

**JULY, 1946**

# **NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**OF THE**

# **WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS**

**(BRITISH SECTION)**

**LONDON**

**MAY 12th, 1946**

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

---

**SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Published by the British Section of the World Jewish Congress,  
Congress House, 55, New Cavendish Street, London, W 1**

## THE WORLD EXECUTIVE

of the  
World Jewish Congress  
(New York)

*President :* RABBI DR. STEPHEN S. WISE.

*Chairman of the Executive Committee :* DR. NAHUM GOLDMANN.

*Chairman of the Governing Council :* LOUIS LIPSKY.

*Secretary-General :* DR. A. L. KUBOWITZKI.

*Officers :* RABBI DR. S. FEDERBUSCH.

RABBI IRVING MILLER.

THE REV. M. L. PERLZWEIG, M.A.

DR. J. ROBINSON.

DR. I. SCHWARZBART

DR. A. TARTAKOWER.

---

## THE BRITISH SECTION

*President :* The Marchioness of Reading.

*Vice-Presidents :* The Rt. Hon. Lord Melchett.

Alec Nathan.

Mrs. I. M. Sieff.

*Chairman :* S. S. Silverman, M.P.

*Vice-Chairmen :* The Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, M.A. (Birmingham).

Norman Jacobs, B.Com. (Manchester).

Fred Nettler, J.P. (Glasgow).

*Joint Treasurers :* Jack Cotton

Ben Rubenstein.

*Joint Hon. Secretaries :* N. Barou, Ph.D. (Econ.).

A. L. Easterman, M.A., LL.B.

### *Members of the Executive :*

Cmdr. Ashe-Lincoln.

Dr. S. Levenberg.

Dr. F. R. Bienenfeld.

Mrs. N. Nahum.

A. Bornstein.

M. Orbach, M.P., L.C.C.

Prof. E. Frankenstein.

Dr. A. Steinberg.

### *Departments :*

*Research and Information :* Dr. A. Steinberg.

*Relief and Recovery :* Dr. St. Barber.

*Organisation and Search :* K. Baum.

*National Organiser :* C. Honig.

# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

## National Conference of the British Section London, 12th May, 1946

---

### *Table of Contents*

	PAGE
Part I (Summary of Proceedings) .. .. .	I—22
Opening Statement .. .. .	I
Political Secretary's Report .. .. .	2—5
General Debate .. .. .	6—7
Financial Report .. .. .	8
Palestine .. .. .	8—10
Fraternal Delegates .. .. .	10—12
Organisation .. .. .	12—13
Peace Treaties .. .. .	13—14
Restitution of Property .. .. .	14—16
Relief and Recovery .. .. .	16
Restoration of Jewish Culture .. .. .	16—18
Elections .. .. .	18
Resolutions .. .. .	19—22
 Part II (Report of Executive Officers) .. .. .	 23—62
Political .. .. .	23—40
Palestine .. .. .	41—43
Research and Information .. .. .	44—51
Relief and Rehabilitation .. .. .	52—56
Search for Missing Relatives .. .. .	57—58
Organisation .. .. .	59
Provincial Groups .. .. .	60—62

## MESSAGES

*The following messages addressed to the National Conference were received :*

**From the Executive of the World Jewish Congress, New York :**

We send you warm fraternal greetings on the occasion of your National Conference and take the opportunity to express our deepest appreciation of the magnificent service rendered by the British Section to the Jewish cause. Jewish People now at turning point its history must mobilise all its strength to battle for its rights on many fronts and on issue this battle will depend the status and quality of Jewish rights everywhere for generations. More than ever important representation Jewish people be heard effectively international councils and that one Jewish People should speak to the one world to which civilised men everywhere give increasing loyalty. Congress alone qualified by structure experience perform this office for Jewish diaspora in which British Section not only essential but must take increasing responsibility.

**From the Canadian Jewish Congress :**

Although we do not find it possible to send fraternal delegates we wish your deliberations great success and hope that much good may result from the National Conference.

**From Lord Melchett, Vice-President of the British Section :**

Best wishes for the success of your meeting to-day. There has never been a time when the consideration of the problems which are before you needed more careful study or more energetic action.

**From the French Section of the World Jewish Congress :**

French Section World Jewish Congress extends your Conference fraternal greetings and heartiest wishes and expresses certainty of ever closer co-operation between British and French Jewries during decisive years ahead.

**From the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in the U.S.S.R. :**

Jewish anti-Fascist committee in U.S.S.R. sends its cordial greetings to your National Conference. We are sorry we could not send representatives as we learned of your conference only on May 8th. Your conference meets at time when freedom loving mankind celebrates first anniversary world historical victory over Fascist Germany. Unfortunately there are still countries in Europe and elsewhere where Fascists are continuing their pernicious activities setting up new strongholds and making ready to throw world into new conflagration. Reactionaries have started most vicious campaign slander and calumny against Soviet Union whose war efforts saved world civilisation from Fascist bandits. Untold sufferings and privations would again be lot Jewish People should war incendiaries succeed in their diabolical plans. And yet it is a fact that even among Jews there are still people ready to serve reaction in its attempt to destroy peace and security. Jewish People who have lived through greatest tragedy in history are vitally interested in preserving and consolidating world peace. Today when in many countries acute struggle is being waged between forces democracy and reaction Jewish People cannot but join those who fight for complete annihilation Fascism. Soviet Jews are confident that you will continue your anti-Fascist activities with still greater vigour and will consolidate your ties with all democratic forces for joint struggle against intrigues reaction. We sincerely wish you success in your work. Presidium of Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee U.S.S.R.

**The National Conference sent the following Cable in reply to the message received from the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow :**

Conference British Section World Jewish Congress cordially welcomes and reciprocates greetings of Jewish Anti-Fascist committee of U.S.S.R. Will always gratefully recall what Jewish People owes to U.S.S.R. for equal citizenship in Soviet Union for heroism and devotion of Red Army in their vital part in liberating Europe. Justice and freedom for Jewry depends on absolute victory of democracy over Fascism and reaction everywhere and attainment Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine. Confidently rely on Soviet Union in association with all free nations in achieving both objectives and on Jewish community of Soviet Union to play their full part in association with the Jewish communities of the world in securing the future of the Jewish people.

# Part I

---

## SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

---

### OPENING STATEMENT

By the Chairman, Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P.

The two and a half years since the last National Conference of the British Section have been difficult and tragic. The Conference of October, 1943, opened with a solemn act of mourning for the victims whose numbers we did not then know, We remember hoping, as we paid our tribute of memory, that perhaps, after all, at the end of the day, the sad toll of massacre would turn out to be better than we feared. Instead of that, the truth was far worse. We are met now, almost on the anniversary of the Allied Victory in Europe. What was the Jewish part in the common victory of civilisation? Where did the Jews come in? More than two-thirds of their man-power in Europe have disappeared. When other nations talk of their man-power they think of their fighting Services, but our losses include the old and the young, the fit and the crippled, the healthy and the sick, men, women and children; whole communities with all their historical heritage of culture and tradition are at an end, all submerged in the black tide of Nazi oppression.

What was the Jewish part in the victory of democracy? The Labour Party had been pledged for 30 years to the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish National Home. So far the only places where Jewish "national homes" have been established are in the Displaced Persons' Camps in Germany and Austria. There is a justification for, maybe, something to be gained in the association of this country and the U.S.A. in carrying out a policy to which the U.S.A. is as much pledged as this country. Few people have thought it was necessary to spend four months trying to find out where the remnants of Jewry in the displaced camps of Germany want to go. The Anglo-American Committee on Palestine found, when they made their investigation, what everybody knew they must inevitably find.

The only justification for asking the Jews of Europe to wait for the report of the Committee was the implication that when that Committee reported, both nations, and both governments, would regard themselves as bound in honour to implement the recommendations of that Committee. There can be no justification whatever for any hesitation. There can be no justification whatever for imposing any conditions upon the implementation of those recommendations which the Anglo-American Committee themselves laid down.

It is all very well for people living in comfort, people living in security, living in the enjoyment of victory, whose future is secure, to preach patience and restraint to other people. The Jewish people both in Palestine and in Europe have shown greater restraint and greater patience than any people in a similar situation have shown in the whole history of the civilised world. There can be no sympathy with irresponsible terrorism. It is wrong in itself and it is bad politics too. But six million Jews were murdered in Europe. When the British Government decided to implement the Mandate and to end the policy of betraying it, it was hoped the Jewish Agency would resume the obligation upon it under the Mandate of co-operating with the British Government in implementing the Mandate. It

was hoped that terrorism would come to an end in Palestine, but there can be no expectation that the Yishuv in Palestine should give up the voluntary disciplined defence militia, the Hagana, on which the safety of the Yishuv depends.

The Conference is met on the eve of the first anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany. The Jewish people are entitled to their share in that victory not because they want the spoils of war but because their share in that victory is nothing less than the continued life of our people.

### EXECUTIVE OFFICERS' REPORT.

MR. A. L. EASTERMAN, in presenting the Executive Officers' Report\* and the accompanying Resolutions, said :—

The Report shows that the British Section, and, indeed, the World Jewish Congress as a whole, has been engaged in a vast field of endeavour and, in many respects, has attained some measure of achievement. The Report contains a record of the past two and a half years, which have been perhaps the most fateful period in the whole of Jewish history. It covers the grim uncertainties of the year 1943 when we last met in National Conference ; it deals with the appalling calamities which befell the Jewish people in 1944 ; it proceeds to the exhilaration of victory and liberation in 1945 and then to our first uneasy steps into the post-war world.

The Jews have lived to see the doom of Hitler. He has suffered the fate of a long line of tyrants who all sought to destroy the Jewish people. We have lived to see the rotten carcass of Germany's Third Reich thrown into the gutter of history. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that for this blessing to civilisation, no nation, no race, has paid a more grim or heavier price than we of the Jewish people ; but with reverence to the memory of our martyred millions in Europe we can now say "yet another enemy of the Jewish people is dead ; long live the people of Israel."

Now, in the aftermath of war and destruction, after one year of liberation, it is our duty to survey the Jewish position and to assess the impact of the victory of democracy on Jewish life in all the countries of the world.

We can gain some knowledge of what the world Jewish position is today if we turn to that part of the Report headed "Current Affairs." The Jewish picture in the eastern countries of Europe is as yet shrouded in uncertainty. Unfortunately, we have not yet had the opportunity of seeing, at first hand, what the Jewish situation in these countries is. We do know that the impact of influences from the Soviet Union have given some insurance against the overt expression of ages-old anti-Jewish excesses in the East European Countries, but it would be an illusion to believe that the deeply ingrained animosities of peoples steeped in anti-Semitism can be totally eliminated in a brief period of time.

We know that the Jews of Eastern Europe, notwithstanding the new influences, are still full of doubt and anxieties and uncertainties. The position of Poland is too well known to need description, but one thing must be said, and emphasised : the remnants of the once great Polish Jewry can no longer be regarded as a permanent element in the life of the Polish Republic. The graveyard of European Jewry cannot be a happy dwelling place for those who have lost their nearest and dearest and their all.

Our people are leaving Poland. They are leaving Poland not because, as a British general foolishly said, there is a world-wide conspiracy compelling them to do so. The Jews are leaving Poland because they are being driven by grief, by the pressure of an intolerable life and by the growth of reactionary attacks

\* The full text of the Executive Officers' Report will be found on pages 23-62.

against Jewish life and property. Notwithstanding the good will of the present Polish Government towards the Jews, its sincere public declarations against anti-Semitic manifestations, and its threat of action against those who practise them, the Jewish position in Poland has steadily deteriorated. In consequence, thousands of Jews have, since the end of the war, felt obliged to leave the country, and the process of emigration still continues.

In Czechoslovakia the Jewish position gives rise to much disappointment and a great deal of anxiety. In that democratic State, before the war the model democracy in Europe, Hitlerism has left deep scars and has found roots whose most disturbing feature is the prevalence of anti-Semitism.

In Slovakia, the autonomous part of Czechoslovakia, we have found a country riddled with anti-Semitism, if anything, worse than that which existed before the war. This anti-Semitism is rampant throughout the whole structure of Slovakia. The Government and people are riddled through and through with anti-Semitism and, to our regret and dismay, Jewish life in this country is still a nightmare of intolerance and wrong-doing.

In West European countries, notably in Holland, deep fissures of anti-Semitism have developed and anxieties for our people flow beneath what appears to be the calm rivers of tolerance and freedom.

There can be no more illuminating comment on the whole European Jewish situation than the statement of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine that 500,000 Jews are anxious and determined to leave Europe. This understatement by impartial investigators is eloquent testimony to the insecurity of Jewish life in Europe.

No less anxious is the picture of Jewry outside Europe. In North Africa during the past year we have seen riot, death and destruction against Jewish life and property, notably in Tripoli.

In the Argentine we have seen, during recent years, ominous manifestations of anti-Semitic agitation and violence. The democratic Government of China does not yet see the distinction between German and Austrian Jewish refugees and German and Austrian enemy nationals. In the United States the leaders and principal organisations of the greatest single Jewish Community in the world are engaged in a nation-wide struggle against "discrimination," which we in this country describe by its plain term "anti-Semitism."

A few weeks ago Sydney Silverman, on returning from his mission to India, reported that in Afghanistan there is a small Jewry of 5,000 souls. Many, if not most, of them are members of a small and ancient Jewish Community which has endured for at least a thousand years. Yet, in Afghanistan anti-Semitism is rampant and the 5,000 Jews are the victims of violence, intimidation and discrimination.

This very brief outline of the Jewish position does not provide a comforting picture and we are driven to the conclusion that for the Jewish people the war has not yet ended. For the Jewish people the war for humanity and for human rights has proved a dismal disappointment. The world does not yet understand the Jews. The world does not yet appreciate that the Jews have a right to a tranquil life of decency and of peace. The world does not understand that the Jews have this right as citizens of a society of free men.

If this is a true assessment of the attitude to the Jews in the non-Jewish world, it is our duty to enquire if Jews have themselves appreciated the significance and necessities of our times and of events.

It is now ten years since the formal inauguration of the World Jewish Congress. From the first the Congress has sought to impress upon the Jewish people that the world Jewish position necessitated a revolutionary re-assessment of Jewish purposes, and a radical transformation of the means of dealing with them. The World Jewish Congress has sought to end the chaotic incoherences in Jewish life and affairs. It has tried to teach that our problems have a world-wide character and significance, with a denominator common to Jews throughout the world, namely, Jewish insecurity. The World Jewish Congress has taught what many of us thought was self-evident : that Jewish affairs must be dealt with not on the plane of parochialism but on the higher level of broad political ideas.

We believe that Jewish affairs must and can be dealt with by rationalised policies and that the mechanics of Jewish affairs require not the impulses of charity, not "a good word in high places," but the methods of wise statesmanship. We have enunciated one fundamental principle in the conception and conduct of Jewish affairs : that political action must precede relief, and that relief without political action leads nowhere. The Congress has tried to teach that the conduct of Jewish affairs is not exclusively the work of part-time amateurs but that, as with all other peoples, it calls for Jewish statesmanship aided by scientific study of trained experts.

The Congress has sought to show, through these ten years, that Jewish affairs are not the prerogative of patrons or patricians but the business of a Jewish democracy in a progressively democratic world. This means the mobilisation of the Jewish people for common Jewish endeavour for the common Jewish good. We have asked, and are still asking, "How can people gain their purposes if that people is not vocal? How can a people be vocal if its voices are not in unison and harmony? How can they be in unison and in harmony if there is no co-ordination?"

Jewish co-ordination would appear to be self-evident and axiomatic in a world in which co-ordination is the international watchword, in a world in which there is a United Nations Organisation which, despite its difficulties and imperfections, is the instrument accepted by men of all nations for the proper conduct of the common purposes of mankind. Yet among the Jewish people we still have the tragi-comedy of little minority pretensions. We still have "Anglo-Jewish Associations" and "American-Jewish Committees." Who knows what these little minority groups mean? Who knows what they stand for? Who knows whom they represent? Their pompous presumptions merely cause confusion in the non-Jewish world and embarrassment to representative Jewish institutions.

The World Jewish Congress perseveres in its effort to impress upon the Jewish people that not by discordant voices but by a voice in unison and harmony is there a possibility of the achievement of Jewish purposes.

We have proceeded a considerable way in achieving this unison, and at our Emergency Conference in Atlantic City in November, 1944, we found an important demonstration of progress. We found an association of Jewish men and women representing some 30 countries from which they had come to the United States despite the almost impossible difficulties of wartime travel and we found them engaged in common deliberations for the common good of the Jewish people.

Last August, in London, we held a special European Conference which took the process of consolidation still farther. At that time we had the happiness of resuming contact with our European brethren, and I am happy to report that since



that Conference most of the communities in Europe have taken their place within the World Jewish Congress. But the process of world Jewish organisation is still far from complete. There are still important gaps in the mobilisation of Jewish world forces.

We have the right to say that the British Section has behind it the overwhelming majority support of the Jewish democracy of this country. We have the right also to expect that the Board of Deputies, as the official representative organisation of British Jewry, must, without undue delay, take its place inside the World Jewish Congress. We hope that when the Jews of the United States organise themselves on a permanent representative basis they too, as the greatest single Jewish community in the world, will assume their responsibilities as a constituent member of the World Jewish Congress.

There remains the great Jewry of the Soviet Union from whom we have been separated for so long. Of all the Jewries in the world, this important community has perhaps the most significant rôle to play in the development of Jewish history and in determining the future destiny of the Jewish people. During and since the war the World Jewish Congress has had from the Jews of the Soviet Union the most cordial expressions of good will and brotherly concern in the plight and in the problems of world Jewry. The latest example of this cordial exchange is that which you have heard from the Chairman this morning. The Jews of the Soviet Union have much to teach us and much to learn from us. We shall pursue our efforts to meet the Jews of the Soviet Union on common ground and perhaps the time is not too far distant when we shall welcome them into the democratic organisation of the World Jewish Congress. I would like to say to the Jews of Soviet Russia, in words they will understand : " Jewries of the world, reunite."

To other Jewries we say that the accident of geography and chance residence in a particular territorial area do not create special attitudes or special policies, or special points of view. We do not admit that mere residence or birth in any particular country entitle any Jewry, or any section, or any group, to make special presentations of Jewish claims to governments or international agencies. This is the right and duty of all Jewries deliberating together and acting together for the common end. To all Jewish communities we say that Jews are not the protagonists of any particular patriotism, nor are they the missionaries of any particular political, social or economic system ; in Jewish affairs, Jews are Jews and the Jewish people is one and indivisible.

Alongside their duties as citizens of the countries in which they reside, Jews have important and essential duties to perform, as Jews, on behalf of the Jewish people. These duties are to secure the human rights of the Jewish people wherever they may reside, to eliminate Jewish wrongs wherever they may be perpetrated and, for the ultimate destiny of the Jewish people, to achieve the freedom and independence, the peace, the security and the self-respect of the Jewish people, as a democratic nation in a democratic State, in the land of Palestine.

It is fundamental that these principles governing the achievement of Jewish ends can only be accomplished by the recognition of the Jewish people as a people ; this is the underlying basis of all the work of the World Jewish Congress.

Great tasks lie ahead of us. We have to face the problems of the recovery and restoration of European Jewry according to the will of the communities. We have to face the problem of restoring the enormous property confiscated and stolen from the Jews of Europe and of reparation for the vast losses suffered by them.

We have to seek the assurance of human and legal rights for Jews everywhere and to secure the suppression of anti-Semitism by national and international legislation, and finally to attain the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine.

These are the supreme aims requiring the maximum effort and the maximum consolidation of the Jews throughout the world, acting as one people through a common democratic instrument.

### REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

M. MAURICE ORBACH, M.P., presenting the report of the Credentials Committee, said that the committee had confirmed the election of 242 delegates representing 96 of the 169 organisations affiliated to the British Section. Of these, 140 had so far arrived. In addition, 7 fraternal organisations were represented by a total of 39 fraternal delegates.

The report was unanimously adopted.

### GENERAL DEBATE ON THE EXECUTIVE REPORT

MR. S. L. ALEXANDER (Workers' Circle, Div. 9) said that, having paid tribute to Switzerland, the Vatican, Franco Spain, etc., they might have made adequate reference to the debt owed by the Jewish people to the Red Army. The Report might have referred to the lightness of the sentences in the Belsen trials. Had the World Jewish Congress no protestations to make in connection with the attitude of the British Government in permitting Nazi activities in the British zone in Germany?

With regard to Poland, what were the views of the Jews on the spot? The Central Committee of Polish Jews did not accept the view that there is no future for the Jewish people in Poland. The World Jewish Congress, instead of making representations to the Polish Government, should have made protests to the British Government about General Anders' Army.

MR. H. PERLMUTTER (Workers' Circle, Div. 10) asked what help of a financial character had been given to the Polish Jews?

MR. M. RAYNER (Workers' Circle) said he would like to see a statement of the steps taken by Congress to remedy the conditions in India and Afghanistan. He had seen reports from France that relief had been specifically given by certain Jewish resistance movements there to maintain the orphans of Nazi oppression.

MR. N. TROMPETER (London Individual Members) said the Congress should set up a committee to deal with the properties of people who had not claimed them, or who never could.

MAJOR S. WEISER (Assoc. of Jewish Ex-Servicemen) said he was the only Jewish member of the British Mission to Russia in 1945. When the mission went to Lublin they were told that two million Jews had been entirely wiped out, and the entire Jewish centre blotted out of existence.

MR. E. SOSNOWICZ (London Individual Members) associated himself with the remarks of the speaker from the Workers' Circle regarding Polish Jewry. The British Section should not override the general political basis of collaboration between the Jewish groups in Poland.

DR. L. CONRAD (London Individual Members) said the World Jewish Congress should do something to step up the procedure regarding people who were in small camps in Austria, to find out who was alive and whether relatives could be traced.

MR. H. MYER (Newcastle Zionist Society) said people outside Poland should defer to the expressed wish of Polish Jewry even when they have some doubts (and very grave doubts) of the influences brought to bear on Polish Jewry. Rescue, not relief, was what Polish Jewry needed. Our interests were with Jews, not with governments.

MRS. KISSMAN (Oxford Women's Zionist Society) said the work done by the Search Department was most impressive. They should send a team of workers to the Continent. Rescue on the highest level was the thing. Sending workers to the Continent would mean more than writing.

MR. A. RICHTIGER (Poale Zion, Leeds) : Let us stop trying to give Polish Jewry advice. They can give us advice. Polish Jewry to-day is as alert as ever before. Unfortunately they have lost the masses behind them. During the month of February there were not more than 50,000 to 60,000 Jews in Poland. Referring to Hungary, he said a Socialist paper recently made a terrible attack on the Jews of Hungary and the great Jewish Labour movement in Palestine. There was some misunderstanding there of the whole Jewish problem.

S./Ldr. S. ROWSON (Research Committee) said the Report did not refer to the Jewish communities in Arab countries, the disturbances in Benghazi and Cyrenaica, the Egyptian attempt at a pogrom in November and the entirely unsatisfactory position of the Jews in Iraq.

MR. GOLDSTEIN (Federation of Polish Jews) said it was futile to discuss the matter of Polish Jewry. What country had opened its gates to emigrants from Poland? The Federation of Polish Jews had undertaken to build two orphanages in Warsaw to house the children until they were able to leave for Palestine or America. When 100,000 would have gone to Palestine they could argue as to whether they should rescue the Polish Jews or leave them where they were. Until then all arguments were futile.

MR. B. SAFFER (Zebulun).—There was violent anti-Semitism in Afghanistan and discrimination in the U.S.A. Anti-Semitism was everywhere. The whole situation must be treated as one, and Palestine was the only solution.

MR. L. ZAIDMAN (Workers' Circle, Div. 9).—If the leaders of the British Section really believed that the Jews in Poland have no future, they should come forward with a programme and a point of view as to how the fate of those Jews can be settled. There was no place in the world today where the Jews were safer than in the Soviet Union. The Conference should give a lead as to how the Jews can be assisted out of their present life.

THE CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Conference to the telegram they had sent to the Anti-Fascist Committee in the U.S.S.R.

MR. HARRY MYER said the rehabilitation of Polish Jewry did not stand alone and did not differ from the problem of rehabilitation of any other Jewish community in Europe. It would be fatal if the Conference were to express a point of view in favour of rehabilitation of any community in Central Europe before the question had been discussed by the Peace Conference, before they knew what the political, economic and social conditions of post-war Europe were to be.

MRS. DIAMOND (Zebulun) referred to the activities of Zebulun and thought the World Jewish Congress should help them to collect funds to carry out their aims.

MR. I. SHORTT (Midland Group).—The Conference should place on record its appreciation of the tremendous work the Hon. Officers were doing for the Jewish people of Europe.

## EXECUTIVE'S REPLY TO THE GENERAL DEBATE

DR. N. BAROU, replying on behalf of the Executive, said the position in regard to Poland was clear. They had started work with the Central Committee last August. They were on the best terms with the Polish Embassy in London. They had done nothing to disseminate false information about Poland and the Report made it clear that it was the greatest tragedy that Jewry in a newly-liberated Poland became the best instrument for counter-revolution and racialism. The task was to destroy Fascism once and for all and to see that democracy should so function that no one could use anti-Semitism as a weapon either against the Jews or against democracy. There were tens of thousands of Polish Jews who did not want to remain in Poland. They believed that after what had happened these Jews had a right to go elsewhere. It was their duty to defend the Jews in Europe and to support the Jewish Agency in its demands for the right of Jews to go to Palestine.

The World Jewish Congress had tried to develop a record of service. Utility unity in Jewish life was of little use. They must work hard for political enlightenment, patiently, and with tolerance and understanding, trying to find a common denominator for a progressive international organisation of Jews who were ready to abide by the decisions of the majority.

The Report of the Executive Officers was unanimously adopted.

The political resolution (page 19) was unanimously adopted.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

MR. ALEC NATHAN (Joint Hon. Treasurer), in presenting the financial report and the audited balance-sheet, which had been circulated, said that behind the cold figures placed before the delegates there was a stirring story of human effort and labour to alleviate and remedy the greatest tragedy and suffering of a people the world has ever seen. There were many difficult problems to be solved. It was for that purpose that funds already subscribed had been used; but there were so many and so urgent needs and the funds available so limited, that the British Section would shortly appeal for larger funds to meet the needs of the present emergencies.

Security, freedom, leisure and comfort carried a duty and an obligation which could not be discharged better than by subscribing more than one could easily afford.

The audited Financial Report was unanimously adopted.

A vote of thanks to the Hon. Auditors, Messrs. Farr, Rose & Gay, was unanimously adopted. The auditors were reappointed.

## PALESTINE

The REV. DR. A. COHEN (Vice-Chairman), in moving the resolution on Palestine, said the first paragraph of the Resolution set out the firm stand which Jewry took against the infamous White Paper of 1939, and which had been clearly, if rather diplomatically, endorsed by the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. Therefore in that paragraph they expressed their appreciation of the Committee's decisive stand on these two matters.

The next paragraph is unfortunately necessary. We cannot for one moment allow the 100,000 displaced Jews, as indicated in the Report, to be held as hostages. The question of Jewry, the survival of the remnants on the Continent and elsewhere is for us not so much a political question as a human question, and we take our stand on the principle that we cannot allow any conditions to be attached to the fate of the 100,000.

The World Jewish Congress has always stood firmly by the principle that although it looks to Palestine as the ultimate and complete solution, it is important to secure Jewish rights in all countries where Jews reside. We emphasise the point made in the Commission's report that even if 100,000 displaced Jews on the Continent are settled in Palestine, there will still be a very considerable number of people similarly placed whose fate is undetermined. They have been through sufficient agony to oblige us and the world to do all we can to solve their future with the least possible delay. It is our firm conviction and resolve and demand that the hundreds of thousands of Jews who do not wish to remain or cannot remain in Europe or elsewhere, shall be found a home in the only country in the world which is prepared to have them—that is, Eretz Israel.

Even if all the Committee's recommendations were to be carried out, there will still be a Jewish problem in the world. The conviction of the World Jewish Congress has always been that only in a Jewish democratic state in Palestine can there be a final solution to the Jewish problem.

DR. S. LEVENBERG (Executive, British Section), seconding the Resolution, said the Report of the Committee of Inquiry was both a victory and a defeat for the Jewish people. Its proposals were a decisive achievement from the point of view of the six years' struggle of the Jewish people against the White Paper.

It would be wrong, however, to express only satisfaction with the conclusions of the Committee of Inquiry. There can be no question that there are parts of the Report which are a definite under-statement of the Jewish case, and the Report confines the Jewish problem to the position of the Jews in Europe. They had not been told of the terrible position of the 600,000 Jews under Arab rule, of the terrible outbreaks in Cairo, in Irak, Tripoli, and elsewhere. They did not find it necessary to mention that there is a world-wide problem of a people which is the only people in the world not on its own national soil, and had been persecuted for thousands of years because of their minority status everywhere. These aspects of the world Jewish problem were completely ignored in the report.

### DEBATE ON PALESTINE RESOLUTION.

MR. L. ZAIDMAN (Workers' Circle, Division 9) moved an amendment to follow the first paragraph of the Palestine Resolution :—

“ It regrets, however, that the Committee failed to accept the view, that the future progressive development of Palestine can only be based on an independent democratic Arab-Jewish State.”

He also moved that the fourth paragraph of the resolution, reading :

“ The National Conference expresses its disappointment that the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry has failed to see the problem of European Jews as part of the world-wide problem of Jewry . . . ”

should be amended as follows :—

“ . . . as part of the general problem of the democratic world. In so far as the Jewish people are concerned, their future and security can only be achieved on the basis of full democracy everywhere and by outlawing anti-Semitism, racial hatred and fascism.”

In moving the amendment, Mr. Zaidman said that the Report of the Committee of Inquiry was a blatant Imperialistic document. If Jewish organisations accepted the Report they were again committing the same kind of blunder as in 1918-19 at the time of accepting the British Mandate for Palestine. Had the Committee

been representative of the United Nations and included Jews and Arabs, the report would have been different.

MR. M. GADYAN (Manchester Strangeways Independent Hebrew Society), seconding the amendment, said Palestine alone would not solve the problem. They would like to see unity between the Arabs and the Jewish people and a bi-national state built up for the benefit of all interested in the country.

MR. L. BAKSTANSKY (Zionist Federation) urged the Conference to reject the amendment. To pin the hopes of the Jewish future upon an improvement in the state of the world was to ignore the very core of the Jewish problem, the homelessness of the Jew throughout the world, including Soviet Russia. They owed it to the 6,000,000 dead to reject this fallacy once and for all. They all agreed about Arab-Jewish unity, but only a Jewish State would lead to Arab-Jewish agreement.

Their demand for a Jewish State was not born out of chauvinism or narrow nationalism, but out of the deep conviction that only Jews could know the urgency of the Jewish problem and only Jews were possessed of the energy and capacity to develop the country to its utmost. Only a Jewish administration could develop the country so that the Arab masses would benefit.

The British Government were accepting a very heavy responsibility if they allowed the present state of uncertainty to continue because the average Arab desired nothing but to live with the Jew in peace and amity. The implementation of the Anglo-American Report was another great opportunity for constructive work and co-operation in Palestine between the Jews and the Arabs.

RABBI DR. I. J. UNTERMAN (Liverpool) supported the Resolutions.

MR. H. MYER (Newcastle Zionist Society) said the British Section of the World Jewish Congress seemed to go out of their way in order not to embarrass the Government.

MR. I. MIKARDO, M.P. (London Individual Members), said the Conference should avoid the vague verbiage contained in the amendment and should reject it with an overwhelming majority.

On a vote being taken the amendment was rejected by 108 against 4.

The Resolution was then put to the Conference and was carried by 110 against 6.

### FRATERNAL DELEGATES.

The MARCHIONESS OF READING (President of the British Section) welcomed the fraternal delegates, Mrs. Archibald Silverman from U.S.A., and Dr. Gerhard Riegner, head of the World Jewish Congress Geneva office. After appraising the important work done by Congress in the reunion of families, in the field of relief, restitution and rehabilitation, Lady Reading said it was most important that the recommendation that 100,000 certificates of entry be granted for Palestine had found its way into the Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. The special function of the British Section of the World Jewish Congress was to mirror, through the World Executive in New York, through the other branches all over the world and the Vaad Leumi, one of our constituents, what British opinion on this subject was. British Jewry and Jewry as a whole should welcome the Report on Palestine, and look at it as a whole and not in parts. British opinion should be mobilised behind it so that there was no excuse for sabotaging its recommendations by saying "Neither the Jews nor the Arabs like it, so there is nothing we can do."

MRS. ARCHIBALD SILVERMAN (Providence, U.S.A.) said too little was known about what the Congress was doing and there was not enough participation in this great world organisation. They had to make the Congress known in their communities. The Congress was not only a platform from which to say a word on behalf of displaced persons. The Congress was an instrument wherewith to speak at the proper time for anybody and everybody whether homeless or presumably secure.

DR. GERHART RIEGNER (Director of the Geneva Office of the World Jewish Congress) said it was a great honour to address the Conference. As one who had been associated during the terrible war years with the day by day work done by the Congress he would say that every Jew must realise the enormous work done by them. He paid tribute to Mr. Silverman's efforts on their behalf in the House of Commons, to Dr. Barou's work for the Jews in Eastern Europe, and to the work done by Mr. Easternman and other friends of the British Section.

They had to acknowledge, that they had not been able to do very much, but what had been done had been achieved through the efforts of a small group of able men. Once more the Jews of the Continent turned their eyes to Great Britain and America as the only Jewries who could speak for them.

A year had passed and they knew the situation. The Jews who came back were not welcomed. Those who claimed their property did not get it or got part of it only after much trouble. The restoration of Jewish life was not accomplished.

During the past year he had travelled to Italy and to France, to Belgium, Holland and other countries. One had to realise that the situation in all those countries was very different from the situation in England; even in countries where the situation was good, as for instance in Belgium, where anti-Semitism was non-existent, even there, he met Jews who told him: "I cannot bear to stay here any longer; I have lost members of my family; everything here reminds me of what I have lost." Those Jews had the right to turn to British and American Jewry to claim from them moral assistance and political help. That was the purpose of the World Jewish Congress.

THE CHAIRMAN welcomed Mr. Norbert Wolheim and Mr. Bernard Laufer, Vice-Chairman and Secretary of the Jewish Central Committee of Bergen-Belsen.

MR. NORBERT WOLHEIM said he wanted to tell them something of their problems, their needs and difficulties. He brought greetings from the remnants of Israel in Germany, from those who had suffered most in these last six years. He and Mr. Laufer were very glad to be with them and to have the opportunity of discussing their problems and explaining the difficulties which had arisen since the liberation.

Mr. Wolheim regretted that their Chairman, Mr. Rosensaft, could not be at the Conference; he had to stay in Germany for very urgent work. It was difficult to leave Germany not only because of visas and permits but because of the work which was always at hand to be done.

Mr. Wolheim said he spoke for all the Jews in the British zone. Their first need was to be able to leave Germany as soon as possible and that meant to go to Palestine. The second point was the care of those who, unfortunately, could not leave Germany because they were too old or too sick and also the care of those who for special reasons could not leave.

He was glad to be able to make his points in London, the centre of the Empire, where so many important decisions regarding Jews were made. He wanted to

say, as one of those who had suffered with his people during all the war years in the name of the surviving Jews in Germany : " Give us the possibility and the opportunity to leave Germany as quickly as possible, because we cannot live in Germany any longer and we will not live in Germany any longer. We want the opportunity to establish a new productive life. We see that there is no other way than that the gates of Palestine be opened." They understood well the attempt of the Anglo-American Commission, whom they had seen in Belsen and other parts of Germany, to try and find a way to bring out these people as soon as possible. But that was not enough. It must be *their* way, otherwise our people cannot recover ; it must be their way so that they could re-normalise their people, give them the feeling that they are close to their own people, that they were a people like other people, to live with their own people in their own land. That meant Palestine.

That was what they had fought for in all those long years. The Jewish blood shed in Germany was not yet dry. They could not build up a new life in a country knowing that that country was the graveyard of the best of them.

Mr. Wolheim appealed to the Congress to help them in their fight, to help **them** as a strong organisation—an organisation of importance—to realise what they needed. They wanted nothing but to live as a free people in their own country.

## ORGANISATION

MR. NORMAN JACOBS (Zionist Central Council, Manchester) moved the Resolutions on Organisation. They were entirely satisfied with the political work carried on by the World Jewish Congress in London, and had great admiration for the constant care and devotion which Mr. Silverman, Mr. Easternman, and Dr. Barou gave in the political sphere to Jews here and throughout the world.

However, they were not only the London office of the World Jewish Congress ; they were also the British Section, and speaking in that connection, they were not at all satisfied with the progress registered in the last couple of years—and certainly not with the progress since they had last met in conference. If they were going to justify the speeches which had been made that day ; if they were going to have a British Section which could influence not only Jewish opinion in this country but also by influencing it play a part in the counsels of World Jewry, they had to have a British Section which is representative of the whole of the Anglo-Jewish community.

In order to bring this influence to bear and so that the voice of Congress be properly heard, they had to have an organisation. They had to demand from the London Executive not the attention of people whose time and energy are already fully involved in political work, but people who were able to devote their full time to the organisation of the British Section.

COUNCILLOR K. C. COHEN, LL.B. (Leeds Jewish Representative Council), said that the Congress should consider that after much tribulation the Provinces had set London an example of unity amongst Jewish communities. The Executive might consider whether in its approach to the provincial communities it should not ask the Representative Councils that already existed to affiliate to Congress rather than to make in those provincial centres separate Congress groups.

MR. SILVERMAN explained that they only meant to establish separate groups where there was no communal council or where the communal council did not agree to affiliate.



MR. WALTER HARRIS (Chairman Glasgow Group) supported the resolutions on Organisation. Glasgow was the first provincial group of the World Jewish Congress. When they started they were unknown, but to-day they had reached the stage in Glasgow where they were respected for themselves and for the body they represented. Mr. Harris thought there should be no hesitancy in starting provincial groups wherever they might be and where there were communal groups of any kind.

In Glasgow they had over 500 members, and their own group had 12 or 13 affiliated organisations representing something over 4,000 members. With their own membership they now represented almost one-third of the Jewish population.

MRS. D. GOLDSTEIN (Federation of Women Zionists) referred to the type of activities the women's sections could engage in. She was a member of W.I.Z.O., and asked how the Women's sections of Congress would fit in with the work of W.I.Z.O.

MR. HERBERT LESSER (Finchley Young Israel Society) said Jewish youth could take a great part in the growth of Congress, and should be allowed to do so.

MISS HANNAH STEIN (Federation of Zionist Youth) suggested that all young students about to qualify—teachers, doctors, etc., who had qualifications—should be collected as a nucleus of apostles of Congress, armed with a programme of study on the Jewish problem. In that way, with the help of correspondence courses, lectures, etc., they would create a generation of leaders and workers.

The resolution on Organisation was unanimously adopted.

## PEACE TREATIES

MR. A. C. A. LIVERHANT, LL.M. (Research Department), proposed the Resolution on the Peace Treaties.

He said the Jewish peace problems to-day were far more complicated than at the time of the Peace Conference in 1919. The importance of formulating the Jewish demands with a view to their inclusion in the Peace Treaties was recognised by Congress at an early stage. Preparatory work on the Peace Treaties was started by the British Section in 1943.

At the Atlantic City Conference in November, 1944, many of the resolutions passed were framed with a view to their eventual incorporation in the peace settlement. By 1945, a general draft of provisions for inclusion in the Peace Treaties had been worked out and adapted for each ex-enemy country.

The World Jewish Congress demands the incorporation in the Peace Treaties of the principles for the legal and actual rehabilitation of the Jewish populations because, in the light of past experience, it is impossible to rely only on a change of regime in the ex-enemy countries for the restoration and future protection of Jewish rights.

The attitude of some of the countries concerned has taught, that the treatment of the Jewish population is not a matter which can be left solely to the sovereign jurisdiction of their governments. It is therefore essential to provide for international guarantees in the Peace Treaties.

The cardinal principle to be embodied in all Peace Treaties is to restore to Jewish citizens full equality of rights in law and in fact, and to abolish all discriminatory legislation. Provisions have to be inserted to ensure that Jews acquire and retain nationality on the same conditions as others, and that the effect of past discrimination in matters of nationality should be remedied. Equality, once

obtained, must be protected. Effective measures, such as the enactment and execution of adequate penal sanctions, must be taken against any attempts to destroy it by the instigation and dissemination of anti-Semitic hatred, discord and discrimination.

Displaced Jews from the ex-enemy countries must be given the right to return and must be helped to do so if they wish. On the other hand, no one must be forced to return against his will. Jews must also be given the right of emigration and facilities for taking their belongings with them.

The protection of individual Jewish rights, however, is not sufficient for guaranteeing the survival and freedom of Jewries in some of the countries concerned, unless it is accompanied by safeguards for the rights of the Jewish community to lead its own communal, religious, and cultural life. Jews there must be protected as a group, with the same rights and facilities which enable other distinct groups in the country to maintain and develop their individual character. In all the ex-enemy countries the Jewish community must be assured of the right to freedom of religion, expression and association and must be given facilities for carrying out their cultural and social activities.

Finally, the effective protection of all the rights secured for Jews by the Peace Treaties must be obtained by granting Jews a right of appeal to international authorities in respect of any infringements of the provisions of the Treaty.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

### RESTITUTION OF PROPERTY

DR. F. R. BIENENFELD (Head of the Legal Section) submitted the Resolution on Restitution of Property.

He said the problem of Jewish economic rehabilitation, restitution and indemnification for losses suffered by European Jewry had three main aspects :—

1. Reparation to the Jewish people for the terrible losses it has suffered through the Nazi and Fascist war of aggression against the Jews.
  2. The satisfaction of individual Jewish claims for the restitution of their property and indemnification for their losses.
  3. The allocation for purposes of Jewish rehabilitation of heirless Jewish property and the property of Jewish bodies and institutions which no longer exist and will not be re-established.
- i. As to Reparation to the Jewish people, the Jewish Agency for Palestine supported by the World Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies, submitted to the Conference on Reparation in Paris at the end of 1945 a proposal that part of the reparations to be paid by Germany to the Allied Governments should be reserved for the Jewish people. That request was not acceded to by the Conference on the ground that only States and not nations were entitled to reparation. The American delegates suggested that those classes of victims of Nazi oppression, who are not protected by any Allied Government, should be granted a share of the reparations for the rehabilitation of their members. This includes all Jewish victims of Nazi oppression who are Stateless or of enemy nationality. This suggestion, which the World Jewish Congress had helped to promote, was accepted by the Paris Conference and embodied in its Final Act.

Although the solution adopted fails to ensure that all the property from Jewish sources will be used for Jewish victims, and deals only with assets in Germany

and in neutral countries, Jewish organisations have to accept the new situation. They will have to try and induce the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees and the Allied Powers concerned to insert in the scheme to be elaborated, clauses which would do fuller justice to the Jewish claims, providing that the property of victims of Nazi persecution everywhere should be used only for the rehabilitation of the surviving members of the group to which the victims belonged. A Jewish department should be set up, either within the framework of the Intergovernmental Committee or of the corresponding agency of the United Nations, which would take over the task of administering and employing the assets concerned in co-operation and consultation with Jewish organisations experienced and interested in Jewish rehabilitation and resettlement.

2. As to individual restitution, the general lines have been laid down in the Inter-Allied Declaration of January 5th, 1943, according to which all transactions concerning the transfer of property and other rights and contracts made by victims of racial or religious persecution during the period of Nazi domination, are invalid because they are deemed to have been effected under duress.

The Atlantic City Conference of the World Jewish Congress, endorsing that principle, elaborated it in order to meet the specific Jewish needs and interests involved. The British Section of the World Jewish Congress, through their legal experts, took an active part in the drafting of the Atlantic City Resolution, and added detailed suggestions which cover all cases of Jewish claims for restitution and compensation. Many of the countries concerned have enacted legislation which follows the principles of the declaration of January 5th, 1943. The World Jewish Congress' efforts are reflected in the legislation of France, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland. In Germany and Austria, laws on restitution are still under consideration. Until now—with local exceptions—only measures for the seizure and preservation of looted property have been taken there.

Although, in theory, the provisions for individual restitution are, on the whole, not unsatisfactory, their practical effectiveness in all countries is hampered by the difficulty of tracing movable property and of transferring abroad the assets of Jews who have left the country of their former residence and do not intend to return there. In Central and Eastern European countries the matter is complicated by the laws of nationalisation and by land reforms which have been introduced there.

The World Jewish Congress is submitting to nearly all governments concerned proposals designed to overcome these difficulties.

In Switzerland, Jewish German and Austrian assets were at first registered and blocked as German assets, but are now being released on individual application. The World Jewish Congress is now engaged in negotiations with the Austrian Government which was preparing a highly unsatisfactory Bill on Restitution.

3. As to the employment of Jewish heirless property and the property of Jewish bodies which have been dissolved and which will not be re-established, the World Jewish Congress is trying to convince all neutral and Allied governments, that no government should benefit by the results of Nazi crimes and that such property should, therefore, not escheat to the State, but should be handed over to special Jewish rehabilitation funds. To that effect discussions have taken place with the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees and with countries such as Switzerland, Sweden and Holland in whose banks and trust-companies there are

considerable Jewish deposits which are ownerless. The first practical step is to get a survey of these deposits, which may amount to many million dollars.

One country, Greece, has already set up by a special Law, a rehabilitation fund as suggested by Congress ; others, such as Italy and France, appear to be favourably disposed towards the suggestion.

The British Section of the World Jewish Congress has actively supported the realisation of the principle which was endorsed by the Conference at Atlantic City, that the Jews are entitled to get the means for rehabilitation of European Jewry as of right and not as charity. It is a matter of simple justice that all Jewish property which was left ownerless in consequence of the mass murders carried out by the Nazis and the satellite governments, which amount to many hundred-million pounds must be used for the rehabilitation of the remnants of European Jewry.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

### RELIEF AND RECOVERY

DR. STEPHEN BARBER (Relief and Rehabilitation Department) proposed the Resolution on Relief and Recovery. The World Jewish Congress approached these problems in a new, unorthodox way which differs considerably from the views and methods of a number of organisations who maintain the theory of strict separation of relief from political work. The Atlantic City Conference of the World Jewish Congress had pointed out the fallacy of this theory and the developments in Jewish life since the cessation of hostilities have only confirmed the urgent necessity of co-ordination of all activities in the field of Jewish public interests. The World Jewish Congress had never the ambition of taking over the work of the established specialised Relief organisations, who have been and are doing remarkable work, but wishes to improve the present unsatisfactory state by insisting on a system of effective co-operation.

Even the most ambitious relief drives amongst the Jewish communities throughout the world cannot yield the goods and funds which are required to solve the gigantic problem of assisting financially several hundred thousand of Jewish survivors and to facilitate their gradual return to a normal life. This has to be primarily the responsibility of the Governments concerned and those specialised Agencies, like UNRRA, which ought to recognise finally the special aspects of the Jewish tragedy and to deal with them accordingly. To bring this home to Governments and Inter-governmental Agencies is obviously a political task.

The British Section has been able to be of assistance to a number of relief organisations overseas, acting as a clearing house and forwarding supplies to those parts of Europe where they were most urgently needed.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### RESTORATION OF JEWISH CULTURE

In the absence, owing to illness, of DR. A. STEINBERG, Director of the Research Department, the Rev. DR. A. COHEN (Midland Group) presented the Report on the Restoration of Jewish Culture in Europe.

Dr. Cohen said that the activities of the Cultural Section were mainly concerned with tasks of a general character. These tasks were : (a) The drawing up of the outline for a plan for the restoration of Jewish cultural life in liberated Europe; (b) the collecting of all available information relevant to the accomplish-

ment of this tremendous restoration work ; (c) the recovery of Jewish cultural property of every kind which was rescued by the armies of liberation ; (d) the providing of the Jewish survivors in Europe with at least the dire necessities of cultural life ; (e) the adjustment of the Jewish restoration plan to the kindred schemes worked out by the Allied Governments ; and (f) the establishment of close and permanent contacts with the international agencies responsible for the promotion of cultural progress among the peoples of the world.

Since the establishment of the Conference of the Allied Ministers of Education, formed during the war in London, which was the nucleus of the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, usually referred to as U.N.E.S.C.O., the cultural Section closely followed all the suggestions advanced by the various governments in regard to cultural rehabilitation and reconstruction in the post-war period. A special Jewish interest was involved in this matter in view of the general intention of the Allied Nations to use the new international agency for cleansing the atmosphere of Europe infested by the virus of racial hatred, in particular of anti-Semitic incitement.

In anticipation of the Constituent Assembly of U.N.E.S.C.O., a resolution was submitted to and adopted by the Special European Conference of the World Jewish Congress stressing the urgency of Jewish representation on the various organs of the International Agency in prospect.

After a number of preparatory steps by the British Section, which secured uniformity of action between the World Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Conference, and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, a memorandum suggesting a series of amendments to the Draft Constitution of the new agency—vital from the Jewish point of view—was conveyed to the delegations of 42 States participating in the Assembly. A paper by a prominent member of our Cultural Section (Dr. I. Zollschan), suggesting methods for combating Racial Philosophy was also distributed among the delegations. Both documents met with a favourable response.

The final text of the constitution of U.N.E.S.C.O. meets most of the requirements of Jewish educational and cultural rehabilitation and reconstruction. The possibilities of active Jewish collaboration with U.N.E.S.C.O. call for the preparation of a detailed Reconstruction Plan which will have to be submitted to the First General Assembly to be held during the coming autumn in Paris. Our Cultural Section is now in charge of this task.

Meantime, the Preparatory Commission of U.N.E.S.C.O. concluded a special agreement with U.N.R.R.A. for the establishment of a Consultative Committee of representatives of international organisations operating in the field of educational scientific and cultural relief with a view to co-ordinating their activities. Upon request, this Committee will advise the Joint Committee of U.N.R.R.A. and the Preparatory Commission of U.N.E.S.C.O. on matters of educational, scientific and cultural relief, and may be called upon to assist U.N.R.R.A. and the Preparatory Commission of U.N.E.S.C.O. in the discharge of their respective responsibilities.

Dr. A. STEINBERG was invited to serve on this Committee as representative of the World Jewish Congress.

The World Jewish Congress was also invited by the Preparatory Commission of U.N.E.S.C.O. to supply a statement of its relief work undertaken in the field of education and culture. The link between the World Jewish Congress and

U.N.E.S.C.O. has by now become permanent. It is of the highest importance that the Constitution of U.N.E.S.C.O. is based on the principle of equality of opportunity in the provinces of education and culture, as well as on the recognition of the fact since time immemorial so well known to the Jews, that the driving force in cultural progress is diversity rather than uniformity.

It is now our first duty to be fully acquainted with all facts and figures concerning the cultural life and needs of the Jewish population of the Continent. The work of collecting these data must go on unceasingly. With that purpose in view we have to develop our already existing contacts with all the re-established Jewish communities—large and small—in liberated Europe. On the basis of the information collected we will have to submit to the peoples of the world a comprehensive plan of Jewish cultural restoration.

The resolution on Cultural matters was carried unanimously.

## ELECTIONS

MR. M. ORBACH, M.P. (London Individual Members) announced the result of the elections of the Executive and the National Council of the British Section.

A full list of the members of the EXECUTIVE will be found on the inside cover page of this report.

The following were elected to the NATIONAL COUNCIL :

S. Adler-Rudel.	Mrs. T. Hodess.
Dr. K. Alexander.	Dr. F. Kobler.
S. L. Alexander.	D. Kostoris, HALE, Chesham.
B. A. Bagnari.	Prof. H. Levy.
L. Bakstansky, LL.B. B.Sc.(Econ).	B. Margulies.
K. Battsek.	I. Mikardo, M.P.
D. Biegun.	H. Myer.
J. Bolchover, MANCHESTER.	I. Nathani.
M. Cohen, LL.B.	Mrs. R. Orbach, B.A.
C. Edelman, GLASGOW.	Dr. W. Pinner, BIRMINGHAM.
Councillor J. L. Fine, J.P.	J. E. Posnansky, BOURNEMOUTH.
D. Fraenkel, MANCHESTER	A. R. Rollin.
J. Fraenkel.	Dr. Scheffler.
S. Gestettner.	Mrs. R. Shaerf.
J. C. Gilbert.	Mrs. R. B. Solomon.
Prof. M. Ginsberg, CAMBRIDGE.	Dr. H. Tauber.
Mrs. D. Goldstein.	Rabbi J. I. Unterman, LIVERPOOL.
A. Handler.	Dr. Shenfield, BIRMINGHAM.
W. Harris, GLASGOW.	Dr. Wigoder, MANCHESTER.
C. Q. Henriques, M.Inst.C.E.	Dr. I. Zollschan.

THE CHAIRMAN, in closing the Conference, offered the thanks of the British Section to all who had participated, and who had assisted in its preparation.

# RESOLUTIONS

## POLITICAL

1. The National Conference of the British Section of the World Jewish Congress declares its acceptance of, and support for, the resolutions adopted by the War Emergency Conference held in Atlantic City in 1944 and the Special European Conference held in London in 1945, and approves the work of the Executive Officers of the British Section as following the principles and decisions enumerated in these Resolutions.

2. The National Conference places on record its endorsement and approval of the work of the World Jewish Congress and the British Section

(a) in the defence of Jewish life, rights and liberties wherever they have been threatened throughout the world, and in the efforts to restore Jewish rights and freedom in the countries formerly occupied by the enemy.

(b) in the assistance given to enable the surviving Jews of Europe to reconstitute their Jewish life and institutions.

(c) in relation to the political protection, welfare and future of the Jewish Displaced Persons, whose transfer from Europe and resettlement in the countries of their choice calls for final solution as a matter of urgency.

3. The Conference expresses its gratification that the World Jewish Congress has made a contribution of historic importance to the question of War Crimes in having secured the presentation of a special Jewish case against the war criminals.

4. The Conference expresses its approval of the policies adopted by the World Jewish Congress and the work of the British Section in association with the Jewries of the liberated countries, with a view to safeguarding Jewish interests in the projected Peace Treaties with the former enemy countries, and particularly in the work of securing the restitution and recovery of Jewish property and reparations for the losses suffered by the Jewish people.

5. The Conference approves of the statement and the evidence submitted in London by the World Jewish Congress to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine.

6. The Conference endorses the principles put forward and the political and scientific work relating to proposals for national and international legislation against race hatred, anti-semitism and racial and religious discrimination.

7. The Conference notes with great satisfaction that so many of the liberated Jewish communities of Europe have been able, through their affiliation with the World Jewish Congress, to renew their association with their fellow Jews throughout the world.

8. The Conference earnestly hopes that there may be early fulfilment of the efforts made by the World Jewish Congress to bring the great Jewish community of the Soviet Union into practical association with its work on behalf of World Jewry.

9. The Conference expresses cordial approval of the preliminary agreement reached at Atlantic City between the Canadian Jewish Congress, the British Section and other World Jewish Congress organisations of the British Commonwealth and instructs its new Executive to promote the closest possible practical co-operation between them on the basis of this agreement.

## REHABILITATION AND RESTITUTION

1. The Conference notes with satisfaction the work of the World Jewish Congress in the field of Jewish relief and rehabilitation and particularly the work of the British Section relating to the search for missing and disunited families, and in the assistance given to Jewish cultural recovery in Europe, through the supply of books to the Jewish Displaced Persons and Jewish institutions.

2. The National Conference reaffirms the principles adopted by the World Jewish Congress in respect of restitution and recovery of Jewish property to the effect that no Government or Nation may enrich itself through the crimes committed by the Nazi and Satellite Governments against the Jews and to attain this end recommends the following measures :—

(a) Heirless or unclaimed Jewish properties should be handed over to specialised funds for Jewish rehabilitation and resettlement and should be administered under international control in co-operation with and on the advice of representative Jewish organisations.

(b) Jewish Communal properties should be restored to the Jewish communities in all liberated countries and where not required for their maintenance should be employed for Jewish reconstruction and resettlement.

(c) The former enemy countries and Austria should be obliged to adopt and put into execution the principles laid down in the Inter-Allied Declaration of January 5th, 1945, against acts of dispossession of individual property.

(d) Jews should be exempted from all confiscatory and similar measures which may be imposed on enemy nationals in respect of reparations.

(e) Measures imposed by any governments against disloyal national minorities, should not be applied to the Jews.

## CULTURAL

1. The Conference approves the Report of the Cultural Department and endorses its plans for extension of the Congress work in the field of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Reconstruction.

2. The Conference calls upon all Sections and members of the World Jewish Congress to assist in the development and intensification of this vital work, and appeals to all Jewish bodies concerned to associate with the World Jewish Congress in its endeavour to restore and revive Jewish cultural life in the liberated countries.

## PEACE TREATIES

The National Conference resolves that in order to implement the resolutions adopted by the World Jewish Congress, efforts should be made to secure that the following provisions should be included in the Peace Treaties with the former enemy countries :—

1. The safeguarding of the human rights of Jews and their right to full equality with other citizens, and the adoption of legislation against racial hatred and discrimination.

2. The grant to the Jewish communities of the same right as are accorded there to other religious, ethnic or national groups.

3. The restoration to Jews and Jewish communities of their rights and property of which they have been deprived and the use of heirless Jewish property for the rehabilitation and resettlement of Jews.

4. The recognition of Jewish rights as a matter of international concern and the protection of these rights by the United Nations and appropriate international agencies.



## RELIEF

1. The National Conference endorses the policy of the World Jewish Congress that it is primarily the responsibility of the governments and local authorities of the various European countries to provide relief for the remnants of their Jewish populations, and to help them in their efforts to rebuild their lives.

2. The Conference approves the report on Relief and Rehabilitation and endorses the initiative of the World Jewish Congress in presenting to U.N.R.R.A. constructive proposals regarding the specific needs of the Jewish survivors. It stresses the urgency of the problem of Jewish resettlement and requests the Executive to continue their efforts to secure that the United Nations' Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons should give due regard to the special case of Jews and that the Agency for Refugees should associate with it, in its future work, representative Jewish organisations.

3. The Conference reaffirms the resolution of the Atlantic City Conference of the World Jewish Congress that, apart from governmental and international relief, the Jewish people themselves must undertake the responsibility and provide the means for a part of the work of relief and reconstruction which necessitates the fullest co-operation of all forces in Jewish life.

The Conference urges that in the light of the experiences of the last two years the appeal made at the Atlantic City Conference to the leading Jewish organisations for coordination of their political and relief work has become more imperative than ever.

4. The Conference expresses its thanks to the great number of individuals and affiliated groups in this country for their generous response and their support to the appeal for clothing, books and funds. It conveys to the relief department of the World Jewish Congress Executive its gratification for the substantial help organised by them and the affiliated organisations in many overseas countries for the distressed Jewish population in Europe.

## PALESTINE

The National Conference notes with gratification that the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine has unanimously agreed that the restrictive measures of the White Paper of 1939 should be rescinded and has thereby condemned its unjustifiable policy. It appreciates the Committee's positive proposal for immediate action to admit into Palestine, at once, 100,000 Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist oppression.

The Conference earnestly hopes that the British Government, as Mandatory for Palestine, will give effect to these recommendations unconditionally and without delay.

While stressing the importance of securing Jewish rights in all countries where Jews reside and the re-establishment of Jewish communities, the Conference places on record the emphasis which the Committee of Enquiry has laid upon the undoubted fact that many hundreds of thousands of Jews remain in Europe for whom Palestine gives the only hope of a peaceful future.

The National Conference expresses its disappointment that the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry has failed to see the problem of European Jews as part of the world wide problem of Jewry, and to accept the view of the overwhelming majority of the Jewish people, that their fundamental needs require the development of the Jewish National Home as a democratic Jewish State in which Jews and Arabs will have equal rights and common opportunity of achieving peace and prosperity.

## ORGANISATION

1. The Conference instructs the incoming Executive to organise branches of the British Section in all Jewish Communities.
2. The Conference proposes that special attention should be paid to the development of the Congress Group in London, which should have its own Committee and local organiser.
3. The Conference recommends that the Executive summon periodical Regional Conferences to give an opportunity to the Branches to discuss the current activities of the World Jewish Congress and to put forward proposals regarding future activities.
4. The Conference instructs the Executive and the local Branches to make a special effort to increase the number of affiliated organisations and individual members.
5. The Conference recommends the establishment of a Women's Section within the British Section in order to secure the co-operation of Jewish women in tasks in which they are particularly interested.
6. The Conference recommends that the Executive issue a regular publication covering the activities of the World Jewish Congress and the British Section, and approves a special budget for this purpose.

## Part II

---

# REPORT OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Executive Officers of the British Section of the World Jewish Congress presented to the National Conference the following Report on the activities of the Section during the period October, 1943, to May, 1946.

### POLITICAL

No period in human history has been so fateful for mankind as that between the end of the years 1943 and 1945. Within this brief space of time the Jewish people covered the full range of historical and emotional experience which has characterised 2,000 years of exile and dispersion as a nation; they passed from the bitterly helpless grief of tragedy unparalleled in any era, through the deep sadness of the plight of the remnant of European Jewry, which only just survived the horrors of mass annihilation at the hands of Nazi Germany, to the relief and hope which liberation brought in the train of Democracy's victory over the forces of the blackest reaction, brutality and aggression ever known to man.

Two dominating factors governed the political activities of the World Jewish Congress in the last months of 1943 and the first of 1944. The first was the revelation of the real extent and character of the mass massacre of the Jewish people in Europe. The fact that Nazi Germany had really embarked on the oft-declared plan to destroy the Jews had gradually been accepted by the civilised world since the British Section of the World Jewish Congress, in 1942, had succeeded in calling public attention throughout the world to Hitler's diabolical designs and in securing the Allied Declaration of December, 1942, denouncing the massacre of Jews and promising retribution for the perpetrators. By the end of 1943 it was known that millions of Jews had perished by murder in the slaughter houses and gas chambers of Eastern Europe. The world had become familiar with Oswiecim, Treblinka, Maidanek and Lublin, names synonymous with unbelievable horror for ever to be associated with German infamy against the Jewish people. Mingled with Jewish tragedy was Jewish pride in the heroism of the doomed but resolutely brave defenders of the Warsaw Ghetto, who in face of the full force of brute machine might fought their murderers from the cellars and the sewers and the roof tops of the Nalewka until they perished.

The second factor was the beginning of the decline of the Nazi war machine and the early visible signs of the collapse of the Third Reich. The Red Armies advancing towards Germany, the British and Americans driving the Germans out of Libya, Tripolitania and Tunisia, presaged the Allied invasion of Europe. Between the advancing Russians and the retreating Germans lay the great areas in which were concentrated the major Nazi slaughter houses for Jews. Seeking to reinforce their southern flank, the Nazis engulfed Hungary and strengthened their grip on Rumania and Bulgaria. Advance and retreat brought new perils for the Jews. In Poland, mass massacre of the Jews was intensified; in Hungary, the dread process of deportation and slaughter began. The 800,000 Jews of Hungary faced the same fate which had befallen their fellow sufferers in the other European countries dominated by Nazi Germany.

## Rescue :

During the year 1944, the principal work of the World Jewish Congress was the difficult and almost hopeless task of saving what could be saved from the wreckage of European Jewry. In Washington the World Executive, and in London, the British Section, pursued ceaselessly their efforts to enlist the aid of the Allied Governments in rescuing Jews from the murder wrath of the defeated enemy. Consistent representations and proposals were submitted to the Allied civil and military authorities to issue warnings to the Germans to stop the process of massacre under threat of punitive measures. Among these proposals was the suggestion that the victorious Red Armies should drop parachute forces in the regions of the concentration camps and slaughter-houses to protect and liberate the Jews and other internees and so prevent further massacres. This plan was, unfortunately, not considered militarily feasible and was not carried out to any considerable extent.

## Hungary :

The peril of the Jews of Hungary soon became all too real. On the German occupation of that country, the Executives of the World Jewish Congress in London and New York took immediate measures to attempt to save the Jewish population from the horrors which clearly threatened them, particularly when the Germans began a registration of Jews, the first stage in the dread and too well-known process of deportation to and extermination in Poland. On the initiative of the British Section, the British Government, through the B.B.C., broadcast repeated warnings to the Germans to refrain from their customary persecution of the Jews and appealing to the general Hungarian population to protect their Jewish fellow-citizens and not to assist the Germans in perpetrating crimes against them. On the request of the British Section, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the late Dr. Temple, broadcast a special appeal to the people and churches of Hungary to protect the Jews. Similar broadcasts were made on the request of the British Section, by the International Co-operative Alliance, the International Federation of Transport Workers, and the British Union of Railwaymen.

As a result of direct communication with the Vatican and through the Apostolic Delegate in London, His Holiness the Pope urged the Roman Catholic clergy and people of Hungary to do all possible to protect the Jews and to intercede on their behalf with the Germans. Whatever success these appeals may have had in individual cases, the lot of the Jews of Hungary remained, generally, unaffected : at least 350,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to the murder camps, of Poland, there to suffer the martyrdom of the 5,000,000 Jews of all Europe destroyed by German Jew-hate and blood lust.

## World Reaction :

The grim and tragic fact that five-sevenths of the entire Jewish population of Europe, outside Soviet Russia, have been annihilated reveals in all too black significance that all the laborious and desperate efforts to rescue any substantial part of European Jewry has met with heart-breaking failure. It has to be recorded regretfully that no practical effort developed on the part of the Allied Governments, throughout the war, to save the Jews from destruction. The plea of lack of practical means of rescue and of overriding military necessities was maintained to the last and remained in force. The repeated declarations denouncing

the crimes committed and contemplated against the Jews drew the world's attention to the horrors, but sadly failed to arrest them. In the result, only a bare handful of Jews succeeded in escaping, with assistance from outside, from the occupied countries. For them the choice of places of asylum was severely restricted to the few neutral countries of Europe able and willing to receive refugees from Nazi oppression and murder. Sweden, Switzerland and Spain have displayed a noteworthy humanitarianism in opening their frontiers to Jewish refugees and in providing places and means of residence until their final resettlement could be effected. The numerous representations which have been addressed to the Governments of these neutral countries by the World Jewish Congress have been met with consideration and sympathy expressed, wherever possible, in practical aid. In this connection, the International Red Cross, with which the World Jewish Congress has maintained close and cordial contact throughout the war, has proved a helpful channel of communication and assistance.

### **War Refugee Board :**

The repeated and persistent representations to the Allied Governments to rescue Jews from occupied Europe had one notable and important result. The late President Roosevelt took the initiative in the creation of the War Refugee Board, operating under the auspices of the United States Department of State, the War Department and the Treasury Department. Close and constant contact was maintained by the Congress with this Board, which set up agencies wherever possible in Europe and Turkey. Through its representatives the War Refugee Board proved always accessible to the suggestions and advice of the Congress Executives in London and New York and was able to render assistance in aiding Jews to escape from the Nazis and to enable them to find refuge in neutral countries. Unfortunately, the War Refugee Board came too late. The extermination of the Jews was already in full progress and the channels of escape had dwindled to a minimum.

### **The Liberation of Europe :**

In the early months of 1944 it became clear that the final act in the drama of the destruction of the Nazi Third Reich was imminent. Having in mind the events which followed the conquest and surrender of the major part of Italy when the retreating Germans had deported those remaining under their yoke in Northern Italy, the British Section made representations to the British and American Governments proposing that the Allied military commanders should address proclamations to the Germans warning them against committing acts against Jews and other civilians in areas in the line of German retreat and particularly against further deportation of Jews who might still remain in these areas. Soon after the invasion of Normandy the Allied Commanders issued such proclamations in general terms.

The liberation of France and Belgium, the advance of the Soviet Armies into the Balkans, through Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland towards Germany, produced fundamental changes in the situation of the surviving Jews in these countries. The pattern of Europe freed from Nazi terrorism began to outline itself and the remnants of European Jewry began to emerge from the horrors of Hitler and the German war. With their emergence the problems of surviving Jewry gained practical and grim reality ; they were the problems of devastation, uprooting, hunger, requiring material aid on a vast scale ; they were also problems of essential political character, of rights and status, of restitution of property

stolen and despoiled, of reparations for damage sustained, of punishment for the crimes committed against the Jews for racial and religious reasons, of recovery of cultural and communal life and religion, of security against racial hatred and anti-semitic agitation. In face of these vast and difficult issues affecting the future peace and security of the surviving Jewries of Europe, the Executive of the World Jewish Congress decided, at the end of the summer of 1944, to summon a War Emergency Conference of its available constituent members throughout the accessible world.

### War Emergency Conference :

The War Emergency Conference of the World Jewish Congress met in November, 1944, at Atlantic City, in the United States. Delegates and representatives from every free Jewish community in the world assembled in one of the most notable international Jewish gatherings. For the first time, since the war had built impenetrable barriers between the Jews of Europe and the rest of the world, Jews of all lands met together for common consultations and to discuss common plans for the reconstruction of Jewish life in the post-war world. Three hundred delegates were able, in the midst of the war, and in face of immense difficulties of transport restrictions, to meet in conference on vital problems of current and prospective importance. The War Emergency Conference was altogether a remarkable occasion, demonstrating the common interests of world Jewry and the desire to organise, within the World Jewish Congress, for their consideration and solution.

The largest single territorial delegation from countries outside the United States was that of the British Section. Nine members of the Executive, Mrs. I. M. Sieff, Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., Dr. N. Barou, Mr. Ben Rubenstein, Dr. A. Cohen, of Birmingham, Mr. Jack Cotton, of Birmingham, Mr. Fred Nettler, of Glasgow, Mr. Norman Jacobs, of Manchester, and Mr. A. L. Easterman, Political Secretary, were afforded special facilities by the Foreign Office and the Ministry of War Transport to proceed to the United States. The Executive of the British Section expresses its deep appreciation to these Departments for the understanding and courtesy shown by them in enabling so large a delegation to travel from the United Kingdom at so critical a time in the development of the war.

The British Delegation took an important part in the work of the Conference, which elected its members to key positions on the principal Commissions : Mr. Silverman as a member of the Presidium and Vice-Chairman of the Political Commission ; Dr. A. Cohen as Vice-Chairman of the Cultural Commission ; Dr. N. Barou as Vice-Chairman of the Reparations and Restitution Commission ; Mr. A. L. Easterman as Chairman of the War Crimes Commission ; Mr. Ben Rubenstein as a member of the Finance Commission ; Mr. Jack Cotton and Mr. Norman Jacobs as members of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissions. Owing to a family bereavement, Mr. Fred Nettler was, unfortunately, obliged to return to Great Britain in the early stages of the Conference.

The War Emergency Conference of the World Jewish Congress adopted a series of Resolutions forming together a comprehensive statement of the needs of the Jewish people for reconstruction and rehabilitation in the post-war world. These resolutions covered all aspects of the political, social, cultural and economic questions affecting the surviving Jews of Europe and throughout the world. In particular, the Conference adopted a Declaration containing the basic requirements

of the Jewish people in a reconstructed democratic society based upon individual and community freedom. The Declaration stated :

The War Emergency Conference of the World Jewish Congress, meeting at the historic hour of the approaching liberation of the peoples enslaved by the Nazi-Fascist tyranny, sets forth, as a solemn duty to the memory of Jewry's martyred millions annihilated in Nazi Europe and elsewhere and to the generations of Jews who will survive them, the indispensable principles upon which the Jewish people seek peace, freedom, and equality among the nations in a free, democratic world.

The Jewish people looks to the United Nations for the establishment of a new international democratic order based on the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter, embodying *inter alia* :—

(a) The promulgation of an International Bill of Rights securing full protection of life and liberty for the inhabitants of all countries without distinction of origin, nationality, race, faith, or language, and the enforcement of such a Bill of Rights by an adequate international machinery.

(b) Full and unequivocal equality of rights in law and in fact for all citizens or subjects in every country and adequate protection of the elementary needs of all the inhabitants, such as the right to a gainful occupation.

(c) The inalienable right of all ethnic and religious groups to maintain and foster their collective identity under the equal protection of the laws and with equal assistance of the State, where such system prevails.

(d) The adoption and promulgation of national laws and appropriate international legal instruments providing that anti-Semitic and anti-racial activities and similar acts of incitement to racial and religious hatred and discrimination are violations of criminal law and public policy.

With regard to specific Jewish needs the World Jewish Congress calls for :—

(1) The declaration as null and void of all measures of discrimination directed against Jews and the full restoration of their rights and status.

(2) Recognition of the particular needs of the Jewish people in the application of relief and rehabilitation measures within the scheme of post-war reconstruction.

(3) Apprehension, trial, and punishment of the instigators and perpetrators of the crimes committed against Jews as such and the Jewish people since 1933.

(4) Restitution and reparation for the losses suffered by still existing Jewish communities and the individual Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist murder and spoliation.

(5) The recognition of the principle that the Jewish people is entitled to a collective reparation for the material and moral losses suffered by the Jewish people, its institutions, or individual Jews who, or whose heirs, are unable to present their individual claims.

(6) The establishment of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth.

The Declarations and Resolutions were formally presented to the American Secretary of State, Mr. Edward Stettinius, by a delegation of the principal members

of the constituent organisations attending the War Emergency Conference, and to Mr. Anthony Eden, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the British Section. They were subsequently submitted to the other Allied Governments.

During their stay in the United States all the members of the British Section's delegation addressed many meetings throughout the country explaining the organisation and purposes of the World Jewish Congress, the work of the British Section, especially during the war, and the significance of the War Emergency Conference in relation to current and post-war Jewish questions. Of particular interest was the national conference of the Canadian Jewish Congress at Toronto in January, 1945, to which Mr. Silverman and Mr. Easterman, the remaining members of the delegation then in the United States, were invited as representing the British Section. Both addressed the Conference, which revealed the Canadian Jewish Congress as the most soundly organised representative Jewish body democratically elected by the entire community and most efficiently conducted. As a constituent member of the World Jewish Congress, the Canadian Jewish Congress takes a noteworthy part in the issues affecting the Jewish people, on the international plane. An agreement for closer co-operation with the British Section on matters of common interest was cordially entered into with the Canadian delegates attending the Atlantic City Conference.

#### **Soviet Jewry :**

It is apposite to refer here to the contact between the World Jewish Congress and the Jewry of the Soviet Union. Throughout its existence the Congress has recognised the vital significance to the whole Jewish people of the great Jewish Community of Russia, the largest single Jewish territorial group in the world outside the United States. At its inaugural assembly in Geneva in 1936, the Congress invited the Jews of the Soviet Union to take part with the other Jewries of the world in the creation of this international non-party, non-sectional organisation as the functional representative and democratic assembly of the Jewish people operating in the sphere of international relations and as a common platform for the consideration of and action upon matters in which Jews throughout the world had a common interest. Soviet Jewry was not then able to accept the invitation to Geneva. Since the beginning of the recent war the Congress has on a number of occasions, notably on the entry of Russia into the war and subsequently during the progressive holocaust of European Jewry, addressed communications to the Jews of the Soviet Union inviting their co-operation and association with the World Jewish Congress. To these communications Soviet Jewry, through the Anti-Fascist Jewish Committee of Moscow, has replied in cordial terms. The Executive of the Congress extended an invitation to Russian Jewry to delegate representatives to the War Emergency Conference in Atlantic City. The reply was of the friendliest character, indicating the close concern of Russian Jewry in the problems facing the Jewish people. It was not found possible, however, for representatives to travel from Moscow to Atlantic City. A further invitation to the Special European Conference in August, 1945, in London, evoked a similar cordial response, but practical difficulties prevented the presence of delegates. The Congress is still in communication with the Jews of the Soviet Union, and it may be possible in the near future that they will find it practicable to meet with their fellow-Jews from other parts of the world in a common and happy association in the interests of Jewish people as a whole. That is the profound wish as well as the policy of the World Jewish Congress.



### France and Belgium :

While the War Emergency Conference was meeting in Atlantic City, the remaining members of the Executive of the British Section continued the work in London. Most important of these activities was the visit to France and Belgium in November, 1944, of the Marchioness of Reading, accompanied by Mr. Mitzman, then in charge of the Organisation Department. This was the first direct contact between representatives of a Jewish organisation outside Europe with the survivors in a liberated country. The picture of Jewish survival, revealed to this mission, was distressing in the extreme—a great community disrupted and disorganised, poverty and homelessness, sickness and helplessness, families torn and uprooted, children scattered in non-Jewish homes, often without identity, lack of cultural means, of education and religion. Here was the problem of recovery and rehabilitation in its reality, lending urgency to the plans of Jewish reconstruction being formulated in Atlantic City. Not less urgent were the political problems involved in the survival of the Jewish remnants, the questions of the status of Jewish “foreigners,” the right to residence, work and food, restitution of property left without heirs, questions of compensation for damage suffered and losses incurred. These gave emphasis to the thesis of the World Jewish Congress: that relief without political action provided no answer to Jewish needs and that political action was the necessary preliminary to effective relief action. The conditions found by Lady Reading in the liberated countries of France and Belgium made an apt commentary on the wisdom of the common counsel taken by the Jews of the world at the Atlantic City Conference, and of the common planning manifested in the Declaration and Resolutions which it adopted.

### Sweden :

A similar mission to Sweden in March, 1945, undertaken by Mr. Rubenstein and Dr. L. Zelmanovits, then in charge of the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of the British Section, emphasised, too, in the field of refugee maintenance and settlement, the paramount importance of political action as an essential prelude to effective relief. While the conditions of Jewish refugees in the safety of neutral countries were by no means comparable with those in the recently occupied lands, the maintenance, settlement and future of refugees involved often difficult and delicate questions of a political character. These the policy and plans of the Congress always envisaged and the principles of their solution were to be found in the decisions taken at Atlantic City.

### United Nations' San Francisco Conference :

The Yalta Conference of the leaders of the three leading Allied Powers proclaimed the intention to summon the free nations of the world to create the Organisation of the United Nations. The inaugural assembly of the nations was announced, early in 1945, to take place in San Francisco, where the Charter of the United Nations was to be formulated as the foundation of the structure of the democratic post-war world. In such a Charter the Jewish people had obvious and direct interests. These interests were clearly envisaged and set forth in the Declaration of Atlantic City, and it became essential to attempt, at least, to procure a hearing for Jewish views on matters fundamentally affecting their future peace, liberty and security, as individuals and as a collectivity, as citizens of the countries in which they might reside, and as members of the racial, religious and cultural community of Jews. As the projected Conference of the United Nations was to be an assembly of sovereign States, the Jewish people could find no formal status

entitling them to representation. Notwithstanding the urgency and the appositeness of Jewish views and experience, the only part the Jewish people could play in an international conference of sovereign nations was to seek the means of submitting views to the delegations and impressing them upon the delegates through discussion. The presence of Jewish bodies at San Francisco became, therefore, a matter of practical necessity. Had Jewish organisations learned the full lessons of experience and had they achieved the full understanding of responsibility, means might have been found to secure a common front within or in association with the World Jewish Congress. As so often in the tragic past, however, a multiplicity of Jewish organisations, societies, institutions and groups found their way to San Francisco when the opening of the United Nations Conference was announced for April 25, 1945.

The World Jewish Congress acted in association with the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews in the preparation and submission of a Joint Memorandum embodying proposals for inclusion in the proposed Charter of the United Nations considered essential for the future well-being and security of Jews in a world based on democracy, liberty and human right of all peoples and nations. Members of the Executive of the Congress formed, with representatives of the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies, a Joint Committee which continued in operation throughout the meetings of delegations engaged in framing the Charter and until its completion. Under the direction of Dr. Jacob Robinson, of the Institute of Jewish Affairs, the Research Department of the World Jewish Congress, the Joint Committee formulated and presented many proposals and amendments, particularly in the clauses of the Charter dealing with Human Rights and Trusteeship. A number of changes in the Draft Charter were secured through the efforts of members of the Joint Committee.

The British Section was represented on this Joint Committee by Mr. A. L. Easterman.

### **The Horror of the Camps :**

In April, 1945, when the Allied armies were sweeping across Germany, driving the defeated and disrupted forces of the Wehrmacht in hopeless confusion before them, the abysmal savagery of the Nazi reign of terror against the Jews of Europe was revealed, in all its hitherto inconceivable horror, by the over-running of the death and concentration camps of the Third Reich. The first sight of the notorious Bergen-Belsen Camp on April 11, 1945, sent chills of revolted dismay through the hearts of the British liberating forces which entered it—ten thousand unburied corpses lay about rotting in carrion-like confusion; 13,000 men and women dying of starvation and disease; thousands of emaciated, barely alive human beings packed like animals in overcrowded, dark and disease-ridden huts. The vast majority of these human remnants were but a small proportion of what had once been the Jewish citizens of Europe's civilised countries. Later came Dachau, Buchenwald, Gross Rosen, Mauthausen and scores of others.

The Allied Commanders, aghast and horrified, called the attention of the world to the incredible evidence of the barbarities of Hitler's jungle state. In messages to the Governments of the Allied countries, the commanders invited them to send accredited representatives to witness the black iniquities perpetrated by the Germans. The British Government at once sent a Parliamentary Delegation to Buchenwald and Dachau. Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., Chairman of the

British Section, was appointed a member of this delegation and was a signatory to the Report, published as a White Paper, recording in gruesome and terrible detail the savageries which the world had, before, been reluctant and often unwilling to believe. It is recalled that when the British Section, in 1942 and 1943, had repeatedly drawn public attention to the mass torture and murder of the Jews of Europe, a sceptical world discounted the reports as exaggerated figments of Jewish imagination, and, sometimes as "Jewish propaganda."

### The War Crimes Trials :

One immediate result of these disclosures was a world-wide outcry for the punishment of the Nazi-Fascist criminals responsible for these outrages. The Report submitted to the National Conference of the British Section in October, 1943, described the close attention given by the World Jewish Congress to the question of War Crimes and the punishment of their perpetrators. Since the setting up of the United Nations Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes, in October, 1942, the Congress, and particularly the British Section, has ceaselessly pursued, through its political and legal departments, researches into the technical character of war crimes, with special reference to their Jewish aspect, and has made continuous representations to the Allied Governments to secure the apprehension, trial and punishment of those responsible for the planning and execution of the vast crimes against the Jews of Europe.

In memoranda formally presented to the United Nations Commission and in discussion with its first chairman, Sir Cecil Hurst, and later, with his successor, Lord Wright, as well as with members of the Commission and with governmental representatives, the British Section, in consultation with the Executive in New York and the Institute of Jewish Affairs, set out the grounds for the indictment of war criminals on specific charges of crimes against the Jews. The principal considerations put forward were : the crimes against the Jews were of a specific and special character ; they were elements in a conspiracy designed to destroy the Jews irrespective of nationality ; the conspiracy and the crimes committed in consequence of it began in 1933 ; the crimes against the Jews were part of a general Nazi conspiracy to wage aggressive war ; the launching of an aggressive war was in itself a crime ; the crimes against the Jews, for reasons of race or religion, if not specifically envisaged in international law, were crimes against humanity and therefore punishable.

Long and difficult discussion and argumentation ensued on these concepts submitted to the authorities concerned. At first, and for a considerable time, few of the Allied legal and political experts were inclined to accept them but gradually opposition was overcome. When the announcement was made of the intention of the Allied Governments to put on trial the major war criminals, and with the appointment of Justice Robert J. Jackson, Judge of the United States Supreme Court, as Principal Prosecutor, the Congress redoubled its efforts to secure that the proposals in respect of crimes against the Jews should be included in the Indictments. It was urged, further, that the Indictments should specify charges relating to these crimes.

The Executive are happy to record that their work in respect of war crimes has met with complete success, achieved finally through negotiations in Washington with Justice Jackson undertaken by Dr. Jacob Robinson, Director of the Institute of Jewish Affairs. On behalf of the British Section, Mr. A. L. Easterman participated, with Dr. Robinson, in consultations with Justice Jackson.

Most noteworthy was the success attained in securing that, at the trial of the major War Criminals at Nuremberg, the Prosecution presented a Special Case relating to the crimes against the Jews. A very considerable part of the material acquired for this part of the Prosecution was provided by the Congress.

One particularly important factor in the proposals put forward by the Congress was for Jewish representation at trials of the war criminals. The specific request was for the appointment of a Jewish *amicus curiae* to assist the War Crimes Tribunals. This proposal the Allied authorities found it impossible to accept, but on the announcement of the first war crimes' trial by a British Military Court, of the Germans accused of crimes committed at Belsen and Auschwitz, the British Section requested representation, on behalf of the World Jewish Congress. This request was granted and Mr. A. L. Easterman was delegated to represent the Congress. When the trial opened at Lueneburg on September 19, 1945, Mr. Easterman was accorded the status of "Official Observer," on equal footing with the representatives of ten Allied Governments and was given a place, with them, on the Judges Bench.

At the Nuremberg Trial of the Major War Criminals, the Congress was granted the privilege of attendance as observers and was represented by Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., and Mr. Easterman. Dr. Robinson was invited as Consultant to the United States Prosecution and performed notable service in assisting in the preparation of the Jewish Case.

#### **Jewish Displaced Persons' Conference :**

While the Belsen Criminals' Trial was in progress at Lueneburg, the Jewish Central Committee at Bergen-Belsen summoned a Conference of Jewish Displaced Persons in the British Zone of Occupied Germany. The World Jewish Congress having been invited to attend, the Executive delegated Mr. Silverman and Mr. Easterman to represent them. The Conference proved to be a most remarkable gathering.

More than 250 delegates from the 30 "assembly centres" throughout Occupied Germany, together with nearly 2,000 visitors, all survivors of the Nazi horror camps, attended the Conference. This Conference was a remarkable demonstration of Jewish vitality and the capacity for survival by men and women who, notwithstanding their sufferings and losses, exhibited in their deliberations an energy and acumen of an altogether unusual character. Their consciousness of Jewish problems as a whole, as well as of the particular political, social and economic issues affecting their own situation, proved to be altogether unexpected and of the highest order. Their skill in organisation appeared unimpaired by years of imprisonment and torture, their courage and determination were phenomenal. Their pride and zeal in the causes of the Jewish people have not been dimmed by their long subjection to the cruelest persecution as Jews ; their proud resolution to persist in survival as Jews, to maintain the traditions of the Jewish people and to pursue the ideals of Jewish nationalism proved to be not only incomparable, but a striking example to the Jews throughout the world who had remained free from the tyrannies to which they, the survivors of European Jewry, had been subjected.

To attend this Conference was an exhilaration and an inspiration to the representatives of the World Jewish Congress who participated in their proceedings.

Mr. Silverman and Mr. Easterman addressed the Conference on behalf of the World Jewish Congress, and in many consultations with the leaders of the Jewish Displaced Persons discussed the numerous problems affecting their present wellbeing and their future prospects and desires.

#### **Conditions in the Camps :**

As a result of representations made to the responsible British military and other authorities in Germany, important improvements in the conditions of the "assembly centres," notably that of Bergen-Belsen itself, were secured. In particular, the armed Polish guards at, and the barbed wire fencing surrounding the camps were immediately removed; greater facilities were obtained for the leaders of the Jewish Central Committee to administer the camps on behalf of the Jewish Displaced Persons; promises were given by the authorities to reduce overcrowding and to provide facilities for the supply from Jewish organisations abroad of clothing for the Jewish inhabitants of the camps; representations were made to enable Jewish Displaced Persons to communicate with their relatives and friends abroad.

The British Section continued to make representations to the Control Office for Germany and Austria in respect of specific questions arising from time to time relating to the situation of the Jewish Displaced Persons in Occupied Germany. On a number of occasions the officers of the British Section have had consultations with Mr. John Hynd, M.P., Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Minister in charge of the Control Office.

In February, 1946, Mr. Joseph Rosensaft, Chairman of the Jewish Central Committee at Bergen-Belsen, and Dr. P. Auerbach, President of the Jewish Communities of the North Rhine Provinces, visited London and had many consultations with the officers of the British Section, and with them had an important conference with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The Jewish Central Committee, which is now affiliated to the World Jewish Congress, maintains regular communication and consultation with the Executives of the World Jewish Congress in London and New York, and looks to the Congress as its spokesman on political and other matters affecting the welfare and future of the Jewish Displaced Persons in Germany.

Having regard to the deplorable conditions in the Displaced Persons Camps and particularly the lack of warm clothing, the British Section pursued the reports of its representatives who visited Bergen-Belsen, initiated extensive action throughout Great Britain for the collection and despatch of suitable clothing supplies, and made representations to the various relief organisations to redouble their efforts in this direction. In addition urgent requests were made to the Executives in New York to take similar measures in the United States. As a result, considerable supplies of clothing and clothing materials were despatched in the course of the following months to various assembly centres in Germany and elsewhere in Europe. The Congress organisations in Latin America, Canada and elsewhere have been instrumental in providing those essential supplies as well as food to enable the Jewish Displaced Persons to face the hard winter which confronted them.

The Marchioness of Reading and Dr. I. Schwarzbart represented the World Jewish Congress at the Conference of Jewish Displaced Persons in the American Zone of Germany held in Munich in January. This Conference, which was attended by representatives of the American military and other authorities, and by the leading members of the German administration in the area, proved to be a

gathering no less remarkable and important than that at Bergen-Belsen. Lady Reading and Dr. Schwarzbart, besides addressing the Conference and conferring with the leaders of the Jewish Central Committee at Munich, visited a number of "assembly centres" for Jewish Displaced Persons, and submitted a full and detailed report of the conditions in these camps and of the needs and desires of their inhabitants. Appropriate representations were made to the Military and Civil authorities in respect of a number of problems of immediate concern to the Jews in the American Zone.

### **The Future of European Jewry :**

By the summer of 1945, the growing urgency of the many and varied problems arising out of the liberation of what remained of the Jewish communities of Europe, made it necessary to seek direct and organisational contact with their leaders. Such reports as had already reached the Executives of the World Jewish Congress in London and New York, chiefly through the Congress Office in Geneva (during the dark years of the war the only window in Europe through which the Jews of the outside world could obtain a faint glimpse into the dark recesses of the Nazi-ravaged Continent), had demonstrated that the exhilarations of liberty and escape from death could only be momentary emotions of relief. In reality, Victory had brought release but also pain and anxiety beyond measure to the scattered and sadly depleted remains of the Jewish people in Europe, and to their brethren abroad. It was soon revealed that of the great Jewry of Poland, the centuries-old heart of Jewish tradition, learning and religion, a bare 100,000 or less remained out of 3,500,000 ; one-half of the Jews of Rumania, about 400,000 had perished ; Hungary had lost, also, nearly 400,000 out of its Jewish population of 800,000 ; the Jews of Holland had all but disappeared ; Belgium's Jews had been reduced to 30,000 ; none remained of the Jewries of the Baltic States ; German Jewry had, to all intents and purposes, completely vanished. The toll of Jewish lives was catastrophically heavy—tragedy almost unbearable in its magnitude and poignancy. With the survivors, however, the problems were many and deeply profound, in extent and character. As the war drove to on its climax, the World Jewish Congress had endeavoured to envisage the needs of the Jews who might emerge alive from it and had tried to plan for their recovery and restoration to at least a semblance of normality. The Congress' experts had laboured unceasingly to draw up the blue prints of European Jewry in a freed post-war world. The results of their planning were contained in the Resolutions and schemes adopted by the War Emergency Conference of Atlantic City, in November, 1944.

### **European Conference :**

It was soon appreciated, however, that this planning, elaborate and constructive though it might be, could not be realistic without taking into account the experiences, the needs and the desires of the Jews who were its object. Accordingly, the executive of the Congress decided to invite the representatives of European Jewry to meet for consultation, to plan common action and to take their place in the collectivity of the Jewish people from which they had been separated for so long. The Special European Conference met in London on August 19, 1945. This assembly of representative delegations from almost all of the liberated countries was of a unique character. It was the first time, since the outbreak of the war, that Jews from the occupied countries were able to obtain contact with their fellow Jews outside ; many of them had been members of the resistance movements and daily lived in peril of death ; some had survived all the terrors of the concentration camp ; almost all had lost their families and friends in the inhuman slaughter houses of Nazi Europe and had been despoiled of their posses-

sions. The part they played in the work of the Conference in London proved them to be worthy sons and daughters of the proud and steadfast Jewish people. They brought courage incomparable, ability undiminished, vitality unimpaired and Jewish zeal unmatched. If their physical survival had been something of a miracle, their spiritual survival proved the unquenchable spark which has inspired Jewish life through twenty centuries of dispersion. With calm and objective realism, the delegates from liberated Europe examined and deliberated upon the plans and proposals which had been prepared for them by the War Emergency Conference ; with skill and statesmanship they amended, added and improved, in the light of their experience and the facts of the Jewish situation as they saw and understood it. In co-operating with the executives of the World Jewish Congress to formulate the bases upon which Jewish life in Europe could be reconstructed and in planning the future of European Jewry they exhibited knowledge and acumen far beyond the expectation of their colleagues from the countries which war and the savageries of the Nazi enemy had barely touched. The Conference considered and adopted a series of resolutions covering all aspects of the current and future issues affecting the basic requirements and desires of the surviving Jews of Europe. These resolutions now form the governing policies for the work of the World Jewish Congress in Europe.

The resolutions of Atlantic City were modified by the conference to conform with new conditions and new facts and were unanimously adopted. An interesting and hopeful feature of the proceedings was the readiness of the Communist delegates to co-operate with their fellow-Jews to fulfil the great tasks resolved upon.

After the Conference the individual delegations had consultations with the World Executive to discuss their particular needs and their active association with the Congress. One of the most gratifying results of the Conference was the decision of many delegations to reconstitute their affiliation as constituent members of the Congress and to play once again an active part in the strengthening of Jewish solidarity through the World Jewish Congress.

#### New Affiliations :

Symptomatic of the revival of Jewish corporate life in Europe after the ravages of war and the horrors of annihilation has been the resumption of interest in general Jewish affairs expressed through association with the World Jewish Congress. The officers are highly gratified to report that, since the liberation of Europe, the following affiliations to the Congress have taken place :—

FRANCE : Congress Delegation of representatives of the principal Jewish organisations.

BELGIUM : Representative Congress Section.

RUMANIA : Congress Section representative of all parties.

HUNGARY : Congress Section representative of all parties.

BULGARIA : Jewish Consistory of Bulgaria.

ITALY : Union of Italian Jewish Communities.

GREECE : Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece, Athens.

AUSTRIA : Jewish Community of Vienna.

SLOVAKIA : Central Jewish Community of Slovakia.

SWEDEN : Congress Section representative of all parties.

GERMANY : Union of Jewish Communities of the North Rhine Province and Westphalia.

Central Jewish Committee of Displaced Jews in the British Zone.

Central Jewish Committee of Displaced Jews in the American Zone.

The Congress has now established offices or has its affiliated representatives in the majority of the European capitals and is thus in a unique position to obtain information and to undertake action on political and other matters affecting the various communities and to take counsel with them on affairs of general Jewish concern.

A representative body of Jews in Shanghai and adjacent areas has been formed as the China Section of the Congress.

### Peace Treaties :

On the certain assumption that victory over the Nazi and Fascist regimes would be eventually achieved, the legal and political experts of the World Jewish Congress, in London and New York, pursued during the war researches into the issues which would affect the Jews who might survive in Europe, in the Treaties of Peace with the defeated countries. For a considerable time, naturally, the problems thus considered were largely of an academic character, although the broad principles of Jewish equality, rights and status were clear enough. With the advance from liberation to post-war planning, the necessities of the Jewish people in the way of the protection of their life, security and liberties, of their rights and claims arising out of persecution and war, steadily gained in clarity and precision. The formulae adopted by the Congress Conferences in Atlantic City and London, the memoranda on Jewish claims submitted to the San Francisco Conference and the United Nations, the documentation submitted at various times to such international organisations as U.N.R.R.A., U.N.E.S.C.O. and the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees, formed together an aggregate of Jewish claims and demands expressed in precise form and technical detail. It remained for these formulations to be given actuality by inclusion in the Peace Treaties.

Since the beginning of 1946 much thought has been given by the officers of the World Jewish Congress to secure the presentation to and adoption by the Allied Governments which would eventually present their former enemies with the formal terms of peace. This has required the presentation of fresh documentation, in the preparation of which the World Jewish Congress has been engaged in recent months in association with the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, under their agreement for common consultation. The scheme of this work is to formulate Jewish schemes and proposals applicable to the Jews of each country with whom a Peace Treaty is to be made.

In preparing this documentation the World Jewish Congress has adopted as basic the necessity of securing and giving effect to the views of the Jews in the countries concerned, and has, consequently, through its affiliated organisations in Rumania, Hungary, Italy and Bulgaria, obtained their proposals for adoption in the representations to be submitted to the peace making Powers. The policy of the World Jewish Congress has been that the desires of the Jews "on the spot" are the primary and governing consideration in any views or proposals for submission to any Peace Conference.

Besides the technical preparation, much political work is involved in connection with the Jewish Peace Treaty proposals. This work, often difficult and complicated, is being pursued through discussions with the various government departments concerned in the preparation of the Peace Treaties. Much remains to be done in this direction, and the World Jewish Congress, in close association with its constituent organisations in the affected countries, is continuing its efforts to secure recognition of the just and essential claims of the Jewish people in respect of their current situation and future security.



### Agreement with other Bodies :

In order to co-ordinate the views of all Jewish communities throughout the world in the work of formulating Jewish views on questions of common concern and with a view of reducing as far as possible the multiplicity of representations to international agencies, the World Jewish Congress has agreed, as a temporary measure, to the co-operation with it of the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews as the principal representative Jewish organisations not yet affiliated with the World Jewish Congress. In the pursuance of this policy the Congress entered into an agreement in January, 1945, with these two bodies, for joint consultation and wherever possible and desirable, joint presentation of agreed memoranda to international agencies engaged in the work of post-war reconstruction. Such joint memoranda have been prepared and submitted to U.N.R.R.A., the International Conference on Reparations, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the United Nations Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons. Joint consultations are now in progress with a view of presentation of proposals relating to the Peace Treaties with Hungary, Rumania, Italy and Bulgaria. The agreement operates technically through a Joint Secretariat in London in which the World Jewish Congress is represented by Dr. N. Barou, in association with Dr. A. Steinberg, Dr. R. Bienenfeld, Dr. P. Weis, and Mr. A. Liverhant as advisers.

### CURRENT AFFAIRS

It is not possible without extensive elaboration, to deal in this report with the manifold problems with which the British Section of the World Jewish Congress has been concerned, and on which they have taken action during the two and a half years since the last National Conference ; almost every country in Europe and many other countries throughout the world have produced difficult questions affecting their Jewish populations. The Executive Officers therefore confine themselves in this report to a brief summary of the more important political matters in which they are currently engaged.

#### Poland :

The virtually total annihilation of Polish Jewry and the sufferings of the Polish people themselves under the Nazi yoke have unfortunately not eradicated the deep-seated anti-semitism which characterised Poland before the war. Notwithstanding the fact that less than 100,000 Polish Jews remained alive in Poland by the end of the war and despite the incalculable losses suffered by Polish Jewry, anti-semitism still persists there, and has evinced itself in physical attacks upon and threats to Jewish life and property. A life of present peace and future security has become impossible for the comparative handful of Jews left in Poland. Notwithstanding the goodwill of the present Polish Government towards the Jews, its sincere public declarations against anti-semitic manifestations, and threats of action against those who practise them, the Jewish position in Poland has steadily deteriorated. In consequence, thousands of Jews have, since the end of the war, felt obliged to leave the country and the process of emigration still continues.

The World Jewish Congress, through the Executives in New York and London, and by delegations to Poland, have made repeated representations to the Polish Government with a view of ensuring that the now small Jewish population should be freed from the menace of anti-semitic attack. The Polish Government has received these representations with expressions of their complete understanding and sincere intention to protect the Jews as free and equal citizens of the

Polish Republic. It is abundantly clear that the recurrent attacks upon the Jews in Poland is the work of reactionary elements hostile to the present Polish Government, who employ anti-semitism as the traditional method of securing their political aims.

#### **Bohemia and Moravia :**

It is to be deeply regretted that in the liberated democratic state of Czechoslovakia the position of the Jews has become difficult and uncertain. Here, too, Jewish losses in life and property have been calamitous. Out of a pre-war population of 360,000 there are now no more than 65,000 Jews left.

Before the war, Czechoslovakia was unique among the countries of Europe for the almost total absence of any manifestation of anti-semitism. The long years of Nazi occupation and the persistent inculcation of Nazi doctrines has left an aftermath of which anti-semitism is a principal factor. In the new unified state of Czechoslovakia the Jews have lost their national minority status ; they must now be either Czechs or Slovaks. Notwithstanding the devastating losses of property suffered by Jews through Nazi robbery and confiscation, little has been done to restore their possessions to them or to compensate them, despite the proclaimed policy of the Government for restitution to the victims of Nazi persecution and the enactments published to give effect to it. In the "security measures" of the Czechoslovak Government against Germans and other enemies of the State, no distinction has as yet been made in favour of Jews who were technically of German nationality and who, under the Czechoslovak constitution, exercised their legal right to opt for German "nationality" or for the use of German as their national language. Despite the fact that these Jews were the victims of Nazi persecution they are still deemed liable, as Germans, to expatriation and confiscation of their property. Having been discriminated against by the Germans, these Jews are now being discriminated against by Czechoslovakia. This is the position in Bohemia and Moravia.

#### **Slovakia :**

In Slovakia the Jewish situation is one causing the gravest anxiety. Anti-semitism is as virulent as before the war in this always anti-semitic country. The autonomous Government contains a large proportion, many of them in leading positions, of avowed anti-semites who served the Fascist Government under the Nazi regime. They have obstructed and failed to carry out the decrees for restitution of Jewish and other property confiscated and stolen during the war ; many of the Government officials are themselves the benefactors of this confiscation and spoliation and have profited by it.

#### **Sub-Carpatho Russia :**

A particularly grave problem in Czechoslovakia is that of the Sub-Carpatho Russian Jews. Under the recent Treaty by which this territory was ceded by Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union, the Jews were refused the right to opt for Czech or Slovak nationality. Before the Treaty was entered into, about 6,000 Sub-Carpatho Jews emigrated to Bohemia and Moravia and applied for Czechoslovak citizenship. This citizenship has not yet been granted to them and they are under threat of forced repatriation, a measure which is contrary to the declared and accepted policies of the United Nations under which persons may not be repatriated to their countries of origin against their will.

In December, 1945, Mr. A. L. Easterman, on behalf of the World Jewish Congress, visited Prague. In a lengthy interview with President Benes and

Prime Minister Fierlinger, Mr. Easternman discussed these and other problems. Both the President and the Prime Minister gave assurances that discriminatory measures would not be taken against the Jews in common with other victims of Nazi persecution, but under the new Czechoslovak State, Jews would be accorded full equality and freedom and that restitution of their stolen and confiscated property would be carried out. There can be no question of the goodwill and good intentions of the President and Government of Czechoslovakia, but it must be stated with regret that these assurances have not, as yet, been put into practical effect. The World Jewish Congress is continuing and will continue to impress upon the Czechoslovak Government the urgency of removing the disabilities and uncertainties under which the Jews of Czechoslovakia are now living.

#### **Tripoli :**

Representations have been made to the British Government in respect of the recent anti-Jewish riots in Tripoli, causing losses of many Jewish lives and the destruction of much Jewish property. The Congress has urged the fullest enquiry and compensation for the Jewish victims of the disturbances together with adequate measures for their protection. No substantive action on these reports has as yet, been taken and the representations are still being continued.

#### **Argentina :**

During and since the war, anti-semitic agitation has been rife and often violent in the Argentine Republic. This agitation has taken the form of incitement in the press and attacks upon Jewish property. Reports have indicated that these have been conducted with the connivance and sometimes with the assistance of the police and Governmental authorities. Strong representations have been made to the Argentine Government through its Ambassadors in London and Washington and the situation has been put before the British and American Governments. There have been fears that the conditions of the Jews in the Argentine would be intensified by the election of the anti-democratic Colonel Peron to the Presidency of the Republic. The situation is being carefully watched.

#### **China :**

Serious concern has been created by the recent decree of the Chinese Government in Chungking providing for repatriation and confiscation of property of German and other enemy nations in China. The wide terms of this decree have made no exception in the case of the more than 12,000 Jewish refugees formerly of German and Austrian nationality who fled from these countries on the advance of the Nazi regime and in consequence of the Nazi terror against the Jews. The strongest representations have been made to the Chinese Government pointing out the injustice of this measure which imperils so many Jewish victims of Hitlerism and Fascism in Europe. It has been pointed out to the Chinese Government that the decree violates the policy adopted by the United Nations in respect that persons must not be repatriated to the countries of their origin against their will. Verbal and written communications embodying these views have been made to the Chinese Government in Chungking, through the Chinese Embassies in London and Washington, but so far no satisfactory reply has been received, although the Chinese Government has expressed its desire and intention not to inflict any hardship on Jewish refugees. Discussions on this matter have taken place with the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees which has been apprised of the situation and has itself made representations to the Chinese Government.

## Afghanistan

The 5,000 Jews now remaining in Afghanistan (many of them descendants of families who have lived in the country for 1,000 years) are being subjected to a virtual reign of terror. They are subject to political social and economic discrimination and many are being imprisoned without charges being made against them.

The status of the Jews is tantamount to slavery, and they are the victims of a cruel racial policy largely the result of German propaganda before and during the early years of the war.

Jews are being forced to concentrate in ghettos in Kabul and in one or two other of the larger cities. Their personal possessions and property and commercial licenses have been taken away from them without compensation, they are prohibited from many of the commercial enterprises open to other Afghanistan citizens, and are confined to petty trading and hawking.

There appears to be Governmental endorsement of, or at least acquiescence in, anti-Jewish propaganda and incitement.

During the recent visit to India of Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., and Mr. Camille Honig, representations were made to the Government of India in respect of 300 Jewish refugees from Afghanistan who are now living in Bombay, destitute of the bare necessities of life and in appalling conditions of squalor. They, too, are victims of the intolerable Jewish situation in Afghanistan.

Mr. Silverman has drawn the attention of the India Office in London to this matter and representations have been made to the Government of Afghanistan.

## PALESTINE

Since its formal inauguration in 1936, the World Jewish Congress has pledged its support to the policy of the Jewish National Home in Palestine as the ultimate and radical solution of the homelessness of the Jewish people with its attendant ills of refugeeism, anti-semitism, inequality, discrimination and attack. At its foundation Conference in Geneva in August, 1936, the Congress unanimously affirmed its pledge of "full support in the task of safeguarding the right of the Jewish people to the widest opportunity of immigration and construction work in Palestine," and for "the hope and efforts of the Jewish people for the rehabilitation of their National Home."

On the occasion of the Evian Conference on Refugees summoned in July, 1938, on the initiative of the late President Roosevelt, the Congress submitted a memorandum stating that the Jewish refugee problem could and should not be discussed without taking into account the immense importance of the possibilities which Palestine offered as a haven of refuge for Europe's wandering Jews. After outlining the phenomenal progress in creating the Jewish National Home the Congress declared: "We take the liberty of wishing that the Conference may take into account the special importance of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, capable of sheltering large numbers of political refugees, and that it may commend political and financial measures liable to facilitate Jewish immigration to Palestine."

The Congress has consistently pursued the policy of full support of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in relation to immigration and settlement in Palestine with a view of firmly establishing the Jewish National Home in accordance with the provisions of the Balfour Declaration and the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine. From this policy the Congress has not deviated, and on the adoption of the Biltmore programme the Congress has adhered to its support of the Jewish Agency in calling for the establishment of a Jewish State or Commonwealth in Palestine.

In all its representations and declarations of policy relating to Jewish problems arising out of the war and in respect of questions of the recovery and reconstruction of Jewish life resulting from refugees of war and the destruction of European Jewry, the Congress has asserted that no plan of Jewish rehabilitation can adequately meet the necessities of the Jewish people without the fullest political and economic development of Palestine leading to its establishment as a Jewish State. This view was embodied in the representations made by the World Jewish Congress to the Bermuda Conference on Refugees in April, 1943 and in the memoranda submitted to Unrra at its Council Meetings in September, 1944, at Montreal, and in August, 1945, in London.

The War Emergency Conference of the World Jewish Congress at Atlantic City, in November, 1944, unanimously adopted a resolution declaring that it "associates itself with the programme of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and its claims that, in the new democratic era assuring peace, freedom and equality among nations, there must be a definitive and permanent termination of the national homelessness of the Jewish people by the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth."

At the San Francisco Conference, in April, 1945, to inaugurate the United Nations Organisation, the World Jewish Congress, in association with the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, submitted

a joint memorandum stating *inter alia* "that the reconstitution of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth is of prime importance for the future of the Jewish people as a whole, and an affirmative solution of this question is the *conditio sine qua non* for Jewish rehabilitation, especially after the horrors and tribulations of the last decade."

In this memorandum, the World Jewish Congress gave unqualified support to the representations submitted to the Conference by the Jewish Agency for Palestine, and endorsed "the demands and recommendations of the Agency concerning any proposed changes in the present Mandatory system as they may affect the rights, status and interests of the Jewish people."

The Special European Conference of the World Jewish Congress held in London, in August, 1945, unanimously resolved that it "fully endorses the demand that the Palestine White Paper of 1939 should be immediately abrogated, that the gates of Palestine should be opened to unrestricted immigration, and urges that the United Nations should without delay give their approval for the establishment of a Jewish Democratic State for Palestine."

The British Section, together with the other constituent organisations of the World Jewish Congress, has actively and consistently pursued this policy in connection with all its activities relative to rehabilitation, emigration and resettlement and the future of Jewish Displaced Persons and orphan children in Europe.

Following the statement on Palestine by Mr. Ernest Bevin, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on November 13th, 1945, making a distinction between Zionists and "Jewry as a whole," the World Jewish Congress issued a statement repudiating this view and declaring that "the World Jewish Congress speaking for Jewish communities and organisations in more than 32 countries, and expressing what is without question the attitude of the great majority of the Jews of the world, completely repudiates the existence of any such distinction. The World Jewish Congress and Jews everywhere will continue to give to the Jewish Agency for Palestine . . . fullest support in its battle for the rights of the Jewish people with regard to Palestine. We declare and feel it our duty to affirm that any such attempt to shatter the unity of the Jewish people in this hour is not only indefensible but it will utterly fail."

On December 12th, 1945, Mr. Bevin addressed to Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., Chairman of the British Section, the following letter :—

"In answer to your letter of the 6th December, I write to assure you that the phrase "Jewish home" which I used in the House of Commons on the 13th November was intended to be understood as an abbreviation of the phrase "National Home for the Jewish people," which appears in the Balfour Declaration and in the preamble of the Mandate for Palestine. His Majesty's Government have no intention of evading their obligations under those instruments, which of course, include facilitating the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people."

On the announcement of the appointment of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine, the Executive of the World Jewish Congress in New York delegated the Executive of the British Section to present a statement and to give evidence on behalf of the Congress, during the Committee's sittings in London. This statement was presented on 25th January, and was followed by oral evidence submitted on 31st January, 1946. The Congress was represented at the oral hearing of the Committee by Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., Dr. N. Barou and Mr. A. L.

**Easterman.** A printed transcript of the written and oral statements has been circulated to constituent organisations and individual members of the British Section. Mr. Justice Singleton, Chairman of the Committee of Enquiry stated at the public hearing that the Committee "have a most useful memorandum from you and it contains a lot of useful detail . . . you may take it that it has been read by members of the Committee."

# RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

## I. ORGANISATION

In the process of a general reorganisation of the British Section a special Research and Information Department was formed out of the existing Research Committee. The new department, set up in March, 1945, continues the work of the original Committee formed in 1942, as a panel of experts for consultation on problems requiring special knowledge and to collect technical information basic to political action.

The Committee has had the co-operation of more than 20 scholars and experts on various aspects of Jewish life. Their generous co-operation is most warmly appreciated.

The Committee has maintained close association with the Research Department of the World Jewish Congress and, by arrangement with the Institute in New York, has undertaken certain particular activities. The contact with the Institute was further strengthened in the course of the five Plenary Meetings of the Committee held in 1944-1945, in which Dr. Jacob Robinson, Director of the Institute, and Dr. A. Tartakover, Director of the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of the Congress, took part.

A fruitful collaboration was also developed with other Jewish bodies engaged on similar problems requiring research study. In 1944 a Joint Commission of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and our Research Group prepared a comprehensive draft of Jewish demands for the post-war period. Later, Joint Committees of the Board of Deputies, the American Jewish Conference, the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the British Section, worked on such problems as the Jewish aspect of Restitution, Reparation, War Crimes and Cultural Rehabilitation.

In conformity with the original distribution of work within the Research Committee, the activities of the Research Department have been subdivided among various sections under the general co-ordinating direction of Dr. A. Steinberg, assisted by Mrs. A. Klausner.

## II. LEGAL SECTION

The most active branch of the Research Department in the period under review was the Legal Section, under the Chairmanship of Dr. F. R. Bienenfeld, supported by the secretary, Dr. P. Weis. Dr. Weis is also responsible for a circular under the title "Report and Evaluation of Legal Events" which presents a monthly survey and analysis of legal enactments and documents bearing on Jewish life and interests.

### 1. War Crimes

One of the foremost problems considered by the Section was to find the legal basis on which the persecution of the Jews since 1933 by Germany and her associates could be fitted into the framework of present International Law. A legal conception was put forward to the effect that all the innumerable crimes committed in the pre-war years and during the war against the Jews should be considered as part of a single comprehensive plot to exterminate the Jewish people as such, conceived in flagrant violation of the universally accepted laws of humanity.

In a number of memoranda presented to the United Nations Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes, as well as to the representatives of the various Governments, supported by verbal discussions, the Jewish case was formulated



in definitive terms as an integral part of the general indictment against War Criminals.

The work of our Legal Section in London was complemented by our colleagues in the United States, and in the preparatory work, the Legal Section had the benefit of the able assistance of Dr. F. Kobler. To our common satisfaction, the international agreements relating to the prosecution of the Major Criminals bear witness that the legal ideas conceived by us were an adequate anticipation of the main trend of opinion among the leading legal experts of the United Nations.

The Legal Section is continuing the study of the newly accepted principles of International Criminal Law. It maintains contact with the United Nations War Crimes Commission and with appropriate Jewish bodies, particularly in Palestine, Switzerland and Poland.

## 2. Restoration of Jewish Rights

One of the most important topics which engaged the Legal Section was the restoration of Jewish rights after the downfall of the Hitler and Fascist regimes. Close attention has been given to the legislation of the liberated countries repealing discriminatory laws and restoring the equality of Jewish citizens. The problem of the restitution of property rights has presented intricate legal problems and has involved considerable preparatory work.

As early as 1943 a special Committee on Restitution was set up and included, besides members of the Legal Section, some non-members with special knowledge in this field. A number of memoranda were drafted incorporating certain specific demands which, in the views of the Committee, made special legislation necessary.

Since the liberation of Europe the Legal Section has collected and examined the relevant legislation enacted by the Allied Military authorities and the Governments of the liberated countries, in the light of the special Jewish requirements as prescribed in the resolutions of the Emergency Conference at Atlantic City, the European Conference in London and amplified and interpreted in the drafts prepared by the Legal Section.

Whenever it was found that governmental or military action did not sufficiently take account of these Jewish requirements, the Legal Section drew the attention of the Executive Committee to these facts and recommended appropriate action.

The extermination of nearly 6,000,000 Jews in Europe has created the specific legal problem of the fact of the vast amount of *Jewish property left without heirs*. While, according to general law of all countries, heirless estates revert to the State, the Legal Section has emphasised the injustice that Governments, particularly those of enemy States, should profit from the crime committed against European Jewry. This property should be used for the benefit of the Jewish people, and for the rehabilitation of the surviving remnants of European Jewry.

The complicated problems of national and private international law involved in this question were made the subject of close study. The Chairman of the Legal Section, Dr. Bienenfeld, visited New York in 1944, for discussions with the World Executive, and recently visited Switzerland in order to investigate the question of heirless Jewish assets in this and other neutral countries.

It is especially gratifying that enactments in various countries recently published conform with this line of approach, and that in particular a recent Greek law explicitly provides that heirless Jewish property in Greece shall be made available to a special fund for the rehabilitation of Greek Jewry.

### 3. Reparations

The demand was voiced by Jewish organisations that the Jewish people, which has suffered such terrible losses at the hands of the enemy, should have a share in the reparations on the same basis as any other nation at war with Germany.

It soon became clear, however, that the request for a reparation share for the Jewish people would not be acceded to, and our efforts were, therefore, concentrated on the problem of including in the general reparations scheme those Jewish victims of German or Fascist persecution who would not benefit even indirectly by reparations because they were stateless or former nationals of enemy States.

Another problem in this field which occupied the Legal Section was the danger that Jewish property might itself be seized in the course of reparation measures because the owners were considered as enemy nationals or because it had passed into non-Jewish hands or into State ownership in the course of the "Aryanisation" of Jewish property.

A special committee consisting of representatives of the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish Agency, the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews dealt with these problems; representatives of these organisations, among them Dr. Jacob Robinson, proceeded to Paris to present these Jewish demands to the delegates of the various Allied Governments taking part in the Conference on Reparations there in November and December, 1945.

The Conference, in fact, allocated a reparation share to non-repatriable victims of German oppression who cannot claim the assistance of any Government receiving reparations from Germany, and recognised, in principle, that claims for restitution should have preference before reparations. It also addressed a request to the Governments of neutral countries to make the heirless assets of victims of Nazi action in their countries available for the rehabilitation and resettlement of non-repatriable victims.

### 4. Legal Status of Jews

The complexity and uncertainty of the national status of the Jews from certain countries, particularly from Germany and Austria, engaged the Legal Section constantly and the matter was taken up whenever difficulties arose with regard to their treatment. A particular problem was the effect on Jews of recent legislation in Czechoslovakia denationalising German and Hungarian minorities.

A special sub-committee was concerned with questions of nationality. The fact that Jews formed the highest percentage of stateless persons was rooted in two factors: the effects of the nationality clauses in the Peace Treaties after the last war, and the policy of Jewish denationalisation by the Axis powers. Dr. R. Graupner and Dr. Weis prepared reports on Statelessness as a consequence of change of sovereignty of a territory after the last war, and as a legal political problem. These reports were published by the British Section under the title "Problem of Statelessness." (See publications.)

### 5. Group Defamation

The experience of Nazism has shown the important rôle which libellous propaganda plays in the development of anti-Jewish tendencies.

In Great Britain a committee, under the chairmanship of Lord Portal, is considering the question of amending the Law of Defamation with respect, *inter alia*, to its application to groups.

The Legal Section discussed a paper by Mr. M. Marcus and set up a sub-committee to investigate this problem in its international aspect. A survey of existing legislation on group defamation in various countries and the possibilities of legal reform was prepared by Dr. P. Weis and published under the title: "Protection Against Group Defamation."

### **6. Displaced Persons**

A special committee was formed to deal with questions of general policy with regard to Jewish Displaced Persons and to advise the Relief and Rehabilitation Department on the legal questions involved.

The publications and documents of specialised agencies dealing with displaced persons, such as UNRRA and the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees, were studied and commented upon.

Together with representations for a Jewish Unit to work in Belsen Camp, a detailed questionnaire was prepared to ascertain the material and spiritual needs of the Jewish D.P.s in the British Zone of Occupied Germany.

### **7. United Nations Organisation**

In the autumn of 1945, when the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations was at work in London, the Legal Section formed a special sub-committee to study all the relevant documents preparatory to the First Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and its principal organs. Facilities were secured to have a permanent observer of the World Jewish Congress present at the meetings of the Assembly.

After a thorough examination of the general position, in consultation with Dr. N. Goldman, then in London, and partly with the Jewish Agency for Palestine, draft Memoranda dealing with urgent Jewish problems were prepared, including the claim for representation of the Jewish people, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. This preparatory work will be applicable to the next General Assembly of the United Nations next September.

Simultaneously, after study of the relevant problems, a second special sub-committee prepared a comprehensive draft of proposals relating to the Jewish aspect of the subjects to be included in the Peace Treaties with Italy, Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland.

In this connection it should also be mentioned that the Memorandum submitted by the World Jewish Congress at the London Session of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine was drafted in consultation with the members of the Research and Information Department.

## **III. CULTURAL SECTION**

At a full meeting of the Cultural Section of the Research Committee held in April, 1944, attended by a number of specially invited experts on Jewish educational problems, a programme of rehabilitation and reconstruction was decided upon. After the cessation of hostilities this plan served as a basis for meeting the needs of the Jewish survivors on the Continent. This programme was endorsed in a separate resolution at the special European Conference of the World Jewish Congress last August.

### **1. Rescue of Cultural Treasures**

During the whole period under review, the representatives of our Cultural Section serving on the Rescue Committee of the Jewish Historical Society in

London, have urged immediate action. After discussions with the individual Jewish bodies represented on this Committee, measures were initiated to safeguard Jewish treasures discovered in occupied Germany. A scheme to set up a provisional centre of Jewish learning entitled to make use of the recovered Jewish books and manuscripts is now under consideration.

## **2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation**

Since the establishment of the Conference of the Allied Ministers of Education, formed during the war in London, and which became the nucleus of the new international agency, usually referred to as UNESCO, the Cultural Section has closely followed the proposals advanced by the various Governments concerning cultural reconstruction in the post-war period. A special Jewish interest in this matter developed with the general intention of the Allied Nations to cleanse the atmosphere of Europe infested by the virus of racial hatred, in particular of anti-semitic incitement.

A Resolution was submitted to and adopted by the Special European Conference of the World Jewish Congress prior to the convening of the Constituent Assembly of UNESCO, stressing the urgent need for Jewish representation on the various organs of the proposed International Agency.

A number of preparatory steps by the British Section secured uniformity of action between the World Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. A memorandum was subsequently submitted to the delegations of 42 States participating in the Assembly, suggesting a series of vital amendments to the Draft Constitution of the new Agency. A paper by Dr. I. Zollschan, a member of our Research Committee, suggesting methods for combating racialism was also distributed among the delegations. Both documents were favourably received. Our observer attended all the meetings of the Assembly, and a number of sessions of its different committees.

The final text of the Constitution of UNESCO meets most of the requirements of Jewish Educational and Cultural recovery and reconstruction. The possibilities of active Jewish collaboration with UNESCO call for the preparation of a detailed Reconstruction Plan to be submitted to the First General Assembly to be held during the coming autumn in Paris. Our Cultural Section is now in charge of this task in conformity with the outline indicated in its Report, summarising the work of UNESCO up to the institution of its Preparatory Commission.

## **3. Book Supply Centre**

A few months before VE-Day our Cultural Section undertook the work of providing the Jewish survivors on the Continent with books considered by the liberated themselves as one of their greatest necessities. Although formally a matter of Relief, this task, requiring special qualifications, was taken over by our Cultural Section. A separate Book Supply Centre was set up in charge of Mrs. Klausner.

The urgency of this matter confirmed by reports from the liberated countries rendered it essential to enlist the co-operation of Jewish organisations anxious and able to help. A co-ordinating body—the Joint Book Supply Committee—was therefore set up as soon as the work started. The organisations represented on this Committee are :

Ararat Publishing Society Ltd.

Association of Jewish Journalists and Authors in England.

Association of Jewish Refugees.  
 Bachad Organisation.  
 Chayes Society.  
 Children and Youth Aliyah.  
 Circle of Dutch Jews in Great Britain.  
 Council of Continental Zionists.  
 Federation of Polish Jews in Great Britain.  
 Federation of Zionist Youth.  
 Friends of Yiddish Loshen.  
 Habonim.  
 Hechalutz.  
 Jacob Ehrlich Society.  
 Inter-University Jewish Federation.  
 Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad.  
 Jewish Times.  
 Mizrachi Federation of Great Britain and Ireland.  
 National Council of Jews from Czechoslovakia.  
 Poale Zion.  
 Relief Committee of Jews of Czechoslovakia.  
 Torah Va'Avodah Organisation.  
 Workers' Circle Friendly Society.

With the support of the representatives of these organisations a campaign was launched throughout the country to collect suitable books, mainly in Hebrew and Yiddish, most in demand on the Continent. Posters and leaflets were widely distributed through Congress and affiliated bodies and reached almost all Jewish communities in the United Kingdom. Up to the 1st April, 1946, nearly 5,000 volumes have been despatched to the Continent. The great majority of the books were sent in small compact libraries of about 150-200 volumes to Displaced Persons Camps in Germany, Italy, Austria, and Sweden, and to restored Jewish communities in France, Belgium, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Recently an important collection of 300 volumes of Yiddish literature was sent to the Central Jewish Library of Warsaw. Special care was taken with text-books for children, particularly for the study of Hebrew. The authorities of Feldafing Camp reported that on receipt of our books there it was possible to have the curriculum of their school considerably extended. Special requests are met as far as possible, and we are constantly in personal touch with workers on the Continent. Through the Inter-University Jewish Federation the needs of adult Jewish Students in Belgium, France and Holland have so far been cared for, and here too constant contact is maintained.

#### 4. Youth Organisations

On the occasion of the World Youth Conference in London in November, 1945, the Congress invited the Jewish delegates to discuss common problems affecting Jewish Youth. Delegates from many countries, including the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, Poland, Palestine, Switzerland, Bulgaria and France, attended. They agreed to investigate the possibility of setting up a World Organisation and expressed a desire for a World Conference of Jewish Youth to be held in the near future.

The World Union of Jewish Students, at their first post-war convention in Paris in December, 1945, resolved to affiliate to the World Jewish Congress and to co-operate closely with its Department of Culture and Education. It was also agreed

that the Cultural office of the W.U.J.S. should be set up in London. Mr. Liverhant of our Research Department was elected Cultural Officer of the W.U.J.S.

The World Jewish Congress has put its organisation at the disposal of the I.U.J.F. in their relief work for Jewish Students in Europe. In particular, books collected in this country for students in Europe are being forwarded through the Joint Book Supply Committee of Congress. Congress also assisted a member of the I.U.J.F. to proceed to France to establish contacts with French Jewish students and with the Headquarters of the World Union of Jewish Students in Paris.

At the annual conference of the I.U.J.F. held in Manchester on 24th-26th December, a resolution was passed calling for close co-operation of the I.U.J.F. with the World Jewish Congress.

#### IV. INFORMATION SECTION

##### 1. General Work

All research work is based on material collected and analysed by the Information Section which, since 1943, has been in the charge of Mr. A. C. A. Liverhant, LL.M. It has the task of providing the British Section of the World Jewish Congress with all facts and figures relating to current Jewish affairs. For that purpose more than 75 different periodical publications, weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies in 10 different languages are regularly examined. A Bibliography of all relevant literature is being kept, and books of special interest are studied and discussed. Special attention is paid to reports of proceedings of Parliament and of International Assemblies and Organisations. A daily Press Survey is circulated among the officers and staff of the British Section.

The Information Section supplies, on request, advice and material to outside bodies, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Close contact is maintained with the Institute of Jewish Affairs in New York, which is regularly supplied by the Information Section with periodicals and other publications appearing in this country.

The library, attached to the Research and Information Department, is still in its infancy. It contains a collection of periodical and other literature in many languages dealing mainly with the history of the last 10 years and with current events and problems.

##### 2. Special Studies

The collection and examination of information has been supplemented by investigations into special fields of interest of a topical character. This work has produced a series of studies for the Research Department prepared partly by members of its Research Committee and partly by experts invited for the purpose.

Most of these special studies were devoted to the present position of the Jews in various countries based on analysis of their historical background. The Italian Jews were the subject of a comprehensive study by Prof. D. Diringer; Dr. A. Bauer and Mr. J. Singer wrote on the Jewry of Yugoslavia, and Dr. Moritz Goldstein on the prospects of the Jews in liberated Germany. Dr. Max Hamburger surveyed the problem of restitution according to German pre-Nazi Law: Mr. G. Haus reported on the Jews in Poland after the liberation: Mr. Y. Levene made a detailed study of all the sources available regarding Jewish life in the Soviet Union: Dr. N. Barou's world survey of "The Jews in Work and Trade," published in 1945, is in part based on preparatory studies initiated by him within our Research Committee.

A number of other studies dealt with special problems of a more general character. Dr. J. L. Flajszer prepared a comprehensive report on the development of British public opinion in the first three years of war in its relation to the Jewish question. Dr. L. Zelmanovits examined the implication of the protection of Minority Rights, and Mr. Adler-Rudel gave an account on the general principles of Jewish relief work in post-war Europe.

In a number of cases independent Jewish research workers have availed themselves of our advice and assistance.

### 3. Publications

The Research and Information Department has participated in all the publications issued since the last National Conference by the British Section. The Legal Section, in particular, was responsible for the publication of "The Problem of Statelessness," by Dr. P. Weis and Dr. R. Graupner, and of "Protection Against Group Defamation," by Dr. P. Weis.

A full list of Congress publications is to be found on the inner page of the back cover.

## RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

The Department for Relief and Rehabilitation of the British Section was directed by Dr. Lev Zelmanovits, from 1943 till September, 1945, when much to our regret, he left for Prague to take up his post as Resident Delegate of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees. From October, 1945, Dr. Stephen Barber, who has been closely associated with the work of the World Jewish Congress in Czechoslovakia since 1936, and later with the World Executive Committee in Paris, took over his work.

The World Jewish Congress is primarily not a Relief Organisation. The precarious situation of a great proportion of European Jewry, however, made it imperative that the World Jewish Congress, as an international Jewish organisation, had to take position and action also in this field to meet the most urgent needs of the Jewish population in distress.

The approach of the World Jewish Congress to the whole problem of relief differs from the traditional ideas of merely raising funds amongst the wealthy Jews and distributing them to the poor ones. The World Jewish Congress affirms that the needs of the Jewish population, which has become the victim of Nazi and Fascist persecution, are of such dimensions that a real remedy can be found only through governmental or intergovernmental action, which alone can be adequate to the scope and nature of the problem. The establishment of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), the re-organisation of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees under the Social and Economic Council of the United Nations Organisation, the enquiry made by the Anglo-American Committee into the situation of European Jewry and Palestine are proofs of the validity of the World Jewish Congress' thesis that assistance to refugees and displaced persons (and almost half of European Jewry belongs to these two categories) is primarily a matter of international responsibility. The main objects of the responsible representatives of the Jewish people must be to state before Governments and inter-governmental authorities the case of the Jews, to draw their attention to the general and specific needs of the Jews, to make constructive proposals as to how they can be met and to co-operate within the limits of the existing possibilities in the solution of these problems. Initiative, advice based on full knowledge of the facts and problems, and finally supplementary action where governmental and other help is not obtainable or not sufficient, these are the cardinal points of the World Jewish Congress Relief Programme. The work of the British Section in the field of Relief and Rehabilitation was determined by these facts.

The World Jewish Congress strives to be an instrument of World Jewry. As well as in political matters it is the intention of the various constituents of the World Jewish Congress to pool their resources and to work according to a plan on which the constituents have agreed and which is to be carried out by its executive organs. The World Executive of the World Jewish Congress has a department for Relief and Rehabilitation, which has its seat in New York, and which is directed by Dr. Arich Tartakower with specialised departments, such as : Committee of Overseas Relief Supplies, Location Service and Child Care.

The relief department of the British Section, which, in view of the importance of London as a political centre and of the special conditions on the European continent, very often had to play a central role in the relief work of the World Jewish Congress, had to co-ordinate its activities with the general plan of work of



the World Jewish Congress on a world wide level. Examples will illustrate this particular aspect of our work. The relief department of the British Section had to make arrangements about the forwarding of relief supplies sent by World Jewish Congress groups in countries like Brazil, Curacao, Australia, etc., and to direct them to various parts of Europe where they were most urgently needed. Negotiations between Stockholm and the inmates of Bergen-Belsen about the re-union of separated families and admission of their members to Sweden had to be carried out through the London office of the World Jewish Congress. Representations to the Colonial office to protect Jewish Refugees in Rhodesia and Tanganyika, S.O.S. messages calling for layettes urgently required in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, suggestions about the use of former German Sanatoria in Switzerland for Jewish T.B. patients—these are some of the many questions, often difficult and complicated, which engaged the attention of the Relief Department in London.

At its Special European Conference in August, 1945, the World Jewish Congress reaffirmed that the maximum of co-ordination should be sought in the field of relief and rehabilitation activities undertaken by the various Jewish organisations. Some measure of co-operation has been achieved through the agreement between the Congress, the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies, and this had the useful result of joint negotiations with UNRRA, the Inter-governmental Committee, the Special Committee of UNO on Refugees and Displaced Persons, and other bodies. The closest contact is also maintained with the Jewish Agency in matters affecting the welfare of the Jews in the Diaspora in relation to Palestine. Within the organisational life in this country the World Jewish Congress has made efforts to promote co-ordination of relief work and to avoid over-lapping. The British Section has taken an active part in the Committee for Jews in Germany, which comprises representatives of all major Jewish organisations in this country with regard to their work on behalf of the Jews in the British Zone of Occupation in Germany. Full support is given and mutual co-operation is maintained with the Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad.

The necessities of economic warfare and the shortages of food, textiles, foreign currency and last but not least, transportation, were the main difficulties from which practical relief work in this country has been suffering during the period under review. Whenever and wherever the Relief Department was able to overcome them, it was the result of strenuous efforts and protracted negotiations. Under these circumstances it has to be regarded as a considerable achievement that even during the war special authorisation had been obtained from the British Government to transfer funds to Sweden, from where food parcels were then despatched, through our Swedish Section, to several concentration camps such as Bergen-Belsen, Terezin and others. Since the cessation of hostilities, the British Section has approached the Treasury department on several occasions in order to obtain authorisation for the transfer of funds to Sweden for food parcels to be sent by air or by road convoys to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other countries, but so far, without success.

The position as far as clothing is concerned is somewhat easier. Under the prevailing coupon system in this country only an appeal for voluntary collections of second-hand clothing had any chance of success. The response by the groups and organisations affiliated to the British Section, as well as from numerous individuals was, on the whole, a spontaneous and generous one. In a few places

separate clothing collecting centres of the World Jewish Congress groups were established, but in the majority of the localities, central stores were set up by all the organisations taking part in this drive. In spite of the very acute shortage of space in Congress House, the Relief Department of the British Section succeeded in despatching numerous 22-lb. parcels to various countries on the Continent. With sincere gratitude we put on record the kind and unselfish co-operation which we received in this matter from many Jewish chaplains and members of the Forces.

Special initiative was taken by the Relief Department of the British Section as a consequence of the visit of the President, Lady Reading, to Belgium and France in November, 1944. A scheme for knitting garments for Jewish children on the Continent was initiated. Well over a thousand garments were knitted by individual voluntary workers and groups such as the Federation of Women Zionists, Synagogue Guilds, Relief of Jewish Women, etc., with the kind co-operation of the Women's Voluntary Service who secured a supply of wool, free of charge, and the War Office which helped by granting facilities for distribution of the garments through members of the forces.

During the last few months the British Section has purchased from the Civil Defence Surplus Stores several hundred blankets, men's and women's overcoats, and arranged for their despatch to the Continent.

Fortunately, the restrictions regarding the despatch of food and clothing and medical supplies are not as stringent in other parts of the British Empire, and especially in the countries of the Western Hemisphere. The Relief Department's main task, therefore, was to secure the co-operation of the Sections of the World Jewish Congress and other organisations in these countries. Bulk supplies of food, new and old clothing, medicaments and other materials were despatched from various overseas countries to places on the Continent, where reports of the situation had been passed on through the British Section. In many cases, bulk supplies from overseas countries were sent to the address of the British Section, which then had the task of allocating and forwarding these goods to the places where they were most urgently needed. In view of the difficult conditions of transportation and the numerous technical difficulties, this part of the work of the Relief Department involved considerable time and expenditure.

Owing to the geographical position of this country and the facilities which the British and American authorities granted to the members of the Executive, it was possible for personal investigations to be made on the situation of the Jewish survivors in several European countries. The reports received from Lady Reading after her visit to Belgium and France, from Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., and Mr. A. L. Easterman, after their visit to the British Zone of Occupation in Germany, from Lady Reading and Dr. Schwarzbart after their visit to the American Zone of Occupation in Germany, from Mr. Maurice Orbach, M.P., after his visit to Austria, from Dr. L. Zelmanovits and Mr. Ben Rubenstein after their visit to Sweden, from Dr. S. Barber after his visit to Czechoslovakia and Austria, and from members of the New York and Paris offices after their visit to Poland, were the basis for relief activities not only in this country, but on a world-wide scale. These experiences and the information received from the representatives of various other countries, either verbally during their discussions or through written reports, constituted the basis on which the political and practical side of the relief work was carried out. They confirm, almost everywhere, the necessity of co-ordinating political and practical relief work, the inter-connection of which has become more apparent than ever before.

The World Jewish Congress understood from the very beginning the importance of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Since its first meeting in 1943, the World Jewish Congress has made all efforts to establish the closest contact with this body, and to put the case of the Jewish survivors before it whenever necessary. The part played by the British Section in these negotiations became very important through the fact that the European headquarters of UNRRA were set up in London, and that most of the contacts between non-governmental organisations had to be maintained through the Chief Liaison Officer of UNRRA, with headquarters in London.

At the Third Session of the Council of UNRRA in August, 1945, the World Jewish Congress together with the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, submitted a joint memorandum to UNRRA, in which a number of important proposals were made with regard to the Jewish inmates of the camps in Germany, to Jews in other ex-emeny countries, to the Jewish Displaced Persons in Allied countries, etc. Subsequently, although with considerable delay, many of these suggestions were taken up by UNRRA. However, the strict adherence to the so-called non-discrimination principle hampered, to a very great extent, the plans which the World Jewish Congress had prepared for the first post-war period.

The reluctance of UNRRA to admit representatives of the World Jewish Congress to work in Germany and Austria, (finally, partly overcome by the appointment of Miss Sylvia Neulaender as the only representative of the World Jewish Congress in Germany), had a serious effect on the relief work to be carried out in these two countries. Recently, and after difficult negotiations, a World Jewish Congress delegation, consisting of the well-known Jewish poet, Leivick, of Professor I. Efros, and of the well-known opera singer, Mrs. Shaver, left for Germany, where they will carry out a programme of cultural rehabilitation amongst the Displaced Persons and the few surviving members of the Jewish communities in Germany.

As UNRRA was conceived from the beginning only as a temporary and emergency institution, which would cease to operate in Europe by the end of 1946, the importance of the new body, which will have to take care of the hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons on the European continent, is growing. The Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees is now faced with the situation created by the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations in January, 1946, which discussed the acute problem of the refugees and displaced persons, and decided that a Special Committee of the United Nations should be convened to examine the whole problem thoroughly and to devise effective machinery to deal with it. The existing Inter-governmental Committee will either be amalgamated within the framework of the Social and Economic Council or re-organised in some form as a specialised agency.

The World Jewish Congress, through its British Section, maintained close contact with the Inter-governmental Committee in London, and found much sympathetic understanding in questions of principle and individual cases from the Director and his principal associates. In November, 1945, the Inter-governmental Committee held a Plenary Meeting in Paris. The World Jewish Congress, together with the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews submitted a number of proposals regarding the legal and material protection of refugees, their re-settlement in Palestine, the re-union of families, and other matters. Very little action has been taken, unfortunately, since then,

mainly for the reason that it was assumed to be the task of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry to examine the situation of the surviving Jews in Europe, and to formulate recommendations how to deal with their problems.

The representatives of the British Section of the World Jewish Congress have been able to convey to the members of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry the views of the World Jewish Congress about the situation of the Jewish people throughout the world, and especially in Europe, and the urgent necessity for the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine.

With the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine now at hand, the members of the Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons, now assembled in London, will require to decide the policy and practical measures to be taken by the United Nations in respect of this problem. The World Jewish Congress, with the American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, has laid before the delegates a brief memorandum formulating the essential demands which the Jewish people hope will be met by the United Nations.

A proper and sufficiently wide definition of the term "refugee" and "displaced person," the acknowledgment that no person who has valid reasons should be forcibly repatriated to the country he has left, the possibility of settling down in their National Home, and to be re-united with surviving members of their families, the use of heirless Jewish property for their rehabilitation and resettlement, the creation of effective machinery which will be in a position to deal with the situation of Jews in a specific way—these are the main points on which a satisfactory solution must be based.

The Relief Department of the British Section is following the work of the Special Committee very closely, and maintaining contacts with the delegations from the various countries to secure full understanding of these demands.

It is to be assumed that the next few months will bring very serious tasks for the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of the World Jewish Congress. The world-wide shortage of food and other commodities on the one hand, and the necessity of international measures to settle the problems of several hundred thousand Jewish survivors, who, since the liberation have been living in a state of expectation that they also will be allowed to share in the fruits of victory, on the other hand, means that the Relief and Rehabilitation Department will be faced with work of unprecedented dimensions, requiring a special effort by all Executive and departmental personnel, and the full support of the affiliated bodies and every individual Jew who has the survival of his people at heart.

## SEARCH DEPARTMENT

One of the most poignant human problems arising out of the annihilation of European Jewry was the tracing of the survivors and their reunion with relatives in Europe and abroad. This task of search and reunion has been intricate as well as urgent; to answer the cries of "Where is my father, my mother, my child, my brother, my sister," which came with tragic insistence from the remnants of our people in Europe and from their anxious families throughout the world, was a work of extreme complexity and difficulty. To carry out this work the British Section set up a special Search Department.

The Department started work on March 1st, 1945, under the direction of Mr. K. Baum, as a centre for enquiries between residents in Great Britain and their relatives and friends in European countries. The Department was also designed to co-ordinate the search work of World Jewish Congress organisations throughout the world and to aid the tracing of displaced Jews not served by the various Jewish Committees in Great Britain engaged in tracing missing relatives.

From a modest start, the Search Department of the British Section has grown to be its largest technical branch. This has been made possible despite great difficulties and its small staff of ten, through the spirited support of a large number of voluntary workers. Out of a panel of some 500, between 20 and 25 volunteers have given spare-time service daily, to render help and to relieve the anxiety of many thousands of enquirers.

The Search Department has organised a Central Index of Jewish Survivors, now by far the biggest register in this country of the remnants of European Jewry. At the date of this report this Index contains 210,000 cards of information about missing persons and inquiring relatives. The Index is increasing by 25,000 cards a month.

In addition, reference books containing the names of another 300,000 Jewish survivors have been compiled for the use of the Department. Moreover, lists of another 100,000 Jewish survivors were in hand at the end of the first year of the Department's work.

Where the Index fails to yield results, inquiries are directed to the World Jewish Congress offices in Geneva, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Stockholm and Oslo, New York, Montreal, Sydney, Johannesburg and the Latin-American countries, to Jewish co-operating agencies in France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Greece, China, Poland, to the official Search Bureau in the British Zone of Germany, the UNRRA Central Office for Germany, the American Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish Central Committees in Bergen-Belsen and Munich, to Jewish communities in many parts of the world and to Jewish chaplains and welfare workers in the field.

The results of the Search Department's work after one year may be summarised as follows:—

A total of 10,133 Jewish survivors have been traced in the year ending on March 1st, 1946, and this number has since increased to 12,000.

Of the enquirers whose requests were met in the first year 5,064 reside in the United Kingdom and the British Empire, 3,737 in European countries and 1,322 in overseas countries.

Successful results in tracing grew from a monthly average of 260, during the first six months, to a monthly average of 1,430 during the second half of the year.

This success has been made possible by a world-wide correspondence, amounting to about 43,000 letters in the course of a year, conveying both enquiries and information of relatives traced. The Department's outgoing mail increased from a monthly average of 1,450 letters in the first half-year, to a monthly average of 5,700 letters in the second half-year, rising to 7,000 letters in a single month.

In addition to its search service, the Department has effectively provided communication between relatives and Jewish survivors in such countries where postal services were non-existent or unreliable. In this service, more than 17,000 letters were dispatched to and from Germany and Austria and, earlier in the year, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Rumania and China. More than half of this service was undertaken on behalf of World Jewish Congress offices abroad. For example, almost the entire two-way correspondence between the Jewish survivors in Bergen-Belsen and their relatives and friends in Sweden was, and, at the time of reporting, still is, carried on through the Search Department of the British Section.

In thousands of cases this mail service has been instrumental in tracing relatives, but in this respect no precise figures can be given because of the technical difficulty of scrutinising so voluminous a correspondence.

The British Section pays tribute to the Jewish Chaplains and relief workers in Germany and Austria, for their great and unstinted assistance in this work, given often at great personal sacrifice.

At the beginning of the second year of its work the Search Department was still holding some 30,000 enquiries from all parts of the world, and as communications will continue to improve during 1946, there is reason to believe that the influx will not diminish for many months to come.

In the tracing of relatives resident in the United Kingdom, the Search Department wishes to acknowledge the courteous assistance rendered by the editors of the *Jewish Times* and the *European Jewish Observer* which both published regular request lists ; to the " United Kingdom Search Bureau," with whom close contact was maintained in tracing German and Austrian refugees in this country, and in exchanging lists of Jewish survivors ; to the Foreign Relations Department of the British Red Cross and its national sections, to the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police.

A special tribute is also due to the " Maccabi Association " which, by enrolling almost its entire London membership for voluntary assistance, have rendered invaluable support to our effort.

## ORGANISATION

Substantial progress has been made since the last National Conference in developing the organisation and increasing the membership of the British Section by individual and group affiliations, by the distribution of publications of the Congress and the British Section, by the circulation of periodical reports on current affairs and by meetings throughout the country.

A notable feature of the World Jewish Congress organisation in this country has been the creation and growth of Congress groups in the larger provincial areas. The first of these, the Glasgow Group, was followed, after the last National Conference, by the establishment of the Midlands Group, with Birmingham as the centre, and later by the Manchester Group. These most ably led and conducted sections have proved very valuable assets to the British Section and the Congress as a whole. They contain a substantial and important individual membership representative of the respective Jewish communities. They maintain a close association with the Congress as a whole and, through their Executive officers, take part in the principal activities of the British Section.

The British Section has inaugurated and successfully conducted a series of WEEKEND SCHOOLS for the discussion of current political, economic and cultural questions as they affect the present and future position of Jews in the post-war world. Such schools have been held in London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester and have proved of considerable value in acquainting members and others with current trends of Jewish thought and action ; they have served as an important channel for discussion of current events and for disseminating information about the activities of the World Jewish Congress, as well as being an effective means of enlarging the membership of the British Section.

Many meetings have been held throughout the country to further the organisation of the British Section and for discussion of the manifold phases of its work. A series of such meetings was addressed by members of the delegation of the British Section which attended the War Emergency Conference of the World Jewish Conference at Atlantic City in November, 1944. Similar meetings were addressed by the Marchioness of Reading, following her visit at the end of 1944, to the liberated Jewish communities of France and Belgium. On this occasion the important work of organising supplies of clothing and books to the Jewish survivors in Europe, was begun.

On the eve of the San Francisco Conference, the British Section held an important public meeting in London at which the Marchioness of Reading ; Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P. ; Dr. Lev Zelmanovits ; and Mr. Harry Myer formulated the Jewish aspects of the inaugural meeting of the United Nations Organisation.

A specially important gathering was the Jewish Youth Conference in London, representing a large number of Youth Organisations throughout the country. The Conference was addressed by Mr. S. S. Silverman, M.P., Dr. N. Barou, and Dr. Steinberg, who dealt respectively with the questions of the political, economic and cultural reconstruction of the Jewish communities of Europe. Following this successful Conference, a number of Jewish Youth Organisations, notably the Inter-University Federation of the Jewish Students Union of Cambridge University, became affiliated to the British Section.

Through the Organisation Department, which during the period under survey was under the direction of Mr. M. Mitzman and, later, of Mr. Camille Honig, a number of important and highly successful functions have been held in London under the auspices of the British Section to further the work of reconstruction and relief in Europe, and to advance the whole purposes of the Congress. At the Royal Albert Hall, London, Yehudi Menuhin, the world famous violinist, gave a great concert dedicated to the memory of the martyred Jews of Europe, to assist the work of recovery of Jewish survivors. The arrangements for this notable event were made in co-operation with the Women's Appeal Committee. At the Dorchester Hotel, in November, 1945, the celebrated violinist, Mr. Bronislaw Huberman, gave an important recital, and in March, 1946, Mr. Maurice Eisenberg, famous Jewish cellist, gave a concert at the Dorchester Hotel, under the auspices of the British Section. These three functions resulted in substantial contributions to the Congress Trust Fund for the work of recovery and reconstruction in Europe, for the work of search and cultural rehabilitation in Europe.

Our grateful thanks are due to these great artists for their generous and ungrudging services in the cause of their people.

## PROVINCIAL GROUPS

### BIRMINGHAM

*President* : Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, M.A.

*Chairman* : Mr. Jack Cotton.

*Honorary Secretary* : Mrs. R. Silverstone.

*Honorary Treasurer* : Mr. J. Cohen.

The Birmingham Group was established in December, 1943. Its membership is now 350 and includes the affiliation of 14 local institutions. The Group includes membership from other areas in the Midlands.

Valuable work has been done by the Birmingham Group under the able direction of its officers and important contributions have been made to advance the purposes of the World Jewish Congress and the work of the British Section.

Since its foundation the Group has held a number of important conferences and meetings which have been addressed by members of the Executive of the British Section. The Group was addressed by Dr. Nahum Goldmann in February, 1944.

A Week-End School to discuss questions of the reconstruction of European Jewry was held in March, 1944. The Conference was addressed by Dr. Barou, Mr. A. Shenfield, Ph.D., and the Rev. Dr. A. Cohen.

Dr. A. Cohen, President, and Mr. Jack Cotton, Chairman of the Group, were elected by the National Council as members of the delegation of the British Section to the War Emergency Conference at Atlantic City in November, 1944.

The Group has proved a highly successful part of the organisation of the British Section, has made important contributions to the funds for reconstruction and recovery in Europe, and has provided substantial supplies of clothing and books for the Jewish Displaced Persons in Germany.



## GLASGOW

*President* : Mr. Fred Nettler, J.P.

*Chairman* : Mr. Walter Harris. •

*Joint Honorary Secretaries* : Mr. Edward Woolfson, Mr. Neil Morris.

*Honorary Treasurer* : Charles Edelman.

The Glasgow Group, the first provincial organisation of the World Jewish Congress, continues to be one of the largest constituents of the British Section, with a membership of more than 500, and affiliation of 13 constituent associations, which include Synagogues, Zionist Societies, Discussion Groups and other bodies.

This Group has been particularly active through regular meetings of its members and committees at which current affairs of the Congress have been discussed and Jewish questions of a general character dealt with.

The Group has engaged in very considerable public activity in the way of public meetings and conferences, and has thus rendered important services in advancing the purposes of Congress. Members of the Executive have addressed a series of large public meetings in Glasgow and the Group has been addressed by Dr. Goldmann, Chairman of the World Jewish Congress Executive. The Group has held two Week-End Schools which have proved eminently successful.

In addition to its valuable work in developing the Congress and in spreading knowledge of current Jewish problems, the Glasgow Group has made a considerable contribution to Congress funds for recovery and reconstruction in Europe, and has provided substantial quantities of clothing and books for Jewish Displaced Persons in Germany.

The Group has been ably directed by Mr. Walter Harris, and his associate members of the local Executive. Mr. Fred Nettler, J.P., was elected by the National Council as a member of the delegation to the War Emergency Conference at Atlantic City in November, 1944.

## MANCHESTER

*Chairman* : Mr. Norman M. Jacobs, B.Com.

*Vice-Chairman* : Mr. Hyman Weinberg, Dr. P. Wigoder.

*Honorary Secretary* : Mr. J. Bolchover.

*Honorary Treasurer* : Mr. David Fraenkel.

Valuable progress has been made in organising the Manchester Group which was established in December, 1943. The Group has now an individual membership of over 200, and has affiliated to it a number of the more important synagogues and institutions in Manchester.

Since its foundation, the officers of the Group have been progressively engaged in disseminating the policies and purposes of the World Jewish Congress and enlarging the field of the organisation of the British Section. The growth of the Group has been steady and substantial and has provided an important addition to the many services which Manchester Jewry renders to Jewish causes.

The Group has succeeded in impressing upon the Jewish community in its area the importance of the place of the Congress in Jewish life and in promoting interest in the many problems with which the Congress is engaged.

The Group has held a number of successful and largely attended gatherings which have been addressed by members of the Executive of the British Section and by Drs. Nahum Goldmann and Leon Kubowitski, of the World Executive. The Group has also held Week-End Conferences for the discussion of current Jewish affairs and political, economic and cultural questions affecting the present state of the Jewish people, and the Jewish position in relation to the post-war work of reconstruction and recovery.

Under the auspices of the Group, a great demonstration, attended by more than 1,200 people, was held in October, 1945—the largest meeting held in the Manchester Jewish community for many years. The meeting was addressed by Mr. A. L. Easterman on the subject of the Belsen and Auschwitz war criminals' trials at Nuremberg, which he attended as an official observer representing the World Jewish Congress.

The Manchester Group has rendered notable service to the World Jewish Congress by substantial contributions to the funds for recovery and reconstruction in Europe, and has provided considerable quantities of clothing and books for Jewish Displaced Persons in Germany. The Group has also co-operated closely with the work of the Search Department in the tracing of missing relatives among the survivors of European Jewry.

The Group is under the able direction of Mr. Norman Jacobs, B.Com., with the most valuable and loyal co-operation of Mr. J. Bolchover, Honorary Secretary, and Mr. David Fraenkel, Honorary Treasurer, in association with a zealous and energetic committee.

PUBLICATIONS  
BY THE  
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

LONDON

Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt on Nazi Massacre of the Jews.  
St. James's Palace Conference on Nazi anti-Jewish Crimes.  
"Stop Hitler Now."  
The Jewish Problem. By Prof. M. Ginsberg.  
A Note on Bermuda—and After.  
Abrogation of the Cremieux Decree.  
Starvation over Europe.  
National Conference—Executive Officers' Report.  
National Conference Proceedings.  
UNRRA—Memorandum on Post-War Jewish Relief and Rehabilitation.  
UNRRA—Atlantic City Conference.  
World Jewish Congress — Origin and Development. By Dr. L. Zelmanovits.  
The Disease of Anti-Semitism.  
The Problem of Statelessness. By Dr. P. Weis and Dr. R. Graupner.  
Protection Against Group Defamation. By Dr. P. Weis.  
War Emergency Conference of the World Jewish Congress.  
Report on Activities of the World Jewish Congress.  
European Conference of the World Jewish Congress.  
Memorandum to Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry on Palestine.  
Uniting the Dispersed—Annual Report of the Search Department.  
Memorandum to the UNO Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons.

NEW YORK

The Jews under Soviet Rule.  
Jews in the French Empire.  
The Problems of a Jewish Army.  
Projects for Jewish Mass Colonisation.  
The Warsaw Ghetto.  
Jews in the Far East.  
Cold Pogrom in Rumania.  
Jewish Forced Labour.  
Minorities after the War.  
Jews in Nazi Europe.  
Hitler's Ten-Year War on the Jews.  
Were the Minorities Treaties a Failure? Edited by Dr. Jacob Robinson.  
Relief and Rehabilitation. Implications of the UNRRA Programme for Jewish Needs. By Zorach Warhaftig.  
Racial State. By Gerhard Jacoby.  
The Jewish Refugee. By A. Tartakower and K. Grossmann.  
Restitution and Indemnification. By Nehemiah Robinson.



# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

## CONSTITUENT ORGANISATIONS

### EUROPE:

- AUSTRIA.**—Jewish Community, Vienna.  
**BELGIUM.**—Conseil des Associations Juives de Belgique, Brussels.  
**BULGARIA.**—Jewish Consistory of Bulgaria, Sofia.  
**CZECHOSLOVAKIA.**—Union of Jewish Communities of Slovakia.  
**EIRE.**—Jewish Council of Eire, Dublin.  
**FINLAND.**—The Central Committee of Jewish Communities in Finland, Helsingfors.  
**FRANCE.**—Delegation of the World Jewish Congress of France.  
**GERMANY.**—Central Jewish Committee, Bergen-Belsen.  
     Central Jewish Committee, Munich.  
     Federation of Jewish Communities of the North Rhine Province and Westphalia, Dusseldorf.  
**GREAT BRITAIN.**—World Jewish Congress, British Section.  
**GREECE.**—Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece, Athens.  
**HUNGARY.**—Hungarian Section of the World Jewish Congress, Budapest.  
**ITALY.**—Union of Jewish Communities of Italy, Rome.  
**LUXEMBOURG.**—Jewish Consistory of Luxembourg, Luxembourg.  
**NETHERLANDS.**—Dutch Consultative Committee for the World Jewish Congress, Amsterdam.  
**NORWAY.**—Jewish Community, Oslo.  
**POLAND.**—Supreme Council of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland, Warsaw.  
**PORTUGAL.**—Jewish Community of Lisbon, Lisbon.  
**RUMANIA.**—Rumanian Section of the World Jewish Congress, Bucharest.  
**SWEDEN.**—Swedish Section of the World Jewish Congress, Stockholm.  
**SWITZERLAND.**—Federation of Jewish Communities of Switzerland, Zurich.  
**YUGOSLAVIA.**—Union of Jewish Communities, Belgrade.

### OVERSEAS:

- Algeria.**—United Jewish Organisations.  
**Argentina.**—DAIA.  
**Australia.**—Australian Section of the World Jewish Congress.  
**Bolivia.**—DEPECO.  
**Brazil.**—Centro Hebreo Brasileiro.  
**British West Indies.**—Jewish Community, Barbados, Jewish Community, Trinidad.  
**Canada.**—Canadian Jewish Congress.  
**Chile.**—Comite Representativo de la Colectividad Israelita de Chile and the Federation Sionista.  
**China.**—Chinese Section of the World Jewish Congress, Shanghai.  
**Colombia.**—Comite Central Hebreo de Colombia, Bogota; and Union Federal Hebrea, Cali.  
**Costa Rica.**—World Jewish Congress Committee and Union Israelite Sionista.  
**Cuba.**—Union Sionista, Jewish Centre of Cuba, Refugee Colony of Cuba, Ashkenazic Community.  
**Dutch West Indies.**—Netherlands Jewish Community, Aruba, and Jewish Community, Curacao.  
**Ecuador.**—Asociacion Beneficiencia Israelita, Quito.  
**Egypt.**—Jewish organisations in Egypt.  
**El Salvador.**—World Jewish Congress Committee.  
**Guatemala.**—Sociedad Israelita.  
**Honduras.**—Centro Israelita.  
**India.**—Central Jewish Board, Bombay.  
**Lebanon.**—Jewish Communal Council.  
**Mexico.**—Jewish Central Committee.  
**Morocco.**—Moroccan Committee of the World Jewish Congress.  
**Nicaragua.**—Union Israelite, Managua.  
**Panama.**—Centro Israelita Cultural.  
**Palestine.**—Vaad Leumi.  
**Peru.**—Asociacion de Sociedades Israelitas del Peru.  
**Philippines.**—Jewish Community, Manila.  
**Syria.**—Jewish Communal Council, Beyruth.  
**Tunisia.**—Union Universelle des Jeunes Juifs de Tunisie.  
**Uruguay.**—World Jewish Congress Committee.  
**United States of America.**—American Jewish Congress.  
**Venezuela.**—Centro Social y Cultural "Israel," Caracas, and Asociacion Israelita Venezuela.