Sikorski, Head of the Office for the
Recovery of Cultural Losses at the Ministry
of Congress Works in London (from 1940
to 1945) 176–178

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Attaché at the Swiss Legation in Berlin
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Polish writer, translator and journalist 361

Fajngold, Naftul

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Falkwrechner, Carlos

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Fall, Leon

Trusted representative of the Polish Embassy
in Moscow-Kuybyshev in Almaty 272

Falter, Alfred

Polish industrialist, shipowner, Deputy
Minister of Treasury (from 30 September
1939 to June 1940), later in the United States
(from 1942) 22, 212

Farinacci, Roberto

Italian politician, member of the Great
Council of Fascism (to 2 August 1943),
Publisher of *Il Regime Fascista*, died 28 April
1945 110, 111

Fasman, Oscar Z.

Rabbi in Ottawa (from 1940) 264

Feder, Chaim Noe

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Feder, Estera

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Feder, Hersch

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Feiner, Leon

Lawyer, activist of the Bund, Chairman
of the Council to Aid Jews 'Żegota'
(from November 1944 to January 1945),
died 22 February 1945 439, 735, 812

Feis, Herbert

American historian and economist,
Economic Adviser for International Affairs
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- Frankowski, Feliks**
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Section (from October 1943), later Head
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Lawyer and journalist, politician of the
Democratic Party, employee of the Polish
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Consulate General in London (to 1941),
Deputy Head of the Continental Action
and Head of the Department of Continental
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Gano, Stanisław

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Representative of the French National
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of the French Committee of National
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British politician, member of the House
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Social activist, organiser of assistance for Polish refugees in Wilno (from September to December 1939), arrested by the Germans, later member of the Joint Distribution Committee in Warsaw (from 1940), activist of resistance movement in the Warsaw Ghetto and member of several Jewish organisations, died 18 January 1943 35
- Gitterman, Eugeniusz**
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- Glaser, Ludomir**
Commander of a squadron in the 10th Dragoon Regiment of the Polish Armed Forces (from August 1942 to November 1943), later Quartermaster of the regiment (to July 1944) 823
- Glaser, Stefan**
Head of Department in the Polish Ministry of Justice (from 1939 to 1941), later Envoy to the Belgian Government-in-Exile, then Envoy in Brussels (from September 1944) 22, 466, 467, 1016, 1018
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- Goebbels, Joseph**
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- Goldmann**
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Agudat activist, editor of *The Jewish Weekly* 27, 37 [?], 785, 1020
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Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe, Minister President of Prussia (to April 1945) 344, 1045
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- Göss → Höß, Rudolf**
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Gestapo Officer, Head of the Political Department in the Auschwitz concentration camp (to November 1943) 704, 962
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- Grabski, Stanisław**
Chairman of the Polish National Council (from 3 February 1942 to November 1944) 296 [?], 299, 885, 887
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- Graliński, Zygmunt**
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- Grasett, Arthur Edward**
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- Greenwood, Arthur**
British politician, Cabinet Minister (from May 1940), later Leader of the Opposition in the United Kingdom (from February 1942 to May 1945) 287, 646
- Grigg, Joseph W.**
Correspondent of the United Press in Europe 326
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- Grobelny, Julian**
Socialist politician, Chairman of the Council to Aid Jews 'Żegota' (to February 1944), died 5 December 1944 706, 732, 812
- Gromyko, Andriej A.**
Counsellor at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, later Ambassador (from 22 August 1943) 1028
- Grosfeld, Ludwik**
Polish lawyer, socialist politician, Secretary-General at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (from 1940 to 1943), later Minister

- of Treasury (from 14 July 1943 to 24 November 1944) 291, 298, 330, 567, 568, 579, 612, 616, 671, 674, 877, 969
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- Grundland, Jakub Joel**
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- Gryncharov, M.**
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- Guinness, Walter Edward (Lord Moyne)**
British politician, member of the Conservative Party, Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (from 1940 to 1941), Secretary of State for the Colonies and Leader of the House of Lords (from 8 February 1941 to 22 February 1942), Deputy Resident in Cairo (from August 1942 to January 1944), later Minister-Resident in the Middle East, died 6 November 1944 1007
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- Gusev, Fedor T.**
Head of the 2nd European Department of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR (from 1941 to 1942), Ambassador in Ottawa (to 1943), later in London 1007
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Representative of the Joint Distribution Committee in occupied Poland 683–685
- Gwiazdoski, Tadeusz**
Liaison of the Polish MFA with the French Ministry of Information and Documentation (from November 1939 to June 1940), Head of the International Regimes Section (from 1 September 1941), Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA (from 1 August 1943) 22
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- later Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (to 26 May 1945) 879
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Polish General, Minister without portfolio (from 3 October 1939), Chairman of the Interministerial Registration Committee (from 15 November 1939), Head of the Office of Education and School Affairs (from 1940 to 1943) 50, 175
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Lawyer, Executive Director of the Canadian Jewish Congress (from 1940), Director of the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies (to 1942) 264
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British diplomat and shipbroker, later Officer of the Special Operations Executive, Head of the Polish Section (from July 1941 to September 1944) 614
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First Secretary of the Peruvian Legation in Bern 707, 708
- Heftman, Josef Chaim**
Zionist activist and journalist, Publisher of the magazine *HaBoker* 1023
- Heilman, Lipa**
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- Heitzman, Marian**
Attaché at the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kybyshyev (from September 1941 to 1942), Embassy Delegate in Samarkand (from 1942), later Head of the Political Department at the Ministry of National Defence 758, 826, 986, 988
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- Henderson, Loy Wesley**
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Danish lawyer, activist of the Jewish community 754
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- Hertz, Joseph Herman**
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Heyman → Hackmann, Hermann

Hidalgo, Ernesto

Secretary-General at the MFA of Mexico 580, 581

Hilzberg, Mozes

Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 845

Himmler, Heinrich

Head of the SS and German police, Minister of Internal Affairs (from 24 August 1943 to 29 April 1945), died 23 May 1945 336, 340, 342, 438, 443, 515, 516, 518, 535, 583, 963, 978, 1003

Hirn, Yrjö

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American entrepreneur, Adviser to the Chairman of War Labor Board (from 1942), later Special Representative of the War Refugee Board in Turkey (from February 1944) 801, 955

Hirszman, Józef

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Hitler, Adolf

Dictator and Chancellor of the Third Reich 19, 111, 177, 230, 266, 319, 328, 344, 349, 359, 360, 363, 368, 369, 382, 390, 392, 403, 407, 412, 430, 438, 440, 443, 487, 488, 512, 520, 522, 529, 549, 608, 754, 787, 824, 829, 852, 872, 879, 937, 966, 967, 972, 977, 984, 1045

Hochfeld, Julian

Polish sociologist and socialist politician, from 1940 in the USSR, Deputy Delegate of the Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev in Stalinabad (Dushanbe), later in the Polish Army in the USSR and in the 2nd Corps, then an employee of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in London (from September 1944) 272, 936–943

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Polish Lieutenant Colonel, victim of the Katyn massacre, died April 1940 16

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Envoy of the United States in San José (to 1 September 1941) 214

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Admiral, Regent of Hungary (to 15 October 1944) 819, 947

Höß (Höss), Rudolf

German Commandant of the Auschwitz concentration camp (to 1943) 701, 703, 962, 977, 978

Hössler, Franz

SS Officer, member of the camp staff in Auschwitz (from 1940 to March 1944), Commandant of the camp in Neckarelz (from March to May 1944), later again in the Auschwitz camp (from June 1944 to January 1945) 961

Houwalt, Władysław

Financial Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Paris (1940) and later at the Legation in Lisbon (from 1941 to 1943), Delegate of the Ministry of Treasury in Lisbon, then at the Delegation to the French Committee of National Liberation 553

Hübner → Gitterman, Eugeniusz

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Polish Consul General in Jerusalem (to November 1939) 10, 11

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State Secretary of the United States (to November 1944) 197, 199, 690–692

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Hutten-Czapski, Emeryk August

Delegate of the Polish Red Cross in France, Government Delegate in North Africa (from 1940 to 1943), Consul General in Algiers (from 1940 to 1943), Deputy Secretary-General at the MFA and Head of the Refugee and Consular sections (from 20 January to 30 September 1944) 553, 567, 579, 580, 595, 650, 651, 662, 663, 798, 816, 818, 819, 843, 848, 849, 865, 881, 902, 949, 951, 960

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Imberman, Ignacy

Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 845

Imrédy, Béla

Former Prime Minister of Hungary, leader of the Party of Hungarian Renewal (from October 1940) 860, 862

Indig, Joseph

Protector of Jewish children in Italy 755

Indzev, Boyan

Official at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Bulgaria 482

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Representative of the Zionist organisation in Budapest 60

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Zionist activist, founder and leader of the New Zionist Organisation, died 4 August 1940 29, 154, 306

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American Jewish activist, National Director of the Joint Distribution Committee in Italy, Greece and Czechoslovakia (from 1944) 1013

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Zionist activist in Argentina 335

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Jewish soldier, Polish Armed Forces 829

Jakubowski, Henryk

Activist of the Polish Refugees Assistance Committee in Romania 743

Jakubski, Zbigniew

Head of the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev (in liquidation), later First Secretary at the Legation and Chairman of the Parcel Dispatch Committee in Tehran (from 1943 to 1944), then Head of the Refugee Department at the MFA 806, 807, 903, 904

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Metropolitan Archbishop of Wilno 342

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Government Delegate for Poland (from 19 February 1943 to 27 March 1945) 613, 644, 687, 706, 732–735, 811, 812, 909

Jankowski, Tadeusz

Employee of the Polish Research Centre in London, later Head of the Eastern Section at the MFA (from 1 August 1941), then Deputy Head of the Eastern Department (from 6 April 1944) 325

Jarblum, Marc

Co-founder of the Jewish Social Democratic Labour Party (Poale Zion), leader of the Jewish resistance movement in France 779, 780

Jarozewski, Kazimierz

Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Palestine 903, 904, 1041

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Jaworski, Jan

Politician of the People's Party, member of the Polish National Council 555

Jenicz, Andrzej

Polish Attaché at the Moscow-Kuybyshev Embassy (from August 1941), Head of the

Embassy Delegation in Kirov (from January 1942), later Representative of the Embassy to the Armed Forces Command in the USSR (from 12 May to 4 November 1942) 500

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War Correspondent of the *News Chronicles* 276

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Member of the Polish National Council 226, 227

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Jurkiewicz, Stanisław
Delegate of the Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Geneva 322, 775, 778, 779, 1035, 1036

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Polish Captain 500

Kaczmarek, Piotr
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Kaczor
Soldier, Polish Armed Forces 823

Kaczyński
Polish priest 799

Kaczyński, Zygmunt
Polish Catholic priest, Deputy Minister of Information and Documentation (from 1940 to 1943), later Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education (from July 1943 to November 1944), member of the National Council (from 1940 to 14 July 1943) 555

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Zionist activist 253, 254, 307

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Secretary-General of the Jewish Agency in Geneva 755

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Finnish linguist, Professor of the University of Helsinki 544

Kalisz, Feiga Brucha
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Rabbi 804

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Kállay, Miklós
Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary (from 9 March 1942 to 22 March 1944) 860, 861

Kalmanowitz, Avraham
Rabbi in the United States, involved in saving Jews in Europe 263, 950, 964, 965, 978

Kamiński, Kazimierz
Polish Honorary Vice-Consul in Zürich 679, 681

Kanstein, Paul Ernst
SS Officer, Head of civil administration in occupied Denmark (from April 1940 to 1943), later Deputy Head of military administration in Italy (from 1943 to 1944) 754

Kański, Władysław
Polish Vice-Consul in Bucharest (from July to November 1940), Head of the Political Communication Post in Romania (from June 1940), later the Delegate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Jerusalem (from January 1941 to September 1942) 323, 324, 448

Kaplan, Izrael
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Kara, Stanisław
Chairman of the Refugee Assistance Committee in Curia (Portugal) and of the 'P' Intelligence Exposure in Lisbon (from 1941), later Military Attaché at the Polish Legation in Rio de Janeiro (from March 1944) 999–1001

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- Karo**
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- Karpensprung**
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- Karski, Jan (Kozielewski, Jan)**
Political emissary and courier between the authorities of the Polish Underground State and the Polish Government-in-Exile 37–41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 582, 614, 615, 687–693, 697, 744
- Karszo-Siedlewski, Jan**
Polish Envoy in Tehran (to June 1942), later Consul General in Beirut (to February 1943), then Head of the Western European Section (to 20 January 1944) and the Western Department at the MFA (from 6 April 1944) 136, 137, 180, 181, 333, 356
- Kasztelaniec**
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- Katz, Leo**
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- Katz, Salomon Mendel**
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- Katzky, Herbert**
Head of the War Refugee Board Delegation in Turkey 1029
- Kazimierczak, Kazimierz**
Polish engineer, organiser of the evacuation of the Polish civilian population in Buzuluk, Tashkent and Samarkand (from 1941 to 1942), Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Nairobi (to 1944) 742, 791
- Keitel, Wilhelm**
Field Marshal, Head of the High Command of the Wehrmacht 1045
- Kenworthy, Joseph (Baron Strabolgi)**
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- of National Defence (from November 1942)
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Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR 630

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Counsellor at the Political Section of the Polish MFA (from 30 September 1939 to 17 June 1940), Head of the Refugee Section (from August 1940 to April 1944), later Head of the German Department at the MFA 118–120, 132, 335, 357, 421, 551–553, 577, 578, 662, 667
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Commercial Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in London, later Envoy in Mexico City (from February 1945) 93
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Assistant Secretary of State of the United States, later Ambassador in Havana (from March 1940) and Mexico City (from February 1942) 756, 757
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Press Attaché at the Polish Legation in Stockholm (to 1939), later President of the Polish Aid Committee in Stockholm 755

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Lawyer, member of the administration of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt 689

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American lawyer, President of the American Jewish Committee (from 1943) 970

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Polish General, participant in the French Campaign, later interned in Switzerland (from 1940) 480

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Polish writer and publicist, participant in the Norway Campaign (1940), Press Attaché at the Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev (from August 1941 to July 1942), participant in battles in Western Europe (from 1944) 251, 276, 277

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Polish Consul in the Far East, later in London (from 1941) 133, 134

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Polish diplomat, participant in the French resistance movement (from 1940 to 1941), employee of the Polish Red Cross and Deputy Director of the Polish Office in Casablanca (from February 1942) and Head of the intelligence post in Casablanca (from March 1942), Vice-Consul in Casablanca (from December 1942 to November 1943), later at the Political Unit of the MFA (from January 1944) and in the Refugee Department (from November

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Polish doctor, bacteriologist, Health Adviser to the Chinese Government (1939), Delegate of the Polish Government-in-Exile for aid to Poland and Polish refugees in the United States (to 1941), Adviser to the Chinese Special Representative in the United States (to 1943) 22

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Associate of General Sikorski, Chargé
d'Affaires at the Polish Embassy in Moscow
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Polish General, Commander-in-Chief of the Union of Armed Struggle–Home Army (from June 1940 to June 1943), died August 1944 230, 231, 425, 438, 518
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Polish General, Commander of the ‘Łódź’ Army and later the ‘Warsaw’ Army (September 1939), then taken captive by the Germans 201
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Polish MFA (from 1943 to 1944), later in the
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Envoy of Switzerland in Rome (to 14 March
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Ambassador of Argentina to the Holy See
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then Ambassador in Madrid 242

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Marshal of Poland, Commander-in-Chief
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First Secretary and Head of the Consular
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Polish lawyer and diplomat, Secretary to
Stanisław Stroński (from 1939 to 1940), later
Head of the Information Department at the
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Commandant of the transit camps in Poznań and Łódź, later Commandant of the concentration camp in Sachsenhausen (from September 1942 to April 1943) and in Kaiserwald (to October 1944), died 1945 647, 648
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- Schorr, Mojżesz**
Polish-Jewish historian, orientalist, former Senator, arrested by the NKVD (1939) and sent to a GULAG camp in Uzbekistan, where he died in 1941 272, 315, 641, 645, 853
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Lawyer, Zionist activist, member of the Polish National Council 11, 22, 51–53, 88–91, 113–116, 135, 136, 148, 149, 154, 178, 183–185, 225–227, 231, 234, 245, 247, 248, 259, 279, 280, 282, 291, 298, 305, 314, 318, 332, 333, 399, 406, 407, 425, 475, 507, 562, 578, 612, 652–654, 662, 663, 686, 687, 738, 757, 772, 779, 780, 800, 831, 832, 835, 857, 903, 904, 968

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(1939), Legal Counsellor at the Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev (from 1941 to 1943), later Vice-Consul in Jerusalem (from July to August 1943), then employee of the Ministry of Information and Documentation in the United States, then Consul in New York (from April 1945) 251, 254, 621, 952–954

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- Singer, Bernard**
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- Skipwith, Sofka (Sophie)**
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Attaché at the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev and Delegate in Chelyabinsk 267

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Captain, Polish Armed Forces 602, 603, 605, 606

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Journalist and physician, Zionist activist, from 1940 in Palestine, Chief of Staff of the Haganah (from 1941), member of the Jewish National Council (from 1944) 448, 1025, 1026, 1039, 1040

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British Head of Refugees Department at the Foreign Office (from 1940 to 1941), later Envoy to Colombia (from 1944 Ambassador) 195

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Delegate of the Polish Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education in the settlement of Santa Rosa in Mexico (from September 1943) 799

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Polish Ambassador in Ankara 87, 94, 112, 126, 137, 209, 303, 840, 949

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Lawyer and politician, former deputy of the Polish Parliament, Gulag prisoner in the USSR (to 1944), Head of the Reparations Department in the Polish Committee of National Liberation (from July to December 1944), later Deputy to the National Council and Chairman

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to September 1942), later Consul in Istanbul
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- Staszewski**
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Rabbi and businessman in Switzerland, organiser of aid to Jews 425, 784, 792, 793, 809, 810, 833, 846, 858, 914, 950, 1003, 1020

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American journalist, editor of the *Chicago Tribune* 953

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Polish Delegate to the League of Nations and Consul General in Geneva (from 1940), later Plenipotentiary of the Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare for the territory of the USA, Consul General in New York (from October 1941) 153, 244, 245, 286–289, 291, 295, 334, 355, 373, 383–385, 425, 495, 507, 508, 510, 524, 525, 561, 562, 646, 693, 731, 744, 745, 792, 795, 803, 809, 810, 846, 854, 858, 876, 877, 888, 889, 910, 914, 931, 932, 934, 947, 950, 964, 978, 1003, 1004

Strasburger, Henryk Leon

Polish Under-Secretary of State in the Presidium of the Council of Ministers (from 5 October 1939), Minister of Treasury (from 9 December 1939 to 14 July 1943), later Minister of State in the Middle East (to 24 November 1944) 11, 12, 60, 119, 121

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British politician, member of the House of Commons 879

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Romanian journalist and politician, President of the Central Jewish Office (from February to December 1942) 317

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Polish politician and journalist, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister without portfolio (from 30 September 1939 to 18 July 1940), later Minister of Information and Documentation (to 14 July 1943) 11, 95, 178, 202, 217, 324, 375, 376, 448, 474, 511, 558, 599, 660

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Polish industrialist, Delegate of the Ministry of Treasury in Hungary, acting Chairman of the Civic Committee for the Care of Polish Refugees in Hungary (1941) 209, 210

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Sukiennicki, Wiktor

Polish lawyer and historian, arrested by the NKVD and deported to the USSR (June 1941), Legal Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev, Head of the Intervention Section (from February to July 1942), later employee of the Centre for Studies in the Middle East of the Ministry of Information and Documentation 361, 456

Sulik, Nikodem

Polish Colonel, later General (from March 1944), Commander of the Union of Armed Struggle district in Wilno (from December 1939), arrested by the NKVD (April 1941), then in the Polish Army in the USSR and in the East, Commander of the 5th Borderland Infantry Division (from August 1943) 499

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Engineer, member of the Jewish Council in Warsaw, died 1943 653, 665

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Zionist activist, trusted representative of the Polish Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev in Kazakhstan 253, 272, 307

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Politician of the Polish Socialist Party, Deputy Delegate of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Tehran (from 1942) 778, 779

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Polish Colonel, victim of the Katyn massacre, died April 1940 16
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- Szymanowski, Antoni**
Polish historian and editor, from September 1940 at the Bureau of Information and Propaganda of the High Command of the Union of Armed Struggle-Home Army, held in German captivity after the Warsaw Uprising 409, 440
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- Świdorski, Kazimierz**
Inspector of civilian centres (from January

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Editor of the Polish daily *Dziennik Polski* in London (from July to August 1940), Counsellor at the Embassy in Moscow-Kuybyshev (from September 1941 to November 1942), Secretary of the Committee for National Affairs and Director at the Polish Information Centre in Palestine (from 1943 to 1945) 331, 1026
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- Tarnowski, Adam**
Polish Envoy in Sofia (to 2 March 1941), Secretary-General at the MFA in London (from April to September 1941), Envoy to the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile (from 1 October 1941 to 29 November 1944), later Minister of Foreign Affairs 182, 238, 239, 245, 1034, 1044
- Tartakower, Arieħ**
Sociologist and demographer, Zionist activist, Director of the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of the World Jewish Congress, Chairman of the American branch of the Representation of Polish Jewry, Chairman of the Council of the Association of Jewish Refugees and Immigrants from Poland 240, 241, 263, 289, 333, 355, 357, 383–385, 562, 563, 565, 646, 744, 745, 831, 832

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Polish Lieutenant, Union of Armed Struggle, later Assistant for Soviet Occupation at the 6th Department of the Commander-in-Chief's Staff (from January 1941) 29
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German lawyer and politician, President of the People's Court (to 20 August 1942), later Minister of Justice (to 30 April 1945) 1045
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Engineer and editor, Jewish activist in Switzerland 71, 72
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German engineer, founder and Head of the Organisation Todt that used forced labour of prisoners, died 8 February 1942 813
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Polish General, Commander of the operational group in the 'Pomerania' Army (September 1939), Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Victory Service (to December 1939), arrested by the NKVD (February 1940), later in the Polish Army in the USSR (from August 1941), Deputy Commander of the Polish Army in the East (from March 1943 to December 1944) 277
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Polish engineer, Deputy Head, later Head
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of Internal Affairs (to 1943), then Consul
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