

THE GHETTO

speaks

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SHOULD YOU MAKE
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Issued by the AMERICAN REPRESENTATION of the GENERAL JEWISH WORKERS' UNION of POLAND

Address: THE GHETTO SPEAKS, 175 East Broadway, Room 401, New York City - Phone: ORchard 4-1587

The Jewish Underground Movement of Poland Carries on

Since the renowned Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto in April-May, 1943, we have been deeply concerned with the fate of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland. True, the heroic struggle, waged by the Jews against their Nazi murderers did not stop with the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto. Time and again we have been informed about new Jewish communities of Poland, that were waging armed resistance, of new Jewish guerrilla detachments leading a vigorous fight for freedom, for the liberation of their country and for their human dignity. Yet, we were apprehensive. We were constantly confronted with the question: had they, there, under Nazi domination, succeeded in re-establishing the necessary connections among themselves, in organizing a new apparatus for the Underground Movement after the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto? We tried, painstakingly, to contact our leaders in Poland, to obtain an authentic report from them which would clear up the situation and put an end to our misgivings. For a long time our efforts were fruitless.

We are now glad to inform our readers, that our task has finally been solved. Dr. Emanuel Scherer, our representative in the Polish National Council in London, has just received an authentic report from the headquarters of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland, which contains new and amazing details concerning their heroic struggle. The Jewish Underground Movement of Poland is working in a way, that makes us all proud of it. This remarkable report is now on its way to us. It will be published in "Ghetto Speaks" as soon as we receive it. The following three cables from Dr. Scherer acknowledge the receipt of the report and disclose some of the information contained therein.

1) JUST RECEIVED LARGE DETAILED REPORT AND A DIRECT MESSAGE FOR THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE JEWISH WORKERS UNION NEW YORK STOP DETAILS FOLLOW

2) TODAY TENTH OF FEBRUARY DELIVERED TO THE JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY AND OVERSEAS AGENCY A CABLE WITH A FEW DETAILS FROM A NEW REPORT RECEIVED FROM THE POLISH JEWISH WORKERS UNDERGROUND STOP A GENERAL STRIKE IN THE GHETTO OF LODZ STOPPED NAZI MURDERER STOP THE STRUGGLE

IN BIALYSTOK LASTED ONE MONTH STOP FIGHTING OCCURRED IN OTHER CITIES AND CAMPS SUCH AS SOBIBOR, TREBLINKA, TRAWNIKI DURING LIQUIDATION STOP THE FORTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR ORGANIZATION WAS CELEBRATED IN THE TRAWNIKI CAMP STOP MANY OTHER UNIMAGINABLE DETAILS STOP VERY SORRY THAT YOU MUST WAIT SOME TIME FOR THIS UNTIL NOW UNPRECEDENTED REPORT

3) JUST RECEIVED A DIRECT REPORT DATED NOVEMBER 23rd REGARDING THE ANNIHILATION REMNANTS JEWS STOP DURING NOVEMBER FORTY THOUSAND JEWS WERE MACHINE GUNNED IN SEVERAL CAMPS STOP RESISTING JEWS SET GERMAN STOCKS ON FIRE STOP THEY APPEAL URGENTLY FOR HELP STOP ARTUR ZYGIELBOJM'S HEROISM KNOWN AND HONORED STOP THEY RECEIVED OUR HELP STOP QUOTED NAMES THOSE KILLED AND SAVED STOP RELATIONS WITH POLISH UNDERGROUND GOOD STOP AWAITING SAID REPORT IMPATIENTLY

INTERVIEW WITH AN EYE-WITNESS OF THE BATTLE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

Dr. Emanuel Scherer, representative of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland in the Polish National Council in London interviewed Mr. Bielak, a leader of the Polish Underground, who recently arrived in London from Warsaw, where he had witnessed the battle between the Jews and the Nazis. Upon his arrival in London, Mr. Bielak was immediately appointed to the Polish National Council. The following is the text of the interview:

"How was resistance in the ghetto made possible?" — Dr. Scherer asked. "There existed in the Warsaw Ghetto a very active and widely developed underground movement. The Jews had for some time been collecting arms obtained from various sources. Through underground tunnels they dug through the ghetto they maintained contact with the outer world and their six weeks' resistance to the enemy is best evidence how well they were prepared. The Germans lost a thousand dead in that battle and to avoid greater losses they brought in tanks, guns and mines. I saw a Jewish mother with her child in her arms, jump-

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ing from the fourth floor of a house in flames. I saw a couple do the same. I saw a Polish fireman who when asked why he looked half dead said, that he had seen so many people burned alive that he could no longer eat."

"What is the position of those who managed to escape from the ghetto?"

Bielak replied: "Jews who escaped are constantly in fear of death, particularly men. If a Pole is arrested and his documents are in order, he may be allowed to go free, but a Jew who is arrested, even if he possesses best documentary proof, is lost."

"In July, 1943, I happened to pass Chmielna Street, near Warsaw's main railroad station. I saw a 'Gestapo dog' dragging someone into the courtyard of a house. A few minutes later I heard a shot and the German came out alone. What had happened was that he had arrested a person, examined his documents and although these testified his being Aryan, the German didn't believe it, and shot the arrested man himself. So it can be seen, that any Jew who manages to escape, if he appears on the streets is liable to be shot. It is necessary to use the greatest ingenuity to hide him."

"How many Jews are still alive in Poland and where are they?" Dr. Scherer asked.

It is difficult to give any clear reply to this question." Mr. Bielak said. "The Germans have deported and are still deporting Jews from other countries into Poland. Some are promised they will get work in Poland but in reality they are all slaughtered. The Jews who are allowed to live are put into forced labor camps or into TODT organizations to build fortifications, trenches, etc. Some are employed in factories working for Germans. Thus there are still Jews alive in Poland but their number is difficult to estimate."

"A special chapter in the history of German oppression in Poland is the method of creating antagonism between Jews and Poles. In camps where they work together, the work is divided in such a way as to favor one and so create ill feeling. Sometimes the Germans succeed and antagonism lives on outside of the camp. The enemy does everything he can to destroy any feeling of solidarity between the two peoples often putting one in position of oppressing the other. This is even carried out between Jew and Jew. I myself saw a group of Jews, guarded by the Gestapo, marching along a road and forced to run a gauntlet of other Jews equipped with whips and sticks, who were compelled to beat them. It was a terrible sight, indeed."

PROF. HAROLD LASKI ON THE BATTLE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

Prof. Harold Laski, at a meeting of the Fabian Society held in Oxford last week, paid tribute to the fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Jewish Underground Movement in Poland. "The heroism of the Jews fighting in the Warsaw Ghetto," he said, "was symbolic of the spirit which must animate all those who are laying the foundations of a new Europe."

JEWISH FEMALE GUERRILLAS

A special list of nearly 300 Jewish women is being circulated by the Gestapo in Poland, as wanted for sabotage, the Polish Telegraph Agency reports. A reward of \$4,000 is being offered for three of the women, who escaped after being seized by the Germans.

POLES AND JEWS HANGED ALONG A ROAD IN POLAND

Thirty Jews and fifty Poles were hanged last month for sabotage on a road near Husiatyn, South Poland, according to a report from underground sources in Poland. The Jews were employed in the construction of a road which was completed only a little while ago.

After the road was completed and German traffic was using it, explosions occurred which killed more than 300 Germans. More than a quarter of a mile of the new road was blown up.

The German authorities arrested and questioned about 2,000 workers who at one time or another had been employed in the construction of the road. Unable to discover who was responsible for the sabotage, they picked 50 Poles and all the Jews, numbering 30, and hanged them along the road.

The bodies of these victims bearing the inscription: "This will happen to every one of you who dares act against the German might," were left hanging for ten days. Townspeople from the district were driven there by German police and forced to look at the bodies.

Among the Jews hanged was a father with his four sons.

THEY DIED FOR FREEDOM

The following is an excerpt from a letter, recently received by the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, describing the death of two soldiers of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland. Before the outbreak of the war, the comrades Celler and Feiereisen were well-known trade union leaders in their native city of Tarnov.

"We regret to inform you, that our dear comrades, Celler and Feiereisen, were killed on the streets of Tarnow while leading a detachment of Underground fighters against the Nazis in an effort to rescue some of our comrades who had been arrested by the Gestapo. They were killed in the fight for freedom along with many others."

In pre-war Poland Tarnov was a well-known industrial center, engaged in the manufacture of clothing, with a remarkably well organized Branch of the Jewish Socialist Movement "Bund." The memory of the two heroes will remain forever.

SLOVAKIA DELIVERS ITS JEWS TO THE NAZIS

According to a report recently published by the Swedish newspaper "Stockholm Socialdemokraten," the Jewish population of Slovakia has received stringent orders for a new registration. The consensus of opinion is, that this registration is connected with a final deportation of the Slovakian Jews to death camps in Poland.

It should be noted, that the Slovak puppet government is paying Germany 5,000 Slovak Koron for every deported Jew whose property it appropriates. At the present moment there are only several hundred Jews left in Bratislava; thousands of them have already been deported.

GERMAN SOLDIERS OPPOSE NAZIS IN DENMARK

The following is an authentic report from Denmark pertaining to the events that occurred in that small country when the Nazis commenced with the deportation of the Danish Jews at the end of 1943:

"A worker from Denmark, who just arrived in London, relates, that the compassion for the persecuted Jews and the help given them by the population of Denmark has been remarkable, unprecedented. Jeopardizing their own safety, the Danes gave shelter to those Jews who escaped from the clutches of the Nazis and help them with all the means at their command. The usually calm and level-headed Danes fumed with indignation and acted against the German SS men and military agents with a fury that astounded the occupation authorities. A considerable number of German soldiers openly opposed the brutal SS men. Many Jews arriving in Sweden from Denmark have related, that they escaped deportation to death camps in Poland only because of the substantial help given them by German soldiers. The difference in the behavior of German soldiers and SS men was then very obvious."

CIVIL DEATH OF THE JEWS IN GERMANY

On July 2, 1943, the Reichsgesetzblatt published the latest in a series of German anti-Jewish decrees. It denies to the Jews the public right of protection by the courts and the civil rights of inheritance. The first clause states that "culpable actions" committed by Jews will be punished by the police. Article two orders that after the death of a Jew his property goes to the Reich. These provisions will also, at the discretion of the German Minister of the Reich, be applied to foreign Jews in Germany. Like many German laws against the Jews in recent years, the most prominent feature about this one is the fact that the conditions it purports to establish already exist . . . But the Germans like to stamp all their acts with an official seal. This decree of July 2, 1943, certified the **fait accompli** of the complete disfranchisement and expropriation of the few remaining Jews in the expanded Reich who had not already at that time been deported or slain.

JEWS IN GREECE UNDER NAZI OCCUPATION

Shut within the ghetto walls, just as their brethren in Poland are, the Jews of Greece have been unable, because of the lack of an organized movement of their own, or perhaps for some other reason, to call the attention of public opinion throughout the world to their

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appalling fate. No one has known anything about them. Now, for the first time, the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland is in possession of an exact, authentic report revealing the condition of the Jews of Greece, and deems it a duty to publish it. The resistance of the gallant Greeks against the anti-Semitic atrocities of the Nazi beasts deserves recognition.

The conquest of Greece by the Axis opened a tragic chapter in the history of Greek Jews for they suffered not only those ills which the other Greeks underwent but they also were victims of those special anti-Semitic measures invented by the Germans and their satellites.

During the first months of the occupation it is true, the Nazi authorities did not adopt any special measures concerning the Jews. Very soon, however, it was observed that if discrimination against the Jews was not applied by the Axis, this was solely due to the fact that it was hoped that this job might be left to the Greeks themselves. They were, however, greatly mistaken.

Greek newspapers, which passed under Axis control were pressed strongly to participate in this anti-Semitic drive, but the great majority of journalists refused to comply with these directives. There is only one exception, the daily "New Europe" of Salonika which was constituted after the occupation of Greece by exclusively German capital, and which is under the direction of a known agent of the Gestapo, Papastratigatis.

This campaign in Greece, had a diametrically opposite result to that which the Germans expected. It provoked, instead of an antipathy against those of Hebrew faith, a great movement of sympathy for them; a clandestine organization was formed, the E. V. E. (Ellines Voithite Evraiores — Greeks give aid to the Jews) which assumed the task of coordinating the moral and material assistance for the persecuted Jews.

Faced with this situation the Germans decided to intervene in a more direct manner. While the anti-Semitic campaign was petering out, because of the lack of any public reaction, the authorities of occupation were approaching the first leader of the shadow government, General K. Tsolokaglou, and attempted to persuade him to adopt racial discrimination through legislation; however, they met with no success, inasmuch as the General, well aware of the unpopularity of any such measures, had no desire to incur greater hatred on the part of the Greeks.

It was only in the middle of 1942 that the Nazis decided to carry out themselves their plans of extermination. On July 12th all the Jews of Salonika from 18 to 45 years of age were invited by the Kommandantur to assemble on Liberation Square for a census to be taken; Italian and Spanish nationals were exempted. Fifteen thousand Jews were obliged to stand in the summer sun from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; those who succumbed to the heat and passed out, were immediately revived, made to stand up and "submitted (by the Gestapo agents) to exercise which would teach them in the future how to stand" (New Europe, July 13, 1942). As a result twelve Jews died from sunstroke on that day.

Because of the reaction of the Greek population of Salonika only part of the Jews were sent for compulsory labor in Bulgaria; the Germans on the other hand accepted from the community a tax of collective exemption amounting to three and a half billion drachmas, with the promise to renounce any future persecutions.

The extent of the popular movement reveals itself through official protests made on various occasions; the Association of Journalists of Macedonia and Thrace, and the Union of Reserve Officers adopted resolutions of sympathy towards the Jews and submitted them to the authorities. Finally the Metropolitan Bishop of Salonika, Mgr. Gennadios, protested to the Germans with such vigor that the Nazis were obliged to renounce provisionally their projects.

Because of the refusal of the Greeks to become anti-Semitic instruments, the Germans were finally obliged to take up the job.

In mid February, 1943, a delegation of the Rosenberg Committee, which had been entrusted with the extermination of European Judaism, arrived in Salonika. This delegation was accompanied by a detachment of SS troops, specialists in Jewish persecution.

The Germans immediately requisitioned a two-story villa in Salonika and began making a list of all the Greek Jews of the city. At the beginning of March all were told to carry yellow cards with the Star of David upon them and an order number. All Jews above the age of three were obliged to carry these insignia which were visible from far (dimensions 10 x 10 cm.). On March 10th the German authorities ordered all Jews to assemble in five indicated districts of the city (three exclusively Jewish suburbs, and two others situated in the center of the town). Only four days were allowed for the moving

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which was made more difficult because of the cold and humid March weather. Let us note also that the Rosenberg Committee had counted that five people were to be installed in each available room.

At the end of the scheduled time limit the occupation authorities published a decree formally forbidding Greeks to carry on any business with Jews or to safeguard their possessions in any manner.

Some days later it was also forbidden to Jews to move out of the limits of the suburbs, where they had been ordered to assemble. At the same time members of the SS troops were sent to the regions of Macedonia and Thrace, in order to hunt down the Jews who had taken refuge there. As a result large numbers of them were brought forcibly to Salonika and confined in the ghettos. The SS guards were also entrusted to escort the Jewish merchants to their business quarters in order to surrender the keys of their stores to the German authorities, who immediately plundered Jewish business establishments; it was thus a common sight at this period to see long lines of lorries carrying off Jewish merchandise to Nazi depots.

Of the five quarters reserved for the Jews, the one, that of Baron Hirsch, situated near the railway station was transformed into a concentration camp. It was surrounded with barbed wire and patrols installed with powerful searchlights for control. This part of the city became the deportation center of Salonika.

The first group of Jews deported from Salonika left the city at the end of March. There were three thousand Jews of all ages, and social classes chosen among the inhabitants of the Baron Hirsch quarter. The operation was carried out by the SS troops, which consisted of more beasts than human beings. They cruelly flogged old and sick men for the simple reason that they were unable, because of their age or their illness, to move at the requisite speed. The Jews were installed in freight cars, 70 per wagon. Among them were cripples and women with children in their wombs. The deportees were deprived of all possessions, money, jewels, etc., and were permitted to take with them only three pounds of bread and a jar of water. The delegation of the Red Cross tried in vain to come to their aid; the Germans permitted no intervention. The wagons were finally sealed before departure.

The next day Jews from the other quarters were transferred to the Baron Hirsch neighborhood. In awaiting their turn to be deported, many, mostly the more prosper-

ous Jews, were submitted to innumerable and indescribable tortures and perished in consequence. They pulled out their finger and toe nails and their teeth or prodded them with red hot bars.

During the months of April and May deportations were carried out ceaselessly under the conditions described above. By June 10th, fifty thousand of the sixty thousand Jewish inhabitants of Salonika were no more inhabitants of that city, where their ancestors had lived unmolested for four whole centuries.

The Greek population reacted to these persecutions indignantly; official protests were lodged with the authorities of occupation with the hope that these anti-Semitic measures cease or lose at least their brutal aspect. The Metropolitan Bishop of Salonika, Mgr. Gennadios, was the interpreter of this universal indignation; he visited the German Military Commander of the Region of Salonika and indicated how contrary to principles of humanity and Christianity were the measures taken against the Jews; the officer answered drily, that any intervention was impossible since orders had been given from higher authorities, alluding probably to Hitler himself.

At the same time the Professional and Popular Organizations in Athens adopted resolutions of protest which were handed to the head of the puppet government, John Rhallis. The leaders of Greek parties sent a delegation to Rhallis, formed by Messrs. Cafandaris, Papandreou and Mylonas; they demanded a prompt and vigorous intervention of the puppet government in favor of the Jews of Salonika. The Greek Church also associated itself with this movement. John Rhallis, impressed by these protests, promised he would betake himself to Salonika; however, he did not keep his word; the Germans told him bluntly to mind his own business and to be quiet. Thus the Greek population of Northern Greece awaited in vain for the relaxation of anti-Semitic measures.

Great efforts were made to hide or organize the escape of the greatest number possible of Jews; five thousand of them were saved, four thousand of them by the E. A. M. (National Front of Liberation). They were mainly war veterans of the Albanian front who joined the guerrilla bands of the Olympian region.

One thousand more Jews who were too old to be able to join in such active resistance were spirited away to Athens, having been given false identification papers with Christian names. Finally numerous Jews are in hiding in Greek homes of Salonika. Naturally it is impossible to es-

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establish their exact number. Jewish children were also saved from deportation by being adopted by Greek families.

This magnificent solidarity did not remain without victims. Hundreds of Greeks were arrested for having given assistance to Jews; they are now rotting away in concentration camps. Many have furthermore been taken as hostages and their life depends on pure chance.

STOP THE SLAUGHTER OF THE JEWS IN POLAND

The American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, afraid that the entry of the victorious Russian Army into Poland will accelerate the liquidation of the remaining Jews by the Nazis, sent the following cable to labor organizations the world over:

CONFRONTED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING TO LEAVE POLAND BECAUSE OF VICTORIOUS RUSSIAN ARMY'S ENTRY NAZIS WILL PROBABLY ACCELERATE ANNIHILATION OF THE REMNANTS OF POLISH JEWRY STOP IN BEHALF OF THE JEWISH UNDERGROUND LABOR MOVEMENT OF POLAND WE APPEAL TO YOU AND THE LABOR LABOR MOVEMENT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO DO UTMOST TO PREVENT THIS HORRIBLE CRIME STOP PLEASE PUBLICIZE IMMEDIATELY LAST MINUTE WARNING TO THE PEOPLE IN GERMANY TO HALT THE MURDER OF AN ENTIRE NATION AND INFLUENCE YOUR GOVERNMENT TO DO LIKEWISE

The following replies have been received to date:

I AM IN FULL SYMPATHY WITH REQUEST YOU MADE IN YOUR TELEGRAM FEBRUARY FIRST STOP EVERYTHING POSSIBLE SHOULD BE DONE TO PREVENT PERPETRATION OF HORRIBLE CRIMES UPON JEWRY RESIDING IN POLAND STOP WILL DO ALL I CAN TO BE HELPFUL

**WILLIAM GREEN PRESIDENT AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF LABOR**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TELEGRAM. AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, WE HAVE URGED OVER AND OVER AGAIN ON MANY OCCASIONS AND IN THE HOUSE

OF COMMONS, THAT OUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD OFFER AN ASYLUM TO REFUGEES, REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED AND COLOR. WE ARE ALARMED AT THE SITUATION IN EUROPE AND I HAVE COMMUNICATED SINCE THE RECEIPT OF YOUR WIRE, WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, SUGGESTING THAT A STATEMENT ALONG THE LINES YOU MENTION, SHOULD BE MADE. I MAY SAY THAT OUR GOVERNMENT HAS MADE STATEMENTS OF A SIMILAR SORT REGARDING JAPANESE ATROCITIES.

I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT EVERYTHING I CAN DO IN THIS MATTER WILL BE DONE.

YOURS SINCERELY,

M. J. COLDWELL

(HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA, CANADA)

The wire regarding this matter was sent to the following labor organizations: Trade Union Congress, London, England; British Labor Party, London, England; S. D. Partistyrelsen, Stockholm, Sweden; Australian Labor Party, Melbourne, Australia; El Partido Socialista, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Confederation de Trabajadores de Chile, Santiago, Chile; Trade Union Council, Johannesburg, S. Africa; Central Committee Social Democratic Party, Zurich, Switzerland; Mexican Trade Unions; Canadian Commonwealth Federation; American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD AND THE RESCUE OF POLISH JEWRY

The White House statement concerning the establishment of the War Refugee Board, authorized by the United States Government, served to arouse new hope for the possibility of rescuing at least some of the Jews under the Nazis.

In conjunction with these hopes, the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland sent the following proposals to the War Refugee Board, through the Jewish Labor Committee:

1) The Board should avail itself of all its international connections, its influence with the International Red Cross and that in neutral countries in an effort

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to ascertain the true state of the Jewish populace in Poland and in all the other countries of Europe, that have been occupied by Hitler.

2) The Board should consider all those Jews, who are at present being held in concentration camps, in labor camps and in the ghettos of Poland and other European countries as prisoners of war, who should be protected, just as prisoners of war of the American Army are, by international law.

3) The American Government should assume the responsibility of delivering food and medicaments to those Jews who are still alive in Poland and throughout Nazi Europe.

4) In all the agreements made with Axis countries regarding the exchange of prisoners of war, the American Government should include the Jews of Poland and other countries. This procedure should also be applied to Jewish refugees from Poland, who have been interned in Shanghai by the Japs.

5) The American Government should utilize all American radio stations, and those stations in other countries, that are controlled by America, in order to issue an urgent warning to the German people to stop the atrocities.

6) American airplanes should drop leaflets on German territory, warning the German people to stop the atrocities.

7) The American Government should issue instructions immediately to all its consulates abroad, that all means be employed to provide Jewish refugees from Poland and other European countries with visas, maintenance and transit facilities.

8) American Consulates in all neutral countries should assume the safeguard of the Jews from Poland and other countries, that have been occupied by the Axis, in the same manner as such protection is extended to American citizens.

9) The American Government should endeavor to obtain exit permits for Jewish refugees from Poland and other Nazi-occupied countries who are at present in Soviet Russia.

10) The American Government should guarantee Jews from Poland and Nazi Europe in general U. S. immigration visas out of the bounds of existing quotas.

*Simultaneous with these proposals, Dr. Emanuel Scher-
cr, the representative of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland in the Polish National Council in London, submitted a motion to the Polish Government asking that in connection with the nomination of the War Refugee Board by President Roosevelt, the Polish Government should appoint a special committee which would cooperate with the American War Refugee Board in order to rescue Poland's population and particularly the Jewish population which is deadly menaced by the German occupants. The motion was supported by P. P. S. and the Peasant Party. Its urgency was recognized by the National Council and transferred for further speedy consideration to the Juridical Political Committee.*

STATEMENT REGARDING A JEWISH COMMONWEALTH IN PALESTINE

On the 17th of February, the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland sent the following wire, depicting the attitude of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland towards the Zionists' demand for a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine, to the House Foreign Relations Commission, Washington, D. C.:

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HEARING CONCERNING A JEWISH COMMONWEALTH IN PALESTINE WE DEEM IT OUR DUTY TO DECLARE AS FOLLOWS STOP WE CONSTITUTE THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATION OF THE JEWISH UNDERGROUND LABOR MOVEMENT OF POLAND STOP THIS MOVEMENT IS A CONTINUATION OF THE JEWISH LABOR PARTY BUND OF POLAND WHICH WAS THE LARGEST JEWISH ORGANIZATION IN THE MOST IMPORTANT JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF PRE-WAR POLAND STOP IN VIEW OF THE GREAT TRAGEDY OF THE JEWISH MASSES OF EUROPE WHO ARE BEING SYSTEMATICALLY ANNIHILATED BY HITLER IT IS PRIMARILY IMPORTANT TO SAVE THOSE WHO ARE STILL ALIVE THERE STOP AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION MUST

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BE MOBILIZED TOWARDS THAT GOAL STOP IN THIS HOUR OF PERIL WHEN THE RETREATING NAZI ARMIES WILL ENDEAVOR TO ANNIHILATE THOSE JEWS WHO ARE STILL ALIVE IT IS URGENT THAT THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES WARN THE GERMAN MASSES DIRECTLY STOP WE ARE CONVINCED THAT AFTER THE WAR THE JEWISH MASSES WILL REMAIN IN THOSE COUNTRIES THEY HAVE RESIDED IN AND HELPED BUILD WITH THEIR SWEAT AND BLOOD FOR CENTURIES STOP THE IMPORTANT PROBLEM IS THEREFORE TO ASSURE THE JEWISH MASSES NATIONAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS ON AN EQUAL BASIS WITH OTHER NATIONALITIES IN THOSE COUNTRIES WHERE THEY LIVE STOP IN THEIR RECONSTRUCTION PLANS THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS SHOULD PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE NEEDS OF THE JEWS BECAUSE OF BESTIAL TREATMENT METED OUT TO THEM BY NAZIS STOP SHOULD ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN EUROPE AFTER THE WAR NECESSITATES EMIGRATION THE JEWISH POPULACE WILL NATURALLY NOT BE OMITTED STOP WE ARE HOWEVER OPPOSED TO THE IDEA THAT THE JEWISH PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED BY EMIGRATION STOP SUCH A SOLUTION WOULD MEAN DISCRIMINATION AGAINST JEWISH CITIZENS OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES STOP INSTEAD OF DEMAND TO OPEN GATES OF PALESTINE AS A METHOD OF ESTABLISHING JEWISH MAJORITY IN THAT COUNTRY WE DEMAND OPEN GATES IN EVERY COUNTRY INCLUDING PALESTINE FOR VICTIMS OF PRESENT WAR STOP NO COUNTRY CAN BE EXCUSÉD FROM THIS RESPONSIBILITY STOP IN VIEW OF PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IN PALESTINE THE DEMAND FOR A JEWISH COMMONWEALTH THERE CAN BE REALIZED ONLY BY MEANS OF ANTIDEMOCRATIC METHODS STOP PROPAGANDA FOR A COMMONWEALTH CREATES FALSE IMPRESSION THAT THOSE JEWS WHO HAVE REMAINED ALIVE EXPECT TO BE SAVED BY ANTIDEMOCRATIC METHODS AND INSTEAD OF PARTICIPATING IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THEIR HOMES TOGETHER WITH NON-JEWS THEY ARE INTERESTED IN EMIGRATING STOP A JEWISH COMMONWEALTH IN PALESTINE WILL NOT SOLVE THE JEWISH PROBLEM STOP JEWS WILL FIND THEIR SALVATION ONLY IN THE OPPORTUNITY TO REBUILD THEIR

OLD HOMES ON A JUST BASIS STOP WE ARE FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT ONLY A WORLD BUILT ON PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC EQUALITY AND FREEDOM WILL GUARANTEE JEWS IN THOSE COUNTRIES IN WHICH THEY RESIDE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE AS PEOPLE AS CITIZENS AND AS A NATIONAL MINORITY

LETTER TO PM ON THE ERLICH-ALTER CASE

On the 15th of February, 1944, PM, the New York daily newspaper, published an article in which the events leading to the tragic execution of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter by the Soviet Government were presented in a rather distorted manner. In order to establish the true facts of the case, the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland sent the following letter to PM on the 21st of February:

February 21, 1944

The Editor
PM
27 Sixth Ave.
Bklyn., N. Y.

Dear Sir:

I am taking the liberty of asking you to publish the following lines not because I wish to argue with the viewpoint revealed in Joachim Joesten's article entitled "Poles Played a Nazi Game by Asking Katyn Probe," which appeared in your newspaper on the 15th of February, but because I want to establish the truth regarding the tragic case of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, prominent Jewish Socialist leaders of Poland, who were executed by the Soviet Government.

1. It is not true, that "in December, 1942, a Soviet tribunal tried two well-known Jewish-Polish labor leaders, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, on a charge of undermining the morale of the Red Army. Both were found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed." Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Ambassador in the United States, officially informed us, that both men were executed in December, 1941.

T H E G H E T T O S P E A K S

2. It is not true, that "the two men had once before, in August, 1941, stood trial on similar charges and had been condemned." The truth of the matter is, that in August, 1941, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter stood trial and were condemned on charges pertaining to their activities in Poland prior to the outbreak of the war in 1939. Henryk Erlich, who was editor-in-chief of a Jewish Socialist daily in Warsaw until September, 1939, was condemned by a Russian tribunal in August, 1941, because, among other "crimes," of an article written by the late S. Zygielbojm, and published in the same newspaper, which condemned Russia's occupation of the Eastern parts of Poland, in collaboration with the Nazis.

3. It is not true, that "in August, 1941, they were released at the request of the Polish Government-in-exile." Both men were released, along with thousands of other Polish citizens, imprisoned in Russia, on the basis of the general amnesty provided for in the Polish-Russian treaty.

4. It is not true, that they were "rearrested and recondemned at a time when Polish-Soviet relations were becoming strained." The truth is, that Erlich and Alter were rearrested and executed in December, 1941, at a time, when Polish-Soviet relations were at their best. At that time, in December, 1941, General Sikorski called upon Stalin at the Kremlin. A banquet and other extravagant expressions of cordiality and friendship were accorded General Sikorski.

5. Joachim Joesten's conjecture, that "the two men engaged in something that could be vaguely described as "Trotskyist agitation," is peculiar, to say the least. Throughout their lives, both Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter were engaged not vaguely, but vigorously in an ideological struggle against the views of Trotsky. It is, therefore, odd to assume, that both of these well-known leaders of the Socialist International were Trotsky's adherents on the sly.

6. It is sheer nonsense to write, that Erlich and Alter "fell victim to the harsh discipline of the Bolshevik Party," since neither of them had ever been members of that Party and were, therefore, never subject to its discipline.

As for Joachim Joesten's remark, that "all those vociferous demonstrations, flaming protests and full-page advertisements in the American press . . . did a lot of harm to American-Russian relations," if any harm was done, those who carried out this political purge are the guilty parties rather than those who protested against it.

Thanking you, in advance, for your courtesy in this matter, I am,

Very truly yours,

Emanuel Nowogrodsky, Secretary

AMERICAN REPRESENTATION OF THE
GENERAL JEWISH WORKERS' UNION
OF POLAND

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INSTEAD OF FLOWERS ON THE TOMBS OF ERLICH AND ALTER

We came across a moving obituary on the tragic execution of the two internationally known Socialist leaders, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, in "Kurjer Polski," a Polish newspaper published in Bagdad, Persia, and dated April 8, 1943. A Jewish soldier of the Polish Army, stationed in the Middle East, paid tribute to the memory of the two men through the following obituary:

"Instead of flowers for the tombs of my dear friends, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, I am contributing \$1.00 to the relief fund for Polish citizens in Soviet Russia. (Signed) Lieber Gottlob."

The newspaper item adds: "The office of 'Kurjer Polski' has turned that contribution over to the Polish Embassy in Bagdad with a request, that it be sent on to Kuibyshev."