

UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND

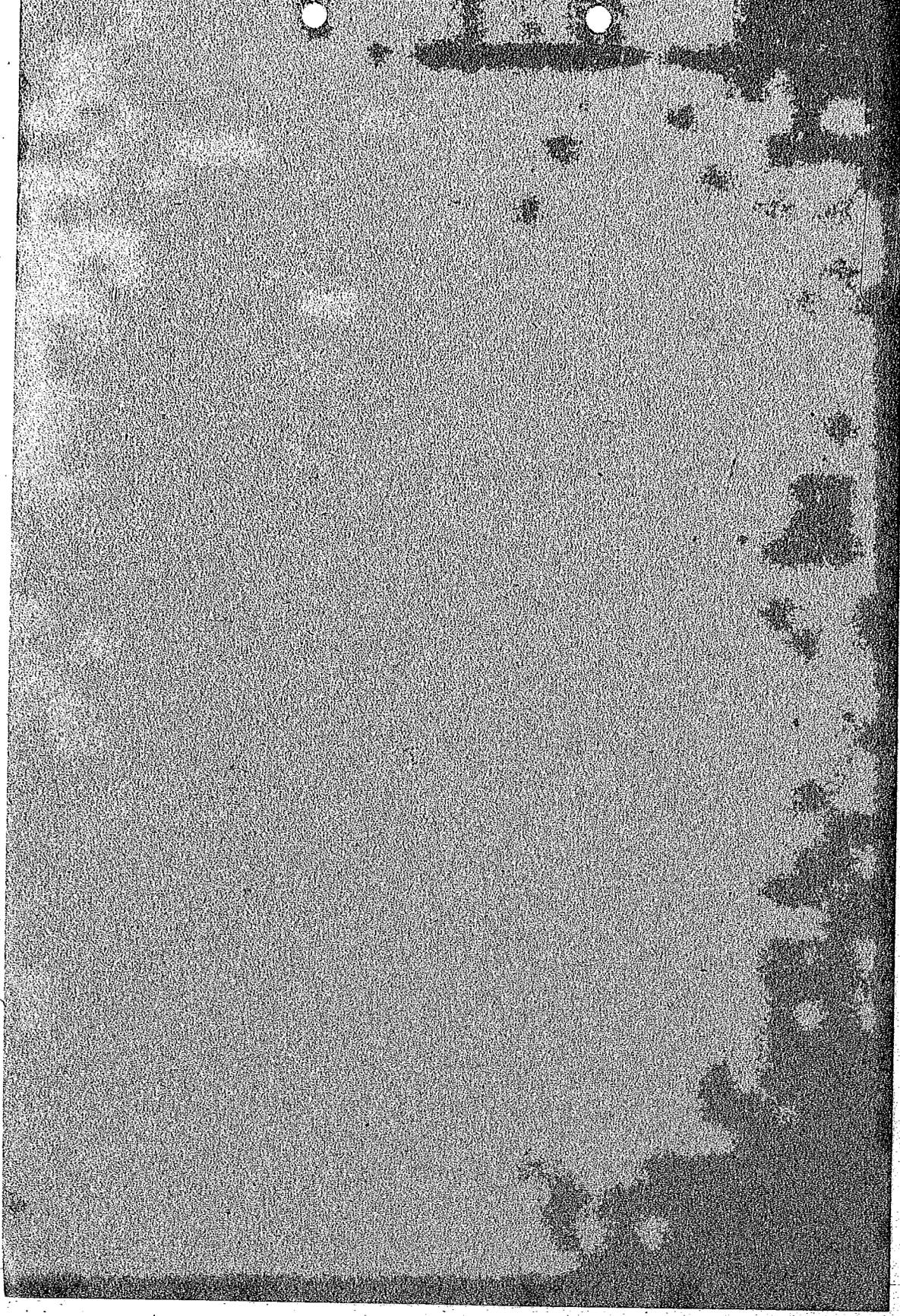
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UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND

1. GENERAL
2. DRAFTS OF GEN. O'DWYER'S SPEECH IN LOS ANGELES

WAR REFUGEE BOARD RECORDS

000104



000105

United Jewish Welfare Fund

JUN 11 1945

Dear Mr. Cohn:

We have received your letter of June 5, 1945, enclosing newspaper clippings and photographs covering General O'Dwyer's recent visit to Los Angeles. Thank you very much for arranging for this service and for sending the material to us for our files.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

Mr. Sam W. B. Cohn,
Publicity Director,
United Jewish Welfare Fund,
939 Broadway,
Los Angeles 15, Calif.

*Original signed
by Mrs. Hodel*

FH:hd 6/11/45

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President, Community Council: JUDGE HARRY A. HOLLZER
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June 5, 1945

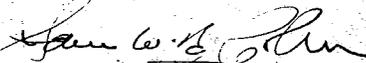
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 - SAMUEL S. WOLFSON

Mr. Wm. O'Dwyer
 War Refugee Board
 Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. O'Dwyer:

In accordance with my promise I am enclosing herewith newspaper clippings, other publicity material and photographs covering your recent visit in Los Angeles. My apparent tardiness in taking care of this matter was occasioned by the fact that our clipping service is very slow in serving us, hence I trust you will forgive the delay.

With kindest personal regards, I remain

Cordially,

 SAM W. B. COHN,
 Publicity Director

SWBC:sb
 Enc.

no endorsement when rec'd by file

000107

"1945 Year of Liberation"

LOS ANGELES WILL RAISE
\$3,000,000

INCREASED GIVING
FOR INCREASED NEEDS!

UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND OF LOS ANGELES JEWISH
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939 SOUTH BROADWAY • LOS ANGELES 15, CALIFORNIA • TELEPHONE TRINITY 0201

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May 19, 1945

Miss Florence Hodel
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss Hodel:

Please accept our sincere thanks for your gracious help in launching our 1945 campaign. My delay in writing was occasioned solely by the fact that I was hoping to have a file of newspaper clippings ready for General O'Dwyer, and learned just today that they will not be ready for another week or ten days.

The ladies to whom you spoke during your visit here were very much impressed, as we were, by your personality and your familiarity with overseas problems. We all wish it had been possible for you to remain in Los Angeles long enough to address some of our larger meetings.

Thanks again for helping us out, and please remember us to our mutual friends.

Cordially,
Leo Gallin
LEO GALLIN
Executive Director

LG:BG

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DIVISION OF &
PRESS INTELLIGENCE
O.W.I.
Tempo V Bldg.

FH. _____

SY. VM

News
Los Angeles, Calif.

APR 30 1945

General O'Dwyer campaigns here for war refugee aid

Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer, the prosecutor of New York's notorious Murder, Inc., is in Los Angeles again. This time, however, he's on the trail of a different breed of killer—starvation.

"The primary purpose of my visit here is to bring home the need for emergency relief of refugees," said General O'Dwyer, who now serves as executive director of the war refugee board.

In this capacity the general will open the 1945 campaign of the United Jewish Welfare fund with an address at the Ambassador hotel Wednesday night, Tuesday evening he will speak to members of the motion picture division, also at the Ambassador.

In 1941, O'Dwyer investigated local ramifications of the lurid New York murder ring, particularly the Harry Greenberg murder.

His activities here, the general said, are designed to promote aid for people already "saved" by the Allies.

General O'Dwyer, 1942 New York mayoralty candidate, is at present the district attorney of Brooklyn.

He was accompanied by Miss Florence Hodel, assistant executive director of the war refugee board.

Max Firestein is the local campaign chairman of the welfare fund drive.

Vote Yes on Airport Bonds



Daily News photo.
GENERAL O'DWYER
From rackets to refugees

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DIVISION OF
PRESS INTELLIGENCE
O.W.I.
Tempo V Bldg.

PH. _____

SY. *UM*

Times
Los Angeles, Calif.
186 APR 30 1945
DATE

O'Dwyer Stresses Refugee Needs

Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer, Brooklyn racket buster and candidate in New York City's last Mayoralty election, said yesterday that displaced Europeans who "have been to hell and back" in their years of internment behind Nazi barricades are faced with problems more imminent than resettlement and rehabilitation.

O'Dwyer, here to fill two speaking engagements, is a member of the waning War Refugee Committee. He became inactive in the Army last year in order to undertake this welfare work and has officially visited sites of German atrocities in Italy.

Dire Times Forecast

Hastily amending his statement to indicate that few of the imprisoned refugees and slave laborers are "back" from the Hitler "hell," he said that only witnesses of the pitiful spectacle of tortured victims, once robust human beings, can appreciate the need which will exist after the enemy capitulation. It will be dire times, he opined, between the firing of the last gun and the setting up of intergovernmental agencies to solve the problems of Europe's populace.

"Care for these people, dispossessed of home, health and almost life itself, is an immediate responsibility which Americans must help meet," said O'Dwyer. "It isn't something that can wait a month or two months or a year. Something has to be done now."

The committee was organized, he explained, to carry on relief work for prisoners behind enemy lines. Its functions end, he said, when V-E Day arrives. From then on the job will be up to the various relief agencies.

Speaks Tomorrow

Gen. O'Dwyer, here for the launching of the 1945 campaign for the United Jewish Welfare Fund, will speak tomorrow evening at a precampaign dinner at which William Goetz, movie executive, will preside and again Wednesday evening at the kickoff dinner.

The 1945 drive seeks to reach the goal of 50,000 contributors, Max Firestein, campaign chairman, said. The dollars-and-cents goal has not been set.

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MAX FIRESTEIN

 *Max Factor & Co.*
HOLLYWOOD 28, CALIF.

HOLLYWOOD 3921

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MAY 10 1945

Dear Mr. Firestein:

I am so sorry that General O'Dwyer and I were unable to accept your very kind invitation to visit your plant while we were in Los Angeles. We tried very hard to make it but our schedule of appointments on Thursday made it impossible to do so.

We enjoyed our visit very much and were happy to be able to participate in the opening of your campaign which I am sure will be most successful.

Sincerely yours,

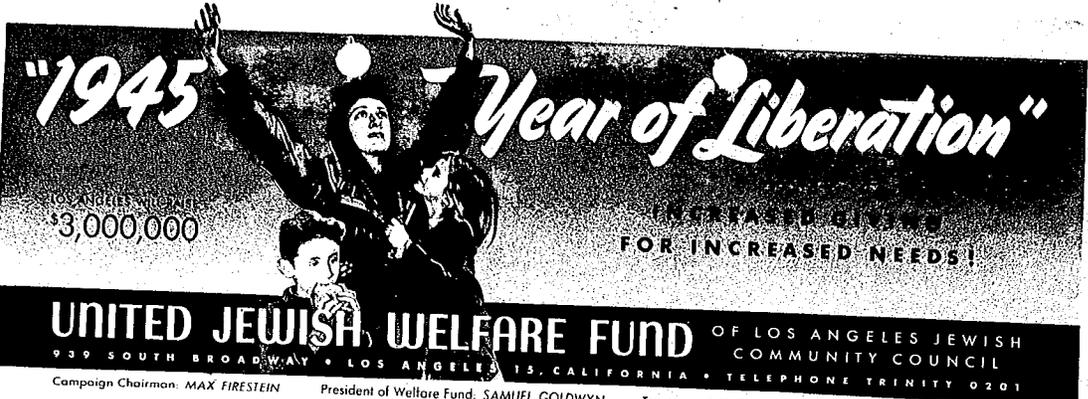
(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

Mr. Max Firestein,
Max Factor & Co.,
Hollywood 28, Calif.

FH:hd 5/10/45

000112



Campaign Chairman: MAX FIRESTEIN President of Welfare Fund: SAMUEL GOLDWYN Treasurer: DAVID MAY II Executive Director: LEO GALLIN

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May 19, 1945

Brigadier-General William O'Dwyer
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bill:

I have been waiting for the complete file of newspaper clippings which we are assembling before writing you, but it seems that our clipping bureau will be delayed about another week. I want to drop you this note to tell you how deeply appreciative we all are of your trip here to address our opening meetings.

Your talks on May 1st and May 2nd are still being quoted at all our campaign meetings, and the Motion Picture Division, whose members are always skeptical about coming to meetings, are all agreed that their May 1st dinner, thanks to you, was a memorable occasion. As a matter of fact, one of the top studio's representatives, who agreed to cooperate on dinner attendance only under compulsion, admitted at the last committee meeting that he had been wrong in underestimating the value of the affair, and that he finds his prospects who attended the dinner much more responsive.

Please excuse my delay in writing; had I known the clippings would not be available promptly, I would have written much sooner. We shall send you the complete file for your information in about a week.

Cordially,
Leo
LEO GALLIN

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SAMUEL S. WOLFSON

LG:BG

000113

BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM O'DWYER

for the

MOTION PICTURE WELFARE FUND

Ambassador Hotel
Los Angeles, California

Tuesday, May 1, 1945

E. Rasmussen, Reporter

STENOTYPE CONVENTION REPORTING COMPANY

26 O'Farrell Street
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

1151 South Broadway
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

806 K Street
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

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BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM O'DWYER

for the

MOTION PICTURE WELFARE FUND

Ambassador Hotel
Los Angeles, California

Tuesday, May 1, 1945

STENOTYPE CONVENTION REPORTING COMPANY
26 O'FARRELL STREET
SAN FRANCISCO 8, CALIFORNIA
1151 SOUTH BROADWAY
LOS ANGELES 15, CALIFORNIA

000115

1 EDDIE CANTOR: In bringing William O'Dwyer to
2 Los Angeles to speak to us in behalf of the Jewish Welfare
3 Fund, we feel we have brought here one of the most impor-
4 tant men in the country today.

5 I'd like to tell you something of the background
6 of Bill O'Dwyer. I call him Bill O'Dwyer, and I feel you
7 will call him Bill when he is through speaking to you. Many
8 years ago he started his career in joining the police force
9 of New York City, and he studied law at night. He was then
10 appointed a magistrate, and later made a wonderful district
11 attorney of Brooklyn. He broke up Murder Inc. Then he
12 served as Brigadier General in the United States Army, and
13 was later appointed by our late great President as the
14 Executive Director of the War Refugee Board. That is the
15 instrument that this government used in saving the lives
16 of persecuted people in Hitler-dominated countries.

17 Of course, it is a far cry from sending these
18 gangsters to the death house to the rescuing of the refugees,
19 but that is the kind of a guy Bill O'Dwyer is. He will give
20 you a bed to sleep in or a chair to sit on. I bring you a
21 great man, Bill O'Dwyer. (Applause)

22 MR. WILLIAM O'DWYER: Thank you, Eddie. If the
23 war keeps up, there will be a shortage of chairs, and we'll
24 have to find some other way to handle the inmate gangsters.

25 Ladies and gentlemen, and honored guests: It
26 takes more than ordinary nerve to cross the continent and

1 face a group such as you. No one east of the Mississippi
2 is reaching out for this one, and I did hesitate to accept
3 your kind invitation to come here principally on that account.
4 Yet, there is a reason why this drive for funds here in Los
5 Angeles must be a success. First of all, there is the need.
6 Secondly, what you do in Los Angeles is going to be reflected
7 in the success of the drive throughout the country. The
8 hour has come when we can't take any chances, because it
9 will mean the saving of human life. Just because of that,
10 the hesitation I had to come went up in thin air, and be-
11 lieve me, nothing could prevent me from coming here because
12 of the importance of the mission.

13 I am going to talk to you tonight not about the
14 ordinary, average year in year out problems that your Wel-
15 fare has. I hope you will remember that these problems
16 always remain. What I am going to talk to you about tonight
17 is an emergency problem this year. The problem of a million
18 people. It is more than that, but we will deal with the
19 round figures, a million Jews who have come through alive.
20 They are living, that's true, but they are just living. They
21 are half alive. They couldn't be normal, natural people and
22 go through what they have gone through in the past twelve
23 years, and it is about them that I am going to talk to you.
24 It is as their special advocate that I have come to you and,
25 believe me, I feel the responsibility keenly because it
26 takes more than words and more than pictures to adequately

000117

1 tell their story.

2 Twelve years ago outside of Russia, you had in
3 Europe six million Jews, quite everyday people with family
4 problems just like we have, some good, some bad, some sad,
5 some happy, just everyday people living in a sense of se-
6 curity, a feeling of security. Well, do I have to tell you
7 what happened? We know it. Maybe we forget it too easily
8 but we know it. It is no longer a theory. It is no longer
9 propoganda. Now it is fact. Overnight into those peaceful
10 lives there sprang from the darkness, from the abyss of
11 human depravity, armed might, the last development of science,
12 a diabolical, methodical attack. First, they took their
13 property away; next, removed, abolished their citizenship;
14 next, dragged them into concentration camps, into slave
15 camps and, by steady process, made one year worse than the
16 other.

17 There came a day at the peak in 1943 where those
18 who were left stood by daily in their camps watching their
19 neighbors going one by one out of the camp into the gas
20 chamber, and saw them removed from the gas chamber into the
21 crematory, and then saw their remains carried forth in a
22 bucket of ashes--fertilizer for the enemy's soil. They had
23 been looking at that during all these years. Would you ex-
24 pect them to be normal?

25 One day, thanks to our armies, and thanks to
26 everyone who helped our armies, and thanks to the agencies

1 that are here tonight asking you for help, when the smoke
2 cleared away, five million of that six were gone forever, and
3 one million who went through those orgies are now alive. It
4 is about them that I want to talk to you.

5 Of course, you don't believe all the stories of
6 horror you see. Of course, you don't believe the pictures.
7 You don't believe the words because you don't smell those
8 bodies. You don't get the feeling. In Rome this past sum-
9 mer, we had taken over Rome on the fourth of June and we got
10 the word back in March, there had been a parade of German
11 soldiers near the Piazza near Naples. Somebody threw a
12 bomb into them and killed thirty-five. Well, that night
13 everyone on the streets of Rome were gathered into the station
14 houses and military depots and some of them came home, but
15 the word got around low in whispers because they didn't speak
16 out loud. One would say, "My baby didn't come home--my aunt,
17 my uncle, my brother didn't come home," but no one believed
18 that. They said, "It will be all right, they will be home
19 soon." But the rumor went around that the iron law of the
20 German was enforced and that out of the depots and station
21 houses they had taken ten civilians of all ages for every
22 soldier killed.

23 Now in the heat of Rome in July when it was really
24 hot, possibly 105 degrees or 106 degrees, which is pretty
25 hot in Rome, it came through that an ancient catacomb had been
26 shelled and someone went down and poked into it. Then the

1 cry went out that 350 bodies were inside the tomb, machine
2 gunned within the tomb for retribution for the soldiers. I
3 didn't see it. I couldn't go that close to it. Neither could
4 you. But I saw the vigil that the relatives kept who sat night
5 and day around the tomb waiting for that moment when they might
6 satisfy themselves that the little one and the big one and the
7 men and the women were really there, the ones they had lost and
8 the ones they loved. You must see that and smell that to know
9 what this means.

10 Now while this was going on back in 1933, as far back as
11 that, these agencies that are now seeking your support were
12 thinking and planning and foresaw the doom of these people.
13 they went into action. Between 1933 and 1939 you could still
14 get Jews from Germany by legal visa in certain cases. To the
15 extent that that could be done, your agencies worked so that
16 they got 800,000 people out of Germany, out of the enemy's
17 control between 1933 and 1939. They placed them in various
18 places of safety.

19 Now, if I may be permitted a side remark in answer to
20 those that are critical of the Zion Movement, let me state
21 that Palestine accepted 300,000 of the 800,000, gave them a
22 home, and gave them an opportunity to grow up in self respect
23 and decency. That should be an answer to any criticism of
24 the Palestine Movement. Now these 800,000 have been placed
25 all over the world. They have had sufficient time to take
26 root in the countries of their adoption. They have some

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1 problems but none of emergency proportions, none that I want
2 to speak to you about tonight, because I am not talking about
3 any one of that 800,000. I am talking to you about a million
4 who were pulled from inside the enemy lines from 1939 to today.
5 That is the million that need the help. That is the million
6 that present this year the emergency that these agencies have
7 to face. That is why there is such a stress made tonight on
8 this year's contributions to the Welfare Agencies.

9 After October 1941, by German edict, it was no longer
10 possible to take anyone out from inside the enemy lines by
11 legal visa. Did that stop your agencies from working? It
12 did not. They concentrated on the development of the resis-
13 tant groups and the underground inside the enemy lines. It
14 took more than money. It took planning. It took the help of
15 friends in neutral countries. You had two things to guard
16 against. One was that you must not under any circumstances
17 do anything that would impede our main purpose--the winning
18 of the war. You must not trade with the enemy, and you must
19 not, no matter what the emergency, create a credit for the
20 enemy in neutral countries or in our country.

21 At this point let me tell you there were people who re-
22 mained at their posts to organize the resistant groups within
23 the enemy lines, great people who knew that by doing so they
24 faced the anger of the Gestapo and the sure fate of torture
25 and death. Hollywood will some day give us the thrilling
26 story of the leaders of the underground and resistance groups

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1 within, who came through the lines to safety, who visited
2 the representatives of these agencies that are sponsoring this
3 affair in Portugal and other neutral countries, who were
4 begged not to go back but who steadfastly followed their high
5 purpose and did go back and were captured and were tortured
6 and were cremated. And when they were gone new leaders from
7 within, knowing their fate full well rose up again and carried
8 on. The stories that could be told in that regard would make
9 stories for you for many days to come, certainly not stories
10 I could tell here in the short time that is at my disposal.
11 These are stories for histories, stories for books, permanent
12 records of heroism. Take the Jewish Agency job in the Balkans.
13 Here were the Jews in the Balkans and here was the enemy
14 coming through and they knew what that meant. Here was a
15 body of water over into Turkey, and here were a handful of
16 little boats that your agencies bought from Turkey to sail
17 across that body of water, unprotected in waters that were
18 infested with enemy craft. And yet, overcrowded, they crossed
19 and crossed. One time with three hundred persons on one of
20 those little boats, when it had almost landed, the enemy
21 calmly threw a shot into it. Of the three hundred, only eight
22 survived. And yet, the boats kept coming until seven thousand
23 in all landed in Turkey and made their way across into Palestine
24 where they were taken care of and in the field of protecting it
25 has credit in preventing the enemy from having the use. I
26 think a very good example would be how your agency has actually

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1 fed the people in Poland with our money without allowing the
2 Germans any credit. How did they do it? They simply took
3 from the Jews in Germany their marks, and with their marks they
4 bought food with Polish currency and for the money they turned
5 in--the marks that were turned in--they got a credit against
6 your agency, against the Joint Distribution Committee, and
7 when they came through they collected their money in dollars
8 and were taken care of. I can tell you now as an official,
9 as the Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, in all the
10 myriad activities of your agencies and for all the pressure
11 and all the enthusiasm of your agencies in their work, there
12 never was one instance where they were successfully charged,
13 or where it was whispered that they neglected the first and
14 final and the main purpose--the winning of the war. Not once
15 did they jeopardize that.

16 There did come a day when the agencies could go no fur-
17 ther. It was difficult to communicate with neutral countries.
18 It was difficult to facilitate American dollars in through the
19 resistance groups, and for many reasons that I don't have to
20 give you, they found that they needed governmental support in
21 their work and they placed their problems before our late
22 President. Well, let me read what he did about it on the
23 22d of January 1944. He established the War Refugee Board
24 "to take all measures within its powers to rescue the victims
25 of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death, and
26 to otherwise afford such victims all possible relief and

1 assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the
2 war."

3 Now ladies and gentlemen, this was a unique thing. Our
4 war, as you know, has been prosecuted as a combined operation.
5 What your agency asked your government to do was to embark
6 on a unilateral action without any connection with the Allies
7 in this deal. What your late President did was to set up a
8 governmental agency under the direction of his three chief
9 secretaries--Treasury, War and State--for the purpose of tak-
10 ing care of civilians inside the line. Of course, it was a
11 courageous thing to do. The ties that bind the Allies in
12 time of war are sensitive things, easy to be tampered with and
13 easy to be destroyed, and history might become critical, or
14 people today might have become critical of his actions, but to
15 President Roosevelt the saving of the civilians was one of
16 the high purposes of our entering into the war. History will
17 understand what some of our contemporaries do not understand.
18 They will understand why President Roosevelt did it, because
19 history will understand the mind and the heart and the humanity
20 that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

21 After the establishment of the War Refugee Board things
22 began to happen. Licenses were issued for the sending of
23 money to neutral countries. Since January 22 until today
24 the War Refugee Board cleared for your agencies \$20,000,000
25 to be spent in this work. Of that, \$15,000,000 was the Joint
26 Distribution Committee's money. The Refugee Board gathered

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1 all the agencies, all the Jewish agencies, all the non-Jewish
2 agencies, all the agencies of government, all the foreign
3 missions, every foreign mission of the State Department, and
4 welded the whole into a working machine so that the best possible
5 help could be brought in the rescue field. Perhaps if
6 I read to you from the official report, and if there are any
7 members of the press here I will have to ask you not to quote
8 any of the readings that I give as they are not those in the
9 released document, because some of the readings here have not
10 been officially released, and yet it would be a shame not to
11 call them to your attention.

12 For instance, our field man, Mr. McClelland in Switzerland
13 back in May 1, 1944, made a purely simple, cold, factual
14 report on his expenditures. I'd like to read the headings for
15 you of what these moneys were spent for, not the amount, but
16 what they were spent for, so you can get an inkling into what
17 your agencies have been doing. For example, he says in Number
18 Three, "Special expenses for courier service to Hungary,
19 Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Germany, Northern Italy, Holland,
20 Belgium, and France," Number Four, "Minor contributions to
21 organizations doing small scale border work, including cost
22 of false papers, temporary maintenance, transportation." You
23 see that was part of the work. "Special grants" he says
24 again, "particularly to political groups or their representatives
25 to find flight, hiding false papers of endangered
26 persons, grants to secure co-operation in such programs."

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1 Number Seven, "Major grants." This ran into \$200,000, "Major
2 grants to organizations to cover the many expenses involved
3 in rescue and relief operations, temporary maintenance, hid-
4 ing false papers, copying minor officials' papers at frontiers
5 for persecuted and endangered persons, particularly Jewish,
6 in Nazi occupied territory," and so on down the line. I won't
7 bore you but you can get from that that work had been going
8 on all the time. This is an official document, a simple,
9 stale report lying in the files at Washington in the Treasury
10 Building.

11 Now, on the other end of the line in Sweden, the War
12 Refugee Board had a representative there, Mr. Olsen. Now Mr.
13 Olsen submitted a casual report way back in November of '44.
14 Because one part of it is interesting today, since the dis-
15 appearance of a great young Swedish humanitarian, Paul Wallen-
16 berg, I think you would be interested in what our represen-
17 tative reported back in November of last year in which he
18 mentions Mr. Wallenberg. He said, "The Hungarian rescue and
19 relief operations of this program went extremely well and
20 based on information available here, probably was the most
21 constructive action initiated from anywhere for the relief of
22 Hungarian Jews." The keystone of the entire operation was
23 the willingness of the Swedish foreign office to assign an
24 attache to his legation in Budapest, exclusively for the pur-
25 pose of initiating relief actions for Hungarian Jews. The
26 attache sent Paul Wallenberg who was personally known to us

1 and was, in fact, our choice--very energetic, great initiative,
2 and resourcefulness, and sincerely concerned with the urgency
3 of the problem. Despite the fact that he was constantly ridi-
4 culed by the Hungarian Nazis, he left no stone unturned in
5 pressing for conditions of greater safety and comfort for as
6 many Hungarian Jews as possible. The first major action
7 initiated was to get as many Hungarian Jews as possible under
8 Swedish protection. Such protective papers were issued to all
9 Hungarian Jews who had relatives or close friends in Sweden or
10 had long established business connections with Sweden. Approx-
11 imately six thousand persons were found eligible out of thou-
12 sands of applications filed.

13 The next step was to get this group released from a
14 series of stringent cruelties imposed upon the Jews and move
15 them into areas of greater comparative safety. Consequently,
16 this plan not only brought considerably more safety and com-
17 fort to this group but made available a fairly large group
18 free to render a hand to bring relief to their less fortunate
19 associates.

20 After as many as possible had been brought under Swedish
21 protection activities switched to a series of relief projects.
22 This was relief to find certain foods and clothing, establish-
23 ment of community housing facilities and organizing hospital
24 facilities. Several thousand Jews benefited from these
25 activities not only physically but as a strong moral factor.

26 Throughout the entire period the Swedish Legation

1 maintained increasing pressure upon Hungarian authorities,
2 not only with respect to the group it was protecting, but in
3 connection with the overall official policy of Hungarian
4 authorities towards the Jews. Unquestionably these efforts
5 have done much to prevent the introduction of even more savage
6 treatment of the Jews. "

7 I am sorry to tell you that young Wallenberg, the scion
8 of one of the greatest banking diplomatic families in Sweden,
9 thirty-one years of age, an architect, a student in one of our
10 American colleges, who threw himself boldly into this work in
11 Budapest, disappeared three days before the declaration of the
12 end of hostilities between Hungary and the Allies, and has
13 not been located yet.

14 This, ladies and gentlemen, is just a picture so that you
15 can see that your agencies who financed these activities have
16 not been remiss. They have been on their toes. They have
17 been working.

18 Now you take another example of where the War Refugee
19 Board and the agencies worked hand in hand. Back in February
20 of this year when I first came to the War Refugee Board the
21 information at that time was clear that there was no more mass
22 extermination. The Germans had abandoned it. They had found
23 a better way, a more successful way. It was great for the
24 Germans when they had the exterminations. They got clothes
25 from the victims, piles of shoes, piles of clothes in reason-
26 ably good condition, and they kept other Jews alive to clean

1 the clothes or mend them and send them back. It was great
2 fun to see these unfortunate women going through the piles of
3 clothing of their relatives and their friends and their
4 brothers. The German mind enjoyed it so much so that one of
5 the extermination chambers had a glass panel so that you could
6 look in. You have seen panels of that kind in broadcasting
7 stations.

8 There is a rumor that is not quite verified yet, but it
9 is strong on good authority, that on the occasion of one of
10 these orgies of exterminations in the gas chamber a high Nazi
11 official came there to see it, and a carnival spirit filled
12 the air. A band of music played while he sat and looked in on
13 the unfortunate ones going to their death, and at all this
14 sorting out of clothing, little shoes, in many cases. Babies
15 were sent into these chambers just like the grown-ups. Some
16 day, some writer and some director worthy of it, will produce
17 the story, keeping in mind that the lesson will have to be
18 perpetuated for all the generations so that it must never
19 happen again.

20 You will have to make a picture some day of a woman who
21 sorted out the clothing of those who had gone to the chamber,
22 and in her sadness saw one little garment that only she could
23 recognize. You will have to translate it to the screen. You
24 will have to show it. It will be a job to do. You will have
25 to translate for posterity her finding of a silent little
26 garment that spoke to her with all the penetrating agonies of

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1 mother love. The Germans enjoyed it, they loved it. They
2 got the band of music and there was a carnival spirit in the
3 air when this was done.

4 Now the Germans don't have a carnival any more. Patton
5 and Hodge are around one corner, Russia is around the other
6 corner. Lines are getting shorter. Housing is not available,
7 food is not available, so they leave them on the sidewalk to
8 die from exposure or starvation, and that is what is going on.

9 Now the War Refugee Board had this problem. How to get
10 food inside the lines to feed them. First of all, we had to
11 have the machinery with which to take in the food. We used
12 the International Red Cross. We first went to our board--
13 the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary
14 of Treasury--and we pointed out the condition, the helpless
15 condition, of these people, and we asked permission to get
16 food in to them. The International Red Cross said all right,
17 but now we had no food. We had no trucks; we had no gasoline;
18 we had nothing. We made another application to our army,
19 again, a unilateral approach. We purchased from stock piles
20 of food eleven hundred tons of it. We got from our army,
21 from General Eisenhower, two thousand gallons of gas a week.
22 We got grease and oil and tires and local trucks and, ladies
23 and gentlemen, for the last four or five weeks our food has
24 gone into these camps. We can't tell you yet how many sur-
25 vived because of that, but the food was there, and some
26 have survived.

1 Now the big point in my going into the work of the agen-
2 cies is this: that in describing it to you as I have done I
3 am hoping that you will get the picture of agencies really
4 at work all the way through from 1933 down to today, with the
5 emphasis all the time on rescue. Now I also want you to feel
6 from their activities the momentary lives of these people
7 day by day down to today. How could people who have gone
8 through that much be normal, natural people?

9 One time in the early days in Brooklyn where I was a
10 magistrate, there was a man who was a keeper of wild fowl,
11 wild life, who was a very cold type of person. He wanted
12 everyone that he arrested to get their five-dollar fine or
13 ten days in jail. He insisted on that, and it got to a point
14 where everyone around the court hated him because he was so
15 cold. Then one cold day in the little court house on Penn-
16 sylvania Avenue in Brooklyn he stands before me, demanding
17 a jail sentence for two men for interfering with a live
18 wild duck that had become frozen on the ice. He opened up his
19 coat and said, "Judge, I want you to see they are damaging,
20 what they are interfering with," and he had a live wild
21 duck inside of his coat with its eyes half open. He takes a
22 little milk, puts it into the palm of his hand and he tries
23 to get the little bird to drink it. He said, "You see, this
24 bird is too hungry for ordinary food. We have to nurse it
25 back to a point where it can take ordinary food." And he
26 pressed the point. We got it. He was a new man to us.

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1 He had taken this wild hungry, cold thing, and placed it
2 where his own heart's blood would warm it. He had given it
3 affection, and forever afterward we respected him for it.

4 Now the new job for 1945 concerns these one million people
5 who have been saved from the tortures of the damned since
6 1939, who are people, not wild birds. You have to first nurse
7 them to a point where they can eat. You have to give them
8 more than that. You have got to give them hope. You have
9 got to take the darkness away from them. You have got to
10 bring into their lives sunlight. When you have that much
11 done you have their children to train. That is the problem
12 you have for 1945.

13 Now, during the course of the drive some cynical persons
14 will say, "Well, the inter-governmental agencies will take
15 care of them." Of course, they will. Some day they will get
16 an agreement on what to do. By the time the proposals and
17 counter proposals have been finally decided and the inter-
18 national minds have met, you won't have any problem if you
19 wait that long. They will be dead. That will take care of
20 the problem.

21 This problem is an immediate one. This million people
22 that I am speaking about need care. They need special care.
23 They need immediate care and it has got to be done in 1945
24 and it must be done by the agencies that have been doing it
25 right along.

26 When the last shot is fired, and it is about fired, the

1 War Refugee Board will go out of business. We have no terms
2 referring to existence longer than the end of the war. That
3 will throw the responsibility back on the shoulders of your
4 agencies. It would be a swell thing and a grand appeal if we
5 could go over to General Eisenhower like our Congress or the
6 Parliament has done, so that we could not only see, we could
7 smell the conditions. I am pressing that point because that
8 is the one element you can't get into your motion pictures,
9 but you can if you go there. If we could see them and their
10 condition you wouldn't need a speech and they wouldn't need a
11 special advocator. You would help. If one of them were here
12 or in your home so that you could see how sick he was or she
13 was in mind and body, if you knew how much could be abolished
14 by placing your cool hand upon a poor fevered brow, if you
15 had them here to see how sick they were, that would be the
16 appeal. No words would match that appeal. All talk would
17 be inadequate. That would be the real thing, but you can't
18 have that. The only thing is to talk to you about it, and to
19 try to emphasize for you over and over again the necessity,
20 the emergency, that this year places before your agencies.

21 I won't detain you any longer. You have been patient.
22 I am grateful to you for listening to me. You will share,
23 won't you? Good night. (Standing applause.)

24 EDDIE CANTOR: On behalf of the ladies and
25 gentlemen gathered here tonight I do want to thank you. We
26 shall long remember your talk. You have painted a very vivid

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1 picture of what is going on in Europe, especially among our
2 people, and I promise you faithfully that we will not forget.
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WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Executive Office of the President

Washington

RELEASE NO. 18

(The following address by William O'Dwyer, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, before the opening meeting of the 1945 campaign of the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles, at the Hotel Ambassador, Los Angeles, is scheduled for delivery at 9 p.m. Pacific War Time, Tuesday, May 1, 1945, and is for release at that time.)

It is a high privilege for me to be here tonight to help the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles raise the funds required for its 1945 programs. I hesitated before accepting your invitation, because of the great responsibility that it entailed, but I felt that it was my duty to present to you, no matter how inadequate my words may be for this occasion, the immensity of the needs of the 1,000,000 Jews saved from the enemy since 1939. I am in a position to know that it is largely through your generosity, and of the Jews throughout America, that so many were saved.

I am deeply appreciative of the fact that funds are needed for the relief of Jews now in countries other than Europe. When the war actually began in 1939, more than 800,000 Jews had already been rescued from the grip of the Nazis and removed to safety. They have had time to take root in the countries of their adoption and today do not present problems of emergency proportions. It was a good thing that Palestine absorbed more than 300,000 of these people and provided them with the opportunity to become self-respecting human beings.

The emergency for 1945 is created by the million Jews saved since 1939 and now in Europe, broken down in body and spirit who are in dire need of special and immediate care.

During the last several war years, the emphasis, in the appeals that have been made to you, has been placed on the work of rescue from enemy control. The time has come when, thanks to our armies and thanks to everyone who has aided in the complete victory over the enemy, this work of rescue is coming to an end. The emphasis tonight must be directed to the task of keeping alive and rehabilitating the saved people.

In order for us to realize the emergency character and immediate need of the one million Jews in Europe saved since 1939, we must fully understand what they have gone through. Twelve years ago there were 6 million

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Jews in Europe, outside of Russia, living with their families in reasonable security and happiness. They had their work and family problems just as you and I. Then suddenly out of the depths of human depravity an evil force struck with unprecedented ferocity at these 6 million defenseless men, women and children. The greatest military force the world had heretofore seen, a vast scientific knowledge, and the methodical German mind were directed towards the complete extermination of these people. At least 5 million Jews were destroyed and turned into fertilizer for enemy soil, and there remain today one million Jews in Europe, alive.

For years, these survivors have lived through torments and agonies that our minds cannot comprehend. Some of them were born in cages and do not yet know that there are in this world people of great hearts and generosity, who are ready to bring to them oil for their wounds, food and clothing for their bodies, shelter from the cold, solace for their souls, and hope for the future.

These helpless ones who, up to now have attracted the sympathy of the humane world, must not be forgotten in the joy of our imminent complete victory over the common enemy in Europe.

Let us go back to that evil day, 12 years ago, when Hitler and his gang pinpointed their attack on the Jews within Germany. That attack, it is now recognized by all, was deliberately planned and executed and the beginning of the more general attack against the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

In the first phase, the Nazis successively took away the property of their Jewish victims, denationalized them and forced them into slave labor. In the second phase, coming to a peak in 1943, they used the process of extermination camps, gas chambers and crematoria.

You must remember that during all these 12 years, the survivors of this holocaust have lived through every bit of that Nazi program, down to the days when they saw their friends walk into the gas chambers and their ashes taken out of the crematoria in buckets. There was never a day in the last 3 or 4 years when these agonized people did not feel that each day was their last on this earth, alive.

The agencies that are asking for your support tonight saw the impending doom of the Jews of Europe years ago and they arose to the occasion. The steps they took to save these people can not be told in the short time at my disposal.

As country after country in Europe was overrun by the German military machine, private agencies brought out as many as possible to safety. Up to October, 1941, it was still possible, in some cases, to obtain legal exit from German-occupied countries but in that month, legal exit was stopped by express German command. From that time on no Jew within the

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German lines had any hope of escape, except through the underground and resistance movements.

These underground and resistance groups had to be financed and your agencies took care of that. Heroic men and women of the underground accepted their dangerous mission with outstanding stoicism and energy. The leaders were tracked down by the Gestapo, as they well knew they would be. They were tortured and executed and they foresaw that too. And when they were gone, new leaders, well knowing the fate in store for them, arose to carry on.

At this point, I want to pay humble tribute to the heroic leaders of Jewry within enemy lines. Many had visas in their pockets and could have gone out to safety but refused to abandon their unfortunate brothers. Just think of it, many of them actually came through the lines to Portugal and other neutral countries to consult with representatives of your agencies. They were begged not to go back to certain death, but they returned to their posts in German territory to bring aid and comfort to their people. Some of the martyrs who died at their posts were Hirsch, Meyerheim and Seligson of Germany; Raol Lambert of France; Friedman of Czechoslovakia; Neustadt and Gilterman of Poland and innumerable others. I bow in reverent memory to these heroes who went to their deaths in defense of humanity.

In developing underground rescue, private agencies had to guard against any activity that might impede or endanger the war effort and the war aims. I can say for them that their first concern has always been the winning of the war.

You know how, for example, when the soup kitchens in German-occupied Poland were established, your agencies devised a method to do this without allowing the Germans to obtain any American dollars from them. You know how German marks were accepted from Jews in Germany in return for dollar credits which they would receive when they left Germany, and how these German marks were used to purchase Polish currency with which to buy the food for the soup kitchens.

The establishment of the War Refugee Board on January 22, 1944, by our late President was an important event in the work to save oppressed people from the hands of the enemy. The directive which President Roosevelt gave in setting up the Board was to carry out the policy of this government "to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war." Thus, it became the expressed policy of the government of the United States to save the lives of civilian victims from the enemy and to utilize its full force and prestige to that end. It was a unilateral action, and therefore unique in this war which is a combined operation of many nations. For President Roosevelt, it was a symbol of our high purposes in entering the world war,

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and history will understand the heart, the mind, and the humanity that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Immediately after its establishment, the War Refugee Board called in the private agencies. The Board thereafter coordinated and directed all programs for rescue and relief. The War Refugee Board enlisted all governmental agencies, including United States diplomatic missions, that could help to carry out this government's policy to save the oppressed minorities under German control. It now became possible for the agencies, under special licenses, to communicate with persons in enemy countries, to transmit funds through underground channels, to facilitate the passage of refugees through neutral countries, and to ship food purchased in neutral countries into the concentration camps.

This partnership of the War Refugee Board and the private agencies was responsible for the rescue from the enemy of many thousands of lives. I have time to mention only a few of the outstanding projects: We have here thrilling stories of courage, tenacity, hardship and tragedy. Seven thousand Jews were brought out from the German-controlled Balkans to safety and a new life in Palestine. To rescue these people, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, in cooperation with the Joint Distribution Committee, chartered tiny boats in Turkey which sailed the Black Sea without the protection of safe conducts and overloaded with people willing to face any hazard to attain a safe haven. Tragically, one of these small vessels was sunk by enemy fire just off the Turkish shores, and over 300 Balkan refugees were lost.

Many thousands of persecuted anti-Nazis were brought across the Norwegian forests to safety in Sweden. This program was organized and sponsored by labor groups in the United States. Several hundred persons in Baltic countries under German control were brought out to Sweden by small fishing vessels and motor launches clandestinely plying the Baltic Seas.

Thousands of Jews were brought from German-occupied France and Czechoslovakia, and from Austria and Hungary to safety in Switzerland and Spain. Their rescue was effected by many American relief agencies, Christian and Jewish alike, including the American Friends Service Committee, the Unitarian Service Committee, the International Rescue and Relief Committee, the World Jewish Congress, and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis. The Joint Distribution Committee poured millions into these hazardous operations.

Several thousand orphaned Jewish children in France were kept alive by means of funds sent from Switzerland under special licenses of this Government. The funds were used to maintain these children in convents, schools and private homes by compassionate Christians, Catholic and Protestant alike.

Many thousands more of the one million surviving Jews in Europe owe their lives in large part to the extraordinary measures taken by the Board

to safeguard and protect them while they remained under enemy control. The full story of these measures cannot yet be told.

I now want to tell you of a striking example of the democratic workings of our government that fell within my own personal experience. When I came to the War Refugee Board around February 1st of this year, the Allies were closing in on the enemy, and the distance between the eastern and western fronts was daily getting shorter and shorter. It became obvious that the continuous success of the Allied armies was rapidly decreasing the housing facilities and food supply available to the enemy, disrupting his transportation, and causing a huge concentration of people in his remaining territory. We considered it certain that, under these conditions, the Nazis would decide that it was easier and more expedient to let their victims die of exposure and starvation, instead of exterminating them directly. These victims now included all those whom the Nazis no longer could use as slave labor, as well as those already in various stages of illness. Fearing that that would happen, I as Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, on the 20th of February of this year, presented the following to the Board:

"MEMORANDUM to: Secretary Stettinius
Secretary Morgenthau
Secretary Stimson

"Our best information indicates that, while the enemy has abandoned wholesale extermination of detainees, large numbers of the physically unfit are now in imminent danger of death due to starvation, exposure and deliberate neglect. The actual numbers are unknown and are believed to be changing daily.

"Food, medicines and clothing must be distributed to such detainees at once if their lives are to be saved. They should be removed, if possible, to safety in Switzerland without unnecessary delay.

"The International Red Cross is our only means of direct contact with the camps. Operations can best be conducted from Switzerland.

"The War Refugee Board is requested to authorize its representative to obtain the necessary cooperation of the International Red Cross and of the Swiss Government.

"The War Refugee Board is further requested to approve that the necessary food, medicines and transportation equipment be made available to the International Red Cross by the Swiss Government against our promise of repayment or replenishment after the war. It is understood that private funds are available for the necessary financing."

Then and there on that date, the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War, the members of the Board, approved this proposal. We found that in order to get food into the enemy's territory we had to have trucks, gasoline,

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fuel, oil and tires, and on March 21st our War Department recommended to General Eisenhower that he provide the Board with 2,000 gallons of gasoline weekly and oil and some tires. This General Eisenhower did. Shortly thereafter, trucks were rolling out of Switzerland for German concentration camps with many tons of War Refugee Board food parcels.

Early last month, the Board was faced with the exhaustion of the 1,000 tons of food it had sent to Sweden and Switzerland. Soon it would have trucks, but no food. Once again the United States Army saved the situation. On request of the Board, the Army sold the Board 1,130 tons of food already in Switzerland.

This food is now going forward through the International Red Cross to the concentration camps in the south of Germany. The International Red Cross now has representatives stationed in the major concentration camps for the purpose of supervising and distributing this food.

I suggest and strongly contend that humanity will not forget the America of our day which, despite the demands made upon its human and material resources by this greatest of all wars, still had the interest and the will to bring aid to those who would otherwise have been forgotten and have had no hope of survival.

A great part of this evening, I have talked about the efforts of your agencies and your government to save victims of Nazi oppression. We are coming to the end of the war in Europe which will terminate the work of the War Refugee Board.

It is true that even now the governments of the United Nations are giving consideration to the final relocation of the people displaced by the war. We have no doubt that sooner or later an orderly solution will result. We must remember, however, that combined operations among nations are complex and require time. It is most fortunate that there exist private agencies which are ready immediately to step into the breach.

We must not for a moment forget that the million Jewish survivors while living are barely alive. Too many of these first victims have lived so long and suffered so much under Nazi cruelties and starvation that they need immediate and extraordinary care to have even a chance to attain normal physical or mental health. Reports of eyewitnesses dispel any doubt that may exist as to the condition of all who survived the Nazi concentration camps. I will read you one report by an American war correspondent who actually saw and spoke to those found at Bergen Belsen as late as April 21st:

"I saw Belsen -- its piles of lifeless dead and its aimless swarms of living dead. Their great eyes were just animal lights in skin-covered skulls of famine.

"Some were dying of typhus, some of typhoid, some of tuberculosis, but most were just dying of starvation. Starvation -- the flesh on their bodies had fed on itself until there was no flesh left, just skin covering bones and the end of all hope, and nothing left to feed on."

General Eisenhower with his usual wisdom invited representatives of the Congress of the United States to view these horror camps and extermination centers in Germany. The reason is simple. Neither oratory nor the written word, nor the motion picture can tell the story in quite the same way as actually seeing it with one's own eyes. I know that from having seen and smelled the 350 bodies of civilian men, women and children, machine-gunned and sealed in a catacomb in Italy. I was there the day the tomb was discovered.

I wish all of us in this room could be shown the camps through which these people have passed so that we might better understand their terror of yesterday and their hopelessness of today and tomorrow. But since this cannot be done, I wish that each one of you had in your own home, at your own fireplace, one of these agonized survivors. His presence, his very appearance, would tell the story of his sufferings and his needs far better than can be done by words. You could then see how sick he is in his mind and in his body. You could see his terror of the past and his dread of the darkness of his unknown future. No words of mine could match that appeal.

These people are only half alive. It will take everything that you can give to bring them back to normal health. Your agencies, particularly the Joint Distribution Committee and the United Palestine Appeal, have the experience and the trained personnel to do a good job. They need money with which to do it and you must see them through.



"1945 Year of Liberation"

LOS ANGELES WILL RAISE
\$3,000,000

**INCREASED GIVING
FOR INCREASED NEEDS!**

UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND OF LOS ANGELES JEWISH
COMMUNITY COUNCIL
939 SOUTH BROADWAY • LOS ANGELES 15, CALIFORNIA • TELEPHONE TRINITY 0201

Campaign Chairman: **MAX FIRESTEIN** President of Welfare Fund: **SAMUEL GOLDWYN** Treasurer: **DAVID MAY II** Executive Director: **LEO GALLIN**

President, Community Council
JOSEPH HARRY A. HOLLZER

Chairman, Advance Gifts
LEONARD CHUDACOFF

Chairman, Trades and Professions
JULIUS FLIGELMAN

CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

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JUDGE IRVIN STALMASTER
THEODOPE STRIMLING
HARRY SUNSHINE
SAMUEL SURKIS
DAVID TANNENBAUM
WALTER F. WANGER
JOE WEBER
ADOLPH WEINBERG
WOLFE WILDER
SAMUEL S. WOLFSON

April 16, 1945

Brigadier General William J. O'Dwyer
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear General O'Dwyer:

We have just received confirmation on hotel reservations for you and for Miss Hodel at the Ambassador Hotel, beginning April 27. There were no accommodations at the Biltmore, which seems to have been your first preference; let me assure you, however, our visitors find the Ambassador the most comfortable and convenient hotel in Los Angeles. Both our May 1 and May 2 meetings, by the way, will be held in the large Embassy Room of the Ambassador, which should be an additional convenience.

We are all looking forward to your arrival.

Sincerely,
Leo Gallin

LEO GALLIN
Executive Director

LG:BG

000142

APR 14 1945

Dear Mr. Gallin:

In reply to your telegram of April 11th, I send you herewith a summary of General O'Dwyer's activities while in Italy which I have procured from the Foreign Economic Administration. There should, of course, be no reference to the Foreign Economic Administration as the source of this material in any public release. I understand that the New York office of the JDC has sent you biographical data and photographs.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

Mr. Leo Gallin,
Executive Director,
United Jewish Welfare Fund,
939 South Broadway,
Los Angeles 15, Calif.

Enclosure

FH
FH:hd 4/14/45

000143

WU32 21 2 EXTRA LOSANGELES ~~KXK~~ CALIF APR 11 1945 1105A 4 00

MISS FLORENCE HODEL, WAR REFUGEE BOARD

RM 2410 TRESURY DEPT

PLEASE RUSH PHOTOGRAPH AND BIOGRAPHICAL DATA INCLUDING
STORY OF ITALY TRIP OF GENERAL O'DWYER. ARRANGING ACCOMMODATIONS.
LETTER WILL FOLLOW

LEO GALLIN ~~XXXX~~ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UNITED JEWISH
WELFARE FUND

400P

1945 APR 11 PM 4 00

Walter... advised by JAC 4/11
Frank Harris

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STANDARD FORM No. 14 A
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1926

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

Mr. Leo Gallin
Executive Director
United Jewish Welfare Fund
939 South Broadway
Los Angeles 15, Calif.

General O'Dwyer and I will now arrive Los Angeles April 28 instead of
April 27. Please advise Ambassador Hotel.

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

WASHINGTON

War Refugee Board

CHARGE ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ APPROPRIATION FOR

1181800, Salaries & Expenses, WRS, 1945

(The appropriation from which payable must be stated on above line)

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

2-14117

000145

STANDARD FORM No. 14-A
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1926

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

Mr. Leo Gallin
Executive Director
United Jewish Welfare Fund
939 South Broadway
Los Angeles 16, Calif.

General O'Dwyer and I will now arrive Los Angeles April 28 instead of
April 27. Please advise Ambassador Hotel.

(Signed) Florence Hodel
Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

WASHINGTON

War Refugee Board

CHARGE ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ APPROPRIATION FOR

1161800, Salaries & Expenses, WRB, 1946

(The appropriation from which payable must be stated on above line)

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

2-14117

000146

APR 6 - 1945

Dear Mr. Gallin:

I have received your letter of March 31, 1945, concerning the meetings which you have scheduled for May 1st and 2nd for the opening of your 1945 Campaign. I am happy to be able to be your speaker on these occasions.

I plan to arrive in Los Angeles the morning of April 27th, accompanied by Miss Florence Hodel, Assistant Executive Director of the Board. I would greatly appreciate your making reservations for two suites at the Biltmore Hotel from April 27th through May 2nd.

Very truly yours,

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Leo Gallin,
Executive Director,
United Jewish Welfare Fund,
939 South Broadway,
Los Angeles 15, Calif.

*Original signed by General O'Dwyer
Sent: airmail, 4/6/45*

FH:hd 4/6/45

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WILLIAM O'DWYER

Born - Ireland, 1890. Arrived in New York, 1910.

Police Department, New York City, patrolman - 1917-1924.

Graduated Fordham Law School, 1923.

Resigned Police Department to practice law, 1925.

Appointed City Magistrate, 1932. Chief interest was crime prevention. Assigned in 1935 to newly formed Adolescent Court, an experiment in crime prevention.

Appointed by Governor Lehman to Kings County Court bench, 1938.

Elected for full 14-year term in 1938.

Elected District Attorney, Kings County, 4-year term, in 1939.

Defeated by LaGuardia for Mayor of New York in 1941.

Entered army as Major, June 1, 1942. Served with Air Corps under General Bennett E. Meyers and General Oliver B. Echols, Procurement Branch.

Promoted to Lt. Colonel, November 1942. Full Colonel, September 1943.

Assigned to Allied Control Commission, Italy, June 1944, as ranking American Officer. Vice President of Economic Section.

Promoted to Brigadier General, August 3, 1944.

November, 1944, while in the army, reelected District Attorney of Kings County without opposition.

Appointed Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, January 27, 1945. Resigned commission to accept assignment.

See Special Delivery 4/6/45 to:

Mrs. Sarah F. Kraus
I.D.C. Campaign
342 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y.

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"1945 Year of Liberation"

LOS ANGELES WILDFIRE
\$3,000,000

INCREASED GIVING
FOR INCREASED NEEDS!

UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND OF LOS ANGELES JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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President, Community Council
JUDGE HARRY A. HOLLZER

Chairman, Advance-Gifts
LEONARD CHUDACOFF

Chairman, Trades and Professions
JULIUS FLIGELMAN

March 31, 1945

CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

- MILTON BARUCH
- HARRY BAUMAN
- NATHAN BENSON
- MISHA F. BERG
- MARK C. BLOOME
- CHARLES BROWN
- EMIL BROWN
- SIDOR BROWN
- MARK CARTER
- JULIUS CEAZAN
- MRS. JOSEPH K. FERGUSON
- LAWRENCE L. FRANK
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- MRS. ISAAC PELTON
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- NORTON SIMON
- BENJAMIN SOLNIT
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- THEODORE STRIMLING
- HARRY SUNSHINE
- SAMUEL SURKIS
- DAVID TANNENBAUM
- WALTER F. WANGER
- JOE WEBER
- ADOLPH WEINBERG
- WOLFE WILDER
- SAMUEL S. WOLFSON

General William O'Dwyer
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear General O'Dwyer:

We are delighted to learn from national headquarters of the Joint Distribution Committee that you have graciously consented to be our speaker on May 1st and May 2nd, for the two opening meetings of our 1945 campaign.

We are scheduling two opening meetings, as we did last year effectively, because we are able to get a rather complete turnout of the Motion Picture group, if their opening dinner is not merged with the general community opening. Last year we had over 400 Motion Picture people on May 1st, including nearly all the leading figures of the industry. The results of the May 1st meeting this year as last will be announced at the general opening on May 2nd, which was attended by a capacity dinner crowd of over 1200 people.

last year
At last year's dinner on May 2nd, we were able to announce \$850,000 toward our \$2,000,000 goal, which was subsequently surpassed by a small margin. This year we are hopeful of reaching \$1,500,000 by the end of the May 2nd meeting - an amount which will insure the success of our \$3,000,000 campaign this year. The Motion Picture group accounts for approximately 25% of the total raised, and we are certain that with you as the speaker, we will attract a maximum crowd on each night and achieve the highest possible results.

We were especially anxious to have you as our campaign speaker this year, not only because we are seeking a record sum, primarily for overseas relief, rescue and rehabilitation; but in addition because the job we do in Los Angeles will have an impact on all the communities in the United States. In our opinion, there is no one in the entire country who could do a comparably effective job in Los Angeles.



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We are mindful of the many demands that are made on your valuable time, and we are therefore particularly appreciative of your acceptance.

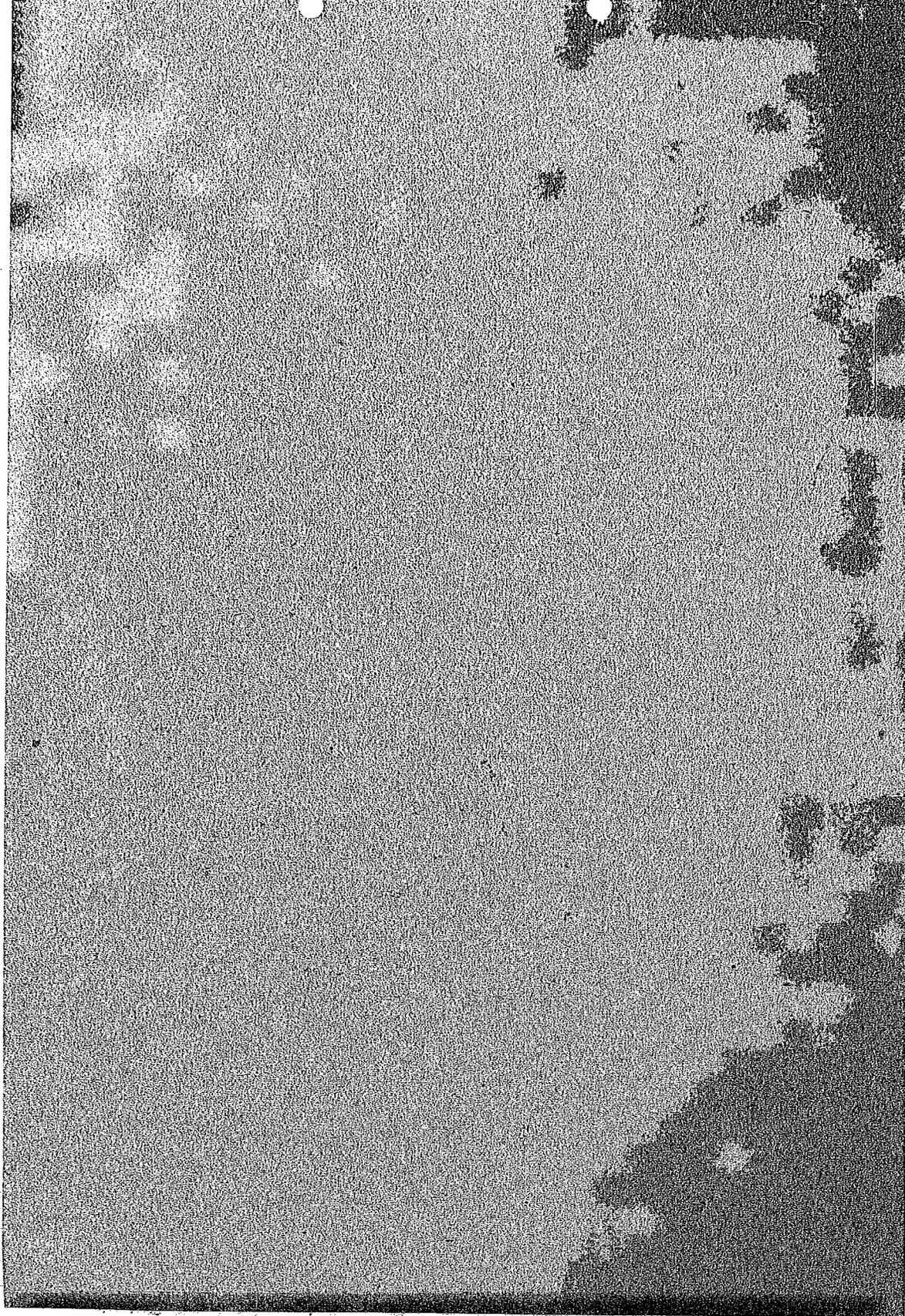
Will you please let us know as soon as possible the date and time of your arrival in Los Angeles, and whether you would like us to make hotel reservations for you and any others that may be in your party?

Again, many thanks for your gracious cooperation.

Sincerely yours,
Leo Gallin
LEO GALLIN
Executive Director

LG:BG

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Final

000152

It is a high privilege for me to
be here tonight to help the United Jewish
Welfare Fund of Los Angeles raise the
funds required for its 1945 programs.
I hesitated before accepting your in-
vitation, because of the great responsi-
bility that it entailed, but I felt that
it was my duty to present to you, no
matter how inadequate my words may be
for this occasion, the immensity of the
needs of the 1,000,000 Jews saved from
the enemy since 1939. I am in a position
to know that it is largely through your
generosity, and of the Jews throughout
America, that so many were saved.

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I am deeply appreciative of the fact that funds are needed for the relief of Jews now in countries other than Europe. When the war actually began in 1939, more than 800,000 Jews had already been rescued from the grip of the Nazis and removed to safety. They have had time to take root in the countries of their adoption and today do not present problems of emergency proportions. It was a good thing that Palestine absorbed more than 300,000 of these people and provided them with the opportunity to become self-respecting human beings.

The emergency for 1945 is created

by the million Jews saved since 1939
and now in Europe, broken down in body
and spirit who are in dire need of special
and immediate care.

During the last several war years,
the emphasis, in the appeals that have
been made to you, has been placed on the
work of rescue from enemy control. The
time has come when, thanks to our armies
and thanks to everyone who has aided in
the complete victory over the enemy, this
work of rescue is coming to an end. The
emphasis tonight must be directed to the
task of keeping alive and rehabilitating
the saved people.

In order for us to realize the

emergency character and immediate need of the one million Jews in Europe saved since 1939, we must fully understand what they have gone through. Twelve years ago there were 6 million Jews in Europe, outside of Russia, living with their families in reasonable security and happiness. They had their work and family problems just as you and I. Then suddenly out of the depths of human depravity an evil force struck with unprecedented ferocity at these 6 million defenseless men, women and children. The greatest military force the world had heretofore seen, a vast scientific

knowledge, and the methodical German mind were directed towards the complete extermination of these people. At least 5 million Jews were destroyed and turned into fertilizer for enemy soil, and there remain today one million Jews in Europe, alive.

For years, these survivors have lived through torments and agonies that our minds cannot comprehend. Some of them were born in cages and do not yet know that there are in this world people of great hearts and generosity, who are ready to bring to them oil for their wounds, food and clothing for their

bodies, shelter from the cold, solace
for their souls, and hope for the future.

These helpless ones who, up to now
have attracted the sympathy of the humane
world, must not be forgotten in the joy
of our imminent complete victory over the
common enemy in Europe.

Let us go back to that evil day,
12 years ago, when Hitler and his gang
pinpointed their attack on the Jews within
Germany. That attack, it is now recognized
by all, was deliberately planned and ex-
ecuted and the beginning of the more
general attack against the freedom-loving
peoples of the world.

In the first phase, the Nazis

successively took away the property of their Jewish victims, denationalized them and forced them into slave labor.

In the second phase, coming to a peak in 1943, they used the process of extermination camps, gas chambers and crematoria.

You must remember that during all these 12 years, the survivors of this holocaust have lived through every bit of that Nazi program, down to the days when they saw their friends walk into the gas chambers and their ashes taken out of the crematoria in buckets. There was never a day in the last 3 or 4 years

when these agonized people did not feel that each day was their last on this earth, alive.

The agencies that are asking for your support tonight saw the impending doom of the Jews of Europe years ago and they arose to the occasion. The steps they took to save these people can not be told in the short time at my disposal.

As country after country in Europe was overrun by the German military machine, private agencies brought out as many as possible to safety. Up to October, 1941, it was still possible, in some cases, to obtain legal exit from German-occupied

countries, but in that month, legal exit was stopped by express German command. From that time on no Jew within the German lines had any hope of escape, except through the underground and resistance movements.

These underground and resistance groups had to be financed and your agencies took care of that. Heroic men and women of the underground accepted their dangerous mission with outstanding stoicism and energy. The leaders were tracked down by the Gestapo, as they well knew they would be. They were tortured and executed and they foresaw that too. And when they

were gone, new leaders, well knowing the fate in store for them, arose to carry on.

At this point, I want to pay humble tribute to the heroic leaders of Jewry within enemy lines. Many had visas in their pockets and could have gone out to safety but refused to abandon their unfortunate brothers. Just think of it, many of them actually came through the lines to Portugal and other neutral countries to consult with representatives of your agencies. They were begged not to go back to certain death, but they returned to their posts in German territory to bring aid and comfort to their

people. Some of the martyrs who died at their posts were Hirsch, Meyerheim and Seligson of Germany; Raol Lambert of France; Friedman of Czechoslovakia; Neustadt and Gilterman of Poland and innumerable others. I bow in reverent memory to these heroes who went to their deaths in defense of humanity.

In developing underground rescue, private agencies had to guard against any activity that might impede or endanger the war effort and the war aims. I can say for them that their first concern has always been the winning of the war.

You know how, for example, when the

soup kitchens in German-occupied Poland were established, your agencies devised a method to do this without allowing the Germans to obtain any American dollars from them. You know how German marks were accepted from Jews in Germany in return for dollar credits which they would receive when they left Germany, and how these German marks were used to purchase Polish currency with which to buy the food for the soup kitchens.

The establishment of the War Refugee Board on January 22, 1944, by our late President was an important event in the work to save oppressed people from the

hands of the enemy. The directive which President Roosevelt gave in setting up the Board was to carry out the policy of this government "to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war." Thus, it became the expressed policy of the government of the United States to save the lives of civilian victims from the enemy and to utilize its full force and prestige to that end. It was a unilateral action, and therefore

unique in this war which is a combined operation of many nations. For President Roosevelt, it was a symbol of our high purposes in entering the world war, and history will understand the heart, the mind, and the humanity that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Immediately after its establishment, the War Refugee Board called in the private agencies. The Board thereafter coordinated and directed all programs for rescue and relief. The War Refugee Board enlisted all governmental agencies, including United States diplomatic missions, that could help to carry out this government's policy to

save the oppressed minorities under German control. It now became possible for the agencies, under special licenses, to communicate with persons in enemy countries, to transmit funds through underground channels, to facilitate the passage of refugees through neutral countries, and to ship food purchased in neutral countries into the concentration camps.

This partnership of the War Refugee Board and the private agencies was responsible for the rescue from the enemy of many thousands of lives. I have time to mention only a few of the outstanding

projects. We have here thrilling stories of courage, tenacity, hardship and tragedy. Seven thousand Jews were brought out from the German-controlled Balkans to safety and a new life in Palestine. To rescue these people, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, in cooperation with the Joint Distribution Committee, chartered tiny boats in Turkey which sailed the Black Sea without the protection of safe conducts and overloaded with people willing to face any hazard to attain a safe haven. Tragically, one of these small vessels was sunk by enemy fire just off the Turkish shores, and over 300

Balkan refugees were lost.

Many thousands of persecuted anti-Nazis were brought across the Norwegian forests to safety in Sweden. This program was organized and sponsored by labor groups in the United States. Several hundred persons in Baltic countries under German control were brought out to Sweden by small fishing vessels and motor launches clandestinely plying the Baltic Seas.

Thousands of Jews were brought from German-occupied France and Czechoslovakia, and from Austria and Hungary to safety in Switzerland and Spain. Their rescue was

effected by many American relief agencies, Christian and Jewish alike, including the American Friends Service Committee, the Unitarian Service Committee, the International Rescue and Relief Committee, the World Jewish Congress, and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis. The Joint Distribution Committee poured millions into these hazardous operations.

Several thousand orphaned Jewish children in France were kept alive by means of funds sent from Switzerland under special licenses of this Government. The funds were used to maintain these children in convents, schools and private

homes by compassionate Christians,
Catholic and Protestant alike.

Many thousands more of the one million
surviving Jews in Europe owe their lives
in large part to the extraordinary
measures taken by the Board to safeguard
and protect them while they remained un-
der enemy control. The full story of
these measures cannot yet be told.

I now want to tell you of a strik-
ing example of the democratic workings
of our government that fell within my
own personal experience. When I came to
the War Refugee Board around February 1st
of this year, the Allies were closing in

on the enemy, and the distance between the eastern and western fronts was daily getting shorter and shorter. It became obvious that the continuous success of the Allied armies was rapidly decreasing the housing facilities and food supply available to the enemy, disrupting his transportation, and causing a huge concentration of people in his remaining territory. We considered it certain that, under these conditions, the Nazis would decide that it was easier and more expedient to let their victims die of exposure and starvation, instead of exterminating them directly. These victims now included all those whom the Nazis no longer could use as slave labor, as well as those

already in various stages of illness.

Fearing that that would happen, I as Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, on the 20th of February of this year, presented the following to the

Board:

"MEMORANDUM to: Secretary Stettinius
Secretary Morgenthau
Secretary Stimson

"Our best information indicates that, while the enemy has abandoned wholesale extermination of detainees, large numbers of the physically unfit are now in imminent danger of death due to starvation, exposure and deliberate neglect. The actual numbers are unknown and are believed to be changing daily.

"Food, medicines and clothing must be distributed to such detainees at once

if their lives are to be saved. They should be removed, if possible, to safety in Switzerland without unnecessary delay.

"The International Red Cross is our only means of direct contact with the camps. Operations can best be conducted from Switzerland.

"The War Refugee Board is requested to authorize its representative to obtain the necessary cooperation of the International Red Cross and of the Swiss Government.

"The War Refugee Board is further requested to approve that the necessary food, medicines and transportation equip-

ment be made available to the International Red Cross by the Swiss Government against our promise of repayment or replenishment after the war. It is understood that private funds are available for the necessary financing."

Then and there on that date, the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War, the members of the Board, approved this proposal. We found that in order to get food into the enemy's territory we had to have trucks, gasoline, fuel, oil and tires, and on March 21st our War Department recommended to General Eisenhower that he provide the Board with 2,000 gallons

of gasoline weekly and oil and some tires.

This General Eisenhower did. Shortly thereafter, trucks were rolling out of Switzerland for German concentration camps with many tons of War Refugee Board food parcels.

Early last month, the Board was faced with the exhaustion of the 1,000 tons of food it had sent to Sweden and Switzerland. Soon it would have trucks, but no food. Once again the United States Army saved the situation. On request of the Board, the Army sold the Board 1,130 tons of food already in Switzerland.

This food is now going forward through the International Red Cross to

the concentration camps in the south of Germany. The International Red Cross now has representatives stationed in the major concentration camps for the purpose of supervising and distributing this food.

I suggest and strongly contend that humanity will not forget the America of our day which, despite the demands made upon its human and material resources by this greatest of all wars, still had the interest and the will to bring aid to those who would otherwise have been forgotten and have had no hope of survival.

A great part of this evening, I have talked about the efforts of your

agencies and your government to save victims of Nazi oppression. We are coming to the end of the war in Europe which will terminate the work of the War Refugee Board.

It is true that even now the governments of the United Nations are giving consideration to the final relocation of the people displaced by the war. We have no doubt that sooner or later an orderly solution will result. We must remember, however, that combined operations among nations are complex and require time. It is most fortunate that there exist private agencies which are ready immediately to step into the breach.

We must not for a moment forget

that the million Jewish survivors while living are barely alive. Too many of these first victims have lived so long and suffered so much under Nazi cruelties and starvation that they need immediate and extraordinary care to have even a chance to attain normal physical or mental health. Reports of eyewitnesses dispel any doubt that may exist as to the condition of all who survived the Nazi concentration camps. I will read you one report by an American war correspondent who actually saw and spoke to those found at Bergen Belsen as late as April 21st:

"I saw Belsen -- its piles of lifeless dead and its aimless swarms of living dead. Their great eyes were just animal lights in skin-covered skulls of famine.

"Some were dying of typhus, some of typhoid, some of tuberculosis, but most were just dying of starvation. Starvation -- the flesh on their bodies had fed on itself until here was no flesh left, just skin covering bones and the end of all hope, and nothing left to feed on."

General Eisenhower with his usual

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wisdom invited representatives of the
Congress of the United States to view
these horror camps and extermination
centers in Germany. The reason is simple.
Neither oratory nor the written word, nor
the motion picture can tell the story in
quite the same way as actually seeing
it with one's own eyes. I know that from
having seen and smelled the 350 bodies
of civilian men, women and children,
machine-gunned and sealed in a catacomb
in Italy. I was there the day the tomb
was discovered.

I wish all of us in this room could
be shown the camps through which these

people have passed so that we might better understand their terror of yesterday and their hopelessness of today and tomorrow. But since this cannot be done, I wish that each one of you had in your own home, at your own fireside, one of these agonized survivors. His presence, his very appearance, would tell the story of his sufferings and his needs far better than can be done by words. You could then see how sick he is in his mind and in his body. You could see his terror of the past and his dread of the darkness of his unknown future. No words of mine could match that appeal.

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These people are only half alive.

It will take everything that you can give
to bring them back to normal health.

Your agencies, particularly the Joint
Distribution Committee and the United
Palestine Appeal, have the experience
and the trained personnel to do a good
job. They need money with which to do
it and you must see them through.

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