

AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

330 WEST 42nd STREET

NEW YORK CITY

STEPHEN S. WISE, PRESIDENT

CARL SHERMAN, CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

NATHAN D. PERLMAN }
LEO H. LOWITZ } VICE-PRESIDENTS

LOUIS LIPSKY, CHAIRMAN, GOVERNING COUNCIL

M. MALDWIN FERTIG, CHAIRMAN, ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

JACOB LEICHTMAN, TREASURER

CABLE ADDRESS 'CONGRESS'

TELEPHONE LONGACRE 5-2600

Office of Dr. Wise
40 West 68 Street,
December 2, 1942.

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Boss:

I do not wish to add an atom to the awful burden which you are bearing, with magic and, as I believe, heaven-inspired strength at this time. But you do know that the most overwhelming disaster of Jewish history has befallen Jews in the form of the Hitler mass-massacres. Hitler's decision was to exterminate the Jewish people in all Hitler-ruled lands, and it is indisputable that as many as two million civilian Jews have been slain.

I have had cables and underground advices for some months, telling of these things. I succeeded, together with the heads of other Jewish organizations, in keeping these out of the press and have been in constant communication with the State Department, particularly Under Secretary Welles. The State Department has now received what it believes to be confirmation of these unspeakable horrors and has approved of my giving the facts to the press. The organizations banded together in the Conference of which I am Chairman, feel that they wish to present to you a memorandum on this situation, so terrible that this day is being observed as a day of mourning and fasting throughout the Jewish world. We hope above all that you will speak a word which may bring solace and hope to millions of Jews who mourn, and be an expression of the conscience of the American people.

I had gathered from the State Department that you were prepared to receive a small delegation, which would include representatives of the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the B'nai B'rith. It would be gravely misunderstood if, despite your overwhelming preoccupation, you did not make it possible to receive our delegation and to utter what I am sure will be your heartening and consoling reply.

As your old friend, I beg you will somehow arrange to do this.

Ever yours,

Stephen
PRESIDENT

SSW:S

BLUE PRINT FOR EXTERMINATION

Almost two million Jews of Nazi Europe have been exterminated through mass murder, planned starvation, deportation, slave labor and epidemic in disease-ridden ghettos, penal labor colonies and slave reservations created for their destruction by the German Government and its satellites. The five million Jews who may still be alive inside Nazi-occupied territory are threatened with total extermination under the terms of an official order by Hitler calling for the complete annihilation of the Jews of Europe by December 31, 1942.

Confirmation of the existence of this program of extermination is offered in (a) depositions made to representatives of the United States Government abroad and transmitted through the State Department to American Jewish agencies (b) official German admissions as well as confidential German reports (c) eyewitness accounts received by Jewish agencies in free countries (d) first-hand reports appearing in the underground press of Poland and other occupied lands and (e) corroborative evidence received by the Governments-in-Exile through their underground channels.

The dual process of outright slaughter and slow death began for the Jews of Germany when Hitler came to power and for Jews of other lands wherever the German army moved in or wherever countries joined the Axis. During the past six months, the organized decimation of the Jews has increased tremendously in its ruthless tempo. Propaganda Minister Goebbels signalized the drive toward total extermination when on June 12, 1942, in an article in DAS REICH, he swore that the Jews would "atone" for the R.A.F. bombings of Cologne and other German cities "with the extermination of their race in all Europe, and perhaps even beyond Europe."

Shortly after the first R.A.F. bombings of Cologne, 258 Jews were taken to the Gross Lichterfelde barracks in the Western suburbs of Berlin and shot in reprisal. This, conspicuously publicized by the Nazis, was an ominous prelude of new horrors to come.

Last June, Gestapo Chief Henrich Himmler visited the Warsaw Ghetto, then the largest single concentration center for Jews in occupied Europe, and appointed a so-called Destruction Commission headed by a notorious Nazi named Fou. The Commission was instructed that the time had come to depopulate the ghetto.

On August 14, 1942, the European offices of a reputable Jewish agency learned that the Polish ghettos were rapidly being emptied by murder, deportation and hunger. It was then reported that 100,000 Jews in Warsaw had been killed and 50,000 at Lemberg. On November 24, the worst fears on this score were confirmed when reports confirming

the mass extermination program were received here through facilities made available by the State Department. That same day, the Polish Government in London offered further corroborative evidence in the fact that in October of 1942 only 40,000 ration cards were printed for the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto, where the population in March of 1942 totalled 433,000.

Among the documents received by us through the courtesy and facilities of the State Department was one summarizing the situation in each country and indicating the sharp reduction in numbers in every land under Nazi domination. This document revealed the following facts:

Germany

Of 200,000 Jews who lived in Germany at the outbreak of the war in 1939, mass deportations, suicides and starvation have reduced their number to 40,000.

Austria

Of 75,000 Jews in Austria at the outbreak of the war, no more than 12,000 to 15,000 remain.

Bohemia and Moravia

Of the 80,000 in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, 15,000 Jews remain. The remainder have been deported to Eastern Europe.

Poland

Of the 3,300,000 Jews living in Poland at the beginning of

the war, there were left following the German invasion 1,300,000 in the General Government and 700,000 in the Polish towns annexed by Germany, the remainder having fled or remained in the territories occupied by Russia, which were later reoccupied by Germany. The total number of Jews under German-domination in Poland, after deduction of some 500,000 refugees in Russia, therefore, should have approximated 2,800,000. At the beginning of the summer, 1942, there were still in Poland only 2,200,000, six hundred thousand having perished, but in the meantime large scale evacuations and massacres took place so that, for instance, the Ghetto of Warsaw, with a peak population of 550,000 (early 1941) harbors today less than 50,000.

Belgium

It is reported that only 5,000 Jews remain in Brussels, and 3,000 in Antwerp, of the 85,000 who resided in Belgium at the beginning of the war in 1940.

Netherlands

Sixty thousand of the 180,000 Jews of the Netherlands have already been deported.

Yugoslavia

In Yugoslavia where some 100,000 Jews lived, 400 escaped to Italy and the remainder were deported, killed or imprisoned in labor camps.

Greece

Of the 78,000 Jews in Greece, all Jews of the ages of 18-45 have been drafted for slave labor.

France

Of the 340,000 Jews of France, more than 65,000 have already been deported.

Rumania

Not more than 270,000 Jews are left of the 900,000 who lived in Rumania proper in 1939. Whole provinces are completely without Jews. And of the 185,000 deported to the prison camps at Transnistria, some 75,000 have perished.

Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, where 50,000 Jews have lived, 8,500 of them are already engaged in slave labor and the remaining threatened with deportation and forced labor.

Slovakia

Of the 90,000 Slovakian Jews, 70,000 have already been deported and the remainder are expected to follow soon.

Latvia

In Latvia, where 100,000 Jews formerly lived, all Jews were segregated in Ghettos. In the City of Riga, where formerly 32,000 Jews lived, 15,000 were immediately registered for slave labor. Subsequently, all Jews between the ages of 18-60 were segregated in a special Ghetto and the remainder sent to camps. Eight thousand were killed in one night. A week later, in December, 1941, the 16,000 persons in the old Ghetto were led into the woods, stripped of their valuables, including their clothes, and then machine-gunned. This action left 4,000 slave laborers in the small Ghetto of Riga and several hundred women. The places of the Riga Jews in the old Ghetto were taken by German Jews, deported from Berlin

Dusseldorf, Cologne, etc. In June of 1942, not a single trace was left of these German-Jewish deportees.

Lithuania

Reports have it that the Jews of Lithuania numbering some 150,000 at the outbreak of the war suffered the same fate as the Latvian Jews.

HITLER'S EXTERMINATION ORDER

The Hitler order calling for the extermination of the Jews by December 1942 was issued in the late Summer, following the presentation of the plan by Herman Backe, Secretary of State for Economics. Under the plan, all Jews living in Germany and German occupied and controlled countries should, after deportation to certain regions of Eastern Europe be exterminated at one stroke in order to solve once and for all the Jewish question in Europe. The plan of Herman Backe was based on economic reasons in order to ease in part the difficult food situation by the annihilation of at least four million persons who would otherwise have to be fed.

The miserable remnants of Jews who are still in segregated areas and concentration camps in Western and Central Europe are being rapidly transported to the East. This technique serves a double purpose:

1. Jews are thereby removed from the half light which still filters into the streets of Paris, Brussels, Antwerp and Amsterdam and from the eyes of the population of Western and Central Europe, to the utter desolation and darkness of devastated Eastern Europe;

2. Here their extermination is carried out without attracting notice. For although the Germans boast of their general plans for the extermination of Jewry, they are extremely careful to shut out from the eyes of the local population, of the world, and even of the German people, the detailed horrors through which these plans are put into effect. On the other hand, Nazi propaganda reports in lavish detail the murders perpetrated by their Rumanian, Croat, Slovak and other satellites.

The method of accomplishing death by deportation is described in the November 24th report of the Polish Government in London. The report describes how masses of Jews were loaded into freight cars in batches of 150 when there were accommodations for less than one-third of that number. The floors are covered with a thick layer of lime or

chlorine, sprinkled with water. The doors are sealed. When the trains reach their destination, half the occupants are dead from suffocation and starvation. Survivors are sent to special camps in Southeastern Poland, where the mass murder of all but those capable of slave labor takes place. Of 250,000 thus "resettled" only about 4,000 reached labor gangs.

EXTERMINATION CENTERS

German experiments in the scientific extermination of Jews had been going on for a long period before the recent tempo of mass annihilation was achieved. When the first large scale deportations took place, the Germans discovered that if a sufficient number of Jews were crowded into freight trains bound for the East very few would reach their destination alive. These methods have now been extended.

In February of 1942, it was reported that 1,200 Dutch Jews, deported to work in the salt and sulphur mines of Mauthausen concentration camps in Upper Austria, were sent to the pits without protection against the fumes. Within a short time, 740 had perished.

Later, large groups of Jews were rounded up in German army vans in various Polish cities, driven to the country side and asphyxiated behind locked doors by carbon monoxide from the exhaust of the army trucks.

Centers have been established in various parts of Eastern Europe for the scientific and cold blooded mass murder of Jews. Polish Christian workers, eye-witnesses, have confirmed reports that concrete buildings, on the former Russian frontiers, are used by the Germans as gas chambers in which thousands of Jews have been put to death.

The slaughter of trainloads of Jewish adults and children in great crematoriums at Oswiencim near Cracow is confirmed by eye-witnesses in reports which recently reached Jerusalem.

Between October 1941 and January 1942, the entire Jewish population of the Polish district of Konin, Kolo, Klodowa, Isbica and Kujawy, numbering several thousand, as well as thousands of Jews of the once teeming Lodz ghetto, were shipped to the extermination center of Che lmo and asphyxiated in gas trucks.

The existence of an extermination center for deported Western and Central European Jews in Kaunas (Lithuania) was confirmed by an American Lithuanian woman who arrived in the United States on the S.S. Drottingholm on June 7, 1942. This was later corroborated by the Polish Government.

The latest reported method for the scientific and low cost extermination of Jews is the injection of air bubbles into the veins. This leads to general poisoning and speedy death. German physicians have found it possible to murder 100 Jews per hour by this method.
