

Programs with Respect to Rescue of Refugees
Relief Projects (Relief to Greek and Jewish
Refugees on Island of Mauritius)

000300

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

PEM

PLAIN

*War Ref. Bd.
(O'Leary)*

April 28, 1945

EMBASSY

PARIS

1750, Twenty-eighth

Please deliver the following message to Joseph Schwartz from M. A. Leavitt of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee through War Refugee Board:

UJOTE Approve tentative grant fivethousand pounds sterling for clothing Mauritius internees pending advice participation South African Egyptian communities which understand will cover major portion costs. UJNOTE

CONTROL COPY

APR 28 1945
DC/L
LIAISON OFFICE

GREW
(Acting)
(GHW)

WRB:KLV:BM
4/28/45

000300

CABLE TO AMERICAN EMBASSY, PARIS, FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Please deliver the following message to Joseph Schwartz from

M. A. Leavitt of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee:

QUOTE APPROVE TENTATIVE GRANT FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS STERLING
FOR CLOTHING MAURITIUS INTERNEES PENDING ADVICE PARTICIPA-
TION SOUTH AFRICAN EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES WHICH UNDERSTAND WILL
COVER MAJOR PORTION COSTS. UNQUOTE

copy sent to Joe 4/26/45

10:20 a.m.
April 26, 1945

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y), Conn, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel, Hutchison, McCormack,
O'Dw/er, Files.

RAH RBH: 4/25/45

7 0 0 3 0

2. Cable to Joseph Schwartz, Paris:

APPROVE TENTATIVE GRANT FIVETHOUSAND POUNDS STERLING FOR CLOTHING MAURITIANS
INTERNEES PENDING ADVICE PARTICIPATION SOUTHAFRICAN EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES
WHICH UNDERSTAND WILL COVER MAJOR PORTION COSTS

M A LEAVITT
J D C

000300

87
April 14, 1945

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Joseph Schwartz was received through the United States Legation in Cairo under date of April 10, 1945:

"Persons now interned Mauritius expected depart for Palestine near future. Palestine Government providing transportation. Governor Mauritius has informed High Commissioner Palestine that about 850 people including 320 men 400 women 73 children and 54 infants will need clothing urgently. He has suggested that upon their arrival in Port Said it be distributed to them. Minimum amount required for this purpose 4 to 5 thousand pounds sterling which we are guaranteeing HMT requesting South Africa and Egyptian communities share which may lessen our participation substantially. Passman continuing with plans and will keep you informed. Fully."

Very truly yours,

((Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

Mr. M. A. Leavitt, Secretary,
American Jewish Joint Distribution
Committee,
270 Madison Avenue,
New York 16, New York.

RBA
RBHutchison: 4/14/45

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM
DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

MB-442

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (RESTRICTED)

1945 APR 12 AM 9000ro

Dated April 10, 1945

Rec'd 11:57 a.m., 11th

DC/L
LIAISON

*Marked
O. Sawyer*

Secretary of State,
Washington.

CONTROL COPY

871, April 10, 12 a.m.

FOR MOSES LEVITT JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
FROM JOSEPH SCHWARTZ

Group now interned Mauritius expected leave for
Palestine within near future. Transportation being
provided by Palestine Government. Governor Mauritius
has advised High Commissioner Palestine that approximately
850 persons including 320 men 400 women 73 children
and 54 infants will require clothing urgently and has
suggested that it be distributed to them upon their
arrival Port Said. Amount required this purpose minimum
4 to 5 thousand pounds sterling which we guaranteeing
BMT asking South Africa and Egyptian communities share
which may reduce our participation substantially. Passman
proceeding with arrangements and will keep you fully
advised.

TUCK

EDA

100300

Refugees Reach Haifa After 5-Year Delay

By the Associated Press.

HAIFA, Aug. 27.—A group of 1,300 Jewish refugees, who were aboard the steamer Patria when it exploded mysteriously in Haifa Harbor in 1940, finally landed here yesterday after almost five years of internment on the British island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean.

Fleeing from Nazi persecution in Central European countries, the refugees were refused permission to land in Palestine because they had no passports.

The explosion, which occurred November 26, 1940, while the refugees were awaiting transportation to Mauritius, 530 miles east of Madagascar, resulted in at least 55 known deaths and 190 missing.

The Washington Post
MAR 2 1945

Mauritius Jews Going to Palestine

The British Embassy issued the following statement yesterday:
In answer to questions in the House of Commons on February 21, the Colonial Secretary, Col. Oliver Stanley, announced that it had been decided to admit to Palestine the Jewish refugees at present located in Mauritius. Colonel Stanley said that this would be done as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made. He could, however, give no exact date, as there were formidable transportation difficulties and some delay would be inevitable.

380

COPY:

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Post Office Box 1541, Durban, South Africa.
March 8, 1944.

Colonial Secretary,
The Secretariat,
Port Louis, Mauritius.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that I have been asked to ascertain the number of refugees now on the Island of Mauritius, and I would therefore greatly appreciate it if you would tell me how many there are and whence they came and what percentage of them are Jewish.

Anything that you may add in regard to the general conditions prevailing in the refugee camps will be appreciated. Has there been any unusual prevalence of disease or malnutrition? And if there are any special needs which we could relieve I should be very glad to have your report, as there are various organizations in the United States that might be able and willing to assist you in supplying such needs.

Thanking you in advance for whatever information you may see fit to give me, I am,

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) E. TALBOT SMITH

E. Talbot Smith
American Consul

000312

COPY:

THE SECRETARIAT,

PORT LOUIS.

24th April, 1944.

1185/43/K

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 380 of the 8th March, 1944, and to forward herewith a printed copy of the latest report of the Area Commandant, Jewish Detainment Camp, which contains the information asked for about the Jewish refugees detained in Mauritius. *- not sent*

2. I am to express this Government's appreciation of the offer of assistance made in your letter and to inform you that as the detainees are well cared for it is not proposed at present to take advantage of your offer.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

?

Colonial Secretary

The American Consul,
American Consulate,
P.O. Box 1541, Durban,
South Africa.

000311

MEMORANDUM TO SECRETARY HULL

Since the creation of the War Refugee Board, there has been called to our attention upon numerous occasions, that widespread suffering exists among refugees, mainly Jewish, on the Island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. In the past two weeks we have received two reports on the subject. The first consisted of Despatch No. 14311 of March 7, 1944, from the Embassy at London, enclosing a letter covering a memorandum from Sir Herbert Emerson, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., C.B.E., Director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, as well as a copy of a record of Parliamentary Debates in the House of Commons on February 23, 1944. The second report was contained in telegram No. 9, of March 20, from the State Department representative at Durban. Taken together, these reports indicate a situation in which there is widespread suffering which we may be in a position to alleviate.

As I understand it, in late 1940, 1659 Jewish refugees attempted illegally to enter Palestine. They did not possess a quota or a certificate, and shortly after November 25, 1940, the British authorities at Palestine deported them to the Island of Mauritius, where they have been interned for more than three years. At the present time I believe there are in the neighborhood of 1400 to 1500 of them.

The report of their condition, based upon an investigation initiated by a foreign service officer at Durban at our request, indicates that these refugees are held in a detention camp at Beaubassin. About 600 of them are from Czechoslovakia, and the balance from Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia and Hungary.

It was reported that malnutrition is general, since Mauritius is unable to meet demands of these refugees. There are a number of expectant mothers suffering from lack of vitamins. Children are in very poor health and there is considerable eye trouble which is the result of lack of nourishment. Malaria and

March 22, 1944

: Mr J. B. Friedman

: Joseph H. Murphy

Re: Refugees on Mauritius

In view of the rather sad condition of the some 1500 Jewish refugees in detention camps at Beaubasin, Mauritius, evidenced by No. 9 of March 20, 1944, from Durban, it seems to me we should raise the matter with UNRRA. It would appear to be the most likely agency to handle this problem, which seems purely one of relief at this time.

I have attached a proposed memorandum to Governor Lehman, a copy of which might be sent to the British for their information.

J.H.M.
J.H. Murphy:dh 3/22/44

000316

CONTROL COPY

2 War Refugee Adm. Office

GAR-14

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (BR)

Durban

Dated March 20, 1944

Rec'd 1 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

9, March 20, noon

With reference to your No. 8, March 6, 6 p.m., according to information obtained from Jewish board of deputies there are 1500 Jewish refugees in detention camp at Beau basin, Mauritius. 600 from Czechoslovakia rest from Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia and Hungary. Malnutrition is general as Mauritius is unable to meet demands. 50 expectant mothers suffer from lack of vitamins. Children in poor health and considerable eye trouble because of malnutrition. Some malaria and heart disease. Refugees from cold climate affected by tropical conditions.

Refugees not allowed to leave camp. Daily rations might be supplemented by purchases from Chinese shop but prices high and allowance of four shillings and six pence per month (repeat per month) limits purchases.

Requirements dried milk dehydrated vegetables and fruit and medicines for malaria and heart ailments. Clothes badly needed.

WSB

SMITH

000311

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 14311

Subject: Refugees in Mauritius.

AMERICAN EMBASSY
London, March 7, 1944.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

1/ In the enclosed letter and memorandum submitted to
2/ the Department at the request of the Director of the
Intergovernmental Committee on refugees, the Director
suggests that the detention of refugees in Mauritius is
a subject which the War Refugee Board may wish to examine.

3/ The subject of refugees in Mauritius attracted atten-
tion in the House of Commons on February 23. A copy of the
pertinent record is enclosed.

Respectfully yours,
For the Ambassador:

W. J. Gallman
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosures:

- 1/ Copy of letter of March 4, 1944
from H. W. Emerson, Director of
the Intergovernmental Committee on
refugees to Bucknell.
- 2/ Copy of Memorandum by H. W. Emerson
regarding refugees who wish to
emigrate to the United States.
- 3/ Copy of record of Parliamentary
Debates, House of Commons, February 23,
1944, Col. 819-820.

CG/PB

840.48 REFUGES/5353

PS/LO

cc: Chauncey, Akrahannon, Akin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedaan,
Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, McCormack, Paul,
Pollak, Rains, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Pehle, Files

Document No. 17 to ...
No. 14314 of March 7, 1942
From the Embassy at London,
England.

SOURCE:

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,
House of Commons,
25 February 1942.
London, Cols. 819-820

MAURITIUS (JERVIS REPORTS)

Mr. Martin asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies how many German refugees are now interned on the island of Mauritius; of what nationalities are they; how many are known to be sympathetic to the Allied cause; and how many have professional or technical qualifications of recognised standing.

Mr. Emyss-Evans: There are some 1,400 German refugees in Mauritius. They include Austrians, Czechs, Poles, Danes and Germans. I have no reason to believe that they are other than sympathetic to the Allied cause. I have no data on the last part of the question.

Mr. Martin: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that some of these people have excellent technical qualifications and that the Allied cause should make some use of them, instead of keeping them in internment, doing nothing year after year?

Mr. Emyss-Evans: A certain number have already been released and are in the service of the Allies.

Mr. Astor: Are these refugees doing nothing, or are they engaged in some useful occupation to help the Allied cause?

Mr. Emyss-Evans: I have said that a certain number have already joined the Allied Forces.

Mr. Silverman: Is it not the case that those who have not been released, those who are still in camp - which is the greater number - are compelled by the Government to spend days in idleness when they are capable of doing useful work and are anxious to do it?

Mr. Tawys-Evans: I should want notice of that question.

Mr. McGovern: Are these Jewish refugees being indoctrinated at the same time as they are asked to do something useful for the Allies (correct)?

CONTROL COPY

TELEGRAM SENT

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (ER)

2 War Refugee
Bel FLAIM
March 6, 1944

6 p.m. *Fido*

To:

AMERICAN CONSUL,
DURBAN, (NATAL, UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF

MAR 7 1944

COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

The War Refugee Board has received several reports of the existence of suffering and disease among refugees on the Island of Mauritius. There appear to be two groups of such refugees on the Island. There are about 1500, probably Czech refugees, who attempted to enter Palestine and were deported to Mauritius. There are also approximately 1000 Greek refugees. It is with respect to the first group that we have received the most unfavorable reports as to living and health conditions.

It would be appreciated if you would institute a check of this matter indicating the total number of refugees on the Island of Mauritius, what percentage of them are Jewish, and the general living conditions of these refugees with particular emphasis upon the prevalence of disease and malnutrition. You might also indicate what is needed by way of relief.

STETTINIUS
Acting
(GLW)

WRB/GLW/EEH

BC

MAR 2 1944

To : Mr. George L. Warren
From: J. W. Fehle

I should appreciate it if the attached cable were transmitted as soon as possible. I think it is self-explanatory.

I am not entirely sure that it is addressed to the proper person but I understand that we have no diplomatic representatives on the Island of Mauritius, nor does it fall within one of our Consular districts. I am informed our nearest representative is at Nairobi, Kenya, East Africa.

(Signed) J. W. Fehle

J.W.F.
J.W. Fehle
JHMurphy: dh 2/26/44

From: T. W. Laffie
to: Mr. George T. Nelson

W46

FROM DEPARTMENT TO AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL, NAIROBI, KENYA, EAST AFRICA

The War Refugee Board has received several reports of the existence of suffering and disease among refugees on the Island of Mauritius. There appear to be two groups of such refugees on the Island. There are about 1500, probably Czech refugees, who attempted to enter Palestine and were deported to Mauritius. There are also approximately 1000 Greek refugees. It is with respect to the first group that we have received the most unfavorable reports as to living and health conditions.

It would be appreciated if you would institute a check of this matter indicating the total number of refugees on the Island of Mauritius, what percentage of them are Jewish, and the general living conditions of these refugees with particular emphasis upon the prevalence of disease and malnutrition. You might also indicate what is needed by way of relief.

JHE:bbk - 2/25/44 *JHE* *bbk* *JHE*

1032

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date
February 26, 1944

TO : Mr. Friedman
FROM: J. H. Murphy
Re : Jewish Refugees on the
Island of Mauritius

In late 1940, 1659 Jewish refugees attempted illegally to enter Palestine. They did not possess a quota or a certificate. Shortly after 25 November 1940 British authorities at Palestine deported them to the Island of Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean, where they have been ever since.

This deportation aroused considerable criticism in Palestine which gave rise to a protest strike, as well as arousing condemnation in the United States and Great Britain. This was particularly wide spread because on 25 November 1940, a group of 1771 refugees who had illegally entered Palestine were assembled on board the ship "Patria" preparatory to being deported to the Island of Mauritius. This ship exploded in Haifa Harbor, most of the passengers being rescued, but 241 missing. The explosion was reported to have been caused by extreme nationalists who protested the policy of deporting Jews from their homeland (American Jewish Year Book, Volume 43, 1941-42, page 284)

In the following year distressing reports concerning the plight of these refugees were received. On September 18, 1941, it was reported that typhoid and malaria were very prevalent and on January 21, 1942, it was officially stated in the House of Commons that 521 of these refugees had died of contagious diseases. (American Jewish Year Book, Volume 44, 1942-43, page 298). However, it was also said that the refugee group had shown considerable initiative, constructing a workshop, etc., and that a number of them had returned to Palestine as volunteers in the Free Czech Army. (IDEM; American Jewish Year Book, Volume 44, 1942-43, page 278)

By 1944 it was reported that there are about 1500 of this group of Jewish Refugees left on the Island of Mauritius, plus approximately 1,000 Jewish refugees from Greece. (American Jewish

Year Book, Volume 45, 1943-44, pp. 357-358, and p. 221) The accounts of suffering and disease among the refugees on Mauritius may also apply to this group of Greek refugees as well as the refugees, probably Czech, who had been deported from Palestine. However, the sources examined seemed to confine themselves to the suffering of the deported group. The most recent report was contained in the item of the J.T.A. NEWS, of January 23, 1944, based upon a release of the American Zionist Emergency Council. This release pointed out that approximately 70% of the refugees were suffering from malaria or malnutrition. The men were reported as living in a prison while the women and children occupied barracks, family life having been abandoned.

Be that as it may however, the American Chapter of the Religious Emergency Council, writing to the War Refugee Board on 31 January 1944, on behalf of the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain asked us to rescue Jewish scholars and rabbis from Europe, pointing out that it had obtained 20 visas for them to go to the Island of Mauritius. Apparently the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain has some contact with internee problems on Mauritius. (Chief Rabbi's Religious Emergency Council Report of Activities for year ending December 31, 1942) What seems particularly to embitter Jewish circles and consequently to focus attention upon the plight of the deported refugees is the fact that such persons were once in Palestine, albeit illegally, and then were deported to Mauritius. (See undated and unsigned memorandum entitled "Memorandum--About the Immigration of Alien Jews from Italy" in WRB files.)

It occurs to me that the most feasible method of approach is to endeavor to get some reliable information about refugees and their surroundings on the Island of Mauritius. The living conditions upon the Island may not be the same for all refugees, and the deported refugees may be subject to more severe treatment than the Greek refugees. It may be possible that living conditions could be improved.

Accordingly I am attaching a proposed cable to the consular agent nearest the Island of Mauritius, since we have no representative nor is it in any consular district. I understand that it can be covered in this fashion, however.

Joseph H. Murphy

00032

FEB 21 1944

Dear Mr. Schonfeld:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of January 31, 1944, concerning the rescue of certain Jewish scholars and Rabbis from enemy-occupied territory.

I am sure you will understand that the task of the War Refugee Board is so great that, of necessity, it cannot deal with problems limited to seeking out and rescuing specific individuals. We shall, of course, do everything in our power to rescue and save the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death.

Your offer to be of assistance to the Board is appreciated.

Very truly yours,

(signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Moses Schonfeld,
Hon. Secretary,
American Chapter Religious
Emergency Council,
55 Leonard Street,
New York, N. Y.

*Original signed
by Mr. Pehle*

26

FHodel:hd 2/19/44

7 10 13 2 1

AMERICAN CHAPTER RELIGIOUS EMERGENCY COUNCIL
OF THE CHIEF RABBI OF GREAT BRITAIN

Registered with President's War Relief Control Board No. 111
55 LEONARD STREET - - - NEW YORK, N. Y.
Telephone: WORTH 4-8818

FILING AUTHORITY
TO: *Mail & Files*
ANS.
REV. AN. R.C.
INITIAL
DATE *2/21/44*

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MRS. ALEXANDER LAMFORT

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President, Beth David Hospital *ona*

THE VERY REV. DR. J. H. HERTZ,
Chief Rabbi of the British Empire

U. S. JUDGE, HON. JULIAN W. MACK,
Vice President, Zionist Organization
of America

DR. ALEXANDER MARK,
Professor, Jewish Theological
Seminary of America

HARRY W. GOLDING,
President, Rabbi Jacob Joseph School

DR. DAVID DE SOLA POOL,
Chairman, Committee on Religious
Activities of the Army & Navy Dept.
of the Jewish Welfare Board

ABRAHAM CAHAN,
Editor, The Jewish Daily Forward

RABBI HERBERT S. GOLDSTEIN,
Honorary President, Union of
Orthodox Jewish Congregations
of America

MOSES SCHONFELD,
American Representative, Religious
Emergency Council

DR. STEPHEN S. WISE,
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HARRY SCHNEIDERMAN,
Editor, The American Jewish Year
Book

MAX ZARITSKY,
President, United Hatters, Cap and
Millinery Workers International Union

THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA
NATIONAL COUNCIL, YOUNG ISRAEL
LEON GELMAN,
President, Mizrahi Organisation of
America

ARTHUR I. LEVINE
HARRY W. GOLDING
Joint Treasurers

MOSES SCHONFELD
Hon. Secretary

January 31, 1944

Chairman of War Refugees Board
Washington
D. C.

Dear Sir:

The Religious Emergency Council of The Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, whom we represent in this country, is vitally interested in the rescue of the remnant of European Jewish scholars and Rabbis. The Council in London has obtained visas for a score of these religious leaders to emigrate to the Island of Mauritius.

The possibilities of rescuing additional Rabbis and their families from enemy-occupied territories might not prove as difficult as the attempt to save others not in this ecclesiastical category.

We are therefore bringing this to your attention in the hope that you may be able to aid in this specific task. The Chief Rabbi's Council has at its disposal the names of such persons known to be still alive, and we would gladly arrange to submit such a list to you in order that it be given sympathetic consideration with a view to the U. S. Government permitting their immigration or temporary residence in this country. We are, of course, prepared to offer our own services in any capacity you may see fit to call on us, and send you herewith a copy of the last annual report covering the Council's activities.

Yours truly,

Moses Schonfeld
Hon. Secretary

Read "THE MARK OF THE SWASTIKA"

Entire proceeds go to help continue the urgent war relief work of the Emergency Council.

Telephone—
STAmford Hill 1971.

Registered under the
War Charities Act, 1940.

Chief Rabbi's Religious Emergency Council

Chairman: The Chief Rabbi of the British Empire,
The Very Rev. Dr. J. H. HERTZ, C.H.

Hon. Treasurers:

Relief Funds—
OSCAR PHILIPP, Esq.
JULIUS FELSENSTEIN, Esq.

Reconstruction Funds—
Col. Sir PHILIP CARLEBACH, C.M.G.
Rabbi H. SWIFT.

Needy Clergy & War Victims Fund—
Rabbi H. FERBER.

Executive:

Dayan H. M. LAZARUS, M.A.
Rabbi Dr. S. SCHONFELD, (Exec. Dir.)

Secretary: Mr. HENRY PELS,

86, AMHURST PARK,

LONDON, N.16.

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

For the year ending 31st December, 1942.

The Council has maintained its activities as an agency of the Chief Rabbi in tackling practical problems affecting religious Jewish life, arising in the present emergency.

The work has thus continued to involve representations to many Government Departments and other authorities. These include the Home Office, the Ministries of Health, Food, Agriculture, Labour and National Service, the Board of Education, the War Office, Colonial Office, and Foreign Office; the B.B.C. and the representatives in London of the United Nations, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the Soviet Government.

The Council takes this opportunity of expressing to its Chairman, The Very Reverend, The Chief Rabbi, Dr. J. H. Hertz, its heartiest congratulations upon his 70th Birthday. It wishes both the Anniversary Volume of Studies and the Hertz Forest, commemorating the event, every success. The recent honour conferred upon Dr. Hertz by H.M. the King, is an auspicious event for the entire community. The Chief Rabbi's appointment to the Companionship of Honour is a well-deserved mark of his eminence as leader and scholar.

The activities dealt with fall under the following headings:

- (1) Jews in the Forces and National Service.
- (2) Needy Clergy and War Victims.
- (3) Refugees—
 - (a) Continental Jewry; (b) In Britain.
- (4) Internees.
- (5) Children.
- (6) General religious problems.
- (7) Reconstruction—
 - (a) War-time; (b) Post-war.
- (8) Overseas activities—
 - (a) British Empire and U.S.A.; (b) Palestine;
 - (c) Other countries.
- (9) Finances.

I.
JEWS IN THE FORCES.

The Jewish Servicemen's Kosher Food Service administered by the Council, with the co-operation of the Senior Jewish Chaplain, has been considerably extended during the past year.

The regular fortnightly service to orthodox Jews and Jewesses has become more widely known and is thus able to cover the field of its operation. Civilian food restrictions have made it difficult for families to care adequately for their members in the Forces, and they have, therefore, to rely upon the facilities organised by the Council. The Service now covers Allied (including American), besides the British Forces, both men and women.

The Passover Service, also administered by the Council, provides many thousands serving with the Land and Air Forces, and a smaller number in the Navy, with Matzos, Passover food, Haggadas, etc., during the Festival. Countless letters of appreciation have been received from soldiers, airmen, sailors and Chaplains. The Council has also participated in the provision of books and religious requisites, e.g., Shofaroth, for the Forces.

Besides prayer books, Chumoshim and Machzorim, the Council has assisted in the distribution of Jewish books through the Chief Rabbi's Literature Fund. In all these activities the Council has continued to enjoy the support of both the War Office and the Ministry of Food. In addition, the Council has been able to assist individual servicemen in their various religious problems.

II.
NEEDY CLERGY AND WAR VICTIMS FUND.

In spite of modest beginnings, the Fund has been enabled to carry on its relief work for two years. Regular monthly grants are discreetly made to a considerable number of religious leaders, mainly aged, whose livelihood has been destroyed or impaired by war conditions. Others who accumulated debts during the early part of the war, have been helped with loans, enabling them to put their affairs in order. The heavy expense of this essential charity is borne by the Council alone. The present regulations of the Board of Guardians make it difficult for any Rabbi or Minister to benefit from their charity. The Federation of Synagogues have been unable to assist in our work of alleviating want among the clergy, who cannot be expected to apply for public relief. There has been a fair response to the Chief Rabbi's appeal for the Fund, and the Associations of Chazanim have assisted in the Council's efforts to raise funds, but it is earnestly hoped that the public will realise the moral claim which the Needy Clergy have upon the community.

III.
REFUGEES.

(a) CONTINENTAL JEWRY.

The terrible plight of our brethren in Europe has naturally engaged the attention of the Council. Efforts were and are still being made to organise some succour to the afflicted. The Chief Rabbi, accompanied by the Executive Director of the Council, interviewed the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Cranbourne, in September. Suggestions concerning the rescuing of children and the emigration of certain groups of victims were sympathetically received. Some few visas have already been granted. Negotiations are continuing with Colonel Oliver Stanley, which, it is hoped, will lead to a successful conclusion. Substantial grants have been made to refugees who have been able to escape overseas. Recipients of the Council's assistance are

in Palestine, Mauritius and Spain. The Council has also co-operated in the organisation and administration of the United Jewish Relief Fund through which large sums have been allocated for helping Polish and other refugees in Russia and the neighbouring countries.

The Chief Rabbi and the Executive Director interviewed the Soviet Ambassador, M. Maisky, on the plight of Polish Rabbis and Students who are refugees in Russia. The Ambassador has been able to convey to the Chief Rabbi his Government's decision to grant exit permits for these refugees to proceed to Palestine. A number of families are being helped to establish new homes in Eretz Yisroel in this way.

The Chief Rabbi was with the delegation which interviewed the Foreign Secretary in December. It has fallen to Dr. Hertz, as the Ecclesiastical Head of British Jewry, to lead the communities of the Empire in their protests and prayers on behalf of massacred Jewry.

The Day of Mourning and Fasting on December 13th, observed by the whole of Anglo-Jewry, was a solemn declaration of spiritual and political forcefulness.

(b) IN BRITAIN.

The Council has maintained its responsibilities in respect of refugees guaranteed by the Council or transferred to its care by the Central Committee for Refugees. Maintenance, welfare, housing and employment have all been carried out satisfactorily. In view of the difficulties of finding suitable occupation for the special class of refugees under the Council's care, the placing of a considerable number of Rabbis and teachers in suitable positions is gratifying, both because of their ceasing to be on the maintenance lists, and because of their useful work in various spheres of activity.

985 individual refugees of Polish, Russian, German and Austrian origin were entirely dependent upon the Council. Of these 270 still remain on the maintenance list. Eight welfare and religious centres for refugees in London and the Provinces have been maintained with the financial assistance of the Council. Individual appeals from various sources, asking for general help in pressing cases have been dealt with, employment obtained, hospitality arranged, accommodation provided, etc. In most cases where religious requisites are needed by groups or individuals, they turn to the Chief Rabbi's Religious Emergency Council, and without exception, the demands have been reasonably fulfilled. The O.S.E. Kosher canteen for refugees in North London has been supported by the Council, which also takes a share in the management.

IV.
INTERNEES.

The Executive Director continues to represent the Chief Rabbi on the Joint Committee on the Welfare of Internees and Prisoners of War. A number of problems affecting Jewish internees both in the British Isles and Overseas have been successfully dealt with. The release of approximately 40 students in Canada and of a few others in Australia and Jamaica was sponsored by the Council. The Council has also obtained the consent of the Home Office for the return to England and ultimate release of a large number of refugees under the care of or known to the Council, who were interned in both Dominions. The reduction of numbers in the camps on the Isle of Man made unnecessary the continuance of Dr. Schonfeld's regular visits or the presence of a resident minister. Rev. S. Anekstein resigned from this post in May 1942, after having carried out his difficult duties with remarkable devotion and success for nine months. Periodic visits are now carried out by our representative Rev. M. A. Jaffe, of Manchester.

Rev. A. Untermyan also visited the camps on behalf of the Council. There remain a number of difficult questions and cases, which can be dealt with by such personal contact, and the Council is grateful to the Central Committee for Jewish Refugees for their consent to defray half of the expenses involved in these visits. Our Council has maintained its responsibility for the first Jewish cemetery on the Island, which was consecrated in November 1940. Tombstones are being erected there.

V. CHILDREN.

The Council has maintained its supervision of the refugee children under its care. Those housed in the various hostels established by local committees with the co-operation of the Council, have been satisfactorily looked after. Many of the children who remained with the Jewish Secondary Schools have now started work, and the Council has made every effort to find them suitable occupation and environment. This has involved considerable individual attention and special arrangements. Both in this sphere and in the care of children placed in private homes, the Council has co-operated with the Refugee Children's Movement, and has also assisted the latter body on the re-homing of isolated or otherwise unsuitably placed Jewish children. The Council has co-operated in the establishment, and administration of a number of hostels. The hostels which have, in one way or another, turned to the Council for co-operation, include the following localities: Clapton (girls and boys hostel) Shefford, Ely, Staines, Nottingham, Cardiff, Nelson, Birmingham, Tylers Green, as well as the Bachad groups.

The Council has been active in the formation of the Joint Committee for the Religious Education and Welfare of Refugee children. This Committee has now been established under the authority of the Central Council for Jewish Refugees and is presided over by the Chief Rabbi. All interested bodies are co-operating in this important task, and the Council's representative, Dr. Schonfeld, has joined the Executive and is actively participating in its work. In addition to supporting the canteen at Shefford, the Council has co-operated with the Chief Rabbi's Kasher Canteen Committee, which administers feeding centres throughout the country and lately also in London. Some support has also been given to the educational activities of the Beth Jacob, especially the Kindergartens established under their auspices.

In the general sphere of Jewish Religious Education the Council has continued to assist the Chief Rabbi in all his activities, including distribution of religious literature. The Council has co-operated, also, with the National Council for Jewish Religious Education, which functions under the chairmanship of the Chief Rabbi.

VI. GENERAL RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS.

These have included Sabbath observance, Kashruth, Yeshivoh and Talmud Torahs, etc. The Council is concerned mainly with the administrative side of these matters and has been able to assist individuals and organisations both morally and financially whenever they have been faced with difficulties in these matters.

On the request of the Ministry of Food, the Council undertook the distribution of Lulovim and Esrogim for the whole country. Plans have been made for the maximum of co-ordination combined with the minimum of waste, especially of valuable shipping space. Arrangements for preventing injury to previous importers, both collective and

individual, have also been made. The United Synagogue, the Federation of Synagogues, the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, the Keren Hatorah and the Mizrahi have been invited to nominate representatives on a Commission which should supervise equitable distribution.

VII. RECONSTRUCTION.

(a) WAR-TIME.

The Council has maintained its policy of assisting in the rebuilding of communal life and activity. Evacuation centres have been helped materially and morally, new communities and classes in the suburbs have been assisted to overcome the initial period, and essential religious and ritual institutions have been inaugurated with the aid of the Council.

(b) POST-WAR.

It is obvious that the Chief Rabbinate will have no inconsiderable share in recommendations affecting post-war Jewish reconstruction, both in Great Britain and in Europe. In the former, the question of religious education will be in the forefront. On this matter the Chief Rabbi has recently conferred with the President of the Board of Education, and proposals for improvements in this important sphere are still under consideration. In the latter area the problems will be vast. In the first place, consideration was given to problems which will arise immediately after the conclusion of a victorious Armistice. Continental Jewry has been selected everywhere for much harsher treatment than other populations, and will require special and speedy succour. They have been persecuted as a religious group no less than as a racial entity, and their rehabilitation should take into account the religious factors as well as the social aspects.

The Council has, therefore, established under the direction of the Chief Rabbi, a commission to study the religious problems which will arise. A memorandum was presented to the Chief Rabbi and representations were made to the appropriate official departments.

With its experience in such matters and the personnel of refugee leaders under its care, the Council should be able to contribute in no small measure, towards the solution of post-war Jewish problems on the Continent.

VIII. OVERSEAS ACTIVITIES.

(a) BRITISH EMPIRE AND OVERSEAS.

The Council has continued to maintain its contacts with communities throughout the Dominions and Colonies. Such contacts have been directed not only with a view to obtaining support for the Council's extensive work, but also in order to assist overseas communities in solving some of the religious problems which the present emergency thrusts upon them. Religious guides and teachers have been recommended to isolated overseas communities. The Chief Rabbi's messages and other religious literature have been forwarded to overseas congregations.

Both the American and Canadian Chapters of the Council, the latter formed during the year under review, have carried out important tasks and have co-operated with the central offices in London. Internee problems in Canada and Australia and Mauritius have received the constant attention of the Council and its friends overseas. In both Dominions the Council's representations have met with considerable success. Many communities throughout the Empire have also co-operated generously in the work of the Council.

(b) PALESTINE AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

Refugee Rabbis in Eretz Yisroel have received support and religious and welfare activities there have also been assisted by the Council. Friends and supporters of the Council in South America, Africa and elsewhere have rendered valuable help to the Council in its various activities.

IX.

FINANCES.

The annual budget of the Council remains at approximately £20,000. The refugee work which is eligible for Government grant, covers about one half of the total. The task of raising £10,000 per annum is not a small one. Apart from Joint Appeals with other refugee and relief organisations the various activities of the Council have asked the Communities for special support. The Servicemen's Kosher Food Service and the Needy Clergy Fund have received some response to appeals issued by the Chief Rabbi, Dayan H. M. Lazarus, the Senior Jewish Chaplain to the Forces, Dayan H. M. Gollop and Mr. Oscar Philipp. The Council was also enabled to carry out some essential religious emergency activities through the Jewish War-Fund for Religious Reconstruction, placed at the disposal of the Chief Rabbi by overseas communities. A general appeal for all the charities administered by the Council was issued over the signature of the Rt. Hon. Lord Wedgwood of Barlaston. The response was encouraging.

A Charity Function in support of this Appeal was held at the Stoll Theatre on 8th March and was successful in raising some funds for these activities. In these ways, the Council was able to raise during 1942 the monies required for the year's work. Help in the form of donations and annual subscriptions to meet the needs of the future will be much appreciated.

The Council is registered with the London County Council under the War Charities Act (1940) and audited accounts are available to subscribers.

Excerpts from some of the letters of appreciation for the Council's food arrangements for Jewish Servicemen.

U.S. AND CANADIAN CHAPLAINS:

(1) " . . . Various organisations helped us very much in our tasks. To them, to the Chief Rabbi's Religious Emergency Committee . . . We proffer our thanks. . . "

(2) " Enclosed please find a cheque for ———, a gift from the Jewish Welfare Board of America to your committee as a token of its appreciation and the appreciation of the Jews of America for the very fine work which your committee is doing. We are particularly grateful for the splendid co-operation you have rendered in sending a certain number of individual Passover parcels to American Jewish soldiers. With my own personal thanks. . . "—Chaplain.

FIGHTING FRANCE:

(3) " . . . I would like to express all my gratitude to the various organisations who helped me in these circumstances and particularly to the Chief Rabbi's Emergency Committee. . . "

POLISH JEWISH FORCES:

(4) " . . . The food, cooked and prepared, had been sent specially from London; the entire expenses were defrayed by the grants from the Polish Government and from the Chief Rabbi's Emergency Fund. The first Seder, at which some 600 men were present. . . "—Glasgow Jewish Echo, April 30, 1943.

CHAPLAINS:

(5) " . . . I do want to thank you and your Council most sincerely for all you did for the troops over Pesach. The food problem is not getting any easier, yet you were able to give us everything for which we asked. Everything came in good order and in good time, and Jewish Service personnel who could not go on leave were enabled to keep the Festival, as far as possible, even under Service conditions. . . . The Council is doing a wonderful piece of work, and I feel that this year more praise than ever is due to your efforts. . . "—J.W.

(6) " I have received many expressions of thanks and appreciation for the very efficient way in which your Council were able to help orthodox Jewish personnel in H.M. Forces in the celebration of the recent Passover Festival. I would like to add my own personal thanks for your ready help and co-operation in this and other matters affecting the religious and spiritual welfare of our fellow co-religionists, which collaboration is deeply appreciated."—B.J.

CAPTAIN OF THE ———:

(7) " May I take this opportunity of thanking you on behalf of the Jewish personnel of this Company for the gifts and very kind help which enabled the men to have a very nice Passover."—S.M.

CONGREGATIONS:

(8) " Many thanks for kindly letting me have the mazzoth for the soldiers stationed in around ———."—P.S.

(9) " You will be glad to know that our Canteen was a great success. . . . The majority consisted of members of H.M. Forces. There was also a good number of Americans and of Czech airmen. . . . May I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to you and your Committee for your great support which you have given us and I wish to assure you that I shall always be happy to co-operate with you whenever the occasion should arise. . . "—H.K.

(10) " I wish to thank you for making it possible for us to accommodate all the troops who were sent to ———. We are very pleased to say that our efforts were highly appreciated by the men concerned. . . . Thanking you once again for your most welcome co-operation. . . "—J.L.

" PESACH " IN THE UNITS:

(11) " . . . Now on behalf of my Company . . . I have the pleasure to express the best thanks for everything what you have done . . . We all appreciate your good work which enabled us to keep Passover despite being in the Army. It was anyhow a great relief for me when Passover was over, a lot of work and responsibility. Everybody was satisfied, not one complaint was noted. . . "—S.S.

(12) " . . . I should like to express to you and all those who assist you so wholeheartedly, our sincere thanks. I don't think there is any need for me to say that without your very kind help all our efforts to hold Pesach . . . would have failed entirely. No praise could be high enough to put into words the greatness of the work. . . . You will, no doubt, be glad to know that everything arrived in time and in good condition. . . "—S.C.

(13) " . . . I liked to tell you, that thanks to your help we had a most marvellous Seder and everything was perfect. We had a lot of extra guests though and still have them for the whole of the 8 days. Mostly men from the R.A.F. . . "—S.G.

U.S. ARMY:

(14) " . . . I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the Passover parcel which I have received. Several of the boys have participated in helping me eat the Matzos, the sausages and the wine. They were very glad to learn that such arrangements have been made for the boys. . . "—J.H.

CANADIAN ARMY:

(15) "... we shouted with joy and happiness when the postman came around and said we each had a parcel from London and to come and get it as it was too large for him to carry. . . . People like you make us feel like carrying on this struggle towards freedom of humanity whereas otherwise it would be the cause of us being dissatisfied and fed up with ourselves, as there is nothing like sitting down Yomtov night with some matzos at the table, as it helps you remember how you did the same back home at the "Seder" with your parents, around the table. . . .—S.C.

(16) "... I can't express in words how grateful I am. Though we are far from home, I want to say on behalf of all the other Canadian boys that we are being well taken care of. . . .—A.K.

(17) "I wish to convey my thanks to you . . . for the efforts made of making the Passover "homey" to the troops visiting this country. Your gift is greatly appreciated by all troops, and also by the people, who in these trying times, appreciate assistance in their food problem when wanting to entertain troops. . . .—B.R.

POLISH FORCES:

(18) "... I am deeply moved with the attention you pay to us, maybe the last remnants of what was once Polish-Jewry. I can hardly express to you how grateful I am. . . .—B.K.

(19) "... It is really marvellous how you manage to overcome all difficulties which an organisation like yours is bound to come up against under present conditions, in order to keep us boys supplied with Kosher food. However, I am sure that a great measure of thanks is due to the members of your staff who managed—for more than two years now!—to maintain a service so efficient and reliable that any Jewish organisation might well take it as an example. . . .—R.C.

(20) "... It is very encouraging to know that the religious needs of Jewish serving men and women in H.M. Forces are being so well cared for by your Society and can assure you it is greatly appreciated by all. . . .—J.W.B.

(21) "Many thanks indeed for your splendid parcel which I received. . . . I cannot say how surprised and pleased I was when I saw the contents. Perhaps you can imagine my feelings as I can a long way from my home. . . . It is a marvellous thing you are doing for us Jewish soldiers, and I think I can truthfully say that we deeply appreciate it. . . .—S.R.

(22) "... sincerely thanking your Council for their kindness and generosity in sending me the parcel of matzos for Pesach. When I read the report of the most excellent work you have done . . . (and I know too of the splendid work you are doing this year) I know that those who control your organisation will receive the reward that is due to them. . . .—H.S.W.

R.A.F.:
(23) "This is to thank you for the nice parcel with Pesach food you have sent me. It helped us to celebrate the Seder in the way we were used to at home, and hope soon to be able to celebrate again. . . .—V.F.

(24) "... thank you very much for your most welcome parcel . . . I am very glad to know that your institution is interested in all the Jews in the Forces. I myself came from Argentine."—A.S.

P.C.:
(25) "... Words alone cannot express my feeling to have received this parcel at a time, when it is not possible for us to celebrate the Passover festival with my wife and daughter. . . .—B.H.M.