

Requests for Aid to Hungary: HIRSCH, JEANETTE

000612

In reply please  
refer to: 3206

AUG 30 1944

Dear Miss Hirsch:

President Roosevelt has referred to me your letter of August 4, 1944, concerning the plight of the Jews in Hungary.

On January 22, 1944, the President created the War Refugee Board for the purpose of taking all possible measures to rescue and save the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death, and to afford them all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war.

To accomplish the purpose for which it was created, the War Refugee Board has initiated numerous measures to assist persons to escape from enemy and enemy-occupied countries, to find havens of refuge for them, to obtain better treatment for those for whom escape is not possible, and to induce the satellite countries to desist from cooperating with the Nazi policy of persecution and extermination of minority peoples. The Board has stationed representatives in strategic countries in order to expedite these measures.

In connection with the problem of finding places of asylum for those who are enabled to escape from enemy-controlled areas, you will be interested to know that the President has taken action to establish an Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, where approximately 1,000 refugees are being cared for until they can be returned to their homelands at the end of the war. Arrangements also have been and are being made to provide other facilities to care for refugees in areas nearer to their homelands.

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With respect to the problem of Hungarian Jews, I enclose a copy of a joint statement recently issued by the United States and British Governments which I am sure will be of interest to you.

I assure you that the Board is doing everything in its power to achieve its humanitarian objectives.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle  
Executive Director

Miss Jeanette Hirsch,  
346 East 57th Street,  
Brooklyn, New York.

Enclosure.

EBH  
EBHutchison:inp 8/25/44

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*W. R. D. Bd*

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3206

346 East 57th Street  
Brooklyn, New York  
August 4, 1944

W. R. D. \_\_\_\_\_  
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The President of The United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT  
AND CONGRESS

*W. R. D.*  
Secretary to the President

My Dear President;

I see by the papers that you have expressed your abhorance at the fact that some 400,000 Jews in Hungary are in imminent danger of being put to death by our enemies. For a person like myself who is powerless to intercede an expression of sympathy or dismay at the fate that is in store for these poor people might suffice, but for you mere words are not enough. Perhaps 400,000 lives are not much in a world that has become hardened to the slaughter of millions of people but the eyes of these many thousands as well as those of the entire world are fixed upon us for some concrete evidence of the fact that we come as Liberators of the European Continent. Here is a chance to prove it, for of what use is a land whose people have been destroyed. Would it not be more practical as well as humane to pause and give some attention to first saving the lives of those whom we are pledged to liberate.

Naturally I know nothing of the problems involved in arranging for the movement and maintenance of these people until they can be returned to their homes but it would seem that a nation which has pledged all its resources as well as the lives of millions of its young men and women in the fight against facism cannot afford not to accept the challenge of saving the victims of the same facist aggressors.

Forgive me if I seem to have spoken too harshly or abruptly but it is from a heart which is distressed at the thoughts of these unfortunate people as they await their fate. I repeat Mr President; there are 400,000 lives at stake.

Very truly yours,  
*Janette Husick*

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