

AGUDAS ISRAEL of America

100320

JUN 26 1945

Dear Sirs:

For your information and that of other interested persons, this is to advise you that, in view of the early termination of the War Refugee Board, over-all responsibility for the Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, has been transferred from the War Refugee Board to the Department of the Interior.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel  
Assistant Executive Director

Agudas Israel of America,  
1123 Broadway,  
New York 10, New York.

EBT EBT:inp 6/26/45

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

*Return to  
Lesser files*



OFFICE OF THE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 1, 1944

*JWS*

*BB*

TO: Mr. Lesser

FROM: Myles Standish

It would be contrary to the established policy of the Board to transmit to Mr. Sternbuch in Switzerland the message contained in the letter dated April 24, 1944, to Mr. Pehle from Rabbi Eliexer Silver, president of the Agudas Israel of America. The Board has committed itself to the policy of concentrating its rescue efforts on groups rather than individuals. Furthermore, the acceptance of a message of this type would open the way for, and make refusal difficult of hundreds of thousands of similar messages which would completely overwhelm the present communication facilities of the State Department. While admitting that the persons mentioned in the proposed message are distinguished religious leaders, the transmission of the message would require the Board to do likewise in the cases of persons of far less individual importance.

A further reason for declining to transmit the message is the two-fold danger to which the persons sought may be subjected should any information concerning their whereabouts be obtained by the enemy authorities. In the first place, there is the possibility that, in the transmission of the names of these distinguished persons from Switzerland to Sternbuch's agents in enemy areas, a leak may occur through which the names may become available to the enemy. The second danger is that, in searching for the persons involved, Sternbuch's agents might be being followed by enemy police and thus inadvertently lead them to the hiding places of the persons the Agudas Israel wishes to aid.

*Myles Standish*

May 1, 1944

TO: Mr. Lesser

FROM: Myles Standish

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MStandish:lcm 5-1-44

# AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

1123 BROADWAY NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

Cables "AGUDOH" New York  
Telephones { Watkins 9-0841  
              Chelsea 2-9515

RABBI ELIEZER SILVER, President  
JACOB ROSENHEIM, Honorary President

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ISAAC MASEL  
OSCAR Z. RAND

Director

RABBI S. EICHENSTEIN

Mr. John Pehle  
Director, War Refugee Board  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

Pursuing our aims for rescue, which you are by no doubt quite familiar with, we wish to furnish for you the following matters:-

A - At the time of our appointment with you on March 21, we brought to your attention the need of having a representative of our organization in Europe to help in rescue work.

At that time you favored the suggestion, and you asked us to furnish the parties in question. We submit to you herewith the candidates whom we think would fit for this purpose. They are:- Dr. Isaac Lewin, 230 Riverside Drive, New York City; Mr. Samuel Smith, Editor of Every Friday, Cincinnati, Ohio; Rabbi Oscar Z. Rand, 72 W. 106 Street, New York City.

All the above mentioned know the European continent well, and were active in rescue work. Having rescue committees in Switzerland and Turkey, we would especially like to have one in Portugal, prospectively Spain, in order to concentrate on all neutral nations bordering the invaded countries.

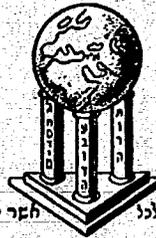
We stress our interest in Dr. Lewin especially, who possesses all the qualifications necessary for this type of work. Dr. Lewin is a scholar and is familiar with international and diplomatic undertakings. He speaks English, Polish, French, Hebrew, Yiddish, and German fluently, besides other languages. He is highly respected by the Polish Government in Exile, and by its agencies as well as by various Embassies, whom he approached in behalf of our organization concerning rescue work.

B - We also, at the time of our appointment, emphasized the need of having the opportunity of sending messages of inquiry to our committees abroad. You suggested we send you a trial message, and that you would try to send it through our Department of State.

Agudas Israel aims to solve all problems confronting Jewry in the spirit of Torah and Tradition

ב"ח

Talked to  
Tress  
5-11-44  
אשר יחזיקו לנו



April 24, 1944

Files

- 2 -

We are worried about the fate of hundreds of outstanding personalities, but since it is merely on a trial basis, our rescue committee came to an agreement to try to find out about the fate of thirteen individuals, and we would appreciate having the enclosed message sent to Mr. N. Sternbuch, Chairman of our Committee in Switzerland.

We trust that you will give both of our suggestions your kind consideration, and favor us with an early reply.

Respectfully yours,  
AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

*Rabbi Eliezer Silver*  
Rabbi Eliezer Silver  
President

ES: bgb  
Enc.

100325

The following message is to be sent to the American Ambassador in Switzerland to transmit it to Mr. Sternbuch:

PLEASE LOCATE FOLLOWING PERSONALITIES: RABBI ELCHONON WASSERMAN;  
BRUCE GINSBERG OF YANOVA; PINCUS TWERSKY IN SAMBER; SAMUEL SOLOMON  
LEINER OF RADZIN; SAMUEL FUHRER OF KROSNO; MOISHE CHAIM LAU OF  
PIOTRIKOW; LEVI SPITZ OF TAVRUK; SHLOMO FEINZILBER OF KIEIDANIAI;  
LEIB GERSTEIN OF KORDEL; NAHUM AARON ROKACH OF LWOW; ALTER HOROWITZ  
OF TARNOW; ISRAEL SPIRO OF USTRZYKI DOLNE; AND JOSEPH FEIVELSON OF  
KOVNO.

AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

2/1/44 JH

100326

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS  
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER  
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

123

SYMBOLS

- DL - Day Letter
- NL - Night Letter
- LC - Deferred Cable
- NLY - Cable Night Letter
- Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

JA28 NL=CINCINNATI OHIO 7

1944 MAR 8 AM 4 12

ACTING DIR J PEHLE, DIR WAR REFUGEE BOARD-

MAIN TREASURY BLDG RM 288 1/2 WASHDC-

BEING IMPORTANTLY ENGAGED HERE SUNDAY MARCH 19TH UNTIL VERY LATE WOULD APPRECIATE APPOINTMENT WITH YOU BE POSTPONED FOR TUESDAY MARCH 21ST INSTEAD MARCH 20TH-

RABBI E L SILVER.

19 21 20\*

DN WBS 9 W 8 35

2:30  
-Time  
3/21

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

100000

MAR 3 1944

In reply please  
refer to: 269

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Thank you for your letter of February 29,  
1944, outlining suggestions and information for the  
aid of the War Refugee Board in formulating its rescue  
program.

Your cooperation and prompt response to our  
request for advice are greatly appreciated. We shall  
give very careful consideration to the suggestions  
and information which you have advanced.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director

Rabbi Eliaser Silver,  
President,  
Agudas Israel of America,  
1123 Broadway,  
New York 10, New York.

*EBT* *RWH*  
RBHutchison 3/3/44 *JW*

100376

# AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

1123 BROADWAY NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

RABBI ELIEZER SILVER, President  
JACOB ROSENHEIM, Honorary President

Vice-Presidents  
RABBI SOLOMON FRIEDMAN  
RABBI SOLOMON HYMAN  
RABBI JOSHUA BAUMEL

Executive Chairmen  
RABBI DR. I. LEWIN  
RABBI E. M. BLOCH  
MICHAEL G. TRESS

Treasurers  
ISAAC MASEL  
OSCAR Z. RAND

Director  
RABBI S. EICHENSTEIN

ב"מ

269  
Cables "AGUDOH" New York  
Telephones { WAtkins 9-0841  
              CHelsea 2-9515  
              FILING AUTHORITY  
              TO: Mail & Files



חברתנו לנו      אשר ירחיק

February 29, 1944

Mr. John Pehle  
Director, War Refugee Board  
Treasury Building  
Room 164  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

The Agudas Israel of America as an independent organization of Orthodox Jewry with affiliations all over the world, has maintained a rescue service through its branches in every country. Agudas Israel tried to rescue as many souls as possible from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia etc. The American Consuls all over the world were incessantly contacted by Agudas Israel for the rescue of our unfortunate co-religionists who were especially endangered by the Nazi rule and its later invasion.

The committee on rescue and relief work of Agudas Israel, after careful mediation, proposes the following steps to be considered by the War Refugee Board.

- 1-A large amount of money should be appropriated for the rescue work of thousands of individuals who in accordance with recent reports are hiding in forests around the Polish-Hungarian-Slovakian border, in churches and various places, whose life is endangered every moment. There is a possibility to smuggle them across the border to the satellite nations, or even to neutral countries. This rescue work requires greater sums because the smugglers demand large amounts per capita.
- 2-To secure visas in countries out of the war zone, such as Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Persia, as well as all countries of Northern Africa and the Americas.
- 3-Neutral countries such as Turkey, Portugal, Sweden, Spain and Switzerland should be approached to grant transits to larger quantities of refugees escaping the invaded continent. We think if proper assurance would be given to the mentioned nations that the fleeing refugees would be later taken care of and

*Agudas Israel aims to solve all problems confronting Jewry in the spirit of Torah and Tradition*

- expedited by American authorities, there would be no objection from the above countries to grant them a temporary stay.
- 4-Camps for war refugees should be established in freed countries and in the Western Hemisphere maintained by the United Nations, where thousands could be placed, and after a thoroughful investigation these refugees could help in the United Nations war effort, and their production would give the possibility for the maintenance of the same camps.
  - 5-Food should be sent to the remnants of the Jewish population in Nazi-Europe, either in form of individual packages from neutral countries, or in form of larger transports to the Jewish communities where this can be properly arranged, such as Transdnistria, etc.
  - 6-The greatest possible number of Jews in Nazi dominated Europe should be exchanged against German Nationals in the Western Hemisphere and in the British Commonwealth.
  - 7-A solemn warning to the German people should be issued by the Governments of the United Nations that the massacres of the Jewish civilian population is being considered as unprecedented violation of the international law and the very principles of human civilization.
  - 8-Our organization being incessantly active in rescue work should be enabled to send representatives to the countries bordering the invaded continent in order to contact members of their affiliated organizations. We could then establish or enlarge our contact with the underground of the invaded territories. We did not succeed as yet in getting permission for any representative for our organization to visit Europe, and study the situation which we are sure could greatly help our rescue efforts.
  - 9-Due to censorship restrictions, our contacts in neutral countries cannot transmit messages of information to us and vice versa. We therefore emphasize the necessity for having a possibility to send messages including names and addresses to our contacts in Switzerland, Turkey, Portugal etc, in order to be able to find out all the information of individuals whom we might rescue.
  - 10-To enable religious rescue squads to visit liberated territories to get in touch with the stricken ones and refugees, and care for their religious needs.

We again express our compliments and gratefulness for our beloved President of the United States who enabled us through the War Refugee Board to have an organized body for the sole purpose of rescue. May we wish a speedy complete victory to the United Nations, and success for all your worthy undertakings.

ES:bjb

AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

*Rabbi Eliezer Silver*  
Rabbi Eliezer Silver  
President

# AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

1123 BROADWAY NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

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JACOB ROSENHEIM, Honorary President

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MICHAEL G. TRESS

Treasurers

ISAAC MASEL  
OSCAR Z. RAND

Director

RABBI S. EICHENSTEIN

Mr. Lesser  
War Refugee Board  
Treasury Building  
Room 164  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

Enclosed you will find our memorandum to  
Mr. John Pehle, Director of the War Refugee Board.

We are sorry that we cannot keep our  
appointment tomorrow as Rabbi Silver, the President  
of Agudas Israel was urgently called back to  
Cincinnati.

May we ask you to arrange for us another  
appointment with Mr. Pehle on March 20.

Appreciating your understanding, we are,

Sincerely yours,  
AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

*Oscar Z. Rand*  
Rabbi Oscar Z. Rand

OZR:bgb

Cables "AGUDOH" New York

Telephones { Watkins 9-0841  
                  { CHelsea 2-9515



March 1, 1944

2.30

*not being answered when  
sent in file.*

Agudas Israel aims to solve all problems confronting Jewry in the spirit of Torah and Tradition

FEB 19 1944

Dear Rabbi Eichenstein:

With reference to your letter of February 14, 1944, I am forwarding to you herewith a duplicate of our letter of February 8, 1944, which you state you have never received.

We look forward to receiving your memorandum which will be given our immediate attention.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director

Rabbi S. Eichenstein,  
Director,  
Agudas Israel of America,  
1123 Broadway,  
New York, N. Y.

Enclosure.

*Handwritten:* Cleared  
with H. A. Lasser.

FHodel:hd 2/18/44

*Handwritten:* EBT

DUPLICATE

In reply please  
refer to: 148

FEB 8 1944

Gentlemen:

The War Refugee Board, consisting of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War, was created by President Roosevelt on January 22, 1944. The President's purpose in creating the Board, as well as the Board's duties and authority, are set out in Executive Order No. 9417, a copy of which is enclosed for your information.

The Board is not unmindful of the fact that private agencies, including yourselves, have for some time been active in seeking means to effect the relief and rescue of Jews and other minority groups threatened with extermination by the enemy. Nor is the Board unmindful of the fact that such agencies have actually brought relief to and effected the rescue of a number of such victims of enemy persecution.

The Board is presently preparing programs for action and earnestly solicits the advice and cooperation of every agency concerned with the problem. Consequently, the Board would appreciate it if you would submit to it, at your earliest possible convenience, a detailed statement in writing of such specific action as you believe the Board should take to effectuate the policy announced in the Executive Order, and of the measures that you are equipped to take to lend assistance to such program. While your statement may be informal, it should contain all available information necessary or incidental to the effectuation of any project you suggest. In this connection, you should bear in mind that the Board must, of necessity, confine itself to projects involving the relief or rescue of groups of persons and cannot deal with proposals limited to any specific individual.

Agudas Isroel

- 2 -

The Board is fully cognizant of the difficulties involved in the preparation of any such statement, but nevertheless believes that the effort thus expended will have its compensation in achievement.

I think that you can understand our desire for having the suggestions of all agencies submitted to the Board in writing and at the earliest possible moment. On the other hand, I want you to know that the staff of the Board is always available for discussions with your representatives and the consideration of such further proposals or suggestions as you may be prepared to make.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle  
J. W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director

Agudas Israel of America,  
1128 Broadway,  
New York, New York.

Enclosure.

LSL:JWP:ccm 2/18/44

AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

1123 BROADWAY NEW YORK, N. Y.

RABBI ELIEZER SILVER, PRESIDENT  
 RABBI SOLOMON FRIEDMAN }  
 RABBI SOLOMON HYMAN } VICE-PRESIDENTS  
 SHLOMO TRAVIS }  
 RABBI JOSEPH D. SOLOWEICHIK } EXECUTIVE CHAIRMEN  
 RABBI JOSHUA BAUMEL }  
 HIRSCH MANISCHEWITZ } TREASURERS  
 ISAAC MASEL }  
 RABBI S. EICHENSTEIN, DIRECTOR

143

MAILING AUTHORITY  
10: Mail & Files

ANS. ....

NO-ANS. REQ. ....

INITIAL .....

CABLES "AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA" NEW YORK  
TELEPHONE WATKINS 9-0841

Reply # 58

February 14, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle  
Executive Office of The President  
War Refugee Board  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

We have your letter of February 12 on hand, and we express our appreciation for your kind understanding towards our interests.

We are sorry to state that our organization did not get any form letter or questionnaire from your office.

We beg to inform you that a special committee of our organization is working on a memorandum which we would like to present before you in the near future. At that time also, we would like to discuss with you various suggestions concerning rescue and help.

Sincerely yours,  
AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA

*S. Eichenstein*  
Rabbi S. Eichenstein  
Director

SE: BGB

Agudas Israel aims to solve all problems confronting Jewry in the spirit of Torah and Tradition

100335

42  
FEB 12 1944

In reply please  
refer to: 68

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Your telegram of February 6, 1944, to the President  
and Judge Rosenman, have been referred to this Office for reply.

No doubt, you have by now received my letter of  
February 8, 1944, asking for the advice and cooperation of  
every agency concerned with the problems of the War Refugee  
Board. As stated in that letter, the Board is always avail-  
able for discussions with representatives of your organization.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director

Rabbi Eliezer Silver,  
President,  
Agudas Israel of America,  
1123 Broadway,  
New York, New York.

RBH  
RBHutchinson:agr 2-12-44

100236

112

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 7, 1944

Respectfully referred to the  
War Refugee Board for attention  
and such acknowledgment as may be  
deemed appropriate.

Attention: Mr. Pehle.

M. C. LATTA  
Executive Clerk

100337

ARCHIVE  
THE WHITE HOUSE

The  
Washington

WB9 DL NEW YORK NY FEB 6 1944 6:43 PM 1944

THE PRESIDENT

THE WHITE HOUSE

SIR, THE EVENT THAT IT SHOULD BE CONVENIENT TO HEAR SUGGESTIONS OF THE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNING THE IMPORTANT WORK OF THE RECENTLY CONSTITUTED WAR REFUGEE BOARD BY A PERSONAL AUDIENCE WE WISH TO STRESS THE DUE CLAIM OF ORGANIZED ORTHODOX JUDAISM TO BE INCLUDED IN THE REPRESENTATION OF AMERICAN JEWRY AS WELL AS LIBERAL ZIONIST AND SOCIALIST GROUPS. WE THEREFORE RESPECTFULLY PROPOSE TO INVITE THE AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA TO SEND ONE OR TWO DELEGATES FOR THE PROPOSED AUDIENCE. RESPECTFULLY, WATKINS 90841.  
AGUDAS ISRAEL OF AMERICA 1123 BROADWAY RABBI ELIEZER SILVER PRES.

100238

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 7, 1944

58  
FILING AUTHORITY  
TO: Mail & Files  
ANS. ....  
NO ANS. REQ. ....  
INITIAL .....  
DATE .....

Dear Mr. Pehle:

The enclosed telegram  
is respectfully referred to you  
for consideration and acknowledg-  
ment.

Very sincerely,

*Samuel I. Rosenman*  
SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN  
Special Counsel to the  
President

Mr. John Pehle  
Treasury Department  
Washington, D. C.

100339

The White House  
Washington

FEB 6 5 44 PM 1944

WB10 DL

NEW YORK NY FEB 6 1944 142P

JUDGE ROSEMAN

THE WHITE HOUSE

WE HAVE ADDRESSED TODAY TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT THE FOLLOWING  
TELEGRAM: QUOTE THE EVENT THAT IT SHOULD BE CONVENIENT TO  
HEAR SUGGESTIONS OF THE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNING THE  
IMPORTANT WORK OF THE RECENTLY CONSTITUTED WAR REFUGEE BOARD  
BY A PERSONAL AUDIENCE WE WISH TO STRESS THE DUE CLAIM OF  
ORGANIZED ORTHODOX JUDAISM TO BE INCLUDED IN THE  
REPRESENTATION OF AMERICAN JEWRY AS WELL AS LIBERAL ZIONIST  
AND SOCIALIST GROUPS. WE THEREFORE RESPECTFULLY PROPOSE TO

100340