

UNITED ROMANIAN JEWS OF AMERICA

000294

November 29, 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

Thank you for your kind invitation to the annual dinner of The United Roumanian Jews of America on December 10. I wish that I might be with you and I deeply appreciate your members and officers' desire to take this occasion to thank the War Refugee Board publicly for its share in helping your people. Unfortunately, the pressure of work in Washington prevents my coming to New York at that time.

With all good wishes for the success of your meeting, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, President
United Roumanian Jews of America
110 West 40th Street
New York (18), New York

MM:bgd

*original signed
by Mr Pehle*

000295



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THE UNITED ROUMANIAN JEWS of AMERICA

110 WEST 40th STREET, NEW YORK 18, N. Y.
Telephone LACKawanna 4-6535

November 25, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

On December 10, 1944 at the Hotel New Yorker, New York City our organization is holding its annual Dinner. This year the Dinner is tendered in honor of one of our former presidents, Hon. Bennett E. Siegelstein, on the occasion of the liberation of the Jewish people in Roumania.

Since you and the War Refugee Board have played such a great part in rescuing many thousands of our people from the concentration camp in Transnistria and facilitating their emigration to Palestine, our members and officers are of the unanimous opinion that we would like to take this occasion to publicly thank you for your share in helping our people. It would give us great pleasure if we could have the honor of your attendance at this Dinner.

Awaiting your reply and with personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES SONNENREICH
President

CS:RR

000296

September 23, 1944

TO: Mr. Warren

FROM: J. W. Pehle

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, President of the United Romanian Jews of the United States, has requested that the Board facilitate the delivery of the attached letter from him to Dr. William Filderman, Bucharest, Romania. Unless there is some inconvenience involved in doing so, we would appreciate it if Mr. Sonnenreich's attached letter were forwarded to Mr. Hirschmann at the American Embassy, Ankara, by courier with instructions to cause the same to be delivered to Mr. Filderman, if possible.

Attachment

L.S.L.

LSLesser:tmh 9-21-44

000297

COPY

CHARLES SONNENREICH

1501 Broadway
New York, 18, N.Y.

Attorney at Law

September 14, 1944

Dr. William Filderman
Str. St. Apostoli 16
Bucharest, Roumania

Dear Dr. Filderman:

I received your last letter dated July 5, 1940 and since then have been carefully following your activities as reported from time to time in the press. I am very happy that you are well and safe. We were greatly disturbed when we heard of your deportation to Transnistria and did everything in our power to effect your return. Some day I will tell you more about this. We were aware of your intense efforts to save and rescue Roumanian Jews and help their emigration to Palestine. Your great courage in remaining in Roumania to champion and defend the Jewish people and your activities in their behalf have won for you the admiration and respect of all the Jewish people in the United States.

I saw Dr. Schwartz who just returned from Turkey and he gave me a general idea of conditions in Roumania. We in America have concentrated our efforts for the rescue of Roumanian Jews and to help those who reach Palestine. In this connection we have been in communication with Dr. Ebner and his committee.

At our last Convention held in May of this year, we adopted a program to raise funds for the relief and rehabilitation of Roumanian Jews in the post-war period. We should like to hear from you and for you to give us a report on the economic conditions of the Jews and their needs so that we can concentrate our efforts towards helping our people.

We have closely followed the action of the new Roumanian government under King Michael and read with interest his action in restoring the constitution abolished by his father in 1938. The meager news that has reached us through the press did not disclose whether all anti-Semitic and discriminatory laws enacted before 1938 were also abolished. We refer specifically to the National Labor Law of 1924 limiting the number of Jews engaged in industry and the law for the Revision of Citizens which disfranchised so many thousands of Jews. We should like to hear from you about this.

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We thank God you are alive and hope by the time this reaches you, you will be reunited with your son. Among the recent arrivals I have been in contact with are Phillip Sanft and Lazar Margulies. S. Laban came here from Paris before the fall of France. Mr. Davila has been very sympathetic and helpful in the cause of our people. We should like to send a few of our friends to Roumania and we hope that this ~~will~~ will be possible. At present our people are most anxious to learn about their relatives and to obtain the names of those who have survived. We have sent a list of names to the International Red Cross asking them to locate some people.

If you can contact Mr. Mendel Avram, Calea Bucharesti 117, please tell him his wife and daughter are well and anxiously await the day they can be united. Will you also try to see the Schneerson's and tell them that the Sanfts are well and send their love.

All of our members and officers join me in wishing you good luck and continued good health and thank you for your tireless efforts on behalf of our people. We also send our best wishes to Rabbi Safran.

I anxiously await your reply.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Charles Sonnenreich

CHARLES SONNENREICH

CS:ER

000299

CHARLES SONNENREICH
ATTORNEY AT LAW

1501 BROADWAY
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

4-0817
CHICKERING 4-0818

September 14, 1944

Lawrence Lesser, Esq.
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

I am enclosing a letter to Dr. William Filderman which you said you would be glad to forward for me. I would appreciate it if when you receive his reply, you would send it on to me. I am very grateful to you for helping me contact Dr. Filderman with whom I have not been in direct contact since 1940.

With personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Charles Sonnenreich

CHARLES SONNENREICH

CS:RR
Enc.

000300

CHARLES SONNENREICH
1501 F ROADWAY
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.



Lawrence Lesser, Esq.
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

File

*Letter to Hirschman,
to transmit the
attached to Alderman,
if convenient
Clear through State.*

000301

AUG 17 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of
August 15, 1944.

Mr. Lesser will be available to see you on the
afternoon of Tuesday, September 5, at about 3:00 P.M.
o'clock.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle,
Executive Director.

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, President,
The United Roumanian Jews of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York, 18, New York.

LSLesser:tmh 8-17-44

L.S.L.

000302



THE UNITED ROUMANIAN JEWS
of AMERICA

110 WEST 40th STREET, NEW YORK 18, N. Y.
Telephone LACKawanna 4-6535

August 15, 1944

Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of August 12 in reply to my telegram of August 8 re the S.S. "Mafkura." I would greatly appreciate it if you would send me whatever information you may obtain in regard to the sinking of the ship and the refugees who were on board.

I shall be in Washington the afternoon of Tuesday, September 5 and would appreciate it if you or Mr. Lesser would arrange to see me.

Thanking you for your cooperation, I am

Very truly yours,

Charles Sonnenreich

Charles Sonnenreich, Pres.

CS:RR

OK

000303

AUG 12 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

I regret to advise you that the Board is not in possession of the list of refugees lost on the SS "Markura" which you requested in your telegram of August 8, 1944.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich,
President,
The United Roumanian Jews
of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York, New York.

BBHutchison:agr 8-11-44

000304

WU25 44 11 EXTRA

NEWYORK NY AUG 8 1944 1237 PM 1 09

288/2

JOHN W. PEHLE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD

THE UNITED ROUMANIAN JEWS OF AMERICA WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE

TO RECEIVE A LIST OF APPROXIMATELY 250 JEWISH REFUGEES OF

ROUMANIA PERISHED ON THE BLACK SEA ON THE TURKISH SHIP

MAFKURA

~~NEWYORK~~ AUGUST 7 1944

CHARLES SONNENREICH PRESIDENT SOL ROSMAN EXECUTIVE

SECRETARY 110 WEST 40 ST NEW YORK CITY

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In reply please
refer to: 3142

AUG 8 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

Thank you for your letter of July 20, 1944,
enclosing a statement by Mr. Charles A. Davilla, former
Roumanian minister to the United States, outlining his
suggestions for arresting the wholesale slaughter of the
Jewish people in Europe.

The interest of your organization in the fate
of these unfortunate people is indeed appreciated.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich,
President,
The United Roumanian Jews
of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York 18, New York.

EBT RBH Hutchison:agr 8-3-44 JWA

000306



THE UNITED ROUMANIAN JEWS
of AMERICA

110 WEST 40th STREET, NEW YORK 18, N. Y.
Telephone LAcawanna 4-6535

July 20, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

It is now an established fact that Hitler and his satellites are determined to go through with their murderous plan of exterminating all Jews still surviving in Nazi dominated Europe. The wholesale slaughter of men, women and children is now in full sway in Hungary.

Appeals to the conscience of the murderers have been unavailing. Warnings couched in diplomatic niceties have not deterred them. A direct warning to the heads of the Hungarian State may still save those who have not as yet found their way to the gas chambers. In this connection we enclose a recent statement of Mr. Charles A. Davilla, former Roumanian minister to the United States outlining his suggestions for arresting the wholesale slaughter of these people.

We ask you to consider his proposals and urge upon our Government the course of action suggested therein.

Sincerely yours,

Charles Sonnenreich
CHARLES SONNENREICH, Pres.

CS:RR
Enc.

3142

W. R. B. _____
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To: Files _____
Ans. 8/8/44 _____
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Date _____

000307

When last March the War Refugee Board was created, President Roosevelt addressed a stirring appeal to the peoples of Europe and Asia to help the victims of Nazi and Japanese brutality. Lately a statement, signed by fifteen prominent Senators, has been broadcast by the OWI to the people of Hungary, as a sequel to the recent anti-Semitic measures taken by the new Hungarian Government. It would thus appear that, in spite of the President's appeal and his warning that "all who share the guilt shall share the punishment", and in spite of the efforts of the War Refugee Board, the plight of the Jews has become more desperate in certain European countries. The "peoples" to whom all the appeals are being addressed are themselves oppressed by Fascist governments; how much the Hungarian people could help the Jewish population already interned by the new government in ghettos and concentration camps can be surmised.

On the other hand it is to be expected that now, when the invasion has begun, most means of transportation on which the War Refugee Board counted will be unavailable. We know already that an agreement with the Roumanian Government could not be carried out two months ago because the Germans refused to clear a Turkish boat chartered for the first batch of Jewish refugees. There is no reason to hope that the situation will improve now.

Under these circumstances, it may be advisable to examine what steps could be still taken to give protection to the Jews within Europe, or at least within the Axis satellite countries. The governments of those countries have, as a rule, yielded to the pressure of the Nazis or the local anti-Semites because they are convinced, notwithstanding the President's reference to the "leaders", that in the eventuality of Allied victory their explanation that they were actually prisoners of the Germans will be readily accepted. They obviously believe that the President's words do not apply to them personally, but only to those directly responsible for the acts. Otherwise, how could Horthy have stood for the recent anti-Semitic measures?

..... more

100308

It seems to me that the only means of forcing those governments to take a risk and to resist the German pressure is to make them fear the Allies more than the Nazis. This ought to be easier now when Germany's defeat is obvious. A new warning addressed personally to the heads of the satellite states and all the members of their governments could specify that (1) it has been decided, for humanitarian reasons out-ranking any other consideration including that of sovereignty, to break all precedents in order to prevent that helpless people should face annihilation not for what they have done, but for what they are; (2) the heads of the states and all the members of their governments will be tried, and capital punishment demanded, if from now on, while they are formally in power, and Jew dies because of direct or indirect measures taken by any authority in the respective country; and (3) no excuse or alibi will be accepted, and extradition from neutral countries of such chiefs of state or members of government will be demanded and obtained.

Such a warning would not only force the satellite governments to resist the German demands, but would provide them with a convincing argument for the Nazis, as these can hardly pretend any more to be certain of victory and, on the other hand, they have no interest in replacing precious collaborators enjoying a certain local prestige with desperadoes bound to bring trouble, at a time when Hitler has his hands full. Another effect of the warning would be that the heads of the governments would lose their collaborators if the Anti-Semitic measures were maintained.

If for military reasons certain arrangements, following the Italian pattern, with the Fascist heads of satellite states are being considered, the above warning would serve the double purpose of speeding them up and of extending to the Jews the only possible protection in the present circumstances. The best way of convincing Fascists and opportunists is to make oneself feared. Hitler had got the general idea.

CHARLES A. DAVILLA
Former Roumanian Minister
to the United States.

June 12, 1944

000309

WU19 45 9 EXTRA

NEWYORK NY MAY 12 1944 1128A

LAWRENCE LESSER

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

164

1944 MAY 12 PM 12 00

Files

CONVENTION OF THE UNITED ROUMANIAN JEWS OF AMERICA MAY 13-14
WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE IF A LIST OF ROUMANIAN REFUGEES WOULD
BE SENT TO US IN TIME TO BE READ TO THE DELEGATES ASSEMBLED AT
THE CONVENTION

SOL ROSMAN EXEC SECY UNITED ROUMAINAN JEWS OF AMERICA

110 WEST 40 ST NEW YORK CITY.

1153A.

*Talked to
Sommerreich's
secretary 5-16-44
the day message
delivered to me - No
Ans req.*

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000310

Dear Mr. Rosman:

Please accept my warm greetings on the occasion of the 36th annual convention of the United Roumanian Jews of America. It is your high purpose to further, defend and protect the interests of the Jews of Roumania. I send you our pledge that nothing will be left undone to speed the task of rescuing those defenseless victims of Nazi persecution.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Sol Rosman, Executive Secretary
The United Roumanian Jews
of America
110 West 40th Street
New York 18, New York

VMM:mg

000311

W. R. B. 632
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Ans.
No. Ans. Req.
Initial
Date

The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

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LEO WOLFSON

President
CHARLES SONNENREICH

Vice-Presidents
MAX SCHONFELD
SAMUEL KANTER
ISAAC COHEN
DR. SOL BICKEL
EMIL GELBER

Comptroller
PAUL GINGOLD

Treasurer
DR. CH. H. KREMER

Executive Secretary
SOL ROSMAN

"To further, defend and protect the interests of the Jews in Roumania, to work for their civic and political emancipation and for their economic reconstruction and rehabilitation; and to represent and further the interests of the Roumanian Jews in the United States."

Vice-Presidents

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April 27, 1944

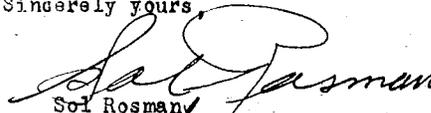
Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

We regret your inability to attend our 36th annual convention as stated in your letter of April 22.

May we ask you to be good enough to send us a message to be read at the convention.

Sincerely yours,



Sol Rosman
Executive Secretary

SR:RA

May 14

000312

April 22, 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

Thank you for inviting me to address the annual convention of the United Roumanian Jews of America on May 14. I wish that I might be with you. But the demands of the work I am doing are such that I must refuse your kind invitation. I am sure you understand just how pressing those demands are.

It is good to know that you were as heartened as we with Mr. Hirschmann's report from the Balkans. We are confident that the machinery he has set in motion will be the means of saving many more lives.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich
President
The United Roumanian Jews
of America
110 West 40th Street
New York, New York

VMM:rat

000313

The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK

*in
Prepared
reference*

Honorary President
LEO WOLFSON

President
CHARLES SONNENREICH

Vice-Presidents
MAX SCHONFELD
SAMUEL KANTER
ISAAC COHEN
DR. SOL BICKEL
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JAMES ELLMAN, DETROIT, MICH.
NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

April 20, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I was greatly heartened when I read the report pertaining to the rescue of Roumanian Jews released in Washington upon Mr. Hirschman's return from abroad. In saving the lives of these people, you have rendered a great service to humanity. It is difficult for me to find adequate words to express the gratitude of my members.

On May 13 and 14, 1944, our organization is holding its 36th annual convention at the Hotel Edison in New York City. Representatives of our affiliated organizations throughout the country will attend. On behalf of my organization, I extend to you a very cordial invitation to attend the Sunday afternoon session, May 14 to address the delegates as a guest speaker. I feel certain that they would want to express to you personally, their appreciation for all you have done to help their less fortunate people abroad.

I would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Charles Sonnenreich
CHARLES SONNENREICH

CS:RR

Telephone
Lackawanna 4-6535

Chickering 4-6817

439

File - No answer needed
The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK

Honorary President
LEO WOLFSON

President
CHARLES SONNENREICH

Vice-Presidents
MAX SCHONFELD
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LOUIS ROHRlich, MONTREAL, CANADA
JAMES ELLMAN, DETROIT, MICH.
NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

March 31, 1941

Mr. Lawrence Lesser
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

I was sorry that I was not in my office yesterday morning when you called.

I was greatly heartened by your message with regard to our getting a list of the repatriated Jews of Roumania. I am sure that the members of my organization are very grateful to you for your cooperation. I presume that as soon as you or the Red Cross gets this information, you will forward it to me.

Thanking you for your cooperation and your kindness in granting me an interview, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Charles Sonnenreich
CHARLES SONNENREICH

CS:RR

000315

MAR 27 1944

Dear Mr. Rosman:

Reference is made to your letter of March 15, 1944, enclosing excerpts from a recent issue of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency bulletin. You have requested assurance from the Board that the statements from the bulletin, concerning evacuation of Jews from the Balkans, are authentic.

The War Refugee Board is presently working on a program of evacuation from the Balkans. However, the degree of our success is unpredictable, particularly in the light of the current military situation. We prefer no publicity at this time which might in any way interfere with the success of the program.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Sol Rosman,
Executive Secretary,
The United Roumanian Jews of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York 18, N. Y.

Handwritten: Closed
with Mr. Pehle
PH:lab 3/25/44

000316

The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

W. R. B. *334
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 No. Ans. Req. _____
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 Date _____

- Honorary President*
LEO WOLFSON
- President*
CHARLES SONNENREICH
- Vice-Presidents*
MAX SCHONFELD
SAMUEL KANTER
ISAAC COHEN
DR. SOL BICKEL
EMIL GELBER
- Comptroller*
PAUL GINGOLD
- Treasurer*
DR. CH. H. KREMER
- Executive Secretary*
SOL ROSMAN

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- Vice-Presidents*
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LOUIS ROHRLICH, MONTREAL, CANADA
JAMES ELLMAN, DETROIT, MICH.
NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

March 15, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

The enclosed bulletin published by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency is of vital importance to our organization. Before taking any affirmative action, we should like to be assured that the information contained in the said bulletin is authentic and reliable.

Under the circumstances, we should greatly appreciate your early advice.

Sincerely yours,

Sol Rosman
Sol Rosman ✓
Executive Secretary

SR:RA
Enc.

*I am encouraged in such efforts.
The report is particularly important in the light of the
unreliable, but I will refer you to the
publicity since it may not have been
referred since the report*

100317

U. S. REPRESENTATIVE COMPLETES PLAN FOR EVACUATION OF JEWS FROM BALKAN COUNTRIES

ANKARA, Turkey, March 12. (JTA) -- The first steps toward mass evacuation of Jewish refugees from Rumania and Bulgaria have been completed, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was told today by Ira A. Hirschmann, representative here of the United States War Refugee Board.

Mr. Hirschmann revealed that Turkey has agreed to passage of 5,000 children to Palestine. He added that negotiations for a Turkish ship, capable of carrying 1,000 children at a trip, are shaping up for early settlement. The ship will pick up its passengers at Constanza, Rumanian Black Sea port, and take them to Haifa.

The British authorities, Hirschmann said, will provide Palestine visas and he is hopeful of getting a German safe conduct. At the present time, only about 100 persons weekly are allowed exit from the Axis-controlled Balkan states. They are allowed 24 hours to pass through Turkish territory.

Jewish Children from Bulgaria Reach Palestine

HAIFA, March 12. (JTA) -- Fifty Jewish children from Bulgaria arrived here today. They were met by representatives of the Jewish Agency and taken to Jewish settlements where they will reside and be educated. The last group of Rumanian Jews who were held in Cyprus for more than two years also landed in Haifa today.

000318

The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

433

W. R. B. _____
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LEO WOLFSON

President
CHARLES SONNENREICH

Vice-Presidents
MAX SCHONFELD
SAMUEL KANTER
ISAAC COHEN
DR. SOL BICKEL
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Comptroller
PAUL GINGOLD

Treasurer
DR. CH. H. KREMER

Executive Secretary
SOL ROSMAN

"To further, defend and protect the interests of the Jews in Roumania, to work for their civic and political emancipation and for their economic reconstruction and rehabilitation; and to represent and further the interests of the Roumanian Jews in the United States."

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JAMES ELLMAN, DETROIT, MICH.
NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

March 24, 1944

Mr. Lesser
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, president of the United Roumanian Jews of America will be in Washington on Monday, March 27, and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you the situation of the Jews in Transnistria and in Roumania.

Sincerely yours,


Sol Rosman
Executive Secretary

SR:RA

000319

The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

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NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

March 22, 1944

Mr. John W. Pable
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Pable:

It was with a great deal of interest that I read the enclosed news item which appeared in the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. With the advance of the Russian troops through the territory of Transnistria, our people were very much concerned over the fate of the Roumanian Jews who had been deported to that area. We did hear that some 6500 had been repatriated, but had had no further information with regard to the remainder. I would appreciate it very much if you were to advise me exactly how many Roumanian Jews were repatriated to Roumania. We have seen the news releases relating to Dr. Hirschmann's activities in Ankara, but, of course, could not tell whether the reports were authentic.

I should also be grateful to you if you would obtain for us the names of the children referred to in the enclosed news report who were transported from Roumania to Turkey. In this same connection, I saw Mr. Peter Wehrli, Mr. Peter's assistant at the International Red Cross in Washington and I had asked him to obtain for me through the Geneva office a list of the names of the 6500 Roumanian Jews who had recently been repatriated from Transnistria to Bucharest. The other day he forwarded to me a copy of a cable received from the Geneva office which stated that they had available the names of the repatriated Jews, but could not furnish them directly to us because the information would have to come through the Red Cross or a Governmental Agency.

100320

The United Roumanian Jews of America

110 WEST 40th STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

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LEO WOLFSON

President
CHARLES SONNENREICH

Vice-Presidents
MAX SCHONFELD
SAMUEL KANTER
ISAAC COHEN
DR. SOL BICKEL
EMIL GELBER

Comptroller
PAUL GINGOLD

Treasurer
DR. CHARLES H. KREMER

Executive Secretary
SOL ROSMAN

"To further, defend and protect the interests of the Jews in Roumania, to work for their civic and political emancipation and for their economic reconstruction and rehabilitation; and to represent and further the interests of the Roumanian Jews in the United States."

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JAMES ELLMAN, DETROIT, MICH.
NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

March 22, 1944

Mr. John W. Pahle

-2-

I would appreciate it very much if the names of those people could be made available to us. This would not only allay the fears of those who had relatives in Transistria, but would also relieve the agencies concerned from the task of complying with individual requests for information. In the past, such lists of names have been obtained for my organization through the kind cooperation of the Department of State.

I would deeply appreciate your cooperation in this matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely yours,

Charles Sonnenreich
CHARLES SONNENREICH

CS:RR

700321

MAR 2 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

Thank you for the memorandum on the rescue of Rumanian Jews which you left with Mr. Lesser.

I am glad to have your views on the problems with which the Board is faced and I assure you that the proposals which you have submitted will receive prompt and careful consideration.

I am also returning herewith the translation of certain correspondence which you were good enough to leave with Mr. Lesser.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, President,
The United Rumanian Jews of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York 18, N. Y.

Enclosure

REGISTERED

L.S.L.
LSLesser:als 3/2/44

000322

MAR 2 1944

Dear Mr. Sonnenreich:

Thank you for the memorandum on the rescue of Rumanian Jews which you left with Mr. Lesser.

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Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, President,
The United Roumanian Jews of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York 18, N. Y.

Enclosure

REGISTERED

LSLesser:als 3/2/44

100323

Mr. Pehle

March 2, 1944

L. S. Lesser

The annexed purports to be a translation of correspondence between Antonescu, the Rumanian Fuehrer and one Dr. Filderman, one of the principal leaders of the Rumanian Jews. It is said that the originals of these letters are in New York. The subject matter of the correspondence is the forced emigration of Jews from Rumania. Unfortunately, none of this material can be used for propaganda purposes because Dr. Filderman is still in Rumania, having been brought back from Transnistria upon the insistence of the Vatican whose limited protection he is said now to enjoy. It is interesting to note that as late as October 25, 1941, Filderman believed that German Jews and the Jews in the Ghetto of Lublin were being "put to work for the army and for civilian needs."

LSLesser:als 3.2.44

100324

MEMORANDUM

February 25, 1944

27
Rund

Walcup
JWP

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, President of the United Rumanian Jews of America, called yesterday morning to submit his organization's suggested program for action in response to the Board's circular letter. During his visit a number of miscellaneous matters were discussed:

1. Mr. Sonnenreich emphasized the plight of the Jews in Transnistria and strongly urged that action be taken to evacuate them. In this connection, he stated that it had been reliably reported that Cretzianu, the Rumanian Minister at Ankara, was likely to be disposed to aid in any such venture. Mr. Sonnenreich said that Cretzianu, far from being Antonescu's man, was really an adherent of Maniu, Rumanian democracy's "white hope" whose advice he followed in accepting his present post. Mr. Sonnenreich also said that he had reason to believe that the Rumanian Minister at Buenos Aires would be well disposed to aid since it has been reliably reported that he has already appealed in his own name to the Rumanian Government to release the Jews in Transnistria. Mr. Sonnenreich also referred to the Rumanian Minister at the Vatican who, he said, was helpful in getting Dr. Filderman, one of Rumania's Jewish leaders, out of Transnistria.
2. With respect to his own organization, Mr. Sonnenreich said that it had cooperated closely with the JDC and the UJA and intended to continue to do so. He said he thought it would add confusion to the picture if organizations like his own attempted to operate directly or independently. On the other hand, he said, reports indicated that the Jews in Transnistria were very badly off for clothing since most of their durable wearing apparel had been requisitioned for use by the German and Rumanian Armies on the Russian front. Mr. Sonnenreich's organization is prepared to undertake the collection and supply of large quantities of clothing if any way can be worked out to assure its receipt by Jews in Transnistria. In this connection, Mr. Sonnenreich said that his organization had reports that the Rumanian Government was allowing Jews to return from Transnistria -- upon the payment of large sums per head for such permission -- provided they had decent clothing.
3. Mr. Sonnenreich said that his organization had extensive lists of Jews in Rumania and Transnistria and would be grateful if we would supply the names of any persons who may be rescued, as such information would be of great comfort to their American friends and relatives. I told Mr. Sonnenreich that I did not believe the Board could or would undertake such a task since it would involve considerable work and would not aid appreciably, if at all, in the rescue or relief of victims of enemy oppression.

1000325

4. Mr. Sonnenreich stated that he and his colleagues were very interested in the work of the Board and consequently were most desirous that the Board should have at its command all the funds that are needed. He said that his organization could be instrumental in seeing to it that the Board received substantial funds by way of gifts.

Sonnenreich

COPY

Translated from Roumanian (1)

F. U. of C.
No. 1347

October 9, 1941

To His Excellency
Marshal Antonescu
Leader of the State and
President of the Council of Ministers

Mister Marshal:

I have been told that Jews of Bucovina will be sent to Besarabia; that those of Besarabia are to be deported to the Ukraine and that this deportation means for them death under the present circumstances.

I implore you to stop this exodus, if it is possible and if the deportees are not guilty of anything.

Accept, Mister Marshal, the assurance of my profound respect.

The President
(Dr. W. Filderman)

P.S. The distinguishing mark of the Jews has not yet been suppressed in Bucovina.

100327

Translated from Roumanian
Bucarest, October 19, 1941

Federation of the Unions
of Jewish Communities of Roumania
No. 1387

Mister Marshal:

1. Deportation of Jewish Roumanian citizens of Bucovina & Besarabia.
2. Expulsion from the Old Kingdom of Jewish Roumanian citizens, natives of Bucovina and Besarabia.

A clamor of despair hitherto unheard shakes the air everywhere in the country. It makes me tremble on account of the terrible responsibility which I assumed, and it forces me, in these days of great national celebration and glory for Your Excellency, to impart to you my torments.

1. Deportation of Jewish Roumanian citizens of Bucovina & Besarabia

A few days after an appeal to us by the Governor of Besarabia to help our brethren of faith of that province--a decree ordered the immediate deportation of all the Jews of Besarabia and Bucovina. His Excellency, the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers in the audience granted to me on October 14th;

1. Had consented to exempt from deportation, the intellectuals, workers, merchants and proprietors.

2. Had reserved his decision concerning my request to postpone the deportation of all until the spring and to bring back those already deported in order that they be selected according to No. 1.

The above order pursuant to paragraph No. 1 was immediately executed in Bucovina, but in Besarabia, although it seems to have been sent there, it has not been executed, since the Military Commandment does not know

100329

anything about it. Thus, a few transports of deportees left Chisinau, and we received information that the corpses of all those who belonged to the first transport lie between Orbei and Rezina. Concerning the other transports shipped away on October 14th, 16th and 18th, no news is available other than that they were stripped at Orbei of everything they had on them.

Where are they? Are they still alive, or did they share the fate of those corpses that lie-according to rumors-between Orbei and Rezina?

What will become of those who were designated to leave on the morning of October 20th and the days following that date?

Approximately 800 Jews, natives of Balti and residing in Glurgin, were sent to Besarabia, in sealed wagons, without air or light, and travelers who arrived from R. Sarat, informed us that they nearly went insane when they heard the screams and cries of the desperate and the moans of the dying.

"A man is a man, to whatever faith he belongs."

"Justice must be granted to everyone whether he enjoys it or applies for it."

These are the principles upon which Your Excellency declared that the State would have its new foundation.

Allow me to ask you to order that the Jews, too, be treated like men, and that Justice be rendered to those of them who have the right for themselves and in whose name I am applying to your Excellency.

Indeed, Decree No. 793 of September 3, 1941, regulating the citizenship of the inhabitants of Besarabia and North Bucovina, declares:

"Have been and are Roumanians" all the inhabitants of the liberated territories, who, pursuant to the laws in effect on June 28, 1940, are enjoying Roumanian citizenship" (Art. 1) with the exception of those who have applied, after June 28, 1940, for authorization to return to the invaded territories." (Art. 2).

Thus, on September 3, 1941, you established the rule that a Roumanian citizen is one who in any manner and by any reason is able to prove his citizenship.

Notwithstanding this law, a few days later, Roumanian citizens of Jewish faith were forced to quit their houses within three hours, that is to say without being able to take anything with them, and a few days later, they were deported to foreign countries in spite of the law which recognized their right of citizenship and even more their human right and also their right to reside in the country whose citizens they had been recognized to be.

Mister Marshal,

In the audience of April 1st, 1941, I had the honor of handing you a memorandum--the memorandum No. 212/25 March 1941--concerning expulsion from the country where they had been residing, for several decades; many of them who even had become Roumanian subjects. In the aforementioned memorandum I complained about the fact that to these Jews only a few days had been given to leave the country while others, who had entered Roumania clandestinely had obtained two months to leave. I said in the aforementioned memorandum:

"What is more serious, many of these Jews who are Polish subjects, have consulted us about the liquidation of their industry and they

100331

have for our sake given up the idea of liquidation. Indeed, pursuant to the obligation taken before Your Excellency, namely that the Jews will not sabotage the government of Your Excellency, pursuant to the decision of Your Excellency, which was again made public by the address of the President of the Council of Ministers, on September 18, 1940, pursuant to the law of April 3, 1930, which assures to the Jews the right to work; pursuant to the communication of the Government, of October 4, 1940, concerning illegal immigration; pursuant even to the law of November 16, 1940, referring to the status of the Jews engaged in enterprises, which guarantees the keeping of the employers; pursuant to the decree of the Minister of Labor, dated March 22, 1941, which withdraws the working papers of foreign Jews but upholds the right to work of those of them who are owners of enterprises; and finally, pursuant to the law on sabotage which punished the employers who dismiss their personnel and reduce thus their activity, I advised the men to refrain from liquidating their business."

Your Excellency has recognized the justness of the cause and ordered suspension of the expulsions.

Since you recognized, Mister Marshal, that foreigners residing in the country cannot be treated worse than those residing there illegally, I cannot believe that you will not agree with me in declaring that citizens of Roumania cannot be treated worse than foreigners; that the law forbids their deportation, that this measure lacks any legal basis, and that, in fact, the way they were driven out of their houses and

the fate reserved to the deported are incompatible with the fundamental principle that a man is a man to whatever faith he belongs and that justice must be rendered to everybody whether he enjoys it or applies for it.

Allow me to believe that the aforementioned measure has ceased to be urgent today when the war is over, and when danger no longer exists for Roumania. But the present measure of deportation is all the more serious and illegal because it is applied not only to the liberated provinces, but also to South Bucovina and even to the country of Dorohoi recently incorporated into Bucovina.

II. Expulsion from the Old Kingdom of the Jews, natives from Bucovina and from Besarabia.

A decree of the Minister of Interior ordered the departure of all the Jews, natives of Bucovina and Besarabia from their native country--together with their families, wives, or children--who were born in the old Kingdom.

There are Jews who have lived for decades in the Old Kingdom, many with their wives or children born here; all of them are Roumanian citizens whose citizenship was recently examined and proved; they have served in the Roumanian Army or are now performing useful work in the army; they have subscribed to the Loan or are waiting to be invited to subscribe to it after having given plenty for hospital needs; others have entered the Old Kingdom after June 28, 1940 fleeing the Soviet regime and proving thus their attachment to Roumania. And all these Jews--those of the Old Kingdom as well as those of South Bucovina or Dorohoi and those of the liberated provinces--are being treated worse than the foreigners who entered the country legally or illegally, they are ruined because they have been given no time to liquidate their businesses--they will be sent in a

100333

few days or hours to death, without any legal ground or personal guilt, without any other guilt than that of their origin, a discrimination being thus made between man and man, depending on the religion to which he belongs.

Mister Marshal, you mentioned to me, during the audience of Butiman, the bad conduct of a few Jews, but you also mentioned the bad conduct of a few Roumanians. Isn't it a fact that innocent people have suffered-- intellectuals, merchants, industrialists, proprietors, etc.--whether they be Jews or Gentiles--under the bolshevistic regime, and that not only Roumanians but thousands of Jews have been deported to Siberia?

I did not defend and am not defending the guilty ones; the latter should take their punishment.

I am only defending the innocent, those whom an administrative measure deprives of their right of citizenship as well as of their human rights, which the text of the law clearly recognizes to them.

Mister Marshall:
If I and I alone, bear all the responsibility, I and I alone, should get all the blame, because I and I alone prevented the Jews of the Old Kingdom and of South Bucovina from liquidating their enterprises as I respected the word given to Your Excellency, namely that I would prevent sabotage toward the government, and as Your Excellency repeated to me the words stated to the newspaper "Stampa":

"The Jews will no longer be the beneficiaries of the resources of the State, but they will be allowed to live in Roumania."

Only two months have elapsed since General Stonescu transmitted to me the message of Your Excellency in which you guaranteed the physical existence of the Jews.

At present, Mister Marshal, not one of the Jews of the country enjoys any tranquillity of mind. Unprecedented panic and boundless despair prevails among them, and they are haunted by a horror which provoked many suicides at Cernauti, which might provoke, God knows what tomorrow, but for which, I know, the responsibility is laid to me.

You suffered very much, Mister Marshal, until you could see the triumph of justice for yourself for Roumania and the Roumanian people.

I am profoundly, very profoundly convinced that you will not tolerate the glory of Roumania and of Your Excellency to become tarnished; that the respect of human rights and of the laws be suppressed. You will order that the generous decision of the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers should immediately be also extended to Besarabia; otherwise this very morning and on the following days new transports will be sent to Death. You will order that those who have been deported be brought back for selection; the guilty ones should be punished, and the innocent should not be taken for deportation; the Jews of South Bucovina and of the Old Kingdom should not be affected in any way.

If it would not be possible to reach a definite decision now, even a deferment until the Spring, could be, it seems to me, of great significance, all the more because many Jews would leave the Country in the meantime and many even now are leaving it, several among them being in possession of visas so that their departure is only a question of days.

I must also mention that I'll immediately summon to Bucarest Messrs. Jacobsohn & Bloom, representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee, in order to ask them to accelerate the departure of as many Jews as possible.

100335

The panic that seized all the Jews after the Decree which expropriated them of their outstanding credits on mortgages, of their shares in incorporated firms, and so on, which chased landlords out of their apartments a few days before October 26, which not only obliges them to transfer to the Treasurer the rent received by them from their tenants, but also to pay themselves a rent immediately--although they did not yet receive the money for the expropriation,--the ghettos and also the deportation of the Jews not only from the liberated countries but also from South Bucovina,--measures which spread terror all over the rest of the country, ought to be, I believe, suppressed in the interests of Roumania.

The Vice-President of the Council of Ministers confirmed to me that he was working on a statute, whose general lines--insofar as Jews were concerned--Your Excellency was kind enough to repeat to me during the audience at Butiman. It is of the greatest importance--it seems to me--that the statute in question should be promulgated without delay and that an end should be put to the panic and to the instability of the political civil and juridical status of the Jews, because everything will crumble without stability.

I dare hope, Mister Marshal, that you will believe my assumption, namely, that I was guided by the purest Roumanian patriotic sentiments in exposing the above facts, and I hope that they will receive the special attention of Your Excellency.

I beg of Your Excellency to accept my most respectful consideration.

The President:

Dr. W. Filderman.

700336

Translated from ROMANIAN

Escutcheon of Romania
Leader /Conducator/ of the
Roumanian State.

Mr. Filderman:

You wrote me in two successive petition about the "shocking tragedy" and "implored" me in impressive terms, reminding me of my "conscience" and of "humanity" and emphasized that you are "compelled" to appeal to me and "only" to me in behalf of the Jews of Romania who left for ghettos prepared for them on the Bug.

In order to also include tragedy into your intervention, you stress the fact that this measure "is death, death, death without guilt, without any other guilt than that of being Jews."

Mr. Filderman, no one can be more sensible than I, to the sufferings of the lowly and of the defenseless. I understand your pain, but you should understand, or better, you too, all of you should have understood my suffering of the last year, which was that of a whole people.

Do you think, did you think of how we felt at that time, at the evacuation of Besarabia, and how we feel now when every day, and even every hour we are paying with magnanimity and blood, with very much blood, for the hatred with which your fellow Jews of Besarabia treated us during the time of the evacuation of Besarabia, the way they received us during our retreat and behaved toward us from the Dniester to Odessa and to the region of the Sea of Azov?

But faithful to a tradition, you would today reverse the roles and turn from accused into accuser, forgetting the reasons which caused the situation which you are bemoaning. Allow me to ask you and through you all your fellow-

100337

Jews who cheered all the more frantically, the heavier were the blows we received:

What did you do last year when you heard about the behavior of the Jews of Besarabia and of Bucovine towards retreating Romanian troops who until then, had protected the security and wealth of those same Jews? I remind you of this:

Even before the arrival of the Soviet troops, it appears that the Jews of Besarabia and of Bucovine spit on our officers, snatched their epaulettes, tore their uniforms and whenever they could, they killed our soldiers villanously with clubs. We possess proof.

Those ingrates received the Soviet troops with flowers and celebrated their arrival with great joy. We possess photographs that prove this fact.

During Soviet occupation, those whom you are now pitying, betrayed good Romanians, denouncing them to the Communists, and caused grief and sorrow in many Romanian families.

From the cellars of Chisinau, numerous corpses are taken out every day, horribly mutilated corpses of our martyrs who had been thus repaid for having extended a friendly hand to those ingrates for twenty years.

There are well-known facts, certainly known even by you, and you may convince yourself at any moment as to all their details.

I ask you: why did the Jews of Besarabia set their houses afire before retreating? Can you explain to me why we found upon our return Jewish of 14-15 years, whose pockets were full of hand-grenades?

I ask you: how many of our people were villanously killed by your fellow-Jews, how many of them were buried alive? If you wish to have proof of these facts, you may have them.

100338

These were acts of hatred, a hatred that was close to madness which your Jews have showed against our people, so tolerant and hospitable, but who today is conscious of its rights.

To repay the generosity with which they were received and treated in our midst, your Jews, who had become Soviet Commissaries, caused the Soviet troops of the region of Odessa to put up a regime of unequalled terror, witnessed by Romanian prisoners, and organize a useless massacre, only in order to increase our losses.

In the region of the Sea of Azov, our troops were temporarily retreating and they left behind numerous wounded officers and soldiers. When they resumed their advance, they found their wounded horribly mutilated.

Men who could have been saved, died in atrocious sufferings.

Their eyes had been torn out, their tongue cut, as well as their nose and ears.

Can you imagine the scene, Mr. Filderman:

Do you feel shocked? Do you pity the victims:

I ask you: why this hatred on the part of the Russian Jews with whom we had nothing to do?

Your hatred is the hatred of all, it is your hatred.

If you really have a soul, do not pity those who do not deserve it, but pity those who deserve it.

Mourn with the mothers who lost their children in such pains, and not with those who caused them so much wrong and will also cause so much wrong to you.

/Signed/ Marshall Antonescu

10/19/41.

P.S.

A wounded soldier from

Pietra Neanta was buried alive ... /several illegible words/

of the Soviet Commissaries...his tomb;

he implored not to be buried.../several illegible words/.....4 children.

000340

Translated from Roumanian

October 25, 1941

To His Excellency
Marshal Antonescu, esq.
Leader of the State

Mister Marshal:

Your letter of the 19th inst. was handed to me in the evening of the 21st inst.

Although it crossed my petition forwarded in the morning of October 19, and although in this petition can be found-short but clear- the answers to several questions put by Your Excellency, I feel obliged not to limit myself to the mere expression of my thanks, but to also answer your questions with the same loyalty which I evinced ever since the first day of your advent.

I was certain that no one could be more sensible than Your Excellency to the sufferings of the humble and the defenseless; that was the reason that I applied to your Excellency.

As you know very well, Mr. Marshal, I, too, have devoted my life to the humble and the defenseless since my early childhood.

"Under a gloomy, leaden sky

A pitiful crowd of men behold!-

In the snow-covered field nearby

Drags itself sadly, half-dead with cold."

These verses of the poem "March to Siberia" have decided my way of life.

They were the cause of my using the minutes of recreation in High School and the hours of night- while my schoolmates played or slept- to publish those

"Lessons of practical agriculture" which helped the peasants' children

learn agriculture in the gardens established by the village of Spiru Ilaret.

000341

These verses induced me to study the problem of the peasants and to make proposals for the raising of their standard, proposals, some of which I had the pleasure to see, were taken into consideration. They made me declare, while defending my fellow-Jews--that I would never defend them against and beyond the interests of the Roumanian people.--and my relations with the Kings, the Regency and with all the leaders of the country for twenty-five years were, I believe, the best recognition of this attitude,--in spite of the search made in my house in 1927 by the Military Public Prosecutor, by order of the Minister Octavian Goga, Esq., and in spite of the two ineffective searches ordered by the Secret Police and the Legionary Police who looked for proofs of my working against the country or the regime.

These verses made me decide at a time when Jews of other countries--fighting National-Socialism--proclaimed the boycotting of German goods--to ask the German envoy for an audience in order to assure him that as long as Roumania would be linked to Germany by a commercial agreement, the Roumanian Jews would not support the boycott,--a declaration that was broadcast by all the broadcasting stations of Germany,--and when you concluded an alliance with Germany, to restate to the Jews my advice of absolute loyalty.

On the other hand, those same verses incited me, Mister Marshal, to intervene in behalf of the Jews, natives of Bucovina and of Besarabia who are at present in the Old Kingdom, and also in behalf of the residents of South-Bucovina and of Old-Dorohoi, incorporated in Bucovina--whom I cannot consider, in any case, but as anti-bolshevik,--as well as in favor of those Jews of Bucovina and of Besarabia who proved to be innocent of any anti-Roumanian action. I was interceding for those Jews and only for those.

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I therefore did not insist so much upon the withdrawal of the order as upon the postponement of its execution to next Spring and upon the selection of the men, and I did not think that such a measure could provoke any discontentment.

At the time of my intervention, I was well aware, Mister Marshal, of the accusations which are the subject of your letter. You communicated them to me at Butiman through the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and through Dr. N. L. Lupu.

I replied to you then, Mister Marshal, and I am replying again today, that the guilty must be punished without pity but that one cannot punish ten thousand innocent for the crimes which other people committed.

What encouraged me to write you again was the fact that a few days after the audience of the 8th of September, a decree was published, which mentioned the rights of citizenship of Jews of North-Bucovina and of Besarabia, under the restriction that the same rights could be withdrawn in individual cases,--a law which in my opinion excluded mass deportation and strengthened me in my belief that my request was in conformity with the motto of Your Excellency:

"Justice is given to anybody who possesses
it or who applies for it."

Thus, justice for the Jews cannot be different than justice for other people, and it is not possible to say that, because a few Jews are contemptible, all the Jews are contemptible, blending the good and the bad.

There cannot be two kinds of justice. The Russian Jews are Russians and not Roumanians and consequently, we cannot be held responsible for their actions, just as the Jews of Besarabia and Bucovina,--amongst the families

of whom many have been sent to Siberia--cannot be held responsible for the deeds of those of their relatives who had become Communists. This is all the more true since the Jews of the entire world had disavowed Communism and the Communist Jews.

So did the Rabbis of United Roumania a few years ago under the presidency of the late Great Rabbi Dr. I. Niemirower, and so did I in my lectures and in a pamphlet which I published in 1922; so did also the American Jews through the proclamation of the American Jewish Committee, which declared that the triumph of bolshevism "would inevitably lead to destruction of Judaism."

It can still less be conceived that the whole of Roumanian Jewry, should be held responsible for the acts of the Russian Jews.

If the Roumanians--Jews or Gentiles, soldiers or civilians--committed such barbarous acts, the culprits must take the consequences thereof,--for the soldier, even the enemy soldier, is a martyr who defends his country,--and he who touches him otherwise than in open combat or tortures him, is the most abject of criminals.

Your Excellency cited examples. Allow me to give in my turn one example. At the departure of the Roumanian troops from Chisinau and Cernauti, all the Jewish stores of the center of these two cities were devastated by Jewish Communists. Just as the rebellious extremist Legionaries intended to exterminate the leading Roumanians in order to secure definite mastery over the country, the communist Jews prepared themselves to exterminate Jewish bourgeoisie. And just as the Roumanian people cannot be responsible for the murders perpetrated at Jilava or for the assassination of Jews, in the same way no Jew of the Old Kingdom or of Transylvania or the innocents of Bucovina can be held responsible for acts initiated by a few among them.

Moreover, in the audience at Butiman, Your Excellency expressed to me verbally a few of the arguments which appear in your letter and yet you added that a few Roumanians who had looted the Jews of Besarabia had been punished by death penalty; you also told me of the possibility of authorizing, after the fall Odessa, the Jews in rural communities, to return to their residences, and Your Excellency also spoke to me about the situation of the Jews of the Old Kingdom whom you trusted, and who would be given a privileged position.

I did not imagine that, under these circumstances, my intervention would irk Your Excellency. I even thought to serve a major national and governmental interest, because the Jews--as "Universal" recognizes them--played an outstanding part in Besarabia and formed, together with the Germans, the "economic foundation of Besarabia" and because, according to the newspaper, Jews and Germans could not be replaced:

"in a twinkling by improved ^{*}elements, unfamiliar with surroundings, with the spirit and local work-conditions." (Reconstruction of Besarabian economy, Universal, October 21, 1941.)

Their deportation would consequently hamper the economic reconstruction of that province and of the rest of the country which depends on Besarabia for a number of products.

I thought finally that it would have been more useful that all Jewish workers should be put to work for the army and for civilian needs just as German Jews are used and as Germany uses the Ghetto of Lublin.

My intervention was all the more justified because I knew that when a few Legionaries introduced the Law about Roumanization, the German envoy

*Exact spelling on material this was copied from.

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at Bucarest told them himself that this was not a clever political measure and that the law in question was bound to disrupt the economy of the country. The total and immediate deportation of the Jews of Besarabia and of Bucovina must even more quickly have the same effect.

The selection and the postponement appeared to me to be in the interest of the country and of Your Excellency. This was my deep conviction without which I would not have appealed to your Excellency.

And now, I will give precise answers to the questions of Your Excellency.

Yes, Mister Marshal, we did speak about territorial cession, as well as about the questions of refugees and the bad behavior of a few Jews of Besarabia and of Bucovina (Enclosures 1-3)

No, Mister Marshal, we do not wish to reverse the roles from accused into accusers as we did not accuse anybody. There is nothing in the two letters to which you refer which resembles an accusation. We could not do it, as we disapprove of the facts related by you.

No, Mister Marshal, I cannot explain either the setting afire of houses by Jews of Besarabia or the profanation of the children's minds by the filling of pockets of 14 to 15 year olds with grenades.

I can imagine, Mister Marshal, the sufferings of those mothers, wives and children, and I feel horror and sorrow at the mere thought of those sufferings. I therefore understood the collection from Jews, thousands of blankets, mattresses and tens of thousands of bedsheets, pillows, pillow-cases, etc. for the hospitals of the wounded.

I also initiated a drive among Jews in favor of subscriptions to the Loan. If this drive did not succeed, it was not my fault; because not

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until the end of September, did the Collectors of Internal Revenue--and not even all of them--send us in the returns showing the financial situation of the Jews. I assure you that my appeal will be followed with enthusiasm, if only the Jews could get a little relief, if each day did not bring them new hardships and if the date of expiration of the Loan would be extended two more months.

I certainly am mourning, Mister Marshal; I assure you that I am mourning because no human suffering is indifferent to me; and so are not the sufferings of all of us Roumanian Jews.

I am not mourning for those who have done themselves so much harm. These people should be punished, but only these people.

I, Mister Marshal, have remained and will remain faithful to my given word. I gave you unceasing proof of Jewish loyalty, by means of memoranda or through Major Marin. Your Excellency has repeatedly recognized this loyalty.

Yet, the most convincing proof is that since your advent to power, not one Jew of the whole of Roumania has been found guilty of working against the regime; that since the beginning of the war the Jewish populace maintained the same loyalty toward the German army and toward our army, and before all, my written request--two days after mobilization, to the effect that Jews should be re-inducted into the army, that they might follow their predecessors of the War of Independence, of the Balkanic War and of the War of union, and that they might give their lives, side by side with the Roumanian soldier, for the triumph of the Roumanian cause, for a great and powerful Roumania.

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I hope, Mister Marshal, that these lines will definitely enlighten you and that pursuant to my request of the 19th instant, concerning the acceleration of the statute of the Jews, about which I spoke with the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, you will be kind enough to grant me an audience as without an immediate stoppage of the avalanche of laws and decrees, the latter will no more be able to work, being completely ruined, which would upset the whole economic structure of the country.

In the meantime, I beg of you to believe that Doctor Felderman remains the same loyal and moderate man, and that he did not and will never do anything that might render more difficult the situation of the country in these painful and hard time, and that he is at the orders of Your Excellency with all his energy and all his affection for this country.

Accept, Mister Marshal, the assurance of my deep respect.

(Dr. W. Filderman)

*Exact spelling on material which this was copied from.

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Mister Marshal:

The letter of Your Excellency of October 19th, predated the evening of October 21st, was answered by me on October 25th; but as my reply did not reach you and as I cannot bear the idea that you could believe me capable of a lack of tact vis-a-vis the leader whom destiny entrusted with the fate of the State, and that I refused to answer the questions of Your Excellency, I have the honor to inform you of the following:

1. Roumanian Jews have disavowed through me the facts mentioned by Your Excellency, declaring among others that "with all we are and with all we have, we are ready for any sacrifice in order to fulfill our duty toward the Throne and the Country" (Enclosure No. 1): asking all the Jews to embrace with fraternal affection the Roumanian refugees from the provinces temporarily yielded. (Enclosure No. 2): disapproving severely the crimes related by the press, committed by a few Jews at the time of the retreat of our troops, and declaring that not only did they not approve them but that they qualified them "facts of savage madness" (Encl. No. 3) and requesting you the second day after the mobilization, to re-induct us into the army so that we might be able to take part in the reconquering of Roumanian territories for whose conquest our fathers, brothers, children, and we had fought. Public declarations in the same sense were made by Spanish Jews as well as by different Jewish general and local institutions.

2. I formulated my petition enclosed in my letters of October 9th and 11th, under a double reserve:

(a) "If the Jews in behalf of whom I pleaded, were not guilty of anything," and

(b) "If it was possible."

Thus, I still acted this time within the border of patriotism and of honor,

as I have not excused any fault, whatever would have been at stake. Moreover, I stated clearly that I tried to intervene even in favor of the innocent only under the condition that "It was possible," that is to say that it was not contrary to the interest of the State.

Besides, His Excellency, the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, when receiving me on October 14th, gave a favorable reply to my request and ordered the selection of the deportees--an order for which I thanked him in writing; it only remained then to reach a decision concerning those who had been deported prior to their selection.

3. My attitude on that occasion was not inspired by circumstances. Indeed, since I took in hand the direction of Jewish affairs, I declared repeatedly that I did not want to defend the Jews neither beyond nor against the interests of the State and of the Roumanian people.

Thus can be explained, I think, the fact that I had the supreme honor to be received by the Kings, by the Regents and by all the Governments of the country for more than twenty-five years.

Permit me to remind you of the two searches made in my house on January 3rd and 5th, 1941, upon orders of the "Siguranta" and of the Legionary Police who went through all my files without finding the slightest indication of any activity against the country or the regime.

Thus can also be explained the fact that while Jews of other countries decided to boycott German goods--to fight National-Socialism--I presented myself at the office of the office of the German envoy at Bucarest and declared to him that as long as a commercial agreement would exist between Roumania and German, we would not support the boycott,--a declaration broadcast by all the German posts--and when Your Excellency concluded a treaty of alliance with

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Germany, we renewed our pledge of absolute loyalty.

Besides, I turned over to you personally and also through Major Marin the memoranda and statistics which proved the absolute loyalty of the Roumanian Jews and my own loyalty.

4. In spite of this, Mister Marshal, and in view of the fact that the press is attacking me and demands my elimination from the bar, I decided to retire voluntarily, having the impression that I lost Your Excellency's confidence that I had been honored with for a year, and although on October 14th, the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers also expressed his confidence in me.

On October 28, I was even summoned in audience by the Minister of Finance who was kind enough to extend for one month the expiration date of the subscription by Jews to the Loan, so that I withheld my resignation lest the latter should be interpreted as an act against the Government.

The decision remains with Your Excellency.

In the meantime, kindly believe that Dr. Filderman remains the same loyal patriot he has always been, and that he will not undertake anything that could be detrimental to the country's interests. On the contrary, he is, as he has been for more than a year, at the disposal of Your Excellency with all his energy, his affection for the country and all the veneration and respect for Your Excellency.

Dr. W. Filderman

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November 3, 1941

Enclosure No. 1

"CURIERUL ISRAELIT" No. 22
of JULY 10, 1940

In these stormy times of trial, which weigh so heavily upon our dear Fatherland, the Roumanian Jews express their homage to the Throne and wish to proclaim their firm solidarity with the destinies of the Roumanian people. They share the fate of the country, and their sufferings and hopes are Roumanian sufferings and Roumanian hopes.

The Jews of the Old Kingdom--Jews of Roumanian land--born and brought up for generations in Roumania, are and remain attached with all the affection of their heart to the soil of Roumania, soil of abundance, fertilized by the blood of their noblest sons, fallen in the War of Independence of 1877, in the war of 1913 and in the War of Reunion of 1916-1918. Their ideals were always intermingled with those of all the Roumanians and whatever would happen and whatever they would suffer, they were and they are eternally unified with the Roumanian people, and they convey their destiny as being indissolubly attached to this earth.

And the Jews of the annexed territories have, too, proved their attachment to the Fatherland, fulfilling with an entire devotion their debts and obligations of Roumanian citizens.

At the appeal of the Fatherland, all their sons responded with the same patriotic enthusiasm inspired by the same consciousness of their civic duties and the same sentiment of Roumanian national solidarity. With everything they are and with everything they have, the Roumanian Jews are ready for every sacrifice in order to fulfill their obligations toward the Throne and the Country.

We recall the blessed memory of generations who repose in the holy ground of the Fatherland and we kneel down humbly at the tombs of the heroes.

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With their unshakable resolution and their will, as hard as steel, the Roumanian Jews feel themselves united with the Roumanian people, in their national solidarity and discipline, in their profound patriotic faith and devotion toward the King and the Country.

Long Live His Majesty!

Long Live His Royal Highness, the Great Voived Mihai!

Long Live Roumania!

The Federation of Unions of
Jewish Communities

The Federation of Unions of
Jewish Communities

The President: Dr. W. Filderman

The Chief Rabbi: Senator:
Dr. Al. Safran

The Secretary General: Dr. I. Brucar

700353

November 3, 1941

Enclosure No. 2

CURIERUL ISRAELIT NO. 22

of JULY 10, 1940

A circular of the Union of Jewish Communities

The Union of Jewish Communities of the Old Kingdom forwarded the following circular to all the (Jewish) communities:

Mister President:

The Jewish population of our dear Fatherland, deeply afflicted, shares the mourning of the country.

In the Friday-evening and Saturday-morning sermons of July 5th and 6th of the present year, the Rabbi of your community will emphasize the mourning of the Roumanian Jews which merges with that of the Roumanian people.

You will particularly address an ardent appeal to the faithful in favor of their contribution with all their means to the help of refugees from Besarabia and North Bucovina.

Sincerely

The President: Dr. W. Filderman

The Chief Rabbi: Dr. Al. Safran

The Secretary General:

Dr. I. Brucar.

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November 3, 1941

Enclosure No. 3

CURIERUL ISRAELIT NO. 22
of JULY 10, 1940

Whatever will be told, whatever we will have to suffer, we still remain united in deep affliction with our country in its mourning, in these times of changing laws and changing beliefs.

We know only by hearsay the villainous acts which some residents of Besarabia and North Bucovina are said to have committed on the occasion of the evacuation of these provinces of the Roumanian troops,--among which residents, were also a few Jews. We do not know to what extent rumors referring to these acts are true or to what extent Jews of Besarabia have taken part in the reprehensible acts which have been committed there. But whatever the truth may be, what guilt do we have in these crimes of mad savagery, committed by people born and brought up under another regime, who had no time to attach themselves in their heart to the people and to the country? We cannot have any solidarity with those facts which have nothing in common with our faith or our historical traditions, in any place and at any time of our destiny.

For one hundred and twenty years we have been refugees, attached to the Roumanian people and the Roumanian country, and we remained the same in 1821 as in 1848, in 1877 as in 1913 and 1916-1918.

All these are facts that speak the truth about our devotion and our gratitude, facts that cannot be erased from one day to the other. They are deeply penetrated in our souls. And whatever might happen, we shall be animated by the same sentiments that are so deeply imprinted upon our conscience, as the result of our unshakable faith in our country.

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Translated from Roumanian.

Bucarest, November 11, 1941

Roumania
Escutcheon of Romania
Office of the Prime
Minister.

No. 16343 c.c.

Mr. Filderman:

Marshall Antonescu entrusted me with transmitting the following answer to your petition of November 3, of this year:

"I am surprised at the way in which you endeavor to prove that in the year of 1940 the Romanian people were close to your heart during the tragic events with which they were overwhelmed.

In fact, the arguments which you are presenting in the enclosure of your petition, are nothing else but a clever display of the "sacrifices" made by Jews for "their Romanian fatherland", from the War of Independence to 1940, as though Romania had been founded and built up thanks to Jewish gallantry and Jewish blood lavishly shed in the course of times on our battlefields. (Enclosure 1.)

In the circular of the Union of Jewish Communities (Enclosure 2) you do not beg of all the Jews, as you claim in your petition, "to embrace with fraternal love the Romanian refugees coming from the provinces temporarily turned into battlefields", but you ask them to "contribute with all their means to the aid of the refugees coming from Besarabia and from North Bucovina"; as this appeal has been addressed by your Rabbis in their Friday night and Saturday-morning preachings, it means that it was only a question of contribution for the help of the Jewish refugees, since it is usual to collect contributions through the synagogue. Your interpretation was therefore misleading.

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Likewise, the truncated reproduction of an article published by the "Curierul Israelit" (No. 22 of July 10, 1940) was nothing but a vague disapproval of the abject misdeeds of the Jews of Besarabia and North-Bucovina, since, Mr. Filderman, it has been established that it was the Jews who had committed those ignoble horrors.

In enclosure No. 3, it is said, "The facts were perpetrated by inhabitants of the evacuated provinces, among whom there were also Jews. We do not know, to what degree the rumors are true, nor to what degree Jews of Besarabia participated in the reprehensible acts that were committed there. But whatever may be the truth, whatever guilt we may have in those acts of savage madness, perpetrated by people born and brought up under another regime who did not have time to be united in their soul with the people and the country, etc."

Thus, your disapproval was much more a whitewashing and a justification of the crimes of the Jews of Besarabia, since first you expressed doubt about the fact that those crimes had been actually committed by Jews, and, at the same time, you tried to vindicate them in the same way by saying that they had been committed by men born and brought up under another regime, etc.

Consequently, we too were aware of that and precisely for this reason, we felt the impulse to defend ourselves and so the measures of deportation to ghettos of those Jews "born and brought up under another regime, etc." are justified.

Moreover, in that same enclosure you do not forget to display "the sacrifices" made by Jews for Romania, going back as far as 1821.....

This is ridiculous, Mr. Filderman! You see to what has been reduced your "approval" and "disapproval". And it is useless to employ toward

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Marshall Antonescu this cleverness of a lawyer, which is specifically Jewish.

Marshall Antonescu has said his word.

All the Jews will have to leave who came to Romania after 1914 and all those of the liberated provinces, without exception.

The Jews of the Old Kingdom will be allowed to remain, who resided there before 1914, provided they comply with the laws of our country. But among them, all those will also have to leave who are communists or those who will make subversive propaganda or associate themselves with the enemies of our country and all those who will try to sabotage in one way or another the interests of the Romanian State and the Roumanian People.

Now, we have to come to defend our Romanian rights and our country, since our hitherto too indulgent hospitality, of which the Jews particularly took advantage, facilitated the substitution of foreigners, especially Jews, for Romanians in those rights. In spite of this substitution, they did not show any gratefulness, on the contrary many of them repaid our kindness and hospitality with hatred and hostility.

We are determined to stop this situation. We cannot jeopardize the existence of our people, which has hammered out its history and sealed its rights on this soil with a lavishness of sacrifice and of blood in heavy fighting against all kinds of invaders -- We cannot jeopardize our rights for the sake of a few hundred thousand Jews or to save the principle of a humanitarian democracy, wrongly understood and repaid with hatred, crimes and hostility.

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On this Romanian soil Romanians are and will remain the masters, because this must be. The others might be tolerated if they do not try to steal our rights, if they submit without a murmur to the laws of our country and do not stand in the way of our national aspirations.

You and your Jews must understand this, Mr. Filderman, and those who will not understand it, will have to leave."

Seal of the
Prime Minister's
Office.

The Secretary General
Ovidiu Al. Vladescu
(Signed) Vladescu

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FEB 22 1944

Dear Mr. Rosman:

I have your letter of February 17, 1944, concerning the desire of Mr. Charles Sonnenreich to discuss the situation of the Roumanian Jews in Transnistria and Roumania.

We will be very glad to discuss this matter with Mr. Sonnenreich and suggest that, when he is in Washington, he call my office for an appointment with me or one of my staff.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Sol Rosman,
Executive Secretary,
The United Roumanian Jews
of America,
110 West 40th Street,
New York 18, N. Y.

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The United Roumanian Jews of America

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NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

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"To further, defend and protect the interests of the Jews in Roumania, to work for their civic and political emancipation and for their economic reconstruction and rehabilitation; and to represent and further the interests of the Roumanian Jews in the United States."

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NATHAN LAX, DETROIT, MICH.

February 17, 1944

Mr. John W. Fehle, Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Fehle:

Mr. Charles Sonnenreich, president of the United Roumanian Jews of America would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you the situation of the Roumanian Jews in Transnistria and in Roumania.

Mr. Sonnenreich can arrange to be in Washington any day of next week convenient to you following Tuesday, February 22.

Sincerely yours,

Sol Rosman
Sol Rosman
Executive Secretary

SR:RA

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