For your information. I have already acknowledged the receipt of this communication.
January 25, 1941

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am enclosing the promised memorandum on the subject of Jewish military aid to Britain.

I trust that it will not reach you too late to read it before the interview which you were kind enough to grant to Dr. Joseph and Mr. Neumann for Monday at 11:30 A. M.

Faithfully yours,

Stephen S. Wise

Honorable Sumner Welles
Department of State
Washington, D. C.
January 23, 1941

MEMORANDUM

1. On August 29, 1940 Dr. Weizmann, the President of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, wrote to the British Prime Minister stating that "the Jews stand by Great Britain and will fight on the side of the democracies." At the same time in Palestine a similar offer was made by the Jewish Agency representatives there to the Chief Secretary and to the General Officer Commanding British Troops. The latter was informed that "in the event of war, we desired to offer the assistance of the Jews in the defense of the country....we were willing to supply as many men as they would require up to some 40,000....to include all services which the army authorities might consider necessary in order to defend the country."

2. Soon after war commenced the Jewish Agency was asked to provide Jews for service in various British units of the Army wherever such services might be required, the intention being that they should in fact serve in Palestine and neighboring countries. Later exclusively Jewish companies of Royal Army Service Corps (transport), Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps and infantry (Royal East Kent Regiment, The "Buffs") were formed.

The Jewish Agency complied with all the requests for the provision of Jews for service in the British Army. The number of men requested and supplied up to the end of December was, in round figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R.A.F. (Royal Engineers)</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.E. (Royal Army Service Corps)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.O.C. (Royal Ordnance Corps)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.C.S. (Royal Corps Signals)</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry (The Buffs)</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps</td>
<td>2,600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Port Services - stevedores and lightermen (in course of formation) 400
Royal Artillery (including anti-aircraft group) 130

3. Negotiations have been proceeding continuously for some time past between His Majesty's Government and the Jewish Agency for Palestine for the formation of a Jewish Military Force of substantial size. The request that Jewish military assistance to Great Britain should take the form of a Jewish Military Force is based on grounds of principle and expediency.

a) No people in the world has greater reason to fight the Nazis than the Jews. They are being persecuted by the Nazis as Jews. For them, more than for any other of the attacked peoples, a German victory would mean extermination. For this reason the Jewish people should be given the opportunity to play their full part in this war as Jews.

b) Moreover one of the basic concepts of Nazi ideology is that the Jews must be excepted from enjoying the civic, political and national rights accorded to other peoples. Great Britain is fighting against such Nazi principles.

c) There are at present fighting with the British forces several foreign military units representing peoples at present subject to Nazi oppression. Only one people is not represented as such - the Jews. Czech, Dutch and French refugees in England may enlist under their own national flag to fight alongside Great Britain. This privilege should be similarly accorded to the Jews.

d) Jews claim the right to serve in a distinctive Military Force like the other allies of Great Britain, which should enjoy recognition and status similar to that accorded to the Military Forces of the other allies. The Jewish Agency for Palestine, having a recognized legal and political status, desires in cooperation with the British
4. It is proposed that this Jewish Force should be enlisted from among Jews living in Palestine, the British Empire, and other countries in which such enlistment may be possible and permissible under the laws of the land, and should be available for service wherever required and more particularly for the defense of Palestine.

5. The need for a Jewish Military Force to serve in Palestine is of urgent importance. In view of the special status of the Jews in Palestine, they are entitled as a Jewish community, to the recognition of their elementary right of self-defense. If Palestine were to be invaded by the enemy, even temporarily, and if, for reasons of military expediency, it became necessary for the British troops or the greater part of them to be withdrawn from that country, the Jews of Palestine would be faced with the danger of annihilation. They must accordingly be given the opportunity of defending themselves and their country by the establishment of a Jewish Military Force.

Submitted on behalf of the
Emergency Committee for
Zionist Affairs
In reply refer to
VD 811.111 Bernhard, Georg

MARCH 6, 1941

My dear Dr. Wise:

With reference to my letter of February 24, 1941, regarding the status of the visa case of Dr. Georg Bernhard, I have to inform you that the Consul General at Marseille has now reported that Dr. Bernhard received his American visa on September 24, 1940, and that his present whereabouts is unknown to that office.

In the event that you obtain further information which might enable the Department to assist you in this matter, please do not hesitate to call upon me.

Sincerely yours,

A. M. Warren
Chief, Visa Division

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Ph.D.,
American Jewish Congress,
330 West Forty-second Street,
New York, New York.
Office of Dr. Wise
40 West 68 Street,
April 10, 1941.

The Under Secretary of State
State Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Secretary Welles:

May I trouble you for a moment to read the enclosed letter which I have written to an old friend, Ambassador Steinhardt. I have ventured to tell him of your own interest in the case of Professor Schorr, one of the grand, old figures of European Jewry, and if you felt that you could write a supplementary line to him, saying that Dr. Goldmann and I have discussed his case with you on several occasions and that you were good enough to volunteer to take up his case with the Soviet Ambassador, I should be most grateful.

I must take it for granted that it will be possible to secure for Professor Schorr a visitor's visa to our own country.

With deepest appreciation,

Faithfully yours,

STEPHEN S. WISE,
President
April 10, 1941.

The American Ambassador  
Moscow, USSR

My dear Ambassador Steinhardt:

You may recall that upon an earlier occasion I wrote to you concerning one of the finest men in the Jewish life of Europe before the present war, Professor Moses Schorr, former Chief Rabbi of Warsaw and by virtue of that a member of the Polish Senate,—though I must add at once he was never a political figure, but essentially a spiritual person and a scholar of distinction in the oriental field.

From Warsaw Professor Schorr escaped to Lwow, where he was imprisoned for a time, later, we have reason to believe, having been transferred to a prison in Moscow.

In order that it may be possible to secure Professor Schorr’s release and permission to leave the Soviet country, his family and friends have succeeded in effecting his naturalization by the Guatemalan Republic, as a special mark of recognition of his distinction as man, Rabbi and scholar. The Guatemalan Consul General at Lisbon has issued a Guatemalan passport and also a document attesting to his naturalization.

Since we are uninformed with respect to the exact whereabouts of Professor Schorr and since the Guatemalan Republic has no diplomatic representative at Moscow, we ventured to advise the Guatemalan Consul at Lisbon to send the documents to you. We earnestly hope that you will undertake to ascertain his whereabouts and to facilitate, as far as it may be possible, the release of Professor Schorr, who is nearly seventy and for whom, I assure you, it is worthwhile intervening within the limits of your high office and opportunity.

I may add that Dr. Nahum Goldmann and I have on several occasions made mention of Professor Schorr to you and our friend, the Under Secretary of State, and Mr. Welles has, I know, become interested in doing whatever can and should be done for Professor Schorr.

Faithfully yours,

Stephen S. Wise
June 2, 1941

PA/LD - Mr. Duggan:

I see no objection, provided the message given by Mr. Chapin be drafted here and that the text make it quite clear that this Government does not regard the conference as in any sense official, and that the presence of our Chargé d'Affaires is due solely to the fact that the United States has been a refuge for many generations for the oppressed from all lands, and glories in the fact today as throughout its history that there is no distinction made between citizens of the United States because of their race, creed, or color.

Chapin should be particularly forewarned that I have indicated my interest in this conference to Dr. Wise because of his explicit statement to me that the conference would deal with no questions whatever touching upon the Zionist movement and would be limited exclusively to the purpose mentioned in Dr. Wise's letter to you and to the working out of plans for the relief of refugees.
In reply refer to
VD 811.111 Schorr, Moses

July 16, 1941

My dear Dr. Wise:

I refer to your letter of July 1, 1941 further concerning the case of Professor Moses Schorr.

While I feel sure that Ambassador Steinhardt will continue to lend his unofficial good offices in behalf of Professor Schorr as may appear opportune, I regret that it has been necessary to suspend telegraphic communications to the Embassy in immigration matters for the present owing to recent developments in the Soviet Union.

At such subsequent time as it may become feasible to take action in the matter, the further consideration of Professor Schorr's visa application will be facilitated by compliance with the new visa procedure which, as you may know, became effective July 1, 1941 and which applies both

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Ph.D.,
American Jewish Congress,
330 West Forty-second Street,
New York, New York.
both to pending cases and new ones. The procedure is described in the enclosed form A, with which I am also enclosing the appropriate number of forms B and C, mentioned therein. In this connection it appears from the Department's files that Professor Schorr desires to be accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Tamara Schorr, his daughter, Mrs. Felicja Kon, and three small grandsons.

Upon the return of the completed forms to the Immigration Section of the Visa Division, Department of State, the cases of Professor Schorr and his family will receive careful consideration and the Embassy at Moscow will be appropriately advised by mail, or by telegraph if such action should then be feasible.

Sincerely yours,

Sumner Welles

Acting Secretary

Enclosures:

Forms A, B and C.
FOR
Telegram of November 6, 1941 from Rabbi Wise re: ninety-three refugees deported from Argentina
SEE: DCR file no. 840.48 Refugees/2749

FOR
Telegram to Rabbi Wise of November 7, 1941 (PA/LD:CW)
SEE: DCR file no. 840.48 Refugees/2749
October 21, 1941

My dear Dr. Wise:

I am grateful to you for your most considerate letter of October 20.

I have by no means overlooked the invitation which you were good enough to extend to me, when I last had the pleasure of seeing you, to address the November 25 session of the Inter-American Jewish Conference.

My whole inclination has been to accept your invitation. Before agreeing to do so, however, I know you will understand my reluctance to make a firm commitment before ascertaining from you a little more precisely what the agenda of the conference will be and what the subject matter of the address you were good enough to suggest I make should, in your judgment, comprise.

Because of the international situation if the agenda of the conference covers solely the question of refugees and assistance to refugees and the manner in which the Jewish communities in the American Republics can cooperate in assisting these unfortunates, I

Dr. Stephen S. Wise,
330 West 42nd Street,
New York, New York.
should be more than happy to attend and to make an address. If, however, the agenda of the conference is to cover other problems as well, however useful and desirable the consideration of such problems might be, I feel it would be better for me not to attend.

I shall consequently appreciate it if you will let me have any light upon this question which you can give me before replying definitively to the invitation you have been kind enough to send me.

With my kindest regards, believe me

Yours very sincerely,
October 25, 1941.

Hon. Sumner Welles
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Welles:

I am glad indeed to think that you feel that, if the agenda of the Inter-American Jewish Conference meets with your judgment as to what the circumstances require, you will be ready to give a definitive answer to our invitation to address the Conference Sunday afternoon, November 23rd.

The Conference is to deal fundamentally with two problems:-

One, to attempt to bring the Jewish residents, especially the newcomers to the Latin-American Republics, to the understanding of the supreme place of Democracy in the Western Hemisphere. After all, that means that we of the American Jewish Congress are to make the effort to bring our fellow-Jews in the Latin-American Republics to the understanding that the Good Neighbour Policy can be effectuated only through loyal adherence of all groups of the American Continent to the Democratic ideal.

Two, in line with that, we feel it altogether justifiable to deal, as you rightly put it, with the question of refuge, including possibilities of settlement and subsequent assistance to refugees, and the very important problem of the cooperation of the Jewish communities in the American Republics in assisting these unfortunate,—in addition, of course, as I am sure you would have it, to giving aid and comfort to the unhappy victims of Nazism in European lands, including for some of them refuge and home in Palestine.

I ought to add that all the Sessions of the Conference are to be strictly private, with the exception of the public meeting, which we hope you will address on Sunday afternoon, the 23rd, and the closing Session of the Conference, which will take the form of a banquet to the delegates.

At the Sunday afternoon Session, it is planned that yours should
AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Hon. Sumner Welles  
-2-  
October 23, 1941.

be the principal address and we would limit ourselves, save for greetings, to the presentation of what you have in mind.

Looking forward, dear Secretary Welles, to your acceptance of our invitation which would mean so much to the Conference,

Faithfully yours,

[Signature]

PRESIDENT