UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND

1. GENERAL

2. DRAFTS OF JEROME C. DEMPSEY'S SPEECH IN LOS ANGELES

WAR REFUGEE BOARD RECORDS
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
Assistant Executive Director

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

PH:hal 6/11/45
June 5, 1945

Mr. Wm. O'Dwyer
War Refugees Board
Washington, 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.
President, Community Council
JUDGE HARRY A. WOLLER

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

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SAMUEL LEVITON
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FRANK S. MANDEL
ERI E. MAYER
HARRY A. MILLER
EDWARD D. MITCHELL
HARRY BLEIER</h5>
News
Los Angeles, Calif.
JAN 80 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 kind 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 famous 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, 42, New York mayoralty candidate, is at present the district attorney of Brooklyn.

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

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

New 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 one of the pitiful spectacle of tortured victims, once robust human beings, can appreciate the need which will exist after the enemy capitulation. It will go, he said, between the firing of the last gun and the setting up of intergovernmental agencies to solve the problems of Europe's popula...
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.
May 19, 1946

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.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

LEO GALLIN
BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM O'DWYER
for the
MOTION PICTURE WELFARE FUND.

Ambassador Hotel
Los Angeles, California

Tuesday, May 1, 1945

E. Raamussen, Reporter

STENOTYPE CONVENTION REPORTING COMPANY
28 O'Farrell Street
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
161 South Broadway
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SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM O'DWYER
for the
MOTION PICTURE WELFARE FUND

Ambassador Hotel
Los Angeles, California

Tuesday, May 1, 1945
EDDIE CANTOR: In bringing William O'Dwyer to Los Angeles to speak to us in behalf of the Jewish Welfare Fund, we feel we have brought here one of the most important men in the country today.

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

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

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

Ladies and gentlemen, and honored guests: It takes more than ordinary nerve to cross the continent and
I face a group such as you. No one east of the Mississippi is reaching out for this one, and I did hesitate to accept your kind invitation to come here principally on that account.

Yet, there is a reason why this drive for funds here in Los Angeles must be a success. First of all, there is the need. Secondly, what you do in Los Angeles is going to be reflected in the success of the drive throughout the country. The hour has come when we can't take any chances, because it will mean the saving of human life. Just because of that, the hesitation I had to come went up in thin air, and believe me, nothing could prevent me from coming here because of the importance of the mission.

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

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

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

One day, thanks to our armies, and thanks to everyone who helped our armies, and thanks to the agencies
that are here tonight asking you for help, when the smoke
cleared away, five million of that six were gone forever, and
one million who went through those orgies are now alive. It
is about them that I want to talk to you.

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

Now in the heat of Rome in July when it was really
hot, possibly 105 degrees or 106 degrees, which is pretty
hot in Rome, it came through that an ancient catacomb had been
shelled and someone went down and poked into it. Then the
Cry went out that 350 bodies were inside the tomb, machine-gunned within the tomb for retribution for the soldiers. I didn't see it. I couldn't go that close to it. Neither could you. But I saw the vigil that the relatives kept who sat night and day around the tomb waiting for that moment when they might satisfy themselves that the little one and the big one and the men and the women were really there, the ones they had lost and the ones they loved. You must see that and smell that to know what this means.

Now while this was going on back in 1933, as far back as that, these agencies that are now seeking your support were thinking and planning and foresew the doom of these people. They went into action. Between 1933 and 1939 you could still get Jews from Germany by legal visa in certain cases. To the extent that that could be done, your agencies worked so that they got 300,000 people out of Germany, out of the enemy's control between 1933 and 1939. They placed them in various places of safety.

Now, if I may be permitted a side remark in answer to those that are critical of the Zion Movement, let me state that Palestine accepted 300,000 of the 800,000, gave them a home, and gave them an opportunity to grow up in self respect and decency. That should be an answer to any criticism of the Palestine Movement. Now these 800,000 have been placed all over the world. They have had sufficient time to take root in the countries of their adoption. They have some
problems but none of emergency proportions, none that I want to speak to you about tonight, because I am not talking about any one of that 800,000. I am talking to you about a million who were pulled from inside the enemy lines from 1939 to today. That is the million that need the help. That is the million that present this year the emergency that these agencies have to face. That is why there is such a stress made tonight on this year's contributions to the Welfare Agencies.

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

At this point let me tell you there were people who re-
ained at their posts to organize the resistant groups within the enemy lines, great people who knew that by doing so they faced the anger of the Gestapo and the sure fate of torture and death. Hollywood will some day give us the thrilling story of the leaders of the underground and resistance groups.
within, who came through the lines to safety, who visited
the representatives of these agencies that are sponsoring this
affair in Portugal and other neutral countries, who were
begged not to go back but who steadfastly followed their high
purpose and did go back and were captured and were tortured
and were cremated. And when they were gone new leaders from
within, knowing their fate full well rose up again and carried
on. The stories that could be told in that regard would make
stories for you for many days to come, certainly not stories
I could tell here in the short time that is at my disposal.
These are stories for histories, stories for books, permanent
records of heroism. Take the Jewish Agency job in the Balkans.
Here were the Jews in the Balkans and here was the enemy
coming through and they knew what that meant. Here was a
body of water over into Turkey, and here were a handful of
little boats that your agencies bought from Turkey to sail
across that body of water, unprotected in waters that were
infested with enemy craft. And yet, overcrowded, they crossed
and crossed. One time with three hundred persons on one of
those little boats, when it had almost landed, the enemy
calmly threw a shot into it. Of the three hundred, only eight
survived. And yet, the boats kept coming until seven thousand
in all landed in Turkey and made their way across into Palestine
where they were taken care of and in the field of protecting it
has credit in preventing the enemy from having the use. I
think a very good example would be how your agency has actually
fed the people in Poland with our money without allowing the Germans any credit. How did they do it? They simply took from the Jews in Germany their marks, and with their marks they bought food with Polish currency and for the money they turned in—the marks that were turned in—they got a credit against your agency, against the Joint Distribution Committee, and when they came through they collected their money in dollars and were taken care of. I can tell you now as an official, as the Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, in all the myriad activities of your agencies and for all the pressure and all the enthusiasm of your agencies in their work, there never was one instance where they were successfully charged, or where it was whispered that they neglected the first and final and the main purpose—the winning of the war. Not once did they jeopardize that.

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

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

After the establishment of the War Refugee Board things began to happen. Licenses were issued for the sending of money to neutral countries. Since January 22 until today the War Refugee Board cleared for your agencies $20,000,000 to be spent in this work. Of that, $15,000,000 was the Joint Distribution Committee's money. The Refugee Board gathered
all the agencies, all the Jewish agencies, all the non-Jewish
agencies, all the agencies of government, all the foreign
missions, every foreign mission of the State Department, and
welded the whole into a working machine so that the best pos-
sible help could be brought in the rescue field. Perhaps if
I read to you from the official report, and if there are any
members of the press here I will have to ask you not to quote
any of the readings that I give as they are not those in the
released document, because some of the readings here have not
been officially released, and yet it would be a shame not to
call them to your attention.

For instance, our field man, Mr. McClelland in Switzerland,
back in May 1, 1944, made a purely simple, cold, factual
report on his expenditures. I'd like to read the headings for
you of what these monies were spent for, not the amount, but
what they were spent for, so you can get an inkling into what
your agencies have been doing. For example, he says in Num-
ber Three, "Special expenses for courier service to Hungary,
Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Germany, Northern Italy, Holland,
Belgium, and France," Number Four, "Minor contributions to
organizations doing small scale border work, including cost
of false papers, temporary maintenance, transportation." You
see that was part of the work. "Special grants" he says
again, "particularly to political groups or their represent-
tatives to find flight, hiding false papers of endangered
persons, grants to secure co-operation in such programs."
Number Seven, "Major grants." This ran into $200,000, "Major grants to organizations to cover the many expenses involved in rescue and relief operations, temporary maintenance, hiding false papers, copying minor officials' papers at frontiers for persecuted and endangered persons, particularly Jewish, in Nazi occupied territory," and so on down the line. I won't bore you but you can get from that that work had been going on all the time. This is an official document, a simple, stale report lying in the files at Washington in the Treasury Building.

Now, on the other end of the line in Sweden, the War Refugee Board had a representative there, Mr. Olsen. Now Mr. Olsen submitted a casual report way back in November of '44. Because one part of it is interesting today, since the disappearance of a great young Swedish humanitarian, Paul Wallenberg, I think you would be interested in what our representative reported back in November of last year in which he mentions Mr. Wallenberg. He said, "The Hungarian rescue and relief operations of this program went extremely well and based on information available here, probably was the most constructive action initiated from anywhere for the relief of Hungarian Jews." The keystone of the entire operation was the willingness of the Swedish foreign office to assign an attache to his legation in Budapest, exclusively for the purpose of initiating relief actions for Hungarian Jews. The attache sent Paul Wallenberg who was personally known to us
and was, in fact, our choice—very energetic, great initiative, and resourcefulness, and sincerely concerned with the urgency of the problem. Despite the fact that he was constantly ridiculed by the Hungarian Nazis, he left no stone unturned in pressing for conditions of greater safety and comfort for as many Hungarian Jews as possible. The first major action initiated was to get as many Hungarian Jews as possible under Swedish protection. Such protective papers were issued to all Hungarian Jews who had relatives or close friends in Sweden or had long established business connections with Sweden. Approximately six thousand persons were found eligible out of thousands of applications filed.

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

After as many as possible had been brought under Swedish protection activities switched to a series of relief projects. This was relief to find certain foods and clothing; establishment of community housing facilities and organizing hospital facilities. Several thousand Jews benefited from these activities not only physically but as a strong moral factor.

Throughout the entire period the Swedish Legation
maintained increasing pressure upon Hungarian authorities, not only with respect to the group it was protecting, but in connection with the overall official policy of Hungarian authorities towards the Jews. Unquestionably these efforts have done much to prevent the introduction of even more savage treatment of the Jews.

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

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

Now you take another example of where the War Refugee Board and the agencies worked hand in hand. Back in February of this year when I first came to the War Refugee Board the information at that time was clear that there was no more mass extermination. The Germans had abandoned it. They had found a better way, a more successful way. It was great for the Germans when they had the exterminations. They got clothes from the victims, piles of shoes, piles of clothes in reasonably good condition, and they kept other Jews alive to clean
the clothes or mend them and send them back. It was great fun to see these unfortunate women going through the piles of clothing of their relatives and their friends and their brothers. The German mind enjoyed it so much so that one of the extermination chambers had a glass panel so that you could look in. You have seen panels of that kind in broadcasting stations.

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

You will have to make a picture some day of a woman who sorted out the clothing of those who had gone to the chamber, and in her sadness saw one little garment that only she could recognize. You will have to translate it to the screen. You will have to show it. It will be a job to do. You will have to translate for posterity her finding of a silent little garment that spoke to her with all the penetrating agonies of
mother love. The Germans enjoyed it, they loved it. They
got the band of music and there was a carnival spirit in the
air when this was done.

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

Now the War Refugee Board had this problem. How to get
food inside the lines to feed them. First of all, we had to
have the machinery with which to take in the food. We used
the International Red Cross. We first went to our board--
the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary
of Treasury--and we pointed out the condition, the helpless
condition, of these people, and we asked permission to get
food in to them. The International Red Cross said all right,
but now we had no food. We had no trucks; we had no gasoline;
we had nothing. We made another application to our army,
again, a unilateral approach. We purchased from stock piles
of food eleven hundred tons of it. We got from our army,
from General Eisenhower, two thousand gallons of gas a week.
We got grease and oil and tires and local trucks and, ladies
and gentlemen, for the last four or five weeks our food has
gone into these camps. We can't tell you yet how many sur-
vived because of that, but the food was there, and some
have survived.
Now the big point in my going into the work of the agencies is this: that in describing it to you as I have done I am hoping that you will get the picture of agencies really at work all the way through from 1933 down to today, with the emphasis all the time on rescue. Now I also want you to feel from their activities the momentary lives of these people day by day down to today. How could people who have gone through that much be normal, natural people?

One time in the early days in Brooklyn where I was a magistrate, there was a man who was a keeper of wild fowl, wild life, who was a very cold type of person. He wanted everyone that he arrested to get their five-dollar fine or ten days in jail. He insisted on that, and it got to a point where everyone around the court hated him because he was so cold. Then one cold day in the little court house on Pennsylvania Avenue in Brooklyn he stands before me, demanding a jail sentence for two men for interfering with a live wild duck that had become frozen on the ice. He opened up his coat and said, "Judge, I want you to see they are damaging, what they are interfering with," and he had a live wild duck inside of his coat with its eyes half open. He takes a little milk, puts it into the palm of his hand and he tries to get the little bird to drink it. He said, "You see, this bird is too hungry for ordinary food. We have to nurse it back to a point where it can take ordinary food." And he pressed the point. We got it. He was a new man to us.
He had taken this wild hungry, cold thing, and placed it where his own heart's blood would warm it. He had given it affection, and forever afterward we respected him for it.

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

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

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

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

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

EDDIE CANTOR: On behalf of the ladies and gentlemen gathered here tonight I do want to thank you. We shall long remember your talk. You have painted a very vivid
picture of what is going on in Europe, especially among our people, and I promise you faithfully that we will not forget.
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
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
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, Meyerhein 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 conduct 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 affected 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, gasolene,
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 gasolene
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.

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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 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.

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.
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
Executive Director
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:nd 4/14/45
WU32 21 2 EXTRA LOS ANGELES XXK CAL IF APR 17 1945 1105 X A 00
MRS FLORENCE HOEDEL, WAR REFUGEE BOARD
RM 2410 TREASY DEPT
PLEASE RUSH PHOTOGRAPH AND BIOGRAPHICAL DATA INCLUDING
STORY OF ITALY TRIP OF GENERAL O'DWYER. ARRANGING ACCOMMODATIONS.
LETTER WILL FOLLOW.
LEO GALLIN XXK EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UNITED JEWISH
WELFARE FUND
400P
TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

Mr. Leo Gallin
Executive Director
United Jewish Welfare Fund
239 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
Mr. Leo Gallin  
Executive Director  
United Jewish Welfare Fund  
929 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
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,
989 South Broadway,
Los Angeles 16, Calif.

FR:nd 4/6/45
WILLIAM O'DWYER


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 1938 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 1939.

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.
March 31, 1945

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.

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.
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
Executive Director
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.

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the emphasis, in the appeals that have
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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 govern-
ments of the United Nations are giving con-
sideration 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 pri-

tate 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 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.
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.