The Jewish DP Problem

Its Origin, Scope, and Liquidation

By

KURT R. GROSSMANN

with an Introduction by

ABRAHAM S. HYMAN

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DEDICATION

This study on the Jewish Displaced Persons is fittingly dedicated to the memory of

ROBERT S. MARCUS (1909-1951)

rabbi, U. S. Army chaplain, and Political Director of the World Jewish Congress who loved and served his people, and particularly the Jewish DPs, with every fiber of his being; who helped to rescue the martyred Jewish inmates of the infamous Buchenwald concentration and death camp in Germany and personally led a large group of DPs to Eretz Israel; who originated the idea of having an Advisor on Jewish Affairs to the Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Forces in Germany; and whose death in the prime of life filled the great and far-flung family of the World Jewish Congress with deep mourning.

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FOREWORD

World War II created many major problems for world Jewry. The direct and indirect effects of the change in the world, and especially in the Jewish position, as a result of the war and the unexampled anti-Jewish onslaught unleashed by the Nazis and their minions, have affected ever wider areas and influenced even Jewish communities which were dormant for centuries and even milleniums.

No single phenomenon of the postwar period, except the struggle for the Jewish Homeland and its miraculous survival in the face of Arab intransigeance, has proven at once so tragic and so inspiring as that of the more than two hundred thousand Jews from various countries who at one time or another sojourned in camps and towns in Germany, Austria, and Italy while waiting for new homes and a new life in freedom. For years the two letters "DP" figured prominently on the pages of Jewish publications, were a daily topic of conversation, the concern of Jewish philanthropy, and the preoccupation of all major Jewish organizations the world over.

It is for these reasons that the Institute of Jewish Affairs decided to relate the story of the Jewish DPs in the present study. In this decision it was guided not only by the human interest of this story but by the object lesson it offers.

The purpose of this brochure is to summarize the unique experience in Jewish history which the DPs represented and to give a brief account of what their problem was like and how and by what means it was solved. The full story of the Jewish DPs, of course, has yet to be written. When it is, it will reveal the full magnitude of the "unique experience" which forms the theme of the present study.

I should like to express my deep appreciation to Major Abraham S. Hyman, who kindly agreed to write the Introduction, and who also made a number of valuable suggestions. Major Hyman was associated with the Office of Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Forces in Germany virtually from its inception to the very end. He served for years as legal adviser and Assistant Jewish Adviser, and enjoys the distinction of having been the last Jewish Adviser. More than any other man he is familiar with the story of the Jewish DPs and best qualified to appraise its evolution and effects. The conclusion he reaches is that the story should give us renewed faith in the immortality of the Jews as a people. In the words of the Bible, "Out of the strong came forth sweetness."

July, 1951 NEHEMIAH ROBINSON

INTRODUCTION

The story of the handful of Jews whom we came to know as DPs constitutes one of the most tragic as well as one of the most inspiring chapters in the history of the Jewish people.

There were people of other faiths and of other ethnic groups who were displaced as a result of the war and who, after the war, found themselves unable to return to the countries of their origin. These were people who were carried off by the Germans as involuntary laborers or who, for political or other reasons, sought refuge in Germany when the tide of battle turned against the German and in favor of the Russian forces. By and large, their families were intact and, as a group, they showed no permanent scars. They were "displaced persons" whose problem narrowed down to one of resettlement.

On the other hand, the Jewish DP's were not only displaced; they were what they appropriately called themselves, the "Sharit Hapletah," the "survivors." Indeed, they were the survivors of a systematic and cold-blooded program of mass carnage whose extent defies belief. As the years wore on we learned to roll off from our tongues rather glibly the reference to the 6,000,000 dead. This is understandable. Actually, neither mind nor heart, regardless of how expansive or emphatic either might be, can grasp the intimate tragedies which these dead, and the brutal manner by which they met their death, represented in the personal lives of the handful of Jews who emerged from the concentration camps and hideouts.

When I refer to the tragic aspect of the Jewish DP epic, obviously I have in mind the staggering losses the survivors sustained. There is, however, another side to the story. It is the story of unparalleled courage, the will to live, which this remnant of European Jewry displayed.

The Jewish DPs sensed this double aspect of their experience and translated it into a symbol which they adopted and used during their temporary stay in the DP countries. The symbol took the form of a tree which was felled at the base. Against the stump of the tree leaned the severed portion, dried and lifeless. However, out of the stump sprang a new shoot, alive and firm. For, even while European Jewry lay prostrate, the Jewish DPs, though poignantly aware of their losses, insisted that their survival meant that they, and not Hitler, had

triumphed. Given time, they asserted, the new shoot would grow to full maturity and, thereby, the continuity of the life of the tree would not be broken.

It is, indeed, an ironic twist of history that all of the forces at work in the postwar era conspired to leave the Jewish survivors in Europe with no alternative but to attempt to reconstruct their lives among the very people who were responsible for their plight. Yet, one can almost see the hand of divine Providence in this seemingly fortuitous circumstance. It was only among the Germans and the Austrians that the spiritual recovery of the Jewish DPs could hopefully be achieved. In Germany and Austria the dedication of a synagogue, the bearing of young, the celebration of a Bar Mitzvah, the printing of an edition of the Talmud — relatively commonplace events elsewhere — took on additional and unique significance. In these countries these events were charged with profound emotion and, in the aggregate, constituted a chant of the DPs which they dinned into the ears of their recent oppressors, that the Jewish people and its institutions are imperishable.

As the following pages reveal, we stand on the threshold of the solution of the Jewish DP problem. This is a problem which a few years ago seemed all but hopeless. In the summer of 1947, when the *Exodus* and its human cargo were returned to Germany, the Jewish DPs felt trapped in the countries which were anathema to them. The callousness of the world in denying them the opportunity to leave for places where they might salvage something of their lives, made them suspect that their physical rescue was merely a part of a sinister plan to prolong their agony. And yet, several years later find all but a small fragment of these very people integrated into communities in Israel, in the United States and in the other countries to which they have gone.

The major credit for the amazing comeback made by this remnant of European Jewry must, of course, go to the people themselves. In evaluating what they achieved in a brief span of a few years, we may err only on the side of understatement. The self-restraint they exercised during their period of waiting, the resilience they displayed in picking up the threads of their lives, and the determination they showed in collectively asserting the right of the Jew to a country of his own, entitle them to a position of honor in the history of the Jewish people and in the story of mankind.

However, what these people did for themselves must not eclipse the help they received from others. Well deserving of tribute are the Western armies of occupation and particularly, the United States military forces in Germany and Austria, who, in addition to helping the Jewish DPs in countless concrete ways, gave them a sense of physical security while they were awaiting resettlement; many selfless workers of UNRRA and of IRO who demonstrated that they knew that the Jewish DPs were Hitler's chief victims and, as such, had a priority on their sympathy; members of the *Bricha* and the corps of men and women from Israel who identified themselves with the lot of the Jewish DPs and who, in the grimmest days, kept alive in the DPs the faith that they would someday be on soil of their own; many people both of the Jewish and non-Jewish faith who anonymously served the Jewish DPs with singular devotion; Western Jewry and, especially, the Jews of America, who, through agencies sustained by the United Jewish Appeal, greatly accelerated both the physical and spiritual recovery of the Jewish DPs; the United States and other countries who relaxed their immigration policies in favor of the admission of DPs, though limited in number; and finally, the State of Israel, which threw to the winds caution on the absorptive capacity of the newly-born state and opened its gates wide to all Jewish DPs who would come.

It is heartening to learn that the Jewish DPs are fast becoming an indistinguishable part of the communities which have absorbed them. No one is interested in prolonging by one day the complete solution of the DP problem. However, humanity, which was indifferent to the madness which ultimately destroyed nearly all of European Jewry until it was too late to avoid the evil consequence of this madness, would, indeed, be compounding the crime if it ever lost sight of the lesson implicit in the story of the Jewish DPs. When the bells tolled for the Jews they tolled for humanity; and the venom which was first directed against a people, too weak to defend itself, did not run its course until after it had shaken the very foundations of Western civilization and had placed all mankind in mortal jeopardy.

Obviously, no Jew can read the story of the Jewish DPs without gaining renewed faith in the immortality of his own people.

ABRAHAM S. HYMAN

I. THE CURTAIN RISES

A. *Jewish DPs at the end of the war*

When hostilities ended in Europe on May 8, 1945, and Japan surrendered on August 14 of the same year, the world saw the fulfillment of the prediction which Franklin D. Roosevelt made in October, 1939, to a delegation of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees; namely, that after the war there would be from ten to twenty million homeless persons. In Germany alone there were found eight million displaced persons who were known as DPs. This was the technical term coined for them on November 9, 1943, when the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was formed, to denote persons who had been forcibly removed by the Germans and their tools to localities other than their regular place of residence.

The Jewish aspect of the over-all DP problem became immediately evident. About 90,000 to 100,000 emaciated, bereaved Jews, who had miraculously escaped physical destruction, were found in the concentration camps liberated by the Allies. The exact number of these survivors was never established because, immediately following the end of hostilities, a considerable number of them died. Moreover, waves of these people started moving in various directions: home, to other camps, to various cities and towns, or to neighboring countries. The number of survivors was estimated at 70,000.* Only when a certain degree of stability had been introduced in the second half of 1945, was a statistical survey of Jewish displaced persons in Germany, Austria, and Italy made, revealing a total of 90,566. This included an estimated 15,000 German Jews who had survived the concentration camps or managed to stay at home, so that the number of non-German Jewish DPs was about 75,000.

The total of 90,566 was distributed as follows:

* See the introduction to the list of survivors (*Sharit Hapletah*) published by the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in 1945. A subcommittee of the U. S. Senate, whose members visited Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Berlin, Munich, Berchtesgaden, and Vienna in 1947, stated that there were between 50,000 and 60,000 liberated Jews in the American zone of Germany at the end of hostilitis.

TABLE I

Country	*Assembly Centers**		*Cities and Towns*		*Totals*	
Germany		34,423		34,046		68,469
U. S. Zone	26,643		27,776		54,419	
British Zone	7,400		5,150		12,550	
French Zone	380		1,120		1,500	
Austria		8,881		1,216		10,097
U. S. Zone	5,116		616		5,732	
British Zone	3,725				3,725	
French Zone	40		600		640	
Italy						12,000
Total						90,566

Of the more than 75,000 non-German Jewish DPs, the majority came from Poland, the others from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Soviet Russia, Estonia, Lithuania, Yugoslavia, and Greece.

From 1945 forward the Jewish DPs passed through four distinct phases, each distinguished from the other and each attended by problems peculiar to that particular period. The first year following their liberation (1945-46) was a period of physical recovery and of frantic search for families; the second (1946-47) saw their numbers greatly augmented as a result of the mass flight from Poland, and witnessed the crystallization of the DP pattern of life; the third (1947-48) was marked by the stabilization of their numbers and brought them some hope of an early end to their homelessness; the fourth phase (1948-50) was a period of mass movement out of the DP areas: the exodus to Israel, and the emigration to the United States, Canada, Australia, and to other countries. At the close of 1950, the dissolution of the DP camps and the resettlement of most of the Jewish DPs meant that the liquidation of the Jewish DP problem was in sight.

B. *The early situation*

The situation of the Jewish DPs in 1945 was graphically described in a report by Earl G. Harrison, special envoy of President Truman who visited the DP camps in July and August, 1945. According to this report, three months after V-E Day and even longer after the liberation of individual groups, many Jewish displaced persons were living under guard behind barbed wire fences, in camps built by the Germans for

* Assembly center was the official designation for a DP camp.

slave laborers and Jews, including some of the most notorious of the concentration camps, in crowded, frequently unsanitary, and generally grim conditions, in complete idleness with no opportunity, except surreptitiously, to communicate with the outside world. Although a marked improvement had already taken place in the health of the survivors, there were many pathetic cases of malnutrition both among the hospitalized and among the general population of the camps. The death rate had been high immediately following liberation. In Bergen Belsen alone shortly after its liberation a Jewish chaplain had attended 23,000 mass burials, 90 per cent of which were of Jews, death having been the result of previous starvation or of overeating.

There was an acute shortage of clothing. In various camps only the concentration garb — striped pajamas — was available.

There were no cultural nor social activities in the camps nor was there any work for the people to do. The DPs had little to do except to brood upon their wretched plight and the uncertainty of their future.

This situation was aptly and poignantly summed up by a leading DP who visited London a few months after his liberation and who told the assembled Jewish leaders that the DPs had always regarded their rescue as a miracle which could never happen, but in their dreams they had felt certain that should this miracle actually come to pass the world would receive them with open arms and give them succor, sympathy, and kindness. Instead the reverse occurred: the miracle had taken place, but the "certainty" had failed to materialize.

The accommodations provided for displaced Jews differed widely in character, being barracks, huts, hotels, apartment houses, and cottages, which were set aside as camps or settlements.

As far as the situation inside the camps was concerned, there was much to be desired in respect of physical conditions. There was a dearth of furniture, there were unsatisfactory cooking facilities, and overcrowding. A shortage of beds and bedding still existed in various camps as late as 1948. At best the camps could not be more than places where the inmates were given food, shelter, and raiment. Even less was done to improve their morale in the first period of their DP life and to relieve the mental anguish brought on by the horrors of Nazi persecution. Only gradually did they lose the feeling of being outcasts. The Jews had voluntarily segregated themselves in the various

camps; a maximum of self-government was introduced; committees were formed to direct group activities and handle complaints. In many assembly centers they had their own police and, until the practice was abolished by the occupation authorities, their own courts which dealt with offenses committed within the camps and with charges of former collaboration with the Nazis as Kapos.

At first the care of the DPs was the sole responsibility of the armies of occupation and whatever local authorities there were. By and by it was supplemented with aid from international and Jewish organizations.

UNRRA was the first international organization to spring up during the war. Among its many tasks UNRRA included care of the displaced persons who had been found in the occupied countries on the day of liberation. It began its operations in Italy in the autumn of 1944 and in February, 1945, assumed administrative responsibility for the large camps in the South of Italy. UNRRA likewise assisted the United States Army in the American zones of Germany and Austria and by April, 1946, UNRRA administered the DP Assembly Centers in these zones. The United States Army provided the accommodations, the basic food and clothing rations, and the medical supplies.

Voluntary organizations were only permitted to move into Germany, Austria, and Italy by special agreement with UNRRA, and each of them had to be approved by SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces). The establishment of offices in the occupation areas and the practical operations of the voluntary agencies depended upon many conditions, such as the character of the organization, an approved program, the funds it planned to disburse, etc. Moreover, the sending of supplies to the occupied countries was not possible until SHAEF, at the end of 1945, finally issued a relevant directive. The World Jewish Congress succeeded in getting a substantial shipment of clothing and food to the Jewish DPs of Bergen Belsen by the first boat, the SS "Martin Behrman," which left New York on December 15, 1945, to deliver UNRRA supplies to Bremen. As a rule, however, voluntary agencies were not able to operate efficiently until the early part of 1946. Red tape and transportation difficulties were the reasons why they could only act slowly in that most critical period.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee very early provided specialists to assist with health, welfare, and

other services, such as the supply of substantial amounts of kosher foods, clothes, and facilities for spiritual and educational life. The Jewish Agency furnished rehabilitation and resettlement services, particularly with regard to projected immigration to Palestine.

Although the individual pro-rata share of the total supplies distributed by the voluntary agencies was not substantial, whatever the DPs received played a major role in lifting their morale. It made them realize that their fellow Jews abroad had not only not forgotten them but were deeply interested in their welfare and were willing to share part of their worldly goods with them.

The basic principle governing the distribution of the supplies was the needs of the recipient of the supplementary aid. Thus, people who were ill, tubercular patients, pregnant and nursing women, children, and old people were given special rations. However, the services of the DP to his camp community were also taken into consideration. Cigarettes and cosmetics were held out as incentives to the DPs for participation in the administration of the camps, in police work, in educational activities, and in the other constructive aspects of camp life.

The self-help of the DPs was the most important factor in re-creating a semblance of communal life. Under the leadership of the Central Committees of Liberated Jews, and with the financial aid of the voluntary organizations, the DPs established schools in all of their camps, organized their religious, social and cultural life, provided for themselves a varied program of recreational activities, and banded together to meet current questions and to present their problems to the occupation authorities and to the world.

II. INFILTRATION FROM THE EAST

Since the end of the war there had been a considerable movement of Jews into the American and British zones of Germany and Austria. Up to December 31, 1945, it was estimated that more than 30,000 Jews had come from Poland alone.*

From April to November, 1946, another 98,800 persons came from Poland, the majority of whom had previously been in Soviet Russia. They stemmed from the eastern part of Poland

* Unless otherwise indicated, the figures are from the Office of the Jewish Adviser.

occupied by the Soviet Union, or had fled to that region in 1939 when the western provinces of Poland were overrun by the Germans.

In 1946 Russia permitted the repatriation of Polish nationals. A total of 150,000 to 160,000 of an estimated 180,000 to 200,000 Polish Jews who were in Russia returned. Most of those repatriates could not and did not want to stay in Poland because of pogroms and for a number of phychological reasons. With the tacit approval of the Polish authorities they left the country and came to the U. S. occupation zones of Germany and Austria in the hope that their stay there would be only temporary and that they would soon be able to leave for Palestine or some other country of their choice. However, most of them had to remain in the camps until May, 1948, when the legal immigration to the newly created State of Israel began.

The movement from Rumania and Hungary commenced at the end of 1945. At first the numbers were small, but between April, 1947, and February, 1948, there was a considerable influx of Rumanian Jews into the U. S. sector of Vienna. They came chiefly from Bucovina and Bessarabia where they had failed to become integrated into the economic life of the country. "While most of these men, women and children appeared to be thin and hungry looking, they did not leave Rumania primarily because of famine in that land, but rather because of the rising tide of rabid anti-Semitism among the masses of the population."*

This postwar infiltration movement resulted in the U. S. Army directive of April 21, 1947, for the closing of all DP camps to those who entered the zones of occupation after that date.

The immediate effect of this directive was to force the Jewish voluntary organizations to assume sole responsibility for maintaining these new infiltrees. However, in August, 1947, the Austrian authorities relaxed the enforcement of this ruling and ultimately assumed the burden of feeding these newcomers. In Germany the infiltrees managed to find their way into the local economy or succeeded in getting themselves accepted by the registered residents of the camps, who shared with the infiltrees their meager rations and overcrowded quarters.

Political changes and economic dislocations in the life of East European countries caused an influx of fresh refugees into Germany. After the fall of the Beneš government in Czecho-

* Judge Louis E. Levinthal, Adviser on Jewish Affairs to General Lucius D. Clay.

slovakia in February, 1948, some 1,100 Jews entered the U. S. zone of Germany from that country.

There was also a large influx, especially in the first part of 1948, from Hungary, which was impelled by political and economic developments and the desire to reach Israel. Hungarian Jews sought to reach the U. S. zone of Germany by way of Czechoslovakia, but adverse measures taken by the Hungarian and Czechslovak Governments considerably slowed down this movement. It is estimated that between four and five thousand reached the U. S. zone of either Germany or Austria.

Simultaneously with the infiltration of Jews into the DP areas, there was an exodus from them and a steady movement from one area to another, apparently from Germany and Austria to Italy, with Eretz Israel as the final goal.

Infiltration from the satellite countries did not cease in 1949. On the contrary, it grew, as may be seen from the following figures on infiltrees from the Eastern lands registered during that year at the Rothschild Hospital (which served as a refugee hostel) in Vienna:

January	724
February	747
March	1,229
April	2,815
May	2,112
June	1,011
July	548
August	1,747
September	496
October	564
November	773
December	644
	13,410

On the other hand, there was a steady *aliyah* from both Germany and Austria to Palestine during the years 1946 and 1947. Jewish DPs went in numbers to Eretz Israel via Italy, sailing in most cases from the port of Genoa. This caused certain complications.* The Italian Government did not oppose this movement; neither did the transfer of the Jewish DP camps

* In the three areas in which PCIRO operated, the cost of maintaining a refugee differed widely: it was 29 to 35 cents a day in Germany, 15 cents a day in Austria, and 57 cents a day in Italy. That is why PCIRO resisted an increase in the number of DPs in Italy. However, it finally agreed to care for a fixed number of 32,000 DPs. Accordingly, as soon as groups left for Israel, others took their place up to 32,000.

from Northern to Southern Italy impede the *aliyah*, whose volume increased from month to month.

III. THE PROBLEM AT ITS PEAK

A. *The numbers and composition of the Jewish DPs*

On July 1, 1947, when the Preparatory Committee of the International Refugee Organization (PCIRO) took over the care and maintenance of refugees from UNRRA, 168,400 Jewish displaced persons were registered. At their peak, the registered Jewish DPs approximated nearly 27% of the total number of registered DPs, including DPs and refugees in other areas than Germany, Austria, and Italy. Part of them lived in camps and the rest outside these assembly centers. A more detailed survey of the actual figures at various times is given in the following tables:

TABLE II

NUMBER OF JEWISH DPS IN THE CAMPS

Area	1947 April 30	1947 August 31	1947 December 31	1948 May 31	
Germany					
U. S. Zone	125,110	114,596	109,522	92,863	
British Zone	11,000 (approx.)	10,428	9,033*	7,417	
French Zone	1,800	1,859	1,850	300	(approx.)
Austria					
U. S. Zone	20,463	19,214	20,133	16,347	
British Zone	2,156	1,641	973	600	(approx.)
French Zone	0	0	0	0	
Italy	15,705	18,686	18,579	18,000	
Total	176,234	166,424	160,090	135,527	

TABLE III

NUMBER OF JEWISH DPS OUTSIDE THE CAMPS

Area	on May 31, 1948
Germany	
U. S. Zone	20,000
British Zone	4,500
French Zone	900
Austria	
U. S. Zone	600
Vienna	2,000
French Zone	500
Italy	4,000
Total	32,500

* This figure does not include the DPs who were returned from aboard the "Exodus." In September, 1947, the latter numbered 4,200; on May 31, 1948, 2,000.

The above figures do not comprise all the Jews who at one time or another were in the DP areas or were granted DP status. This latter number is estimated at 250,000. The reason why the official figures do not reflect this total lies in the circumstance that, in the later period, many of the newcomers did not enjoy IRO protection. Furthermore, the maximum number was during no single period to be found in the DP areas: some went West (to France, Belgium, Holland), others tried to reach Palestine, still other returned for a short or long period to their home country in order to settle their affairs or those of their relatives. In short, there were continual comings and goings. In addition, children were born and deaths occurred, which also affected the total figure.

According to a survey made by the Joint Distribution Committee in 1947, there were in the U. S. Zone of Germany alone 9,098 Jewish infants under one year of age. Of 37,527 women in the child-bearing age group, 12,240 had born new babies or were pregnant.

The age and sex distribution of the Jewish DPs was subject to the fluctuations in their numbers (because the emigrants were, as a rule, of a younger age) and the passing of time (which meant more births). The following table gives the figures as of May, 1948, for Jewish DPs in the U.S. zone and Berlin, and as of July, 1948, for those in the assembly centers of Italy:

TABLE IV

Age Group	*U. S. Zone and Berlin*	*Italy*
0 - 13	23,859	2,974
14 - 17	4,631	991
Total children	28,490	3,965
18 - 45 (males)	41,572	12,847
18 - 45 (females)	32,200	
46 and over (males)	6,212	1,352
46 and over (females)	7,225	
Unclassified	11,552	
Total	127,251	18,164

Table IV reveals certain important age and sex characteristics of the Jewish DPs: comparatively few persons over 45 years old and an excess of men over women. This finding was confirmed by a survey of the entire camp population plus the Jewish communities of Munich, Hamburg, Regensburg, and

Stuttgart made in 1948 by the Medical Department of the AJDC-OSE which disclosed the following characteristics of the Jewish population in the camps and in the above-mentioned cities:

1. The majority of the Jewish population was middle-aged. Those between 18 and 45 years of age constituted 62.7 per cent of the total number.

2. The Jewish population had only a small proportion of older people. Age groups over 70 were virtually absent.

3. There was a very small number of Jewish children of school age. The age group 6-13 amounted to only 5.6 per cent.

4. The number of men in the marriageable age group between 18 and 45 exceeded that of women by more than 9,000.

5. The irrepressible urge of the Jewish DPs to reconstitute family life and to replace the children who had perished at the hands of the Germans, manifested itself in the extraordinarily high birth rate which prevailed among the Jewish DPs. At a rough estimate, the birth rate in the first half of 1946 was higher than that of any other country or any other population. However, there was a downward trend thereafter and in 1948, the birth rate was 31.9 per thousand of the Jewish population.

There are no reliable figures on the national origin of the DPs before September 30, 1947. The following table* gives a breakdown of the Jewish DPs according to the country of origin as of that date:

TABLE V

Country	*Number*	*Percentage*
Poland	122,313	73.0
Rumania	18,549	11.0
Hungary	8,445	5.0
Czechoslovakia	6,602	4.0
Germany	6,167	3.7
Lithuania	1,786	1.1
Miscellaneous	3,614	2.2
Total	167,476	100.0

B. *Health situation and living conditions*

The suffering and tribulations which the DPs had endured and the deplorable conditions in which they were living could not but impair their health.

* PCIRO News Bulletin No. 6, December 8, 1947.

It is, therefore, rather surprising to find that the previously mentioned AJDC-OSE survey revealed a low mortality rate among the DPs. The major credit for this must go to the IRO and to the JDC which provided excellent medical service for these people, probably superior to that which they had enjoyed in their former communities.

The infant mortality rate among the Jewish population in the American zone of Germany was very low: 26.1 per thousand live births. In 1948 it dropped to the phenomenal low of 5.3 per thousand. This was due to three factors: (1) Special care given by Jewish mothers to their infants; (2) frequent consultations with doctors; (3) successful work of well-baby clinics and camps.

The average number of hospitalized Jewish patients in the U. S. zone of Germany was 1,330 per month. Although the number diminished as a result of emigration, the decline may also be attributed to improved medical care and the preparation for emigration of even hospitalized persons.

During 1948, 443,993 Jews were treated in the dispensaries, which means an average of five visits per person during the year, while 15,961 were hospitalized.

In the period immediately after the liberation, tuberculosis was rife among the Jewish DPs, but in 1948 the spread of tuberculosis was checked. At the Gauting TB Sanatorium, 611 Jewish patients were cared for in 1948, but by December 20, 1948, there were only 332 patients there. At Schloss Elmau there were 69 Jewish patients in December, 1948, while in six other hospitals there were altogether 200 patients, of whom 60 were children. A number of tubercular patients were treated outside sanatoriums and hospitals.

Housing accommodations improved only after many Jewish DPs had left the camps. As the camp population thinned out, each family unit had one room to itself. For the children of both sexes this was considered an ideal achievement, but the moral implications of even these improved conditions are self-evident.

In the U. S. zone of Germany a Jewish DP received a differential of 200 calories a day until May 31, 1948, when this preferred treatment was discontinued. Thereafter, Jewish DPs received only 2,015 calories in the U. S. zone, only 1,715 in the British zone, and only 1,809 in the French zone, the same as the indigenous population. In Austria, the respective figures were

1,637, 1,583, and 1,602, while the figure for Italy was 2,114 on that date. It is true that a varying allowance of additional food was given to workers, pregnant women, and sick persons; but on the whole, the nourishment was very meager in quantity and poor in quality. Starchy food predominated.

To balance their diet the DPs traded part of the rations they received from the IRO and the amenities and supplementary rations they received from the Jewish voluntary organizations for items such as fats, fresh fruits, and vegetables, in respect to which their diet was deficient. The trading was with the native population.

C. *Activities of the DPs*

The Jewish voluntary agencies and Military Government, as well as UNRRA and later IRO, were faced with a complex problem. The liquidation of the DP problem became a matter of years. The lot of the DPs was precarious; indeed, their situation was a sharp challenge to all who had to deal with it. There were few opportunities for gainful employment.

The prevailing idleness in the camps was not only very detrimental to moral and psychological stability, but also harmful for the future resettlement of the refugees.

A survey of occupational skills among the Jewish DPs receiving help from IRO showed that among them there was a relatively larger proportion of the most preferred skills than among the non-Jewish DPs.

As of March 31, 1948, the occupational structure of the canvassed Jewish DPs was as follows:

TABLE VI

Occupation	*Number*
Administrative	3,993
Agriculture and forestry	3,099
Chemistry	113
Communications and transportation	1,165
Engineering	136
Food-processing and food-handling	2,469
Health and sanitation	991
Medical and dental	707
Metal trades	950
Mining	6
Professions and arts	1,152
Public safety and welfare	197
Skilled workers	22,805
Unskilled laborers	19,881
Total	57,664

The majority of the Jewish DPs refused to be integrated into the German economy and, therefore, the only outlet was their work in the self-administered camps, in educational activities, and in vocational projects organized, for the most part, by the AJDC. This kind of camp work occupied an average of 18,000 to 19,000 Jewish DPs.

Many plans were discussed for helping the Jewish DPs earn their living and for using the skills of the DPs both in the camps and in out-of camp projects. These plans, necessitating as they did the import of raw materials and the export of the finished products, could not materialize because it was not feasible to set up an economy within an economy. Despite this handicap, the work of reeducation and rehabilitation improved with the passing of time. Not only did the DPs perform administrative, policing, and security functions in the camps, but they also supplied teachers, physicians, tailors, shoemakers, and other craftsmen needed in the camp community.

The ORT schools became centers of great activity. Vocational training courses were well attended: young men learned the trades of carpenters, locksmiths, machinists, welders; women were trained to be dressmakers, nurses, beauticians. Instruction in languages (Hebrew, English) was given in addition to the regular cultural activities of the camp. As of May 31, 1948, 10,400 students were enrolled in the ORT vocational courses, while 4,700 men and women were employed in special work projects of the Joint Distribution Committee.

IV. IN SEARCH OF NEW HOMES

From the very outset the Jewish DPs regarded their sojourn in Germany, Austria, and Italy as temporary. They wanted to stay there only as long as this was absolutely necessary for their immigration to the land of their choosing, in the main to Palestine (later Israel). As soon as an opportunity arose, considerable emigration started. During 1946 and in the first half of 1947, the emigration was compensated by new arrivals; after that, there was a steady decrease in the number of DPs due to emigration. This decline is reflected in the average monthly figures on Jewish DPs given in the following table:

TABLE VII

Number of Jewish DPs, July 1, 1947	168,440
Monthly average, July, 1947 — June, 1948	163,077
Monthly average, July, 1948 — June, 1949	95,189
January 1949	90,553
March 1949	74,345
May 1949	59,133
July 1949	48,083
December 31, 1949	26,472
March 1950	24,916
June 30, 1950	23,031
August 30, 1950	21,501

A. *Emigration to Israel*

The progress of the emigration from the DP areas to Israel was as follows: First, the legal migration pursuant to the quotas established by the British White Paper of 1939. Second, the outflow from the DP areas (*Aliyah Beth*) which started in the latter part of 1945 and continued through the "Exodus" incident. Third, the *Giyus* (mobilization) period, when young Jews were mobilized for Israel so as to be available for the life-and-death struggle of the reborn Jewish nation (December, 1947 to May, 1948, when the State of Israel was created). Fourth, the legal migration since the birth of the Jewish State.

Between December 15, 1945, and September 15, 1946, a total of 15,000 immigrants arrived in Palestine from the DP camps of Europe, of whom 9,296 were so-called "illegals," traveling in the boats of Haganah's secret rescue fleet. The rest held certificates issued by the British Mandatory Government and allocated by the Jewish Agency.

On the Island of Cyprus about 16,000 who had attempted to reach Israel without the permission of the British mandatory authorities were interned. As soon as the State of Israel came into being on May 14, 1948, there ensued a monthly movement of 5,000 to 6,000 DPs into Israel. According to official IRO figures, 45,100 Jewish DPs came to Israel during the year 1949, while the total from July, 1947 to December 31, 1950, amounted to 120,766.

Eretz Israel had become a magnet for hundreds of thousands of Jews. Young and sturdy Jews accepted the challenge to overcome the difficulties, which were obvious. Among them the Jewish DPs were a most important element. Their homecoming

in the *Aliyah Beth* and *Giyus* periods was the most outstanding Jewish organizational achievement.

The most epic adventure in that perpetual search for the homeland was that of the 4,000 Jewish DPs on board the "Exodus, 1947," who were forcibly returned to Germany by the British, after having reached the coast of Palestine.

One of these "Exodus, 1947" passengers — Isaac Perlow — expressed his feelings in a Yiddish poem very fittingly entitled "Despair on the March." The first four stanzas of it are given below in a free prose translation:

> From Russia, from Poland, from Latvia and Lithuania, from Czechia, Rumania, from Austria and Germany, from the Siberian taigas, Auschwitz shambles, from fire and water, from bullet and from lash —
>
> There marches Despair, fermenting as through the action of yeast, homeless misery which shrieks silently, whomever the gas furnaces did not manage to swallow, whose ashes were not scattered.
>
> There go the remnants, what is left of the people, the handful of Jews saved from extermination. Where are their parents? children? uncle? aunt? A whole continent strewn with graves.
>
> What is sister, brother? What is grandmother, grandfather? What is love? What is home? A generation of widows, a generation of orphans is wending its way, wandering stealthily in darkness and pain.

The *Bricha period* (including the *Aliyah Beth* and *Giyus*) gave a striking demonstration of Jewish resourcefulness. From the camps of Germany the prospective immigrants to the Jewish Homeland were loaded into trucks. To obtain the necessary fuel for the trip via Austria and over the Brenner Pass to Italy was no easy matter. It was accomplished with the official and semi-official sanction of the local authorities. Finally, the trucks were driven under the guidance of alert *schlichim* to the Austrian border. From there the trip continued over the famous Brenner Pass. Most of the time the Italian border guards cooperated. Food depots were organized in Italy to feed the wayfarers.

The boats were usually not ready when the emigrants arrived. There was thus the problem of housing and feeding the DPs in the interim. It was solved by distributing the travelers among small Jewish communities until the day of their departure. Many devices had to be used. The DPs had to endure many hardships before the *schlichim* put them aboard the boats bound for the Holy Land.

They had embarked, but would they be able to disembark? Many thousands were unable to do so. They had to wait for years on the Island of Cyprus until the day of their final homecoming.*

A very vivid description of the mood of these "homegoers" is to be found in the *Maapilim Buch* about the first groups of "illegal" imigrants to Palestine, from which the following passage is quoted:

> In our floating house there beat 180 hearts, 180 wills, firmly resolved to resist even the forces of nature. We consist of two groups which strive for the same goal: Partisans and Chalutzim, both tired of wandering across many alien lands, exhausted by the bloody battles on dangerous fronts, but with hearts filled with one longing: to go home!**

What awaited them and the Jewish community of Palestine upon their arrival in the territorial waters of Palestine may be gathered from the following account of what happened to the two ships "Yagur" and "Henrietta Szold":

On August 12, 1946, it was officially announced that the "illegal" vessel "Yagur," with 758 on board, had been captured in Haifa Bay. On the same day the SS "Henrietta Szold," carrying 450 "illegal" immigrants, among them 200 children, was seized. The transfer of the immigrants to the deportation ship commenced on August 14. A curfew was imposed, and since the Jews assembled in spite of it, the police fired on them, killing one Jew and wounding nine. Two of the wounded died afterwards. When the immigrants aboard the "Henrietta Szold" learned that they were to be deported, many young Jews began to jump overboard, but they were picked up and forcibly taken on board. The harbor was surrounded by troops and no one was permitted to approach. Nevertheless, thousands of people swarmed the streets near the harbor. The throng tried to break through the barriers formed by tanks and autos, and the police again fired. Three young Jews were killed and six wounded.

The historic migratory movement to Israel was greatly helped by the financial contributions of the Jews living in safe and prosperous lands, foremost among them the American Jews. The organizational ingenuity of the Jewish voluntary organizations, especially the Jewish Agency and the Joint Distribution

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* For a detailed account of the illegal immigration to Palestine, *see* Murray Gitlin, *The Embarkation*, New York, Crown Publishers, 1950.

** *Maapilim Buch*, edited by M. Bassak, Paris, 1949, p. 273.

Committee and, on the receiving end, the Histadruth and the Vaad Leumi manifested itself at every stage of the journey from the DP countries to Israel, the ultimate destination.

The flow of the Sharit Hapletah, however, could not be stopped. The cooperation of the United States Government, particularly during the complex situation arising after May 15, 1948, was helpful. But the success of the movement was mostly due to the Jewish DPs themselves, who made the "magic carpet" a reality. IRO fulfilled its duties, but difficulties over the payment of the cost of transporting the DPs to Israel arose during the Arab-Jewish hostilities.

B. *Emigration to the United States*

The emigration of Jewish DPs to the United States passed through three phases. The first was under the Truman Directive of December 22, 1945, the object of which was to speed up the admission of refugees and DPs from the U. S. zones of occupation in Germany and Austria and from the whole of Italy on the basis of existing quotas for their countries of origin. Without circumventing any of the immigration laws or interfering with the consular duties and prerogatives, the directive gave these three areas priorities both for using up available quota numbers and for facilitating transportation of the approved immigrants to the United States.

Under this directive, 3,900 quota visas were to be made available monthly, mainly for natives of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans living as DPs in Gemany (U. S. zone), and Italy. This figure was never reached. In fact, during the period from May 1, 1946 to June 30, 1948, a total of only 41,379 DPs came to the United States.* This latter figure consisted of 38,056 quota and 2,268 non-quota immigrants (most of the latter students); the rest were children. The Jewish share was considerable. For, although only 12,099 Jewish DPs were channeled through the AJDC-HIAS offices, the overall total was more than double this number. The Visa Division of the State Department reported in the interim that 23,594 visas had been issued to Jews out of a total of 35,515. Since the grand total was 41,379 DPs, the proportionate Jewish share must have been approximately 27,500.

* Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, U. S. Department of Justice, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1949.

The Truman Directive permitted selected social agencies to furnish the required affidavits of support for the eligible DPs. This helped greatly in stepping up the admission of DPs from Germany.

The second phase began with promulgation of the DP Act of 1948 (Public Law 774), which permitted the entrance of 200,000 DPs. It created special priorities for farmers and DPs originating from territories annexed by the Soviet Union; the "cut-off date" (i.e., the requirement of residence in the DP area) of December 22, 1945, excluded many Jews from the purview of the Act because 100,000 Jews had come into the U. S. zone after that date.

By June 15, 1950, a total of 164,507 displaced persons had entered the United States. Of this number, 36,192, or 22 per cent, were Jews.

The third phase began with the Act of June 16, 1950. After a long struggle, a new and more humanitarian DP Act was adopted by Congress on June 6-7, 1950, and signed by President Truman on June 16, 1950. The new act changed the cut-off date from December 22, 1945, to January 1, 1949, thereby making eligible Jewish DPs who had been excluded from the provisions of the preceding act. The total number for two years was increased from 205,000 to 341,000.

During the first half of 1951, 6,500 Jewish DPs were admitted into the United States under the DP Act while another 3,500 came in under the immigration quota system. Additional Jewish DPs are expected to arrive during the second half of the year under the DP Act, which has been extended by Congressional action to December 31, 1951.

As of July 11, 1951, 250,000 DPs have entered the United States under the two DP Acts, of whom 20 percent were Jews, thus increasing their grand total to 77,500. (Comparable percentages are: for 1948, 33; for 1949, 21; for 1950, 12.)

C. *Emigration to Central and South American countries*

In contrast, the emigration of Jewish DPs to Central and South American countries has been insignificant. According to the resettlement statistics published by IRO, the following number of Jewish DPs emigrated to Latin American countries between July 1, 1947, and August 31, 1950:

Country	*Number*
Argentina	496
Bolivia	608
Brazil	715
Chile	339
Colombia	135
Costa Rica	114
Cuba	274
Dominican Republic	58
Ecuador	189
Guatemala	16
Mexico	12
Panama	11
Paraguay	1,649
Uruguay	680
Venezuela	375
Peru	90
Total	5,761

The DPs were chosen by national selective committees which were sent from the various countries to the DP areas. These committees obviously discriminated against Jews. Although theoretically the committees acted under instructions to select DPs on the basis of their skills, the committees appeared to be unaware of these instructions when it came to the selection of Jewish DPs. All too often they passed up Jewish DPs who had skills superior to those of non-Jewish DPs.

Such discriminatory practices were not confined to Latin American countries, but were also reported as being indulged in by the field officers of other countries.

IRO professed to be unable to change this practice, maintaining that it could only "insure that Jewish refugees receive exactly the same opportunities to volunteer and appear before the selective missions as had the refugees and displaced persons of other creeds."*

D. *Other countries*

The emigration to Australia has been a mere trickle. In the first five months of 1949 only 273 Jewish DPs came to Australia, besides the 401 Jews who had arrived in the preceding year. From July 1, 1947, to June 30, 1950, Australia accepted a total of 4,745 Jewish DPs and other Jewish immigrants.

* Letter from IRO Director General to the World Jewish Congress.

The total number of Jewish DPs admitted to Canada as of the end of 1950 under the Garment Workers' DP Immigration Project was 3,012, of whom 1,417 were workers in the industry and 1,595 were wives and children. Two hundred and ninety-seven furriers with 371 dependents, and 107 milliners with 170 of their next of kin, were likewise admitted. Altogether, 1,821 Jewish DP workers and 2,136 dependents, or a total of 3,957, were accepted. (From 1946 to 1950 Canada admitted 22,392 Jewish immigrants, of whom 19,697 came from overseas countries and 2,695 from the United States.) Of all the workers brought to Canada under the Garment Workers' Project, 59 per cent were Jews. In addition, 67 per cent of the DP furriers admitted to Canada, and 57 per cent of the milliners, were Jews. Also, 22 Jewish farm families (76 souls) came to Canada during the years 1949-1950 under the settlement plan of the Jewish Colonization Association of Canada. They were placed on dairy and fruit farms in Ontario.

A total of 6,162 Jewish DPs were admitted to Canada under these special programs. The grand total of Jewish DPs admitted to Canada until the end of 1950 may be estimated at 10,000.

Although the overwhelming majority of Jewish DPs went overseas to Israel, the United States, Canada, and other countries, because Europe offered them no incentive to rebuild their lives there, there were many exceptions. Of the European countries, significant numbers of Jewish DPs went to Great Britain, France, Belgium, Sweden, and Holland. Their numerical distributions is estimated as follows:

Belgium	5,000 - 6,000
France	8,000
Great Britain	1,000
Holland	5,000 - 6,000
Sweden	7,200

V. CONSOLIDATION OF CAMPS

As the exodus from the DP countries gained momentum, the camps where the Jewish DPs had vegetated so long underwent a process of planned consolidation. The Office of the Adviser on Jewish Affairs took an active part in planning the merger of camps.

At its peak the number of Jewish camps ran as high as 80 in all DP areas. In the U. S. zone of Germany the most important

camps were Landsberg in Bavaria, with an average camp population of 4,000; Wetzlar, with an average of 6,000 (including 1,200 children, all repatriated from Russia); Zeilsheim, 4,000-5,000.

No large camps existed in the French zone. In Austria, Salzburg and Vienna were the chief centers of Jewish DPs. In Italy Bari was among the most famous camps.

In the British zone there were at the peak approximately 10,000 Jews in the once infamous Bergen Belsen camp. The old barracks infested with vermin were burned by the British, and the Jews lived in a sanitary and improved former military camp near Bergen Belsen. In 1950 Bergen Belsen was taken over by the occupation forces, and the remaining 900 Jewish DPs were transferred to the Jever camp in the province of Oldenburg.

The decline of the Jewish camp population took place in all zones. Only four camps remain in 1951: Foehrenwald, Feldafing, Lechfeld in the U. S. zone, and Jever in the British zone. The last-named, however, is next in line for liquidation.

VI. BONN STATES ITS RESPONSIBILITY

As of June 30, 1950, the IRO discontinued its care and maintenance of the DPs who did not want to be included in the process of resettlement. These DPs became the responsibility of the local German authorities. On the occasion of the transfer of this element in Germany to the care of the German welfare authorities, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, on August 15, 1950, issued a statement to clarify its position with regard to these persons.

The Bonn declaration said: (1) The displaced persons for whom the Federal Government has assumed responsibility will have every facility to be integrated with the population of the Republic. (2) They may be expelled only for reasons of public safety and order and after having exhausted all rights of appeal. (3) They will not be extradited, expelled, deported, or sent back to any country where their life or liberty would be in danger on account of race, descent, origin, creed, or political convictions. However, if they so desire, the right to return to their homeland or to emigrate may not be denied them. (4) The displaced persons for whom the Federal Government has assumed responsibility will enjoy the fundamental rights in accordance

with the proper articles of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. (5) The displaced persons for whom the Federal Government has assumed responsibility will be treated in every other respect in accordance with the principles and the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, the Convention concerning the International Status of Refugees of October 20, 1933, and the Draft Convention on the Status of Refugees and Protocol drawn up by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

On February 28, 1951, the Bundestag fulfilled the Western Allies' request for legislation giving the displaced persons remaining in Western Germany equal rights with the Germans in courts, education, employment, social benefits, and freedom of movement, along the lines of the August 15, 1950, statement of the Bonn Government.

On January 12, 1951, Law No. 17 promulgated by the Office of the U. S. High Commissioner for Germany came into effect. It provides that all displaced persons shall hereafter come under the jurisdiction of the German criminal courts. However, HICOG reserves the following rights for itself:

(1) HICOG may intervene to withdraw a given case from the German courts;
(2) HICOG reserves the right to transfer a given case to an appropriate U. S. court;
(3) HICOG reserves the right to refer a given case to the Court of Appeals;
(4) HICOG reserves the right to suspend judgment;
(5) HICOG reserves the right to secure custody of a given DP from the German authorities.

At this writing, however, the West German Government has not yet asserted its prerogatives as far as Jewish DPs are concerned. The latter are for all practical purposes considered to be "in the process of resettlement" and are under Allied jurisdiction.

VII. FACTORS IN SOLVING THE DP PROBLEM

A. *Outside factors*

(a) *United States Army*

The rescue of the DPs would never have been possible without the help and understanding of the United States Army,

which had to tackle a serious social problem. Indeed, the immediate rescuing operation was done by the soldiers themselves when they entered the notorious concentration camps. Nor should it be forgotten that the British forces also lived up to their duty, especially when they occupied Bergen Belsen.

The U. S. Army displayed sympathetic understanding of the special problem of the Jewish DPs; especially commendable was the admission of thousands upon thousands of Jews from Poland. When their exodus to Israel had to be organized, General Lucius D. Clay and his immediate subordinates saw to it that no red tape interfered with the movement.

In his book *Decision in Germany* General Clay says: "The Army can be proud of its role in the care and protection of displaced persons and it can be sure of their gratitude. I shall always cherish . . . an inscribed Jewish Bible, and a book of pictures with the inscription 'Pictures of a few thousand Jewish displaced persons who will never forget the devotion of General Lucius D. Clay'."

(b) *Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the U. S. Military Government in Germany and Austria.*

After unsuccessful attempts, the Office of Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Forces in Germany and Austria was created in October, 1945. Former Federal Judge Simon S. Rifkind was the first to hold this post. His successors were, in the order named, Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, Judge Louis E. Levinthal, Prof. William Haber, Harry Greenstein, and Major Abraham S. Hyman.

This office had two significant aspects heretofore unknown in Jewish organizational life: (1) The fact that the United States Government assented to the view of the Jewish organizations to consider the problem of the Jewish DPs as distinct from that of the other displaced persons; and (2) the fact that all Jewish Advisers were suggested by the 5 (later 4, after the liquidation of the American Jewish Conference) cooperating major Jewish organizations: American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Conference, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Jewish Agency for Palestine, and the World Jewish Congress.

These organizations cooperated for almost five years on various aspects of the DP problem.

The Office of the Jewish Adviser became the intermediary between the Jewish DPs and the Military Government, and the one through which the Jewish organizations channeled their representations to the U. S. occupation authorities.

On December 31, 1949, the Office of Jewish Adviser was discontinued and a coordinating committee consisting of representatives of the remaining DPs, the Jewish communities in Germany, the Jewish Agency, the JDC, and the World Jewish Congress was formed, which endeavored to continue the wholesome tradition established by the Jewish Advisers.

(c) *IRO*

When UNRRA had to wind up its activities in behalf of the displaced persons, there was justified apprehension about the future care and maintenance of the DPs. On examining the record it is possible to agree in general with the statement of General Clay:

> Without criticizing UNRRA, whose services had been most helpful, we found IRO to be a more businesslike organization, which did its work effectively and economically.

The Jews expressed misgivings when IRO refused to pay the transportation costs for the DPs going to Israel, and there was occasional criticism of certain IRO field workers. Obviously, there was not, nor could there be, perfection.

However, it must be realized that IRO had to operate for at least a year as a provisional agency only, that it was bound by its own constitution, and that, moreover, only 18 countries carried the financial burden and responsibility.* At the height of its activity. IRO assisted 1,481,600 persons, of whom 163,077 were Jews.

IRO largely utilized the manpower of the displaced persons themselves or the services of the voluntary agencies. Although IRO's chief activities were repatriation and resettlement, it also conducted an employment service for persons hard to place.

Besides these services, IRO gave legal and political protection to refugees and displaced persons, including travel papers as well as various documents relating to the civil status of refugees.

B. *Jewish self-help.*

(1) *Central Committees of Liberated Jews*

The Central Committees of Liberated Jews, the DP leadership which guided the local camp committees in the arduous task

* The United States contributed more than 46 per cent of the cost.

of administrating the camps, and which welded the DPs in their respective zones into a disciplined group of people, aided materially in the solution of the Jewish DP problem. The Central Committees were democratically elected by the DPs and financed by the Jewish voluntary agencies.

The Central Committee was officially recognized by the U. S. military authorities in the American zone as the spokesman for the DPs, and satisfactory cooperation was also achieved in the French zone and in Italy. Only the British authorities, on orders of the London Government, refused to recognize the Central Committee in their zone as a representative and self-governing Jewish DP body.

Following were the principal tasks of DP self-administration:

(1) Organizing a Jewish police in the camps.
(2) Organizing schools in and outside the camps.
(3) Administering of the camps.
(4) Looking after the health and medical needs of the camps.
(5) Organizing the AJDC work programs within the camps and assisting the ORT and other vocational schools.
(6) Dealing with complaints and incidents and serving as a clearing-house for the manifold problems of the DPs.
(7) Distributing supplies, as well as gifts from abroad.
(8) Directing activities bearing on the religious, cultural, and social life of the Jewish DPs. Thus, the Central Committee in the U. S. zone maintained a Central Historical Committee to conduct research and take charge of publications on the history of the Jews during the Nazi regime.
(9) Engaging in political activities and supplying witnesses and documents for the Nuremberg and subsequent war crimes trials.
(10) Establishing and assisting Jewish newspapers and periodicals. The Location Service of IRO, the Red Cross, and the World Jewish Congress in London and New York were greatly aided by the Central Committees.

Perhaps the most significant service rendered by the Central Committees was in organizing the political life of the DPs, in giving them a Zionist orientation, and in crystalizing the desire of the DPs to migrate to Israel.

(2) *Outside organizations*

The many complex problems — psychological, economic, political, and cultural — of a unique situation, arising from the circumstance of hundreds of thousands of Jews from different countries of origin having to live in a transitory status and, in

addition, on hostile soil, could not have been solved without the commendable efforts of a number of Jewish organizations.

Before the latter were able to act, however, the organization of the unorganized stepped into the vacuum which existed from the day of liberation until the voluntary agencies could begin their operations. The men forming that organization were the Jewish Army chaplains, to one of whom this study is dedicated.

The chaplains established the first contact between the liberated Jewish DPs and their kinsfolk; they distributed gifts out of their supplies; they had religious articles for divine services; they prodded their congregations back home to send supplementary food parcels to them for distribution among the hungry DPs. They not only asked for clothing; they got it, and gave it to the needy. They uplifted the morale of the depressed DPs with their divine services, many of which were memorable affairs, and with their ministrations and counsel. Chaplains stationed for a considerable period in an area carried out a whole program of spiritual and material rehabilitation. They established contacts between Jewish DPs and Allied Jewish soldiers of all ranks. Indeed, their selfless devotion to their liberated brethren was for the latter the first shining light after the period of darkness and despair.

(a) *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee*

The heaviest burden in caring for the DPs fell upon the Joint Distribution Committee. With a field staff of 700, the JDC, with funds supplied by American Jewry, tackled such tasks as child care, medical aid, education, assistance in religious and cultural activities, Passover relief, and the feeding program which required supplementary allocations or complete feeding, especially for the infiltrees.

From 1946 to 1950, the JDC shipped 99,789,548 pounds of food and clothing to the Jewish DPs. Food was the major item, weighing 79,031,017 lbs.; clothing, 10,389,106 lbs.; and miscellaneous articles, including medicaments, 10,369,425 lbs. Of the total amount, more than 27,000,000 lbs. was derived from the Joint SOS campaign in the United States.

The JDC reports that it fed completely or supplementarily 170,600 DPs in 1946, 154,600 in 1947, 79,500 in 1948, 52,850 in 1949, and 18,850 in 1950.

Child care assistance was extended to 77 institutions with an average of 1,010 children (in 1946) to 15,600 (up to 1948). Medical aid was supplied to an average of 8,000-10,000 persons who were treated in 28 hospitals, 37 infirmaries, 68 dispensaries, 16 maternity wards, 50 dental clinics.

There were evening courses in 120 institutions attended in 1948 by 1,900 DPs. Seventy schools had a combined enrollment of 7,000 pupils. Several hundred religious institutions took care of religious needs.

The JDC's most important activity, however, consisted in helping DPs to immigrate to Israel, the United States, and other countries. Although the expenses were partly borne by IRO, the JDC's experienced staff was indispensable in making the migratory movement of the DPs a success. From 1945 to 1950 the JDC assisted over 200,000 persons (DPs and non-DPs) in migrating, the great majority of whom (150,000) went to Israel, 25,000 to the United States, about 20,000 to Latin America and the British Dominions, and 10,000 to other countries. No breakdown of the two groups is available. The work connected with the immigration to Israel was done in cooperation with the Jewish Agency. Expressed in dollars, the budget for the DP areas ranged from $17,000,000 to $20,000,000 a year, diminishing considerably in 1949 and 1950.

(b) *Jewish Agency*

The Jewish Agency, in cooperation with the Joint Distribution Committee, was instrumental in bringing the DPs to Israel. The Jewish Agency had the sole responsibility for organizing the migration, completing all the formalities, arranging for transportation, and through the personal contacts of the *shlichim,* stimulating the interest of the DPs in migration to Israel.

Before Israel consulates were established, the Jewish Agency performed the consular functions. The Jewish Agency had a field staff in Germany, Austria, and Italy of several hundred persons, who not only assisted the migratory movement of the DPs but also engaged in cultural activities, principally by providing a major part of the teaching staffs of the DP schools, and by means of lectures. It sent Hebrew language teachers to the DP camps from Israel. As soon as the DPs arrived in Israel, they became the sole responsibility of the Jewish Agency. They had to be clothed, fed, and housed. This process of immediate relief was followed by a period of training and educating them

preparatory to their absorption into the economic and social life of Israel. Keren Hayesod, the Agency's financial arm, spent over thirty million dollars in 1949 for resettlement and other activities connected with immigration. Although this amount also covered immigrants from other territories, nearly 50 per cent was used for DPs. The Jewish Agency's office in Germany was closed on September 30, 1950.

(c) *HIAS*

HIAS (Hebrew Sheltering & Immigrant Aid Society), with field offices in Germany and Austria, helped Jews migrate to the United States and later shifted its activity to those migrating to Israel. In 1948 HIAS appropriated $1,575,482 for overseas work (as distinct from its services in the United States); in 1949, $1,899,025. In 1948 HIAS reported that it had assisted 22,370 persons to emigrate from various European countries to the United States, Canada, Latin America, and other lands exclusive of Israel. Although there are no exact figures on how many of these were DPs, the majority undoubtedly were. Later on the JDC and HIAS combined their migration offices in Germany and the HIAS figures are therefore included in the overall figures.

By January 31, 1951, HIAS had helped 15,971 persons to immigrate into the United States under the DP Acts.

(d) *ORT*

ORT operated its vocational training program in all three areas (Germany, Austria, Italy). In Germany it had at its peak 68 units with 6,500 students; in Austria, 13 units with 1,020 students; in Italy, 17 units with 1,000 students.

Students who registered for immigration to Israel were encouraged to take additional courses in Hebrew, while those planning to go to the United States were advised to take courses in English.

The ORT vocational training centers were important both for teaching new trades and for keeping up the morale of younger people. The eagerness of the students to learn was apparent to any observant visitor to the camps. The training program was divided into practical and theoretical courses. The standards maintained were very high.

ORT financed these schools by arrangement with the JDC and IRO. The more the Jewish population decreased, the more ORT curtailed its activity in the DP countries.

During 1950, 4,721 persons received training in 111 courses at 5 schools and 4 rehabilitation centers in Germany.

(e) *World Jewish Congress*

Although the World Jewish Congress had no representative in Germany until 1950, all the Central Committees of Liberated Jews in the U. S., British, and French zones of Germany and Austria, as well as in Italy, were affiliated with the World Jewish Congress, and close relations were established which continued from the earliest days of DP life after the war.

Through its Committee for Overseas Relief Supplies, the World Jewish Congress in 1946-1947 and the first part of 1948 sent over a million dollars' worth of clothing, food, and pharmaceuticals to the DP camps.

More important still was the World Jewish Congress' political action in behalf of the DPs. In cooperation with other organizations, and independently, the Congress was concerned that the preferential status of the DPs as to food and housing should be continued; that German courts should not have jurisdiction over DPs; that the German police should not be allowed to enter DP camps; that DPs should be permitted to form their own police; that Jewish DPs should be allowed to take out of Germany household goods and other articles which they had acquired; that the Jewish DPs should be included in the provisions of general claims laws; that they should not be forced to rebuild the economy of the nation which had exterminated six million of their people.

(f) *Other organizations*

Other Jewish organizations whose work in behalf of the DPs deserves mention were the Jewish Relief Unit from Great Britain and Vaad Hatzala of New York. The Jewish Relief Unit was a group organized by British Jewry and especially active in the British zone of occupation in Germany and in Austria. The Vaad Hatzala took care of certain religious needs in Germany.

VIII. WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

Remaining DPs

As of December 31, 1949, there were more than 39,000 Jewish DPs in Germany and Austria in care of the IRO, distributed as follows:

Country	*In-Camp*	*No. of Camps*	*Out-of-Camp*
Germany			
U. S. Zone	15,535	9	12,000
British Zone	1,000	1	1,000
French Zone	——	—	300
Austria			
U. S. Zone	4,372	5	310
British Zone	——	—	40
French Zone	——	—	240
U. S. Sector, Vienna	1,846	4	3,000*
Total	22,753	19	16,890

An additional 2,000 to 3,000 were in Italy.

During the year 1950 the number of Jewish DPs declined still further. The Office of HICOG (U. S. High Commissioner for Germany), in its Status Report as of July 31, 1950, set forth the figures, which covered also Jews living within the German economy and therefore not counted by IRO. According to this report, there were only 11,865 Jews in IRO centers in Germany on that date, while 14,556 Jewish DPs were living within the German economy.

At the beginning of November, 1950, Germany contained 19,000 to 23,000 Jewish DPs, who were classified as follows:

Hard-core cases	3,000 - 4,000
"Amerikantzes" (i.e., those planning to go to the U. S. A., Canada, and Australia)	10,000 - 12,000
Prospective emigrants to Israel	3,000 - 4,000
Those desiring to remain in Germany	3,000

The figures continued to decline. Many of the "Amerikantzes" left for the United States and other countries, while some "hard-core" cases were transferred to Israel.

As of December 31, 1950, the number of Jewish DPs requiring assistance** were:

In Austria		5,801
In Germany		20,085
British Zone	1,917	
French Zone	320	
U. S. Zone	17,848	
In Italy		2,072

* The Jewish Adviser, in his Final Report, estimated that there were now approximately 3,000 unregistered Jewish refugees throughout Austria, with the greatest concentration in Vienna. This figure is in addition to the estimated 3,500 former DPs who are now members of the Jewish Community in Vienna.

** IRO also extended assistance to Jewish refugees in Belgium (2,708), France (3,829), Sweden (1,949).

At the beginning of 1951 only 50 Jewish DPs remained in the French zone.

As of January 1, 1951, according to figures compiled by the Joint Distribution Committee, there were three sizable Jewish DP camps in Germany, viz., Foehrenwald, with 3,487 residents; Feldafing, with 2,190; and Lechfeld, with 1,332. In the hospitals there were 613 ill and invalid DPs; of this number, 267 were in the Gauting TB sanatorium and 130 in Sonnenhof. In the British zone the number of Jewish DPs was 800-900.

The foregoing figures, as said, relate to residents of DP camps only. It is assumed that, in addition, there were about 8,000 former Jewish DPs among the 12,000 Jews organized in the Jewish communities in the American zone. No exact figures are available.

There are still DP problems to be solved. Firstly, there is the need to take care of the hard-core cases among the Jewish DPs. These have contagious diseases, such as tuberculosis, or else are cripples and old people. Israel is ready to take these hard-core cases. Israel has received two and a half million dollars from IRO for their permanent care, which is 25 per cent of the ten million dollars that IRO set aside for all hard-core cases. The Government of Israel and the Joint Distribution Committee have established a special welfare and rehabilitation fund of $17,500,000 in order to be able to assume the financial burden entailed by the assistance given DPs who require permanent care. At a conference of representatives of the Jewish Agency and the Joint Distribution Committee (November 21, 1949) the following outline of the problem was given:

> The 4,000 "hardcore" cases, the majority of whom will never be able to work, will require hospitalization and rehabilitation. Of this group, 1,500 are suffering from tuberculosis. The program, which includes transportation, provision of 1,000 additional hospital beds, expansion of hospital facilities and the recruiting of specialists, doctors and technicians, mostly in Israel, is expected to cost $1,000,000 a month for the first fifteen months. Five thousand dependents of the "hardcore" cases also will be permitted under the program to emigrate to Israel. The International Refugee Organization will provide $2,500,000 toward the construction of new facilities for 3,000 of the cases. The Israeli Government will contribute 3,500,000 in land and buildings, the Jewish Agency $4,000,000 for work in Israel, and the JDC $7,500,000 for transportation and other expenses.

The transfer of the "hard-core" cases and their relatives to Israel has started. On May 7, 1951, a party of 33 "hard-core"

cases and 70 healthy persons, most of them relatives of the patients, left for Israel.

Special arrangements for the "hard-core" movement were made by the Joint Distribution Committee. Staff nurses and physicians accompanied the transport from its starting point at a tuberculosis sanatorium in Gauting, Bavaria, to dockside in Genoa, Italy, where the "Artza," newly equipped with hospital facilities, was waiting. The ship, carrying the 33 patients, —the majority of them bedridden — and 35 members of their families, sailed for Israel on May 8, the sixth anniversary of the Nazi surrender.

On their arrival in Israel, the patients were transferred directly to Malben's hospitals and sanatoria.

An additional 3,500 "hard-cores" are still waiting in Europe until the facilities of Malben, JDC's agency in Israel, can be expanded sufficiently to care for them. By the end of 1951, Malben is expected to have some 7,000 men, women, and children under its care.

It is anticipated that the end of 1951 may well see the solution of the most difficult single problem facing displaced Jews in Europe.

Secondly, there are Jewish DPs who will try to go to the United States in the future, but for technical reasons are unable to do so now.

Thirdly, a limited number of Jewish DPs will remain in Germany, Austria, and Italy for economic and other personal reasons. Some of the DPs have established businesses in Germany, which they do not want to give up.

According to a Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatch, datelined London, April 24, 1951, the closing of the last camp for displaced Jews in the British zone of Germany and the ending of the DP problem in that zone would take place within the next few months.

Many of the remaining Jews, the JTA dispatch went on to say, would emigrate during that period. The "hard-core" cases, numbering between 60 and 100, would be transferred to a hospital in the American zone, where they would be cared for by the Joint Distribution Committee. In the American zone, it is estimated, there are still between 12,000 and 15,000 Jewish DPs.

In addition, there are still living in various European lands — Belgium, France, Switzerland, Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, Sweden — Jewish DPs and refugees who reached these countries

in their flight and prefer to live there for the time being. Many of them, however, consider their stay there temporary, and their desire to be finally resettled is still strong.

EPILOGUE

Of the scores of thousands of Jewish DPs who have been resettled in Israel and other countries, the same process of absorption and integration, of physical rehabilitation and spiritual regeneration, may be observed. These erstwhile outcasts and pariahs have resumed the life of normal, productive, and self-reliant persons, have regained a sense of belonging and of their dignity as human beings, and by their energy, enterprise, and industry have become an asset to their adopted countries.

The part played by former DPs in the struggle for Israel is well known. Needless to say, they are also grateful and loyal to the other countries which have given them refuge and an opportunity to rebuild their shattered lives. They stand ready to serve their adopted lands not only in time of peace, but in time of war, and not a few of them have made the supreme sacrifice. In the *New York Post* of July 1, 1951, there appeared a story entitled "Youth Saved by GIs from Nazis Pays Debt to U. S. With His Life," which will form a fitting close to this study. We quote in part:

"Benjamin Hower has paid his debt of gratitude to America.

"Just 19, he died in Korea, a Private First Class in the U. S. Army.

"Hower was one of the German youngsters Hitler didn't like. He spent his early teens in Auschwitz, the concentration camp. His parents were killed by the Nazis.

"It was an American Army captain who liberated him. The officer's name is unknown, but Hower never forgot him. From the day he left Auschwitz, he had one goal: to join the American Army.

"Aided by the Joint Distribution Committee, young Hower managed to get to America. He volunteered for service with the Army, and the day he was accepted was the happiest day of his life. . . .

"At Beth Israel Cemetery in New Jersey, the boy the Nazis hated was lowered into the earth of his adopted land with the full ceremony of a U. S. Army funeral.

"And the distant relatives turned away to go back to their homes and the way of life for which Benjamin Hower gave up his own."
