II. WESTERN EUROPE

By Martha Jelenko*

1. Germany

Developments within the last year confirmed anew the conviction that the Nazis are endeavoring to exterminate the Jews of Europe by all possible methods in the shortest possible time. Reich Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels in an article in Das Reich of May 7, 1943, put his case bluntly: "Germany must destroy the Jews and there can be no mercy. The slightest weakness in the solution of the Jewish question might endanger Germany as well as the whole of Europe. . . ."

Their attempt to annihilate an all but impotent enemy is typical of the cowardly character of the Teutonic Herrenvolk. Considering the fact that today they have to contend with powerful foes, both in the East and in the West, one must seek the explanation for this persistent and pathological hatred in a number of probable motives, related to the need for a scapegoat, inherent Nazi fanaticism and plain, unadulterated fear of the future. But, whatever the cause, the extermination of Jews in Germany, as in the rest of Europe, is proceeding with undiminished cruelty.

Expulsions

Deportations from the Reich continued at a steady pace. Sporadic reports emanating from neutral countries give only a fragmentary picture. The magnitude of the movement to the ghettos outside of the country and the resulting extinction of the Jewish community in Germany are, however, dramatically illustrated by recently published figures. For the whole country the 1943 Jewish population is estimated by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee as being approximately 40,000. By July 19, 1942, the Nazi press had boasted that 33,000 Jews had been deported

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from the Reich, and that Frankfurt am Main was rid of its entire pre-Hitler Jewish population, of about 26,000. But far more drastic is the almost unbelievable Nazi report of April 1943, that no Jews remained in Berlin, which had a Jewish population of 96,000, according to official figures of 1939.

Official announcements of public auctions of property confiscated from Jews in Cologne were accompanied by a statement to the effect that German air raid victims would receive preferential treatment at the sales.

While in the past the practice had been to deport only Jews under sixty years of age, eventually even older people have had to join the exodus. All inmates of the Berlin Jewish Home for the Aged, including a ninety-five-year-old woman, were shipped to the Czech fortress town of Terezin. Likewise, a report of October disclosed the dissolution of the Nuremberg Jewish Home for the Aged and the expulsion of all inmates to eastern Europe. Moreover, according to reliable reports, fourteen-year-old Jewish girls have been sent to military brothels in Riga, Latvia, and other eastern European towns. Following heavy RAF raids, Jews whose homes escaped damage were immediately ousted to make room for bombed-out Germans. Nazi patrols were also said to have seized Jews walking on the streets and to have hurried them off to three concentration centers near Berlin whence they were later transported to unknown destinations. The pitifully small number remaining within the Reich were employed in German war industries and were tolerated only because they were considered irreplaceable.

Expropriations

Life is well-nigh unbearable for the miserable remnants of Jews thus far spared. All of them know that their turn for deportation will come and that when it comes it will mean almost certain death. It is, therefore, hardly credible that they still have anything left that could be the subject of new economic and social measures.

The value of property confiscated from the now completely pauperized Jews was put at $4,000,000,000 by the Ministry of Propaganda on February 9, 1943. The Swedish
press, commenting on this estimate, however, stated that the amount is only about one-fourth of the actual value and interpreted the Nazis' figure, as well as the timing of the statement, as an answer to the United Nations' promise of the final restoration of property seized by the Nazis, made a month earlier.

Reports stating that the value of shares of "aryanized" business concerns had dropped 40 per cent would seem to indicate that the Nazis themselves feel that these concerns will not remain much longer in their hands.

Social Ostracism

Although "Aryan" wives or widows of Jews are subject to a new series of business restrictions, the Nazis are said to be less discerning so far as "half-Jews" and "quarter-Jews" are concerned in that they are permitted to die at the front for the glory of the Third Reich. On the basis of a document seized by the Red Army when it captured staff headquarters of the 298th Infantry Division, it was established that part-Jews had been serving in the Nazi army since April 1942. An order, countersigned by both Hitler and von Keitel, then commander-in-chief, drafted into army service persons with 50 per cent "Jewish blood" or married to "half-Jews" and persons with 25 per cent "Jewish blood" or whose wives were "quarter-Jewish." "Half-Jews" were to be segregated from Nazi soldiers and could not become officers, whereas "quarter-Jews" were to be treated just as "Aryans." Credence is lent to this statement by a private report according to which, on February 5, German consulates in Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Portugal allegedly asked refugees classified as "half-Jews" under the Nuremberg Laws to return to the German "fatherland."

Nuisance decrees were constantly devised to keep the Jewish issue in the foreground. Early in the summer of 1942, Berlin Jews were forbidden to stroll along the streets at a leisurely pace. They had to walk briskly, showing they were on a definite errand. It was made an offense for them to carry canes or to walk more than two abreast, or to halt and confront a fellow-Jew they met on their route. Linger-
Special police squads were assigned to enforce the new restrictions. All communications between Jews had also stopped since Jews, who had already been barred from relations with non-Jews, were now categorically forbidden to send letters, parcels and telegrams to any person living in the Reich.

An order sent out by Otto Georg Thierack, the German Minister of Justice, announcing "the introduction of the racial principle in German legal procedure" in December, may at first glance be interpreted as spelling additional hardships for the Jews. The edict, made public by the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, authorizes courts to increase sentences meted out to "non-Aryans" and permits all courts to try such persons for crimes which they had not yet committed but which they may be "capable of committing." Since, however, Jews have long ceased to have recourse to legal procedure, the new order seems to be somewhat farcical.

Reaction of the People

Attempts by the general population to aid Jews or to express sympathy for them are extremely isolated and by no means assume the form of concerted action, as shown in the occupied countries. Thus, for example, five peasant women in Königsberg were sentenced to terms of imprisonment for taking under their care eight Jewish children whose parents had been exiled to Poland. Again, a number of non-Jews, mostly women, were sentenced to long terms in Aachen for helping Jews escape to Belgium.

A few courageous church leaders also showed their sympathy for the Jews. Cardinal Faulhaber, the leader of the Catholic Church, arranged to have Torahs and other Jewish ritual objects from the ruined Munich synagogue safely stored in the Archdiocesan Palace at Freising. Sometime in February, Bishop Galen of Münster stated in a sermon that German defeats in Russia were God's punishment for Nazi crimes against the Jews and that no decent German approved of the Nazi atrocities. An open reprimand for the Germans was published in the Deutsche Kirchen Zeitung in March 1943, which said that Christian churches were
being demolished in RAF raids because Germans witnessed the desecration and burning of hundreds of synagogues in Germany and Austria in November 1938, without protesting openly against the vandalism. The same thought was expressed by Bishop Galen in his Whitsun sermon (June).

Anti-Semitic Propaganda

Incitement to mass murder marked the Nazi campaign of propaganda last fall, following Heinrich Himmler’s promise to Hitler to make Germany free of all Jews by the end of 1942. Meetings and street demonstrations were held daily in Berlin at which Nazi spokesmen urged immediate action against the Jews on the ground that “the German people will be able to enjoy freedom and be secure with their daily bread only when all Jews are dead.” Loudspeakers in the streets bellowed the latest Nazi slogan: “The German people demands the deportation of all Jews from Germany.” The S. S. Elite Guard organ, Das Schwarze Korps, trumpeted that “there are still about 250,000 Jewish parasites in Berlin” who must be exiled without delay. The entire press echoed this theme. At a Nazi meeting in Weimar, Fritz Sauckel, the notorious Commissioner for Labor, assured his audience that the government’s decision to deport all Jews would be soon carried out. Simultaneously the Propaganda Ministry busied itself with the production of new anti-Semitic films, such as “Shylock,” “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,” and “The Power of the Masons.” The Ostsee Zeitung, Danzig, in November, advocated a variation of the “old American phrase about Red Indians” to “The only good Jew is a dead Jew.” At a Nazi Labor Front Conference in the same month, the extermination of the Jews was advocated by Alfred Rosenberg, the Nazi Minister for the Ostland, and Werner Best, Nazi envoy to Denmark.

A Zurich report on January 11, 1943, claimed that the week before a conference was held in Berlin at which methods for making anti-Jewish propaganda more effective were discussed. All the star Nazi propagandists, including those engaged in broadcasting to America, were said to have attended. The tone of this conference had been given by
Hitler in his New Year's message, a quarter of which was devoted to his familiar anti-Jewish diatribes.

Orders given at this conference were well carried out because, even with a pitiful handful of Jews remaining in Germany, the Fuhrer's denunciations were made the outstanding feature in the major part of the Berlin press. Echoes came from all over the Reich. Dr. Robert Ley, head of the Labor Front, during a visit to eastern Prussia in February, told public meetings that "Juda is chosen, but for destruction." And the renegade American reporter, Robert H. Best, broadcasting from Berlin to the United States, demanded that one Jew be killed for every German who falls on the Russian front. On May 6 the Propaganda Minister conveyed to foreign press representatives that "the Jewish question is still in the center of interest in Germany" and that no one must doubt "Germany's determination to solve this question forever without any compromise, and in a cold, dispassionate, relentless way."

The blasting of the Mohne and Eder dams in the Ruhr district by the RAF on May 17, was a signal for renewed attacks on the Jews. The Nazis in their drive to divert public attention from the Tunisian debacle, made the most of a London story that a German Jewish emigre there had suggested the bombing. Although the British Air Ministry immediately denied this report, which had been written by Guy Bettany, Reuter's former Berlin correspondent, it continued to be exploited by the Nazi radio and press.

An "International Congress" of Axis-controlled journalists met in Vienna in June where high Nazi officials, including Otto Dietrich, the press chief, indulged in violent anti-Jewish diatribes. At the end of the session, the German radio announced on June 30, participants voted to aid "by pen and sword" in the annihilation of the Jews and in the "liberation of the world from Anglo-American imperialism."

Communal Life

In an effort to alleviate the suffering to some extent, Dr. Leo Baeck, the aged dean of the rabbinate in Germany and head of the Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland, in October 1942, issued an appeal in the *Jüdisches*
Nachrichtenblatt, Gestapo-sanctioned organ of the Jewish community, to the remaining Jews to help each other in the face of their isolation. Like the late Heinrich Stahl, his predecessor, who was reported in November 1942 to have died at the age of seventy-four, Baeck was deported to Terezin in March 1943. Previously, on November 9, Stockholm sources revealed, seven leading members of the former Berlin Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland, whose names were not disclosed, were shot after many months’ imprisonment. In December, Alfred Selbiger, leader of the German Hechalutz movement, was also executed in a concentration camp.

Looking toward a better Germany after the war; the Free German League of Culture in London, a group of non-Jewish anti-Nazi Germans, drew up in November a “Bill of Rights” for Jews in a new Germany. “The first duty of the new Germany,” the declaration said, “must be to right the wrong done to German Jewry.”

Austria

Mass deportations of Jews from Vienna proceeded swiftly. Thousands of rooms formerly occupied by deportees were given to bombed-out Germans sent to Vienna.

In July 1942, without even the usual three days’ notice to prepare for expulsion, victims were taken from their homes directly to transportation centers and shipped immediately to the East. Jewish patients in a Vienna hospital, as well as inmates of the Jewish Home for the Blind, committed suicide when they learned that they would be deported. Among those expelled from Vienna were Dr. Desider Friedmann, former president of the Vienna Jewish Community, and former Deputy Robert Strieker, noted Zionist leaders. Both were taken to Terezin in November.

The Austro-American League in New York announced last July that the Nazis had sent 120,000 Jews to Poland of whom 53,000 were reported to have died from starvation, exposure or torture. According to the annual report published in April by the Swedish Israel Mission, a relief organization aiding Jewish victims of German persecution, it is estimated that only 7,000 of the original 180,000 Jews
still remain in Vienna and that these are so-called privileged cases, namely, families in which one spouse is “Aryan” and the children are raised as Christians. This statement was more or less confirmed by a report in the Berlin Reichsanzeiger that the Jewish community in Vienna had ceased to exist on January 1, 1943. The only remaining Jewish institution is the burial society, whose functions are obvious. After the liquidation of the community, its leader and 32 other executives were likewise deported to Terezin. The British Broadcasting Corporation reported on February 15, furthermore, that Gestapo officials supervising the expulsion of Jews from Austria had been withdrawn and ordered to Berlin and Amsterdam.

2. France

When British and American troops landed in Africa, in November 1942, Hitler immediately occupied all of France and the slight differences in administration between the occupied and the “unoccupied” zones disappeared.

Arrests and Deportations

Occupied Zone

While sporadic expulsions of Jews had taken place ever since the beginning of 1942, it was not until the middle of July, after extensive lists of people virtually slated for death had been carefully drawn up by the authorities, that a systematic man hunt was begun. French Jews will long remember the modern St. Bartholomew’s Night of July 15-16, 1942, when twenty thousand terrified Jews of Paris, including the aged and sick, were dragged from homes, hospitals, from wherever they were, and herded together in the Vélodrome d’Hiver, in the Parc de Princes and other improvised places of concentration. There, the “prisoners” were packed to remain for days, sitting in rows, with stretchers of the dying filling the aisles. Many died from hunger and disease in spite of clandestine help from the outraged populace. Three hundred Jews committed suicide within the first few days.
These scenes of human misery became so frightful that French policemen and officials refused to make any further arrests and German soldiers were called in. By the beginning of September the number of internees had risen to 28,000, and within three months 35,000 families were broken up. Among those seized were 4,000 Rumanian Jews for whose arrest special legislation had to be enacted by the Rumanian Government. Equally ruthless was the manner of expulsion which began in August. Several thousand Jews, many of whom perished during the journey, were dispatched to the East in cattle cars marked: “War Materials Explosives — Transit to Russia.”

While the roundups and successive deportations were still in progress, a good many of those who had been forewarned by friendly police sought to flee the country. Feeling that they would be comparatively safe in Vichy France, many of them tried in vain to cross the closely guarded demarcation line. Those who escaped being shot by German border guards and actually reached the other zone did not improve their lot for they were seized by the French police who had been ordered to arrest them. Many others reached the safety of Switzerland or Spain.

Unoccupied Zone

After the Nazis informed Vichy of their intention to expel all the internees under their jurisdiction, the French Government allegedly negotiated with the Germans to have citizens exempt from deportation and to have them replaced by alien Jews previously interned in Vichy France. The Germans were said to have agreed to this deal in human lives, and promptly asked for the surrender of thirteen thousand new victims. This, like all other agreements with the Nazis, proved unilateral, of benefit to the Germans only, for eventually native French Jews, too, were arrested and deported.

The original deportation policy of Vichy was authoritatively discussed in the Basler Nationalzeitung of October 21, and later confirmed by underground reports. This article, based on official French documents, stated that all alien Jews residing in France since January 1, 1936, were to
be expelled, except those in the following categories: Persons over sixty years of age and their spouses (irrespective of age); children under eighteen years of age when not accompanied by relatives; persons who had served in the French or ex-Allied Army for at least three months, or had participated in battles, as well as their wives, parents and children; aliens having French husbands, wives or children; the infirm who could not be transported; pregnant women; parents of children under five years old, and their children under eighteen; alien workers who could not leave their jobs without causing a serious dislocation to national economy; aliens noted for their artistic, literary or scientific work, or who have rendered services to their country; aliens whose interests were protected by neutral consulates; refugees claimed by Germany for political reasons.

In order to execute the planned deportations, the French authorities stopped granting exit visas in August, and canceled all exit visas extended to Jewish citizens or stateless Jews coming from German-occupied territories. It seemed, however, that when the required number of aliens in France since January 1936 was not enough to meet Nazi demands, instructions were given to complete the quota by choosing from among the internees those Jews who had been residents of France since January 1933; age limits, too, were disregarded.

Before these expulsions started, the “material” for the death convoy had to be assembled. For this reason, 3,000 alien Jews were arrested between August 6 and 10. A few days later, 3,600 were evacuated from the camps at Gurs, Rivesaltes, Recebedou, Noé and Les Milles, and by the middle of August, 2,000 workers were even taken from labor battalions. At the end of August, huge roundups began in the larger cities, evidently because most of the camps had been depleted. All told, 13,000 foreign-born Jews were concentrated in the Pyrenees. A cable to the J. D. C. on September 5, stated that 10,000 Jews, including 290 children, had already been deported from Vichy.

Once the deportations had started, Premier Pierre Laval did not stop with aliens. A report in September indicated that orders had been given for the internment, by October 1, of the 145,000 French Jews in Vichy territory. No further
confirmation of the news has so far been received, except a report on March 31, 1943, that both native and alien Jews were still being interned. Deportees, an edict of May 14 stipulated, were automatically deprived of their French citizenship. Laval further decreed that, effective June 27, Jews naturalized since 1927 (about 100,000) would no longer be considered French citizens.

After the Nazi seizure of all France, deportations were intensified, wherever possible. Since German militia was now in charge of arrests and expulsions, it is not surprising that between December 20 and 30, 1942, 10,000 Jews were dispatched to Poland, an average of one thousand per day. Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, Commissar for Jewish Affairs, boasted in January 1943, that 50,000 Jews had thus far been shipped to forced labor throughout Europe. (In the joint memorandum submitted to President Franklin D. Roosevelt by the American Jewish organizations on December 8, 1942, the number was estimated at more than 65,000.) By February, most foreign Jews from Axis-conquered countries were said to have been interned. A large number, however, were not seized for, as Dr. Joseph Schwartz of the J. D. C. revealed on February 1, a daily average of between one hundred and one hundred fifty refugees were escaping into Spain and Switzerland. Between ten and twenty thousand Jews also were able to make their way into the Italian-occupied areas where anti-Jewish measures were said to have been much less severe.

The last transport of Jews which left France about February 20, was described by the British section of the World Jewish Congress. It was said to have involved three thousand Jews of all classes and ages whose eventual destination was somewhere in the East. The hunt for these unfortunate had begun in mid-February, the statement continued, when the Gestapo raided the Lyon headquarters of the Union Générale des Israélites, arrested the entire staff, removed them to Drancy concentration camp from whence they were shipped to oblivion. The situation was particularly bad in Marseille, Toulouse, Limoges and other cities where extensive raids were carried out. In desperation, the Jews in France appealed to the United Nations in April, on the eve of the Bermuda Conference, to take urgent action
to save the Jews in the country. The appeal added that the Jewish population in France had been reduced to one-tenth of the pre-war figure.

Most pathetic was the plight of children. During the first few days of the roundup in Paris, they were separated from their parents and lodged in empty school buildings. They were at first turned over to the Union Générale des Israélites, the compulsory Jewish organization formed under the aegis of Vichy. Unable to cope with this added burden, the Union appealed in August to the democratic countries to admit thirty-five hundred children. Through the intercession of relief organizations, twelve hundred youngsters were evacuated to the "unoccupied" zone and placed in homes of the OSE, the Jewish child care and medical aid agency, which received a $25,000 grant from the J. D. C. for this purpose. The safety of these children was, however, by no means secure. The policy of Vichy France at first was that parents of children of five to eighteen years of age were free to choose whether to take them along or leave them in care of the Union Générale des Israélites. On September 11, Laval declared that as a "concession" children would henceforth be deported with their parents. Several hundred of them, including infants left behind by evacuated parents and others, were taken from OSE homes and delivered to the Nazis. Other orphaned children were retained as hostages. Efforts by the United States to take these children out of France were opposed. When in the Fall of 1942, the U. S. State Department announced that it would remove 5,000 of the 8,000 children to America, Vichy replied that only 1,000 would be permitted to leave. The explanation for the refusal came on October 22 when the Nazi Trans-ocean News Agency stated that "Vichy may not allow these children to leave unless inimical propaganda against France and Germany ceases in America."

Opposition to the Government

No measure which the Nazis have taken against the Jews so aroused the general French population as the deportations. Many instances of solidarity were shown even though the lives of persons trying to alleviate suffering were en
dangered. Perhaps the strongest condemnation of Nazi measures came from the Protestant and Catholic Churches in France, which up to that point had rallied to the support of Pétain. But the deportations, the most degrading feature of all-out collaboration with Hitler, finally deprived the government of support from this quarter, for the strongest intervention on behalf of the persecuted Jews came from the Catholic hierarchy.

Simultaneously with a direct appeal to the people and several other intercessions with the government in August on the part of Mgr. Valerio Valeri, the Papal Nuncio, Catholic leaders issued letters of protest to Pétain and Laval. One of the first came from Cardinal Suchard, Archbishop of Paris, who had been among the very few outright "collaborationists." It was learned also that, late in October, he conferred at Vichy with Pétain and Laval on "certain measures decreed against the Jews." Mgr. Saliège, Archbishop of Toulouse, issued a pastoral letter in which he exclaimed: "These Jews are men, these Jewesses are women; these aliens are men and women. All is not permissible against them... They belong to mankind. They are our brethren as are so many others. No Christian can forget that." At the demand by the Toulouse Chief of Police that he cease disregarding the official order, Mgr. Saliège gave an answer which will probably be long remembered: "It is my duty to teach morals to the members of my diocese and, when it is necessary, to teach them also to the government officials." At the same time, a joint appeal of protest was directed by the Cardinals and Archbishops in the occupied zone to Marshal Pétain.

Other episcopal letters were issued by prelates to their congregations asking them to help Jews and, assuming full responsibility, instructing the clergy to read them "sans commentaires." Perhaps the strongest was written on August 30, by Pierre Théas, Bishop of Montauban, in which he frankly stated that "present anti-Semitic measures defy the dignity of man and violate the most sacred rights of the individual and the family." Open defiance in the south of France, especially in Lyon, was encouraged by Pierre Marie Cardinal Gerlier, the Archbishop of Lyon, who warned that "the new order cannot be built on violence and hate."
When Laval asked that he instruct monasteries which hid Jewish children to surrender them, the Cardinal refused. In January, the Nazi commander of the quondam unoccupied zone hinted that the Nazis had no intention of persecuting the church provided it discontinued its opposition to anti-Jewish measures. The Cardinal, however, cited the Pope's condemnation of anti-Semitic laws and declared that the clergy would continue to obey the Pope.

Leaders of the Protestant Church were equally courageous in their stand. They voiced their horror through the Rev. Marc Boegner who, in a letter addressed to Pétain on August 20, pleaded for "the introduction of absolutely different methods in the treatment of foreigners of the Jewish race... whose deportation has been admitted" and pointed out that "the tenacious fidelity of France, even and especially during the tragic days which it has lived through in the past two years, toward its traditions of human generosity and noblemindedness remains one of the main grounds of the respect which certain nations still have for us." Several months later, on October 4, a pastoral letter by the Reformed Church endorsing Pastor Boegner's protest was read in churches in both occupied and unoccupied France.

Nor was action by church leaders the only expression of sympathy. Minor clergy did much and risked a great deal to aid the Jews. Village curés furnished birth certificates to Jews who needed passports and helped others across the frontiers. Many were hidden in monasteries and private homes. A Good Friday broadcast from a French monastery was cut off the air when the priest offered prayers for Jews. In Toulouse, Jewish children were hidden in Catholic schools and Catholic civil servants with knowledge of the coming raids, warned "particularly undesirable refugees" beforehand, with the result that 50 per cent of them escaped. Catholic school children in this town made and distributed copies of Bishop Saliège's letter of protest. Frequent raids of monasteries and private homes were made by the French authorities who knew that shelter had been given to Jews.

The open breach between the Churches of France and the government was a source of consternation to Laval. He made his position very clear in a statement to a group of German and other foreign correspondents at Vichy in
the middle of September: "The Catholic Cardinals and Bishops have intervened, but everyone is a master of his own trade. They handle religion—I handle government affairs. No man and nothing can sway me from my determination to rid France of foreign Jews and send them back where they originated ..."

Inasmuch as admonitions and orders made no impression at all, Laval struck back at the Church. Following Cardinal Gerlier's refusal to instruct monasteries to surrender Jewish children, he ordered the arrest of a number of priests. In September, Father Chaillet, member of the Cardinal's staff and president of a "Christian amity" group, was interned in forced residence at Pivas. A week later, the Vichy radio announced that Archbishop Salisè of Toulouse was persona non grata because of his condemnation of the deportations. He was "advised" to go to Great Britain.

Remonstrances against Nazi brutalities came from other quarters. Very annoying to Laval were the manifold expressions of sympathy with the Jews by civil servants and government officials. In Paris, during the first mass arrests, three hundred policemen were dismissed on charges of "pro-Jewish" tendencies and eight high administrators resigned in protest. André Philip, National Commissioner of the Interior and of Labor for Fighting France, revealed in September that forty police officers were shot and 308 arrested for refusing to round up Jews. It even became necessary for Laval to dismiss the Military Governor of Lyon, who, on August 28, refused permission to authorities to use his troops for the arrest of Jews. In some sections, particularly in the south of France, public opposition was so effective that the Department Prefect asked the government to augment police forces with troops. Later, Édouard Herriot, mayor of the city, was removed for the same "offense." Even Admiral Jean Darlan, the late Vichyite, was said to have addressed a letter to Ferdinand de Brinon, Vichy's ambassador to Paris, in October, expressing his opposition to the anti-Semitic measures.

On the evening of August 31, all secret organizations of resistance in the country launched an appeal to the people to protest against the persecution of Jews. The appeal was made by means of underground newspapers, tracts and
posters, and was repeated in a Fighting France broadcast from London, asking for assistance to Jews hunted down by the police. The people, however, were warned not to provoke disorders and thus prevent inevitable reprisals. But even before this call for action was issued, the aroused people showed their disapproval. In a number of cities in Southern France, students and others defended the Jews by forming protective cordons around the victims. Widespread arrests followed these incidents.

Others ridiculed discriminatory regulations. Students wore yellow Stars of David inscribed with "jazz" or "swing" or "Chinois" instead of "Juif." Paris dressmakers designed clothes trimmed with yellow flowers the exact size of the Star of David. People pinned to the collars of their dogs the yellow star with the inscription "chien." Spontaneous demonstrations of sympathy were also marked by the singing of "La Marseillaise" when trainloads of Jews left the Paris railway stations.

More details concerning the disregard for anti-Semitic regulations by a "consciously forgetful public" were revealed in November by Henry S. Harvey, representative at Vichy of the American Friends Service Committee. In spite of orders to the contrary, he stated, most hotels welcomed Jewish guests, while universities admitted Jewish students. On December 22, the Toulouse Nazi-controlled radio announced that Frenchmen had sent letters containing insults and threats to Darquier de Pellepoix following his announcement of the proposed introduction of more severe anti-Jewish legislation. But, in spite of rather severe punishments and threats, resistance continued, Darquier de Pellepoix was forced to admit at a press conference in March 1943.

To counteract the effects of this unprecedented upsurge of defiance and protests, an intensive propaganda drive against Jews was initiated. A campaign was organized by the Commissariat for Jewish Affairs in September for which all radio stations were mobilized. It was built around the slogan "Jews are responsible for the defeat of France." And on November 5, Toulouse radio broadcast extracts from a statement by Darquier de Pellepoix who declared that the "few measures" thus far taken against the Jews were only a beginning; others will follow, he announced, "for it is on
the elimination of the Jewish spirit that the rebirth of France depends." On the other hand, Darquier de Pellepoix recently hypocritically assured the world that "the French Government has no wish to persecute the Jews in France. Our measures have merely a defensive character."

Other Anti-Jewish Measures

Prior to their deportation, Jews were systematically deprived of their livelihood. Early in the summer of 1942, the government gave "financial assistance" for the "economic 'aryanization'" of six cities. The work of "aryanization" offices was well done indeed, for a report in the Stockholm Tidningen on August 6 revealed that practically all Jewish enterprises in the then occupied zone had been transferred to non-Jews, and the Paris radio announced four days later that about 35,000 Jewish-owned businesses, large and small, in both zones of France had already been "aryanized." The announcement further disclosed that 31,700 Jewish-owned firms had been taken over by the German authorities in the Nazi-held territory (24,914 in Paris alone) and that the Vichy Government was taking care of the remaining 3,300 enterprises. From the proceeds of these sales, which had to be deposited in blocked accounts, Jews were permitted to withdraw a maximum of 15,000 francs monthly. Furthermore, 298 parcels of land owned by Jews had been sold to "Aryans" by Nazi authorities, it was said. The value of property taken from Jews in France was set at one hundred billion francs by Darquier de Pellepoix at a press conference held on March 15, 1943. So complete was the elimination of Jews from the economic life that former physicians and attorneys were forced to work as stevedores in Marseille.

But in addition to being prevented from earning a livelihood, Jews were robbed of their last belongings by other means. In September, for example, members of Pétain's bodyguard, known as Service d'Ordre de la Légion, imposed a million francs fine upon the Jewish community of Nice under the pretext that "communist literature" had been discovered in the Grand Synagogue. Incidentally, the synagogue was desecrated and looted before the "searchers" left. Several weeks prior to this incident, Jews in both sections
of France were ordered to contribute six million francs monthly to the Union Générale of Israélites to cover "working expenses" of the organization. Since, however, a non-Jewish official appointed by the Commissariat for Jewish Affairs must give his approval for any expenditures made by the Union, there is little hope that any of this money or other funds will be devoted to the aid of destitute Jews.

Not content with making Jews paupers, the authorities proceeded to promulgate restrictive laws and nuisance measures. Laws barring Jews from the principal streets of Paris, from a number of large department stores, cinemas, concert halls, museums, libraries and other public places, and barring non-Jews from entering restaurants reserved for Jews were published in Vichy on July 10. Moreover, in August, all synagogues were closed under the pretext that they were "nests of anti-German propaganda."

In October the Nazis, evidently distrusting even Darquier de Pellepoix, appointed Admiral Charles Platon as their representative in charge of Jewish affairs. Platon's decisions, however, are subject to Gestapo approval. In order to demonstrate his absolute reliability and efficiency, Darquier de Pellepoix intensified his anti-Jewish drive. During the same month, he enlarged the activities of his department by establishing a legal commission, headed by one Professor Saint-Germes of the Caen University Law Faculty, and a commission for racial biology, under a M. de la Pouge.

The occupation of Vichy France by German troops, of course, brought with it a host of new anti-Jewish restrictions. On December 8, the Paris radio announced a new program under which Jews were compelled to carry identification cards and special "Jewish passports"; foreign or stateless Jews were forbidden to travel outside their residential limits; youth groups were suppressed. Shortly thereafter an order requiring the word "Juif" to be stamped on all Jewish ration cards was given.

The speed-up in expulsions was precipitated by a series of orders, beginning with the census of all Jews in France on November 15. This was followed by an order requiring all male Jews between the ages of 18 and 55 to report immediately to recruiting centers for labor camp duty. The measure was interpreted on December 1 as being appli-
cable only to foreign Jews and to unmarried Jews who had entered the country after 1933. On January 1, 1943, however, it was extended to include all who entered France after 1927. A later edict, published at the end of December, included still a third category, i.e., married men with one to three children. The only exception to these mobilizations so far have been “Jews of foreign nationality who served with a combatant unit before June 1940.”

Finally in January came news of another law which in its own way scrapped more than a century of emancipation. It compelled Jews with French or “Aryan”-sounding names to assume those borne by their ancestors between 1830 and 1850. On February 28, French radio stations announced that all anti-Jewish legislation would be applied to “half-Jews,” who were defined as persons with two Jewish grandparents.

The only bright spot in this sordid story is that Jews in the Italian-occupied section of France escaped many of the harsher anti-Jewish edicts instituted in the areas policed by German forces. A Swiss dispatch of February 3 stated that the Italians are demanding neither the wearing of the yellow badge nor the stamping of the word “Jew” on identity cards.

The Jewish community of France suffered a great loss in January in the death of Prof. William Oualid, 63, internationally known jurist and economist, who for many years was one of the outstanding leaders of French Jews in his capacity as vice-president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, president of the former Union of Jewish Organizations in Paris, and president of the Central Board of the World ORT Union.

**Fighting France**

The liberal tradition of France was enunciated anew by two significant statements concerning Jews. The one appeared in the Fighting French organ *France* (London), of July 23, which trenchantly stated: “It is natural that Jews who were the first victims of Hitler realize better than anyone else the necessity to put an end to the totalitarian barbarism. One must recognize as Mr. Churchill does that they are conscious of their duties and do not spare any effort
in order to assure the triumph of the Allies." And Maurice de Jean, Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, stated a few days later that one of the first measures of a restored France would be to break down the barrier erected against the Jews by the Nazis and to restore liberty and equality to the Jews.

**French North Africa**

North Africa, the first battleground upon which American and Axis troops met, has for many months been the focal point of world attention and controversy. Even while the fighting progressed, one of the major topics of discussion was the fate of the more than 330,000 Jews there, who joyfully welcomed the American forces on November 7, 1942, as the herald of liberation. These hopes, however, were not completely fulfilled. Although some of the oppressive measures instituted by the Vichy rulers were gradually abrogated in those areas occupied by the combined British and American armies, the status of the Jews was not yet fully restored to that of free French citizens living in a French protectorate. (As the period of review ended, however, further improvements appeared possible.)

Initial official statements seemed very promising indeed. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and General Dwight M. Eisenhower spoke of the early abolition of anti-Jewish discriminatory measures. Desirous of allaying fears which arose out of Eisenhower's choice of Admiral Jean Darlan as Chief of State in French Africa, the President on November 17, 1942, stated: "I have accepted General Eisenhower's political arrangements made for the time being in Northern and Western Africa. I thoroughly understand and approve the feeling in the United States and Great Britain and among all the other United Nations that, in view of the history of the past two years, no permanent arrangement should be made with Admiral Darlan." The reason for the choice, he stated, was one of expediency only for it contributed in making a "mopping-up period" unnecessary, and then added: "I have requested the liberation of all persons in Northern Africa who have been imprisoned because they opposed the efforts of the Nazis to dominate the world and I have asked for the abrogation of all laws and decrees inspired by Nazi
governments or Nazi ideologists." On the same day, the American-controlled Algiers radio announced that Eisenhower had made a similar promise to a delegation of Jewish representatives of North African Jewish organizations.

Darlan immediately abrogated legislation barring Jews from service in the armed forces. Accordingly, on November 22, authorities ordered all men who had reached the age of twenty in 1938 or 1939 to report immediately for military duties, and summoned officers and specialists of all ages. Several days later, however, Pierre Bloch, former Socialist member of the French parliament, charged in London that Darlan had called up only Jews holding war decorations for military service. That discrimination continued with the tacit approval of the High Commissioner was apparent from an anti-Semitic broadcast, as late as December 16, over the Darlan-controlled Radio Maroc at Rabat, Morocco. On the other hand, Darlan sought to assure British and American correspondents in Algiers that he had "begun the restoration of rights of those persons from whom these had previously been taken because of race," — a statement which Fighting France characterized as a "masterpiece of impudent hypocrisy."

Whether Darlan really was sincere and merely progressed slowly to appease the Arab population, as critics of the policy in North Africa were assured, will never be known. Darlan was assassinated on December 24; two days later General Henri Honoré Giraud succeeded him.

Under Giraud's regime some — but by no means all — rights were restored to the Jews in spite of the machinations of Axis propagandists who tried to stir up the Arab population by spreading the belief that they would be dominated by the Jews unless the Nazis were victorious. In order to curb such propaganda, the authorities suspended two anti-Semitic publications, Intransigeant Marocain and La Voix Française. Allied headquarters in North Africa on January 15, 1943, also announced that laws sequestering property of Jews, and excluding them from the professions and from high schools and colleges were being relaxed. Although Jews were permitted to enroll in high schools and colleges for the first time since 1940, their enrollment was limited by a numerus clausus of 2 per cent. Also, a month later, Gen-
eral Giraud announced that Jewish community schools would receive a subsidy from the government. Radios which had been confiscated by the Vichy regime were returned to the Jews. An attempt was made, furthermore, to return confiscated property. The bureau in Algiers which had been in charge of the registration of “aryanized” Jewish businesses, however, reported in February that 65 per cent of these concerns had been re-sold by the new owners who had disappeared with the money.

Meanwhile, the Darlan mobilization order was changed; Jewish officers and men were admitted to service with combat units of the French forces. On February 16, this practice was made official in an order by Giraud, which also covered Jews who had served in the French Pioneer Corps. They were to be admitted to all fighting forces which do not include Muslims. Jewish officers and non-commissioned officers, however, were to be restored to their previous rank only if they had been wounded or cited in action or were “favorably known to the military authorities.” This latter provision was again denounced by the Fighting French who in their organ, France (London), of February 18, called it incompatible with “the ideals of the French and the Allies.” Documentary evidence of the sophistry of the new rulers was offered in the United States on April 26 by Paul Jacob, secretary general of the French Republican Committee, and was confirmed three days later by R. Maillard Stead, the Christian Science Monitor correspondent with the Allied Forces in North Africa. The text of secret instructions of January 30, 1943, allegedly issued by Giraud’s High Command in Algiers, provided that, “envisaging a new status for the French population of Jewish faith after the war,” Jewish commissioned and non-commissioned officers and men in reserve would generally be assigned to special non-combatant work; and that this measure was held necessary to avoid “having the entire Jewish population gain the title of war veterans, which might prejudice the status to be given to these people after the war.” However, discrimination against Jews in the armed forces ceased as of May 15, the French Military Mission in the United States on June 2 informed Henri Torres of the French-Jewish Representation Committee of the World Jewish Congress.
On the whole, the situation was such that in January, Harold MacMillan, British Minister in North Africa, felt justified in stating that “the attitude toward the Jews must be changed because the present attitude will never be acceptable to the British and American peoples.” During the same month Giraud, seeking to explain his cautiousness, allegedly told a press conference that the liberation of the Jews was an internal affair of the French administration and must progress gradually so as not to cause economic dislocations or political unrest. Several days later, this statement was formally denied in Algiers, and it was asserted that the journalists had misinterpreted Giraud’s words.

An additional disappointment for the North African Jews and liberals everywhere was the appointment on January 18 of Marcel Peyrouton as Governor General of Algeria. His past record, as Minister of the Interior in the Vichy Government and, earlier, as Secretary General of the Government General in Algeria in 1930, indicated that he would favor the Arab population and retain anti-Jewish regulations under the pretext that their abolition might cause Arab disturbances.

Finally, on March 7, Giraud took a step which on the surface seemed to promise the complete restoration of Jewish rights. He formally severed all connections with Vichy and Marshal Pétain by declaring that decrees signed in Vichy were not valid in French North Africa. At the same time he confiscated the March 2, 1943, issue of the Journal Officiel of Algeria, which had published two Vichy decrees of October 19, 1942, on the status of Algerian Jews, and dismissed M. Maurice Bouni, Director of the General Government.

The repudiation of Vichy, the abolition of the department dealing with Jewish affairs and the dismissal of Bouni definitely were interpreted as a step toward the purging of Vichy elements in the regime. Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles the next day hailed Giraud’s action as a return to the principles of individual liberty that made France great. Even the Fighting French hesitatingly admitted that it was a step in the right direction.

Following this severance from Vichy, Giraud in a speech to the Alsace Lorraine Society on March 14, laid down the
major points of his program. The first one said that an order was being promulgated which would revoke all Vichy laws and decrees, 62 in number, as well as the Crémieux Decree of 1870. He emphasized that it would be impossible to annul all the Vichy laws at once because of the effect upon internal affairs. On March 17, laws were issued “wiping out discrimination against Jews and Masons,” acts which, according to Drew Middleton of the New York Times, restored “representative government” and confirmed “the authority of the French Republic.”

Of the two major ordinances affecting Jews, the first provided for the eradication of any distinction in civil status, and gave free access to the professions and educational institutions. The Governors and Residents General of Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and French West Africa were empowered to fix conditions for the reinstatement of Jews in public functions, their re-employment in public services and re-entry into the professions and commerce. They were also to determine conditions for the return of requisitioned property to Jews, who were permitted to claim indemnity for such losses.

It was the first article of the second decree which gave ample justification to the Jews for distrusting the intent of Giraud’s policy. This stipulation read: “The decree of October 24, 1870, concerning the status of the native Israelites of Algeria is abrogated.” The implication of this measure was obvious when considered in the light of the text of the Crémieux decree: “Native Israelites of the departments of Algeria are declared French citizens. Consequently, their real and personal status will, from the promulgation of the present decree, be governed by French law. All rights acquired to this day remain immune. All legal dispositions, decrees, and regulations to the contrary are abolished.”

Giraud defended his action as an attempt to offset Axis propaganda among seven million Arabs in the two French departments which constitute Algiers. As a prerequisite, he felt relations of Muslims and Jews must be such that neither is superior to the other, since France has guaranteed to both security and peace.”

This apparently fair presentation aroused great perplexities which were shared by the statesmen of Great Britain
and the United States. At first the two governments endorsed Giraud’s policy. Prime Minister Churchill expressed the agreement of his government in particular with the “abolition of French legislation subsequent to June 22, 1940,” and the “abrogation of all race distinctions between native Moslems and Jewish inhabitants...” Secretary of State Cordell Hull backed Churchill by expressing his country’s “heartiest accord with this timely and splendid statement of the British Prime Minister” and his “satisfaction in strongly commending this further step toward French unity.” Expressions of approval of the scrapping of anti-Jewish legislation came from many sources. At the same time there was bitter disappointment at the act which deprived 40,000 to 50,000 Algerian Jews of their French citizenship. Such expressions came from many quarters, including the Jewish bodies in Algeria, the United States, and especially from the Fighting French who termed the abrogation a racial measure and a “fascist act contrary to the laws of the French Republic.” Most critics of this measure felt that it did nothing to improve the position of the Arabs. It was merely an attempt to aggravate the status of the Jews without benefit to anyone else, they said.

Apparently unperturbed by these disputes, Giraud made it clear that two months would be required to reinstate completely the rights of Jews. By an official decree, reported on May 14, organizations were given the right to resume religious, social and political activities. The Kehillah Council and the authority of the Rabbinical Courts were also restored by Giraud’s order a few days later. At the same time Jewish officials ousted in June 1940 were reinstated and were paid full back salary for the time they were out of office. Meanwhile, a purge of reactionary and pro-Nazi officials, ordered by Giraud in April on the advice of the Allied authorities, resulted in the dismissal of many officials who were unquestionably identified with the Vichy collaborationists.

Refugees

As we have observed, President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower promised the release of all political prisoners in North Africa. Among them were, according to statistics
released by General Giraud’s Imperial Council, 5,200 Jews from Germany who were interned in Algeria and Morocco, and 13,730 Jews from other European countries working on the Trans-Sahara railroad to Dakar, many of whom had fled to Algeria after the landing of Allied troops. The release of those still interned was extremely slow and, by the middle of January 1943, the only hope for them was Giraud’s assurance given to a deputation of Jewish leaders in Algeria and Morocco that the internees would be liberated. The deputation sought an improvement in the position of Jews and the release of the slave workers on the Trans-Sahara Railway and in the Kenadza coal mines. On January 14, it was announced that a joint Anglo-French-American Commission for Political Prisoners and Refugees had been set up in an advisory capacity on the question of political prisoners and refugees. The Commission was to visit all places of internment, to ascertain why prisoners were detained, and to recommend measures for their release and disposal.

Earlier, in December, the Jewish Refugee Committee in Algeria stated that Jews would be released provided Jewish relief organizations would assume the responsibility for their maintenance. As an initial step the J. D. C. made provisions for the liberation of 650 refugees in Algeria and 950 in Morocco. As a result of pressure by American military authorities in Algiers, four hundred French Jews who had escaped to this territory after the occupation of France, were released late in January. Due to the intervention of the Polish Consulate in Casablanca in February, five hundred Polish Jews in Morocco were freed. Following the example of the Polish Government, various other governments-in-exile, during the same month, demanded equal rights for their Jewish nationals in North Africa. Simultaneously, Jews of Portuguese, Spanish and Swiss nationality were likewise freed and promised permission to return to their native countries. A number of refugees received immigration visas for the United States under existing quota regulations.

Reports in March indicated that French authorities in charge of internment camps offered to liberate a number of the Jewish internees on condition that they join the Foreign Legion. They refused but expressed their willingness to enter instead the regular Allied armies or the Jewish Bat-
talion of the Palestine Regiment. The French authorities interpreted this refusal as organized resistance to their wishes and, in reprisal, allegedly sent 10 per cent of the Jewish internees to the prison of Ain El Ourak, in Morocco. At the beginning of April, about nine hundred Jewish internees of German and Austrian origin, held in six labor camps, declared a two-week hunger strike. They declined to receive representatives of the American Red Cross who called at the camps with food and medicaments and tried to persuade the internees to abandon the strike. Subsequently, these Jews were joined by 280 more hunger-strikers, mostly of Rumanian and Hungarian origin. A week later, however, the strike was terminated, following an official announcement that the internees would be released on condition that they emigrate from North Africa within six months. The latest reports by the J. D. C. dated May 17, 1943, gave the following figures on release from camps: in Algeria — 620 refugees, as well as all Polish Jews who have been incorporated in the British and Polish armed forces; in Morocco — 200 internees, as well as all refugees in labor camps; of the latter, 220 had already arrived in Casablanca and other cities; 156 were working for American occupation forces and 53 in private industries.

**Tunisia**

Most horrible was the fate of the sixty-three thousand Jews living in Tunisia, where they were exposed to the wrath of retreating Axis troops whose behavior was nothing short of barbarous. As the British forces advanced from Libya, the Jews were rescued, but in most instances deliverance came too late. Many of the cities were in ruins and the majority of the Jews massacred.

The reign of terror was especially severe in the city of Tunis. The entire able-bodied Jewish population was ordered by the Nazi military authorities in January to forced labor constructing fortifications and clearing the docks of the debris left by Allied bombings. The London *Daily Mail* reported that the city had been completely evacuated except for these workers. Charges of aiding the Allied troops led to the execution of a number of Jewish leaders, a collective
fine of twenty million francs imposed upon the Jewish population, and the jailing of hundreds of others.

The victorious Eighth Army in its relentless drive to the West appeared as messengers of mercy to the thirty thousand liberated Jews in Tunis. When the British reached Foum Tatahounie, just below the Mareth Line in southern Tunisia, they found that six hundred Jews had fled to caves in the mountains where they lived for three weeks until the Germans were forced to withdraw. In April, the British entered the city of Gafsa where 82 Jews, mostly women and children, had been killed. The Arab population there had been threatened with the death penalty if they sheltered any Jews. Just before their withdrawal from Gabes, the Nazis had organized a pogrom during which none of the thirty-five hundred Jews escaped injury. Homes and businesses were robbed and destroyed; the women were raped. Over a million francs belonging to Jews were taken from the banks. Italian officers, the London Jewish Chronicle of April 9 reported, intervened and attempted to protect the Jews. When the Nazis left, Jews repaired the bridge to aid the British in their pursuit of the enemy. In their evacuation of Sfax, the Nazis took with them fifty Jewish hostages, including five members of the Jewish community council. Of course, there, too, the Jews as well as the native population were stripped of all belongings. The total amount of cash alone was eighty million francs. The Jews of Kairouan danced for joy when the British First Army entered the town on April 10. They tore off the yellow badges which the Nazis had compelled all Tunisian Jews to wear and donned improvised V signs in their place. An elder of the Jewish community greeted the troops with a poetically written message. Thanks to the rapid Allied advance, about three thousand Jewish slave workers employed in constructing fortifications for the Axis were rescued. The bodies of 85 slave workers left near Wadi Akarit were buried in a common grave at the Sfax Jewish cemetery.

French Guiana

The French Military Mission in Washington announced on April 10 that Giraud's decrees nullifying Vichy anti-Jewish legislation had become effective in those regions of
French Guiana where adherents of General Giraud are in control of the government. Six days later, Aneta, Netherlands News Agency in London, added that Governor Jean Rapenne who replaced the Vichy-appointed Governor Rene Veber, had released a number of political prisoners.

3. Belgium

The cumulative effect of Nazi barbarism aimed at the ultimate destruction of Europe’s Jews is vividly illustrated by the rapid dwindling of the Belgian Jewish community from 75,000 persons (including 15,000 refugees), prior to the Hitler war, to 45,000 after less than two years of Nazi occupation. Of this number, 4,000 were native-born and from 2,000 to 3,000 of Dutch nationality. Of the rest, 60 per cent were of Polish origin, while the remainder came from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. That the total figure of 45,000, released at the end of March 1942 by the Association des Juifs en Belgique in Brussels, was further decreased to 42,000 within five months, was disclosed during a Paris broadcast on August 25, ordering the conscription of all foreign Jews for forced labor in Germany. Indicative of the swift decimation of the country’s Jews was the boast in Leon Degrelle’s Rexist organ, Le Pays Réel, of October 25, 1942, to the effect that 50 per cent of the Jews, described as “émigrés,” had been deported to “a place where they will earn their bread by the sweat of their brow according to the law of God.” About four months later, it was reported on February 19, 1943, Georges Theunis, Belgian Ambassador to Washington, stated that about 25,000 Jews had been deported between July and November of 1942. The Belgian Government-in-exile disclosed on June 14, that altogether 52,000 Jews had been removed to Germany, Poland and occupied Russia.

Imprisonment and Deportations

Corroborative evidence of the carefully planned and organized annihilation of Belgian Jews by the Third Reich was supplied by numerous official, and private sources. The sum total of these sporadic reports is this:
While the first shipments to Polish ghettos began in December 1941, they were intensified in July 1942, and from then on daily stories told of the almost unbearable suffering of helpless men, women and children, arrested in Antwerp, Brussels, Liége and Charleroi, and subsequently segregated at Malines and other points. Convoy after convoy was seen leaving railroad stations in these cities for some "unknown destination." Families were broken up and frequently women from sixteen to fifty years of age were deported before men. A typical case of the fate of Jewish families was reported from Liége on October 5. The father was sent to a labor camp in France; his daughter, aged thirty and feeble-minded, was ordered with two of her brothers to an assembly point whence Jews were transported to the Ukraine; the mother was left behind with two other children. A foreign correspondent of the Morning Journal, New York, reported on January 3, 1943, that a large number of children had been taken from the Jewish section of Liége.

Many of the earlier expulsions were carried out under the guise of punishment for sabotage. Thus, one thousand Jews were deported to German-occupied Russia following an act of sabotage on June 20, 1942; another hundred were taken from St. Gilles prison in Brussels at the end of July, and fifty more were arrested in Brussels as hostages, News from Belgium reported on August 22.

Up to this point, it was believed, Jews had been sent to territories in the East for forced labor. A report emanating from Zurich, Switzerland, on October 27, however, stated that Nazi authorities had decided to discontinue temporarily shipments to the East since labor was needed for building fortifications to thwart Allied landings. Thus, in the middle of October, six hundred men were shipped to the coast of northern France to work on fortifications.

Stockholm quoted German newspapers on October 21 as having expressed satisfaction that the deportation of 5,520 Jews from Antwerp alone had solved the serious housing shortage in the city. In November, nearly two thousand persons in Brussels were arrested by the Germans. News from Belgium of February 13, 1943, reported mass arrests in Hasselt, Genck and Eysden of Jews who were sent to a concentration camp at Neckerspoel, near Mechlin. In order to
appease the increasingly wrought-up population, deporta-
tion proceedings were later somewhat modified. Jews
slated for deportation received notices saying that, according
to a German order, their “application for work has been
favorably received” and that they were to undergo a medical
examination which, however, proved to be a farce. The age
limit for men was fixed at sixty and for women at a somewhat
lower figure, the London Jewish Telegraphic Agency re-
ported on January 18.

In addition to these mass deportations where the victims
died of suffocation or starvation, the holocaust of murder
continued unabated. A reliable report from Belgium of
April 21, 1943, revealed that for the past few months occu-
pation authorities had been delivering bodies of a large
number of Jews to the crematorium at Uccle, a suburb of
Brussels, with orders that they be cremated immediately.
No permits from municipal authorities, normally required
for cremation, accompanied these bodies.

The only possible way to rescue Jews from being sent to
Boulogne and Calais for hard labor, the World Jewish Con-
gress announced on December 17, 1942, was to place them on
farms. In an attempt, therefore, to save at least a few from
a dire fate, the Jewish organization “Ezra” acquired land
near Brussels on which a number of Jews began farming.
Among them were lawyers, physicians, bankers, artists, and
men of other professions, all of whom had been ousted from
their jobs. Since, however, a maximum of two thousand
Jews can be employed on farms, all others would seem to be
doomed.

Popular Reaction

The diabolic treatment of the Jews created a wave of re-
vulsion among Belgian non-Jews. Many of them risked
severe punishment to help the Jews, especially children,
escape the clutches of the Nazis; members of the clergy were
prominent in these efforts. The heads of the Belgian chur-
ches, News from Belgium reported on July 18, 1942, issued
a pastoral letter to their communities in which they called
the Nazi anti-Jewish policy “anti-Christian” and “against
the spirit of Catholicism.” A Protestant vicar in a suburb of
Antwerp appealed to his congregation to remember “the persecuted and tortured Jewish brethren” in their daily prayers. February 28, 1943, was observed by the Catholics of Liége as a day of prayer for the persecuted Jews throughout Europe. The Catholic Church paper *Appel des Cloches* (The Call of the Bells) said that, “In communing and praying this Sunday for the persecuted Jewish people who were once Christ’s chosen people, we shall be acting in accordance with the directives issued by His Eminence the Bishop.”

Many incidents of direct aid by the clergy were recorded. One of the best-known Catholic priests was executed, it was learned January 9, for hiding Jewish children. Special collections of alms for Jews were organized by the clergy and in one town alone 60,000 Belgian francs were contributed at a single mass.

Other means of aiding the destitute Jews were devised. Underground reports made public in Stockholm on August 10, 1942, told of non-Jews paying large sums for picture postcards of Jews wearing the yellow Magen David sold by Jewish children in the streets of the larger cities. Several underground organizations are likewise doing their part. For example, the “White Brigade,” one of the militant organizations, appealed to the population to ignore Nazi threats to non-Jews who demonstrate their sympathy with Jews and to continue to befriend and support the persecuted. Another group, the “Star of David,” had been arranging the safe storage of Torah Scrolls rescued from synagogues in “liquidated” Jewish communities, and authorities were said to have discovered 28 Scrolls in a peasant’s house near Charleroi, according to a report of December 4, 1942.

Demonstrations condemning the practice of deportation were not infrequent. Thus, hundreds of non-Jews in St. Trond crowded the station to bid farewell to Jews exiled to eastern Europe, the Belgian Government-in-exile reported on September 30, and a monk shouted: “Farewell my friends. Have courage.” According to the Nazi organ *Brüsseler Zeitung* on December 12, 1942, many Jews have no fixed address because they move from house to house daily, staying with different friends.

An incident of unusual interest was the raid in January on the Communauté Juive, the compulsory Jewish organiza-
tion established under Nazi orders in Brussels. The raid was
made by four non-Jews who held up the staff with revolvers,
locked them up in a room and proceeded to burn the registers
of Jews which the organization had been forced to compile
for the occupation authorities. The raider's aim was ob-
viously to forestall anti-Jewish measures.

Total Pauperization

The process of physical and spiritual destruction of the
Jews was preceded by economic ruin. The latest available
figure on "aryanization" of Jewish property, begun soon after
the German occupation of the country, was officially an-
nounced in the Brüsseler Zeitung, as 18,327,000,000 Belgian
francs. Probably in an effort to encourage resistance to
Nazi confiscation of Jewish property, Antoine Delfosse,
Minister of Justice of the Belgian Government-in-exile,
broadcast to his countrymen a warning against acquiring
private property where ownership had been affected by acts
of the German occupation authorities. He stressed that
when occupation ends the rightful owners, whether Jews
or not, would resume title to their property, it was reported
March 12, 1943.

And yet, the transfer of Jewish-owned businesses to non-
Jews made gigantic strides during the year. The Deutsche
Bank, for instance, secured control of the big Brussels de-
partment store A l'Innovation by taking over the shares
held by Jewish members of the board of directors (News
from Belgium, November 14, 1942), and Jews were com-
pletely eliminated from the diamond industry (Jewish
were reported to have deeply resented this latter step. To
counteract dissatisfaction, M. Lambrechts, a leading fascist,
proclaimed that the diamond industry had not benefited the
country as a whole.

Other restrictions came into force on July 15, 1942, in
Antwerp. Jews were forbidden to attend concerts or lec-
tures, or to frequent public buildings. Suburban and district
street-cars could be used by Jews only if they lived in locali-
ties served by these conveyances. They were permitted to
ride only on the front platform of these cars in Antwerp, Brussels, and other cities.

Among new acts of vandalism perpetrated by the Nazis was the mutilation in Brussels of the statue of Eugene Ysaye, famous Belgian violinist, and the burning of the synagogue in Rue Joseph Dupont.

The Jewish community of Belgium mourned the death of Maurice Wolf, noted Belgian sculptor. He had been under sentence of ten years' imprisonment in a German fortress for distribution of the clandestine Belgian newspaper *La Voix des Belges*, as reported on December 11.

**Government-in-Exile**

In a message to the Board of Deputies of British Jews in London, *(Belgian Review, December 14, 1942)* Hubert Pierlot, Prime Minister of the Belgian Government-in-exile, stated:

> Until the eve of the invasion, the Jews had enjoyed in Belgium real hospitality. Protected by our constitution, which guarantees freedom of thought and belief, and by our laws, which proclaim the equality of all Belgians, the Jews had equal status with other Belgians. When, years before the war, the Jews suffered the first Nazi persecutions, Belgium became once more a refuge for the victims. The Belgian Government, with the unanimous backing of the country, spared no pains to relieve their sufferings. When victory puts an end to Nazi cruelty, every Belgian citizen, without any distinction of race or faith, will find once more, in our country, the regime of freedom which is Belgium's tradition.

> The German behavior towards the Jews is one of the most horrible dramas in the history of humanity. For the sake of humanity, victory will put an end to it.

**4. The Netherlands**

The task of "solving the Jewish problem" in this country was entrusted at the beginning of July 1942 to the Nazi Elite Guard. After the application of every possible measure to curtail their freedom, to rob them of all they had, to humiliate
them and to lower them to less than pariah status, the remaining seventy thousand Jews were still accused of standing in the way of "the Teutonic fight for freedom... a fight for self-ennoblement." And now, that the fate of the Jews was in "expert" hands, the threat of brutal ejection from the land of their birth turned into monstrous reality. Some time in July, the *Netherlands News* (July 11, 1942) reported, the Nazis published a decree providing for the deportation of all Netherlands Jews between the ages of eighteen and forty. Since July 23, 1942, when the first mass shipment of Jews from the three ghettos in Amsterdam began, deportations had been in full swing. As a matter of fact, the Nazis made plans to oust the Amsterdam Jews at the rate of six hundred daily.

**Raids and Expulsions**

Eyewitnesses related that the first roundup took place on the morning of July 14 when the Amsterdam ghettos were closed by the Nazi police. The handful of Christians still living in these sections was ordered to move at once and then the police, assisted by soldiers, began to arrest and drive together all men and women displaying the yellow Shield of David. Houses were forced and residents dragged outside. Their identity cards were examined and every Jew or Jewess between sixteen and forty was detained and told to prepare for immediate deportation. People were beaten, kicked or dragged down the stairs and through the streets. After several hours of raiding, the people were marched off, leaving behind them distraught relatives. There was, however, an unexpected turn in the tragedy, when the captors released their victims late the same day with the warning: "You'll be sent to Germany some time soon anyway." And, indeed, nine days later the revolting business was repeated — this time as the first of an endless stream of roundups and deportations.

These generally took place with such alarming speed and with so little notice that in September the Jewish Council in Amsterdam urged Jews to be ready for shipment to eastern Europe "at any moment," and advised them to report to its offices to secure information about "the measures which it
is advisable to take prior to leaving the country." Whereas at first only adults had been deported, the Nazis in October began removing whole families, including children. A sense of doom now hung over the Jewish population. Many committed suicide. Others sought to save themselves by feigning insanity and having themselves committed to insane asylums. The institution at Meerenberg daily received a large number of applications from Jews whom their physicians had declared "lunatic owing to horrible cruelty." The Nazi press, relentless in its cry for blood, expressed its amazement at the number of prominent Jews who suddenly developed mental ills. Later, some twelve hundred were removed from asylums "to be deported to the Polish hell." This was evidently done in accordance with the suggestion of a Nazi paper that "if these 'insane' Jews were taken to Poland and not treated too kindly, one could see a miraculous recovery."

In April it was reported that all Jewish patients, including the blind, were removed from hospitals throughout the country and loaded into sealed trains, where many died on their journey to an unknown destination. During the month of December, a total of nine thousand Amsterdam Jews were seized and dragged away, Netherlands News reported on March 11. A most cruel act was the deportation in April of four hundred Jewish children who had been taken from their parents.

To facilitate further their expulsion, Jews were ordered to leave the cities of Haarlem, Heemstede, Bloemendaal, Aardenhout and Voorschoten, and warned by the occupation authorities to move to the Amsterdam ghettos as soon as possible. Those living in the provinces of Friesland, Drenthe, Groningen, Overijssel, Gelderland, Limburg, North Brabant and Zeeland were ordered to report for internment in a camp at Vught by April 10. This new concentration camp in southern Holland was soon to harbor all the Jews except those living in Amsterdam and deportations to this center were said to have begun on April 23. Treatment in internment camps, such as Vught and Westerbork, obviously must have been brutal, judging from the many death notices received by the Jewish Council from these places.

The final stage began with a decree of May 14 barring the remaining four thousand Jews from residence in Amsterdam.
Authorities set about executing this new order with great speed. It was revealed a month later that deportations were carried out in alphabetical order, without regard to age or health. All the Jews of the city were classified in two categories. The documents of the first were stamped with the word *gesperrt*, meaning that their case was closed and that they would be expelled. The second category was marked *bis* and was permitted to remain in Amsterdam “until further notice.” These people were considered essential to Germany’s war effort. Such distinctions, however, were soon disregarded, for the Netherlands Government-in-exile revealed on June 22 that the removal of the entire Jewish population had been completed. Only Jews still held in concentration camps and a handful who managed to evade the Gestapo’s watchful eyes remained.

While younger Jews were generally deported for slave labor to the East, older persons especially highly skilled ones, were slated for forced labor within the German Reich. An announcement over the Hilversum radio on August 5, 1942, revealed that all Dutch Jews would be forced to undergo examinations to determine their fitness for forced labor. Three days later the Amsterdam Jewish Council was handed an ultimatum to register Jews for work in Germany within 48 hours. The Gestapo ordered the Jewish communal body to issue a special announcement warning its constituents that failure to obey summons to work in the Reich would bring about arrest and shipment to the notorious Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. On March 5, 1943, Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Nazi Commissioner for Holland, told a correspondent of the Transocean News Agency at Berlin that one-half of the Jews in the Netherlands had by then been placed in labor camps.

Rather recently, also, a number of Jews were condemned to death on various trumped-up charges. In September, the German Supreme Tribunal in The Hague sentenced to death three Jews of Beverwijk for securing foodstuffs on ration cards allegedly not their own. During the same month, I. Roodenburg, a young Jewish baker, was condemned to death by a German court at Utrecht for having organized a so-called “solidarity group” to resist the native fascist movement. Thirteen Jewish physicians who had been sent to the
Mauthausen camp in June 1942 were reported to have been executed in December. Two months later ten hostages, “drawn from Jewish and communist circles” in Haarlem, were executed in reprisal for the assassination of a German non-commissioned officer.

**Economic Restrictions**

While the Jewish population was being destroyed, a host of additional measures was taken by authorities to oust Jews from all walks of life. Economic restrictions were designed to force the few remaining Jews out of their jobs and into the Nazi labor camps. While earlier regulations had already wrought havoc with the Jews’ economic life, subsequent measures were adopted to impoverish them completely. Apparently in connection with financing their deportations, authorities issued an order in August blocking the wages of Jewish employees if they exceeded 250 guilders a month. Wages in excess of this sum were ordered deposited by the employer on blocked Jewish accounts in a bank in Amsterdam. Whenever several members of a single family were employed in the same establishment, their combined wages were limited by this order to 250 guilders. Employers were subsequently reminded to report statements of payments made to Jews since May 23, 1942. During the same month another order instructed all Jews to surrender their life insurance and annuity policies.

Meanwhile, the “aryanization” of Jewish property continued. The anti-Semitic Amsterdam newspaper *De Misthoorn* stated in September that five-sixths of the Jewish-owned property already passed into German hands. At the beginning of 1943, the Jews were almost entirely excluded from the clothing industry where, only nine months before, 80 per cent of the employers and employees had been Jewish. Jewish employers were now entirely eliminated and only 5 per cent of the workers were Jews.

A tragi-comic note, however, was injected by the fact that Jewish firms taken over by the Nazis were still operating and advertising under their old names at the beginning of 1943. And while advertisements carried both the Jewish name and that of the German “trustees,” slogans such as “Buy your
cake at Cohen's'' in the Nazi weekly *De Waag*, for example, were not unusual.

The mass arrests and deportation of Jews, too, benefited the Nazis directly. Strings of railway cars piled high with looted furniture and other articles, carrying placards, "Gifts from the Netherlands people to the poor Germans who were bombed out of house and home by the English," daily left the Netherlands for Germany. Also, during the December roundups the Germans arrested all Jewish personnel in Amsterdam stores and workshops and stole everything they could lay their hands on, *Netherlands News* of March 11, 1943, reported. Finally, on April 16, a decree authorizing seizure of land owned by arrested Jews was promulgated. It stated that, "When Jews cannot comply with the obligation of selling their land because they are absent . . . the land may be administered by the Netherlands Bureau for Real Estate" which, of course, is under Nazi control. In this way, the Nazis by "aryanization" or confiscation, or by outright theft, sapped all the resources of the once wealthy Jewish community.

**Nuisance Laws**

On June 30, 1942, a curfew was imposed upon all Jews, extending from 8:00 P. M. to 6:00 A. M. They were also barred from using the telephones without permission and from entering private dwellings occupied by non-Jews, as well as "Aryan" offices and hairdresser's shops. The *Joodsche Weekblad*, official organ of the Amsterdam Jewish Council, drew attention on July 10 to the fact that it was also forbidden to lean out of windows during curfew hours or to stand or sit in gardens or on balconies which face the street. Jews were likewise reminded that they must wear the Shield of David when standing at an open window. In September, Jews were forbidden to sit on benches in squares or parks under pain of arrest and deportation. Application of the measures was so strict and reprisals so prompt that the Amsterdam Jewish Council time and again issued urgent appeals for the observance of regulations. The slightest infringement brought with it either direct deportation to Mauthausen or heavy fines. As a matter of fact, the Gestapo
forced the Council to issue a Rosh ha-Shanah appeal to obey orders, for "violation of these regulations, even when due only to carelessness or ignorance, will result in punishment of members of the Jewish Council."

News of a most inhuman act was reported in Swedish newspapers on June 11. Allegedly the authorities resorted to the sterilization of Jews, the first of whom were said to be Jewish husbands of childless mixed marriages. These men, it was stated, were taken to Westerbork concentration camp and given the choice of sterilization or deportation to Poland. It was learned on June 22 that fifty Jews had declared their willingness to remain in the Netherlands under such conditions but that no Dutch surgeon would perform the operations.

Resistance

When the deportations began in July, 1942, Christian fellow-countrymen in almost every town and village immediately gave whatever assistance they could to the victims. Several protest movements sprang up all over the country, the strongest of them organized by the churches. In August, the Catholic and Protestant Churches jointly petitioned the Occupation Commander, Friedrich Christiansen, for better treatment of the Jews. Attacking the statement which was also read in all the churches, Deputy Commissioner Schmidt, on August 2, declared: "Owing to the passivity of the Dutch, we Germans have taken over the solving of the Jewish question and have started sending the Jews to the East...." He, furthermore, warned that, "Everyone crossing us or hindering us must, whatever his nationality, expect the same lot as the Jews."

Attacks upon the churches were many, but when words failed the Nazis began reprisals. In January, authorities discontinued all subsidies to the Catholic church in Limburg province as well as in other provinces. These grants had been paid by the government to the clergy since 1813 and constituted part of the priests' salaries. Such measures, however, did not deter the churches from expressing their solidarity with the Jews and praying for them.

The Christian churches in Holland at the end of 1942 sub-
mitted a protest to Seyss-Inquart, Reich Commissioner, against arbitrary arrests of Jews and the high rate of mortality among the deportees. They bluntly told the Commissioner: "The Church would fail grossly to do its duty if it did not call on the authorities to halt these measures." Seyss-Inquart unequivocally stated that "with Jews there can be no question of charity" and that "the Jewish problem will be solved by the Germans themselves." Other joint letters of protest were sent to Seyss-Inquart by the churches in February and again on March 17. Most devastating criticism of the sterilization of Jews was submitted in June by the United Churches to the Nazi Commissioner, who was warned that he would be held responsible for "the infamous practice" which is "the final consequence of an anti-Christian and destructive racial doctrine, the manifestation of a presumptive, self-aggrandizement and a life philosophy that threatens to undermine and frustrate all truly Christian and humane existence."

A campaign to bring mass pressure upon Nazi authorities to halt the deportations was begun by the underground press early last summer. It printed and circulated a pamphlet whose contents are a fierce and noble outcry against Nazi practices and conclude with an appeal to every loyal Hollander to address an individual letter of protest to the Nazi authorities. It said in part: "We... demand that our citizens shall sabotage the preparations and the execution of this mass deportation... Whoever remains indifferent will find it difficult to justify his present attitude after our liberation. We rely upon it that everyone in a position to do so will sabotage these sadistic Nazi measures — more especially State officials, policemen and railroad personnel."

And, indeed, the people took this admonition to heart. Jan Campert, a poet, was arrested last summer for helping Jews escape deportation. His death in a Dutch concentration camp was reported in March, 1943. In October four men were sent to concentration camps because they helped Jews escape deportation. A month later, a farmer in the vicinity of Winschoten was arrested for sheltering five Jews slated for expulsion. So many were the escapes that the police authorities raided farms in search of Jews. Moreover, in April, the Nazis admitted in the controlled press that a great
number of Netherlanders had been arrested for sheltering and protecting Jews. The first deportations of “Aryans” as punishment for helping Jews were announced officially in the Deutsche Zeitung of Amsterdam at the end of September. At the same time it was learned that the Nazis, in an effort to check the nationwide sabotage, seized one thousand Jewish children as hostages.

Other expressions of sympathy were recorded. Dutch workers, for example, slipped into the Jewish ghettos in Amsterdam at night to protect its inhabitants from attacks. Also, following the ban on Jews in resorts, Christians permitted Jews to use their homes while they themselves moved to hotels. Vrij Netherland, the Dutch-language weekly appearing in London, described in its issue of September 28, a battle of Jews and Christians in The Hague against Dutch Nazi stormtroopers who had attacked a synagogue. Similar defiance of German measures was shown by all railroad men, from conductors to high officials, who took the position that their own regulations — which do not differentiate between Jews and non-Jews — take precedence over Nazi rulings compelling Jews to give up their seats to non-Jews.

The Dutch Government-in-exile, of course, by its reaction to the persecution of Jews, was a source of inspiration for the people at home. On July 26, 1942, Premier Peter Gerbrandy, broadcasting to the Netherlanders, described the deportations as “the latest example of Nazi savagery” and warned his listeners that “a similar horrible fate” awaits Christians, too. He urged them to “bear stoically this new crime against the Jews and to remain steadfast and cling to our faith that the weapons of tyranny will never permanently conquer the citadels of the human spirit.” On the occasion of the Jewish New Year he again called on the population to continue resisting the “satanic plan” of the Nazis for expulsion of Jews.

Queen Wilhelmina, too, on October 17, told her people that she shared fully their “indignation and sorrow for the fate of our Jewish compatriots” and promised them: “We shall try as soon as possible to soften at any rate some of this sorrow.” She further demonstrated her feelings by awarding in Montreal, on March 5, the Kruis van Verdienste (Distinguished Service Cross) to Sergeant Harry Wertheim, a Dutch
Jew, for gathering information and performing acts of sabotage against the Nazis in the Netherlands. Another demonstration was a special service on April 16 at the Dutch Protestant Church in London in memory of Dr. Henri Polak, Dutch Jewish labor leader and former member of the Netherlands Senate, who, after imprisonment by the Germans, died in Amsterdam in March.

In preparation for postwar reconstruction in Europe, the Netherlands Government instructed its people on September 9 to keep a detailed record of all cases of looting and confiscation by the Germans and their native followers. It asked that serial numbers of all securities and other documents taken be recorded to enable the Netherlands Government to restore such valuables to their legitimate owners after the war. The broadcast also warned that Germans and Netherlands Nazis responsible for the confiscation and theft of property would be “severely dealt with.” As a final word of advice Premier Gerbrandy in May stated: “The Christian answer to the racial persecution in Europe is... that the crime must not be revenged, but avenged. Wage this war, therefore, not only against Hitler, but against the German people until the very end; cast out the last crumb of anti-Semitism and abolish every ghetto. . . .”

Communal Affairs

Despite the bitter persecution to which it was subjected, the Jewish Council in Amsterdam did its utmost to lighten the burden of its people. The organ of the Council, the Joodsche Weekblad, which was still permitted to appear fairly regularly, contained a column of letters from deported Dutch Jews, as well as a long list of committees established to help Jews, especially those slated for deportation. Weekly appeals were issued to readers to aid such “travellers” with blankets and warm wearing apparel. Advertisements stated that “out of your old smoking jacket or lounge coat we can make caps for travellers,” etc. The Jewish Council also was empowered to forward one-page letters in German to Jews working in Germany once every three weeks. The situation, however, became greatly aggravated at the beginning of 1943 when
the Nazi administration forbade charity workers to enter the homes of Jews, which meant that they could neither render help to the needy nor collect funds from others. As a result, the income of the Council depended solely on payments for services rendered which, unlike funds collected by canvassing, had to be entered in official records and were, therefore, under Nazi control. Pathetically enough, the helpless Amsterdam Jewish Council made an attempt to defend Jews from Nazi brutality, deportation and forced labor by pointing out in a public statement that forcible entry into Jewish homes "might involve severe penalties."

The deportation of Chief Rabbi Lodewijk B. Sarlouis of Amsterdam and Max H. M. Bolle, secretary of the Jewish Council, in November, left the severely tried Jews without leaders. For this reason, S. Dasberg, Chief Rabbi of Groningen, was appointed temporary Chief Rabbi of Amsterdam. The community was further bereaved by the death of Herman Salomonson, aged sixty, noted humorist writer, who died in Dachau, as reported by Aneta, Netherlands News Agency in London, on November 19.

5. Norway

Following the pattern found expedient in other conquered countries, the occupation authorities here, too, began preparations for the deportation of Jews. On September 15, 1942, an extensive roundup was initiated in Oslo where Rabbi Julius Samuel and several communal leaders, together with many other Jews, were arrested on the trumped-up charge of espionage. The same procedure was followed in Trondheim and other cities throughout Norway. The property of the internees was confiscated. The work of the Gestapo and the Quisling police was thorough. Less than a month after mass arrests started, about half of the Jewish population had been either interned or imprisoned.

Further impetus, however, was given to the campaign by the assassination, on October 23, of a Quisling frontier guard known for his brutality toward Jews. Two of the assassins were identified as Jews and, in consequence, all
other Jews on the railway train on which the act was committed were arrested. Immediately, the native Nazi press, clamoring for revenge, suggested measures varying from deportation to execution of all Jews. Vidkun Quisling immediately ordered the confiscation of the property of all Jews in Norway. Helping Jews to circumvent this law was punishable with prison terms ranging up to six years. News of Norway, on November 20, 1942, stated that at least 795 Jews, or about half of the entire Jewish population, had been forced to surrender their possessions to the Nazis. Members of the Quisling party were given prior claims to the goods of the dispossessed but the net result was disappointing for Quisling, since a great number of the Jews had been so poor that they had been living on charity.

The slaying of the border guard was also the signal for a veritable man hunt. Under Quisling's direction, two hundred Jewish males, ranging in age from 14 to 75 years, were arrested on October 26 in Oslo alone. Among them were Captain Harry Koritschinsky, honorary chairman of the Jewish Congregation, and Dr. H. Bernstein, the head of the Home for the Aged, which was confiscated by the authorities. Where heads of families could not be found, children and women were seized as hostages. Many of those left at liberty were evicted from their homes. These heart-rending scenes were repeated in other parts of the country. And as the number of the victims mounted, concentration camps at Grini, Narvik and Bredtvedt became so overcrowded that a new one had to be established at Toensberg.

Officially it was stated that the arrested Jews were to be deported to forced labor camps in northern Norway. The victims, however, knew full well that their lot would be similar to that of the Jews in other European countries. And, indeed, their fears were justified when, on November 26, one thousand persons were packed aboard a small German freighter and shipped from Oslo to an undisclosed German port. About half of the victims had been seized at 4:30 A. M. on the sailing date by Nazi State Police, who invaded private homes, as well as hospitals, insane asylums and homes for the aged in Oslo. The people were simply told to provide themselves with food and clothing for four days. They were then herded aboard the freighter which stopped at Toensberg to
pick up an additional five hundred Jewish men previously interned.

Again, in February, another boatload of Jews from concentration camps, virtually the last in the country, was shipped to an "unknown fate in Germany." It was learned only much later, in March and April, 1943, that both this contingent and the November one had been sent to the eastern part of Upper Silesia and that most of the Jews were working in coal mines near Katowice. *News of Norway* stated on March 5 that as a result of this expulsion, the number of Jews in Norway had been reduced to about fifty. These had been spared because they were married to "Norwegian Aryans." All others, with the exception of a few who fled to Sweden, had either died on the journey to the East or were doing slave labor for the Nazis.

**Resistance**

The Church in Norway which had maintained a most militant stand against the Nazi authorities ever since the occupation, was most outspoken against the mass arrests and persecution of the Jews. A solemn protest, signed by the Provisional Church Council of all the affiliated church organizations and the theological faculty of Oslo University was addressed to Quisling on November 23. It said, in part, that these measures "have provoked unheard sorrow throughout the country," and further: "The treatment of the Jews is not only contrary to the Christian ideal of loving one's neighbors, but it is also against elementary conception of justice." Quisling ignored the message, and the church leadership, in its New Year's message read in pulpits throughout the country on Sunday, January 17, again condemned the "terrible treatment" of the Jews. An indirect reply to the protest came later in January when the Church Department of the Quisling Government authorized Falk-Hansen, Quisling Bishop of Bergen, to state the "official" position of the Department of the Jewish question — which was, in substance, a vicious attack on the Jews.

Following the lead of the Provisional Church Council, the people in all the churches said prayers for the Jews on Sunday, November 15, and again a week later. On Christmas
Sunday, another prayer was read in all pulpits which asked God’s help for the persecuted Jews and prayed for “an end to all hatred between peoples and races.”

In protest against the second mass arrests, students in Oslo demonstrated and many of them helped Jewish women and children whose husbands and fathers had been taken to internment camps. Still stronger remonstrances were voiced after the deportations on November 26. On that day, the underground press published special editions, expressing profound sympathy with the deportees. Protest demonstrations also broke out in several towns where Norwegians hid Jews from the police and collected funds for them.

Sensational was a report from the Swedish newspaper Svenska Morgenbladet, quoted by the United States Office of War Information on December 8, that the German army of occupation “sharply dissociated itself” from the persecution of Jewish families.

Government-in-Exile

The Norwegian Government-in-exile completely identified itself with the strong opposition within Norway by its publication, on December 4, of a comprehensive report describing the plight of the Jews in Norway and containing the full text of protests against the deportations adopted by the Norwegian and Swedish churches.

6. Denmark

That the Nazis are making every effort to introduce anti-Jewish legislation in Denmark was borne out by the appointment as military commander, on October 14, 1942, of General Hermann von Hanneken, a close associate of Gestapo Chief Heinrich Himmler. Two days later came news of an order forbidding Jews to leave the country on the pretext that they were responsible for strained relations with Germany. Jews, particularly the refugees, recognizing the beginning of measures similar to those taken in other Nazi-conquered territories, sold their businesses, packed their belongings and besieged the Swedish consulate in Copenhagen for visas.
Only very few, however, succeeded in finding sanctuary in neighboring Sweden.

The formation, on November 11, of a new government under the premiership of Eric Scavenius, former pro-Nazi Foreign Minister, was a further step towards the country’s Nazification. And equally alarming was the appointment as Nazi envoy to Copenhagen of Werner Best, another Himmler hangman. The effects of the new leadership were soon apparent. Less than two weeks after his appointment, Scavenius, with Best’s assistance, was engaged in drafting anti-Jewish legislation. Simultaneously, mass arrests of Jews, accused of aiding the enemy, took place. Sixteen of them were sent to Germany for trial.

The Danish Jews realized that their existence was in many ways the immediate cause for the continued difficulties of their compatriots in dealing with the present masters of Denmark. In a rather extraordinary and dramatic move, they took the initiative to simplify the problem. According to a report by the Danish Listening Post, New York, on December 15, the Jewish leaders came to King Christian X with this unusual request: “We have always been well treated in this country and we understand that our being here is one of the difficulties between you and the German Government. If we can make things easier for you by being interned, please intern us.” This strange appeal placed the King and his government in a terrible dilemma. On the one hand, the internment is incompatible with Denmark’s tradition of religious freedom. On the other hand, resistance to Nazi wishes for the introduction of anti-Jewish legislation might very easily lead to the deportation of Jews. Thus far, the King has refused to heed the unique request of his Jewish subjects.

It was not strange at all for the Jews to put their fate into the hands of their King, for he undoubtedly played a stellar role in defending them. Early in the fall, when the Nazis once again pressed for the enactment of anti-Jewish measures, the King said: “There is no Jewish question in this country. There is only my people.” On his seventy-second birthday on September 27, he assured a delegation of the Jewish community of Copenhagen, which handed him an inscribed golden Shield of David, that should the Germans
force the Jews to wear a yellow badge, he would wear one on his uniform and would order the entire royal household to follow suit. To emphasize his sincerity, he later attended a special service in the Copenhagen synagogue. Apparently, the staunch stand of Christian X bore fruit, for Faedrelandet, official paper of the Danish Nazis, in January 1943, wryly said: "It would probably do more harm than good to introduce the compulsory wearing of a yellow Magen David."

Like the French and the Netherlands Churches, the Danish Church has centered its resistance on the issue of anti-Semitism. Last August, the local church gazette of Sonderborg declared that no decent Christian would lend his hand to any of the Nazi anti-Jewish laws. During the same month, a clergyman, Dean Johannes Nordentoft, writing in a journal for Danish pastors, openly attacked the anti-Semitic papers circulating in Copenhagen. He maintained that, "Christians will be the first to fight this dirty anti-Semitism" and described as accomplices those who "remain silent or disprove by shrugging their shoulders." Pastor Ivar Lange of Frederiksberg Church bravely told confirmation candidates in November: "Politics must not be discussed here — because it is punishable. In spite of this, I will tell you that I would rather die with a Jew than live with a Nazi." Again, in March, eight Bishops protested to the Minister of Justice, Thune Jacobsen, against the arbitrary arrest of Danes, as well as against German anti-Semitic propaganda. A month later, Kaj Munk, a well-known priest and playwright, told his community that if Danish Jews were to be deported like those in Norway, citizens of the Christian faith would not only don the yellow arm band but would feel that the Nazis had abolished all rights and that anarchy had taken the place of order. Another memorandum was submitted by church leaders to the Minister of Justice in May which warned that "serious tension" had arisen over the persecution of Jews and that action must be taken to avert the danger of violent explosion.

The universities and students vividly illustrated their independence of Nazi domination in the conduct of their affairs. The Senate of the University of Copenhagen in September named Professor Niels Bohr, the physicist who
won the Nobel prize for physics in 1922, as the principal candidate for the rectorship of the University, in spite of the fact that Bohr had a Jewish parent. Answering the Nazi Faedgeelandet which asked why no "Dane" could be found for "this responsible post," the editor of a democratic organ declared: "If Bohr, who has brought eternal glory to Den-
mark is not Danish, then neither you nor I am Danish." Even more characteristic was the student festival at Gjerlev which took place about the same time, at which Jewish students were given a place of honor, the Zionist flag was displayed and "Hatikvah" played, together with the Danish national anthem.

Such demonstrations should have enlightened the Nazis about the contempt which the Danes have for them. Perhaps they thought that two years of "benevolent occupation" had given strength to the carefully nurtured native Nazis. At any rate, occupation authorities permitted a free election to be held in Denmark on March 22, 1943. The stand of the people, however, was amazing. The vote held next door to Germany, in the country the Nazis have tried hardest to placate, was overwhelmingly in favor of the democratic parties. It was a strong and most encouraging reaffirmation of faith in democracy and a clear-cut rejection of National Socialism and all its works and promises.

7. Sweden

True to its tradition of liberalism and fair play, this small neutral country, in spite of its precarious situation, was particularly incensed over the barbarous treatment of Jews, especially in Norway. After the ruthless deportations from Western Europe, a storm of indignation swept Sweden. In fact, a public opinion poll at the end of December showed that the deportation of Jews from Norway was considered the event which had made the strongest impression upon the people during 1942.

Of special concern to the government were, of course, Swedish citizens of Jewish faith in Nazi-held territories who, as reports in March indicated, were confronted with the alternative of either returning to Sweden within a few
weeks or being deported. The first group of Swedish Jews who had resided for years in France and Holland arrived in Sweden on April 15, 1943. The press the next day welcomed them home; some newspapers stressed that their return should make Sweden feel proud of its role as the last outpost for the oppressed in Nazi Europe. The people, however, were not satisfied with saving Swedish Jews alone. In December 1942, the Gothenburg University students demanded that Sweden admit freely for the duration of the war Jewish refugees from Nazi-dominated countries, especially from Norway, Finland and Denmark.

In an unsuccessful attempt to influence a forthcoming debate on the refugee question in parliament, the Nazis tried to put pressure on members of the Riksdag to oppose this "Jewish invasion." Threats were uttered that a pro-Jewish decision might lead to complications in Swedish-German relations. Yet, the government's decision was in favor of admitting Jewish refugees, at least from Norway. Newspapers thereupon appealed to Vidkun Quisling, Premier of Norway, to permit Jews to emigrate to Sweden. Several hundred of them had previously crossed the border illegally.

At the end of December, the Stockholm Dagens Nyheter stated that the government had participated in negotiations concerning practical aid to the persecuted European Jews. The only official statement on this question was, however, that by a government representative who, according to the New York Jewish Morning Journal of May 24, 1943, said that all Jews who had sought sanctuary in Sweden were granted admission. But this report was contradicted by Charles E. Gratke, foreign editor of the Christian Science Monitor, who stated, May 28, that Jews persecuted for racial reasons had generally not been admitted until the fall of 1941 when "the actual humanitarian effect of these most recent changes was small since the Germans soon began refusing Jews exit permits from Norway." At any rate, most of the refugees who succeeded in reaching Sweden enjoyed full freedom of movement and the right to work. Only a small number of them were interned.

In order to aid Nazi victims more effectively and, particularly, to assist Jewish children caught in Nazi-held terri-
tories to emigrate to Palestine, a women's organization, headed by Baroness Maria Stjernstedt, was established in Stockholm in February, 1943. Attempts by the Swedish Red Cross to aid destitute Jews in Europe were, however, curbed by the Germans. Fritz Bauer, its director, resigned in April in protest against the Nazi refusal to permit the Red Cross to send food and medicaments to the Polish ghettos. Several days later, Prince Karl, brother of King Gustav, in a radio address from Stockholm disclosed the Germans' refusal of offers by the Red Cross to transfer to Sweden the few remaining Jewish families in Norway.

On December 2, 1942, the Bishops of Sweden, headed by Archbishop Erling Eiden, issued a message vehemently denouncing the Nazis because the "Jewish people have had to undergo the heaviest suffering, not for any misdeeds... but solely because of their racial origin." The Swedish Ecumenical Board, representing the Lutheran State Church and all of the country's Free Churches, endorsed the Bishop's protest a few days later. They were joined also by the Sectarian Cooperative Committee composed of Baptists, Methodists and various mission leagues. Previously, on November 29, a forceful sermon against the persecutions was delivered by Dean Olle Nystedt in Gothenburg Cathedral. He then lead his auditors in a prayer for the Jews. Similarly, Bishop John Collberg announced at Strängnäs: "The Norwegian Church has already interpreted the protest of the conscience of Western Europe against these atrocities. It must be loudly proclaimed that we in Sweden support this protest." Roman Catholic churches, too, offered prayers for the Jews on Sunday, December 20.

Reflecting the noble and courageous attitude of the pulpit and of the vast majority of the people, the press, too, frankly expressed its liberal and humane stand. Typical was the remark in Eskilstund-Kuriren, in October: "He who keeps silent in the face of the frightful things which are happening, abandons a part of the front line." And the conservative Svensk Tidskrift commented on the "united reaction" against the Jewish persecutions and "the Nazi mentality."

Another acute problem was the fight against anti-Semitism, both native and imported. Aware of Germany's incitement
of race hatred in their country as an instrument for undermining the democratic government, the Swedish people and the press consequently combatted these attempts with great energy. On September 15, 1942, the police were called upon to take effective measures to prevent native Nazis from parading in the streets with anti-Semitic placards. Recommendations for legislation making the provocation of race hatred a punishable offense had been favorably received by the Riksdag on June 22, 1942. Since no concrete action followed, the Social Democrat Deputy Brandt, supported by several other Riksdag members and backed by public opinion, moved on January 26, 1943, to request the government to curb anti-Semitism by legislation. The press and the Protestant and Catholic churches expressed their agreement with such a parliamentary move. Clergymen throughout the country organized meetings to urge the adoption of such legislation.

As a possible result of public clamor, the police in April raided the headquarters of a pro-Nazi organization in Stockholm where they discovered a list of over sixteen hundred names of prominent Swedish Jews, including Chief Rabbi Markus Ehrenpreis, marked by the Nazis as “dangerous” elements.

8. Switzerland

Although under the constant shadow of threats by the mighty and aggressive neighbor beyond the Alps, the four million Swiss people have given renewed testimony to the world of their traditionally indomitable spirit of independence. They have done this not merely by expression of sympathy, but by actually granting refuge, liberty and protection to about 13,000 to 15,000 people without a country. By doing everything possible to alleviate their suffering, this true and old democracy again nobly met her responsibilities.

Government’s Refugee Policy

Events in the Nazi-controlled countries bordering on Switzerland became so aggravated that most Jews preferred to risk death in the mountains to being seized for deportation.
The resulting rapid and enormous increase in the number of impoverished fugitives created a formidable political and economic problem for the Swiss Government which was reflected in its apparently wavering attitude. This seems to have encouraged the German Propaganda Ministry, as the *Volkischer Beobachter* in November 1942 illustrated, to attempt to frighten the country into refusing entry to Jews. This newspaper alleged that there were 14,500 Axis enemies in the country who, with the knowledge of the authorities, used Switzerland as a "mouthpiece" for insults and for "espionage," and warned that her neighbors would not tolerate this. For this reason, in contradistinction to the press, the churches and other institutions of private character, the authorities could not afford to antagonize the Nazis, and, therefore, were forced at the beginning of August 1942 to apprehend and to expel all foreigners who had entered the country without visas prior to August 11, and to turn back all those who tried to cross the border illegally after this day.*

Representations made by the Jewish Central Committee for Refugees to the Chief of the Federal Police were, nevertheless, sympathetically received. It was pointed out that the authorities were determined to maintain the right of asylum but that the measure had to be taken to stem the influx of refugees in view of the food situation. Finally, on August 25, the order was modified. Although the frontier police was to be strengthened to prevent any further illegal entry of refugees, those already in Switzerland were granted permission to remain if they belonged to one of the following categories: (1) refugees who entered the country before August 11, 1942, and who registered with the police upon arrival would not be expelled without cause; (2) those who had been or would have been held under Swiss customs control while their cases were pending decision, were required to register at the nearest police station. In any event, the Federal Department of Justice and Police reserved the final decision in all cases under examination by the cantonal police chiefs.

* The legal basis for this action was a Federal decree of October 17, 1939, which provided that all foreigners secretly entering Switzerland must be expelled immediately.
Dr. Eduard von Steiger, Federal Councilor and Chief of the Department of Justice and Police, stressed again that the recent orders to the local police concerning the temporary refusal of refuge were to be "considered as a warning designed to prevent an uncontrolled influx of refugees from the Netherlands and Belgium," since "it is far less painful to stop people leaving [their present places of residence] than it is to refuse them entry later on our frontiers."

In spite of all restrictions, a new stampede into Switzerland began when life for French Jewry became a dreadful nightmare. Within ten days — between September 23 and October 3 — no less than 2,207 fugitives, the majority of them Jews, slipped into the country from France. Thus, according to official figures released on October 7, the number of refugees climbed to 13,000, of whom 6,000 had immigrated prior to 1942, and the others since the summer of that year. The proportion of Jews was not officially indicated, but the J. D. C. stated that there were 12,000 Jewish refugees in the country. Other unofficial estimates claim that the number of refugees considerably surpassed the eighteen thousand mark.

In addition to the political difficulties arose the tremendous problem of housing and feeding these unfortunates. In order to cope with the situation, the Federal Department of Justice and Police, on October 2, 1942, appointed a special commissioner in charge of refugee questions. In December, the government made a grant of 3,500,000 francs for their maintenance. At a special session of the Executive Committee of the Federal Council in Berne at the beginning of February 1943, it was pointed out that refugees had been taken to labor camps and assigned to constructing public works. They received the same rations as Swiss citizens, but were not permitted to accept gifts of rationed food. Refugees were generally forbidden to accept employment, and, quite naturally, were barred from any political or journalistic activities.

**Popular Sentiment toward the Refugees**

Protests against the government restrictions were voiced by the liberal press and found a strong echo among the entire population. The churches, particularly, expressed
their solidarity with the Jewish exiles and with the persecuted in other lands. A few examples will suffice to illustrate the indomitable spirit of fair play among the Swiss. On July 3, the Moderator of the National Protestant Church of Geneva urged members of his church "to resist all attempts to introduce among us anti-Semitic concepts condemned by the spirit of our Master and by all our traditions nurtured on Holy Writ." At the 83rd Assembly of the Swiss Pastoral Society in October, a resolution was adopted calling anti-Semitism "irreconcilable with confession of Jesus Christ" and declaring that, "it is the holy duty of every Christian to help the tortured Jews by intercession and active love." Furthermore, a message of encouragement to the "Dear Jews of Switzerland," signed by Karl Barth, noted Protestant theologian, and by 25 other prominent Swiss citizens, was published in the Basler National Zeitung shortly before Christmas, 1942. A moving expression of Catholic solidarity with the Jews was contained in the Schweizerische Kirchen Zeitung, journal of the Catholic Church, on August 29, 1942.

The government, too, displayed courage in its attitude toward the Nazis. On January 26, 1943, the Federal Council forbade the circulation of Volume IX of the latest edition of Meyer's Konversations Lexikon because it contained statements offensive to Switzerland. The Swiss most emphatically resented being called "a backward State detached from the German Empire... the greater part of whose inhabitants belong to the Deutsche Volkskörper [German racial community]." For them, such terminology constituted "insulting language toward this country."

Other groups, such as the Swiss Labor Federation and the League for Human Rights also condemned anti-Semitism. A large public meeting was held in February at Geneva under the auspices of the Labor Federation which adopted a strong protest against anti-Jewish atrocities and urged the government to provide better treatment for the interned Jewish refugees. During the same month, the League for Human Rights sent appeals to the Vatican, the International Red Cross and the heads of the Swiss Protestant and Catholic Churches to intervene with the German Government to abandon its policy of extermination. The statements were
signed by 144 notables, including many political leaders, professors and writers. In addition, at the beginning of 1943, many direct messages of sympathy and contributions to aid Jewish refugees were sent to Jewish communities throughout the country, following the publication of accounts of increased Nazi terrorism.

**Assistance to Refugees**

In addition to the generous aid given to the refugees by the Swiss Government and by the Jewish community, financial support and retraining facilities were supplied by the J. D. C. and the ORT. Joseph C. Hyman, executive vice-chairman of the J. D. C., announced on April 28, that $1,000,000 had been allocated for refugee aid and child-care work in Switzerland. Of this sum, $800,000 were appropriated for food, clothing, medical care and retraining of Jews who had entered from France and the rest was set aside as a guarantee for the care of one thousand prospective child émigrés who were expected to enter Switzerland from France this year. Similarly, Aaron Sinalovsky, leader of the World ORT Organization, reported during the same month that the ORT had appropriated 250,000 francs ($57,500) for the year 1943, for various projects, such as workshops and agricultural training for refugee children.

**Reaction to the Bermuda Conference**

In spite of the liberal attitude of the government toward fugitives from Nazi persecution and the outspoken demands of the press to give them all possible assistance, Switzerland is anxiously waiting for a final solution of this huge problem. When news of the scheduled Anglo-American Refugee Conference was received in March 1943, the *Basler Nachrichten*, for example, expressed the hope that financial aid, if not immigration visas, would be given by America to those stranded in Switzerland and that, looking toward a postwar solution, neutral countries be given also a definite guarantee that refugees would be taken from them as soon as possible. These steps, the editorial continued, were essential to eliminate the danger of anti-Semitic contagion in countries which formerly scarcely knew it. The truth of this assertion was
borne out not much later when the *Journal de Génève*, a large and influential paper, in May accused the Swiss Jews of using their influence with the government to gain concessions for Jewish refugees.

Following the statement by Viscount Cranborne in the House of Lords on March 23, that Britain and the United States had reached an understanding on a program of rescuing Nazi victims in Europe, to be implemented at the Bermuda conference, criticisms were leveled because no mention of either financial or moral support to neutral countries sheltering great numbers of refugees was made. It was predicted that, as a result of this failure, neutral lands bordering on, or close to, Germany would henceforth guard their frontiers even more closely than in the past.

Yet, the various expressions of anxiety in no way reflect even the slightest deviation from a most liberal attitude toward the Jews in Switzerland. It was adequately summarized by the newspaper *Volksrecht*, as revealed by the Office of War Information on December 2, 1942:

“So long as Switzerland is an independent state—and we are determined to maintain our independence with all our means and energy—no other power on earth shall order us or tell us what laws we must make or how we must treat our citizens. It isn’t our fault but our honor that we have become the refuge for some thousands of persecuted. There must be one little spot of ground in ‘new Europe’ where humanity finds a home. We only regret that the force of circumstances makes fulfillment of our task so modest. If ‘new Europe’ finds few supporters in Switzerland, it isn’t the Jews who are responsible therefore, but those Aryans who understand ‘new Europe’ as the suppression of small peoples.”

9. Italy

Because the alliance with Germany brought only humiliating reverses to Italy, the people’s traditional dislike for their Germanic neighbor grew in proportion to the misfortunes suffered by the Axis powers during the past year.
The mighty blows of the Allies resulting in the loss of the Italian African empire, in the capitulation of island outposts, and in the devastating bombardment of the mainland cities, caused this latent animosity to develop into open and bitter hostility, infecting even the high officialdom of the Fascist party to an alarming degree. Italian morale sagged to such an extent that Heinrich Himmler, the jailer of Europe, had to be called in October 1942, to stamp out "unrest,"—but in reality to suppress discontent with Nazi domination and resistance against Nazi-imposed anti-Jewish restrictions.

Notwithstanding these efforts to keep Italy chained to the Nazi chariot, only relatively unimportant measures were taken against the Jews. Perhaps the most significant was an order forcing all Jews to remain indoors on Rosh ha-Shanah eve (September 11), because a government census of Jews for labor conscription would be taken at that time. To ensure compliance with the edict, all synagogues were closed. The new census was to augment the Jewish labor battalions which had been conscripted in the spring of 1942. It evidently took some time to place these people for only on June 19, 1943, did the Italian Government announce that, as part of a general labor conscription to take place on July 1, the Jews would be "rigorously organized and directed to take up work in areas that will be established by the Ministry of Corporations." An order issued a month earlier to Italian consulates in France for the registration of all Italian Jews residing in the former "free zone" seemed to have been part of the attempt to alleviate the serious manpower shortage.

In order to compensate Italians for losses resulting from the war, further measures were taken. As predicted in October by Under Secretary of State, Paolo Ravasio, a leading Jew-baiter in the Fascist party, the property of Jews in Genoa, Turin and Milan was confiscated and given to bombed-out Italians. The impoverished Jews were then deported to concentration camps in southern Tyrol and, six months later, were ordered to build fortifications on the Adriatic coast. Similarly, authorities of Trieste, Fiume and Merano ordered local Jewish communities to surrender 50 per cent of their clothing, underwear, shoes and kitchen
utensils. And finally, at the end of December, the government decided to confiscate all movable possessions of Jews to be given as compensation to Italian soldiers returning from the Russian front.

As the invasion threat to Sicily became more serious in June, authorities transferred some sixteen thousand Jewish internees from various camps in that area to northeastern Italy. At the same time, all telephones were disconnected and all radios in Jewish homes confiscated.

Various projects designed to create a militant Jew-hatred among the Italians failed to elicit the desired response. For instance, in July 1942, the Fascist party established an Institute for the Study of the Jewish Problem at the famous University of Padua, with branches at the Universities of Florence and Trieste. The purpose was the "enlightenment" of the intelligentsia on the "blessings" of racism. In spite of numerous mass meetings denouncing the "pro-Jewish" aristocracy, as well as uncounted scurrilous articles inspired by Roberto Farinacci, Italians continued to show their contempt for an anti-Jewish policy. In order to remedy the situation, Farinacci in August persuaded Mussolini to purge the party. Many of those expelled had wives of Jewish origin and close relatives married to persons of Jewish descent. Others were ousted for sabotaging anti-Jewish legislation. The so-called "dependable" Fascisti were asked by Pietro Piva, federal secretary of the party, speaking in Trieste in September, to denounce any Italian "who lacks the courage to break with Jews."

At the beginning of 1943, the Mayors of Florence and Padua were ousted from their posts, accused of having ignored orders to seize Jewish property; several party officials in Turin were expelled for similar reasons. Two months later, 14 Fascists in Venice, who had dined in the company of Jews, were expelled "for lack of Fascist conscience." Disciplinary proceedings against six members of the party were started in June by Carlo Scorza, the party secretary, because they had employed a Jewish lawyer to defend them in a court trial.

Prior to this, in October, the Bishops of Turin, Milan, Trieste, Fiume and Padua sent Mussolini a joint protest
against the intensified persecution of the Jews. They condemned particularly the order closing synagogues for an indefinite period and confiscating ceremonial objects. Simultaneously, the Bishops drew Mussolini's attention to the maltreatment of interned Jews.

The Pope, too, took an unequivocal stand against the oppression of Jews throughout Europe. The Vatican radio on January 27 and 28, 1943, broadcast to the German people the pastoral letter of December 12 in which Konrad Count von Preysing, Bishop of Berlin, attacked the Nazi "race theory." In reply to a communication received from Chief Rabbi Dr. Isaac Herzog of Palestine, asking for Papal intervention with the German Government on behalf of European Jews, the Holy See stated by cable on February 5 that it was "doing everything on behalf of those persecuted." L'Osservatore Romano, official Vatican organ, declared in March that a true "new order" could not be based on racial privilege and force. Late in June, the Vatican radio warned the French people: "He who makes a distinction between Jews and other men is unfaithful to God and is in conflict with God's commands."

As the period under review came to an end, the plans for the Allied invasion of Sicily had already matured. In July 1943, the invasion began, to be successfully concluded by mid-August. On July 25 came the downfall of Mussolini, the originator of fascism and the dupe and tool of Hitler. In spite of the fact that Italy, under Marshal Pietro Badoglio, remained in the war at the time of writing, democratic and anti-fascist forces everywhere were greatly heartened by Mussolini's collapse. The fissures in fascist Europe were widening. [Italy surrendered on September 8, 1943.]

**Italian Africa**

In August 1942, shortly before Marshal Erwin Rommel began his retreat, the Italian Government extended Italian laws "for the defense of the Italian race" to the Jews of Libyan citizenship. Until then, La Stampa, Turin, explained in September, only Jewish citizens of Italy proper had been affected by these laws.
When the British armies swiftly advanced toward Tripoli, all Jewish men between the ages of seventeen and forty-two were hurriedly segregated by retreating Fascists and interned near the desert town of Fezzan. The surviving internees, numbering three thousand, were released two months later by the “Free French” troops on their way to join the British Eighth Army.

Upon their entry into the city of Tripoli on January 23, 1943, the British were received with open arms by the entire population, including sixteen thousand overjoyed Jews. Subsequent reports narrated acts of terror and suppression during the period of Nazi occupation. But on the evening before the city fell, the holocaust of murder reached its climax, when Axis troops raided the ancient ghetto quarter. It is estimated that altogether seven hundred Jews were massacred; thirty had been deported to Italy in December to be held as hostages to prevent Tripoli’s Jews from taking revenge on the Italians after the British occupation.

The first task of the British military authorities was to tear down the barbed wire fence enclosing the ghetto and to rescind the anti-Jewish laws. In appreciation, the Jewish community presented to General Montgomery an antique gold-embroidered curtain (Parokot) which had hung on the Ark of the Law in one of Tripoli’s oldest synagogues. Action was also taken to give relief to the Jews, whose businesses and workshops had been looted and destroyed. As a result of British pressure, city authorities of Tripoli in February instructed local Italian banks to return to the Jews 10 per cent of their possessions, confiscated by the Italian Government. Since all Jewish deposits in the banks had been sent to Italy, Jews were to receive their money in the form of banknotes to be cashed upon the return of their money from Italy. During the same month, two thousand Jews who in May 1942 had been interned in the mountain village of Giado, Tripolitania, for anti-Fascist activities were released. Staunchly devoted to the Allied cause of freedom, many of them joined the Fighting French army and fought against Rommel’s forces in Tunisia.

Jewish communal activities were quickly revived. In March, the Chief Rabbi of Tripoli appealed to the Jews in
Palestine to send sufficient matzoth for the thousands of Jews in the city. He also asked that two Hebrew teachers be sent for the local Jewish schools. The ban on worship imposed by the Italians upon interned Jews, because of fear that they would pray for an Allied victory, and the prohibition of the study of the Torah and the Talmud were lifted.

When the British Eighth Army reached Bengasi in the beginning of November 1942, it freed some three hundred Italian Jewish subjects who had hidden in the town. Of an original Jewish population of three thousand, they were the only ones who had escaped exile or death by the Axis forces. The Nazis had hanged several Jews "as an example of what happens to those who are friendly to the British." Their treatment in general had been so heart-rending that even Arabs aided them in spite of Arab-Jewish differences. Italian priests reported that when they had sought to intercede with the Nazis on behalf of the Jews, they were curtly told: "You take care of God and we will take care of the Jews."

Under British occupation Jewish life once again returned to normality. Jewish military units stationed with the British forces helped to repair the damaged synagogue and organized schools for Jewish children.

10. Spain

In its ideological affinity to the Axis, to which the totalitarian regime of Spain owed its existence, General Francisco Franco's Government displayed a most severe refugee policy even before deportations from France greatly increased the number of Jews seeking sanctuary in Spain. The Nazi quest for labor slaves to feed its war machine reached even into the concentration camps of this "independent" and "neutral" country. For it was reported in the middle of July 1942, that a special German recruiting delegation had visited the camps and drafted virtually every able-bodied man, whether Jew or "Aryan," German or the national of any other occupied country. During the same month, authorities closed
the border at the Pyrenees because of the huge influx of Jews from France. This action did not deter desperate people. They continued pouring in. They came in families, in small groups and large; some were smuggled by guides, others just followed well-worn paths. On May 17, 1943, the J. D. C. estimated that eight thousand Jews had entered Spain. Almost all these fugitives were imprisoned.

As the prisons became overcrowded and the food supply diminished, the J. D. C. took over the job of relief. In January, about three thousand refugees were concentrated in Barcelona, Dr. Joseph Schwartz, European Director of the J. D. C., reported, and the remainder were in six or seven smaller towns. The monthly budget for their maintenance was put at $67,000 in January 1943.

Plans had to be made to find emigration possibilities for these thousands of internees. Following a conference between Dr. Schwartz and Sir Herbert Emerson, the Director of the Intergovernmental Refugee Committee, in London early in January, it was reported that the Spanish Government refused to issue exit visas to Jewish refugees between the military ages of eighteen and forty. But by posting guarantees for their maintenance, the J. D. C. succeeded in securing freedom for many internees, chiefly women and children who had been held in city jails of Madrid and Barcelona, and in the camps of Miranda del Ebro and Figueras. In May, the gates opened up for all Polish nationals of non-military age and later for 190 stateless persons. At the same time, it was announced that 1,000 more refugees were listed for release. These men and women were permitted to live in "assigned residence" centers where they remained under supervision but retained a degree of personal liberty. In June, 312 fugitives from France were released at the instigation of the American consul and sent to Portugal from where they will go overseas.

This major accomplishment of the J. D. C. was interpreted by the press as a change in the official policy toward the refugees. As a matter of fact, the correspondent of the Manchester Guardian stated in January that Jewish refugees making their way into Spain would, in the future, not be interned unless they were men of military age.
During the year, the Spanish Government decreed the closing of all synagogues and communal offices. Although the Spanish Embassy in England publicly denied these acts, Polish Jews arriving in England from Barcelona confirmed the reports and stated that the synagogue in Barcelona had announced that communal organizations had, in fact, been closed.

**Spanish Morocco**

Since July 25, 1928, Spain has policed the international zone which contains the port of Tangier. Taking advantage of the international situation in June 1940, Spain sent troops into the area “to protect its neutrality.” The Moroccan native nominal ruler was ousted in March 1941.

Since then, anti-Jewish measures have been introduced and in December 1942, the Spanish authorities raided the synagogue during services, as well as many Jewish homes; 55 Jews were arrested and held without evidence for trial on charges of “communist” activities. This step preceded the Spanish Government’s occupation of the international zone as a Spanish protectorate in January 1943, a generally unnoticed aggression which caused great alarm among the local Jews. A number of them succeeded in escaping to French Morocco and Algeria. Indeed, at the end of May, more than one hundred Jewish and Arab youths who had registered at the French consulate for labor service in French Morocco, were rounded up by the Spanish police and flogged, and thirty of them were deported to Tetuan. Authorities frankly admitted that the boys were penalized because they volunteered to work for the Allies and not for the Axis. Alvary D. F. Gascoigne, the British consul-general at Tangier, immediately protested to General Uriarte, the military governor, who promised an investigation. On June 3, the governor informed representatives of the Jewish community that the boys would be “pardoned.”

Other anti-Jewish acts were recorded. During a religious service in Tangier on May 29, secret police under Spanish orders entered the synagogue and arrested two youths. Although they were subsequently released, the violation of
religious rights was deeply resented by the Jews. Several
days later it was learned that Spanish authorities had refused
both labor permits and exit visas to Polish Jews residing
there. Intervention of Polish representatives in Madrid
was of no avail.

In all of Spanish Morocco, Falangists, aided by Nazi
agents, had been carrying on continuous anti-Jewish prop-
aganda. The campaign came to a peak in May 1943, when
anti-Semitic demonstrations were staged in Tetuan during
which a demand for the deportation of all Jews was voiced.

11. Portugal

During the trials experienced by the Jews in Western
Europe in the past year, this country again opened its
doors to the oppressed. Although it is difficult to estimate
how many refugees entered Portugal, because it is merely
a port of exodus, J. D. C. figures indicate that several hun-
dred were involved. Their number increased from 400 in
May 1942, to 800 in February 1943. Most of them had
left their homes at a moment's notice, without funds or
entry permits.

The authorities put no obstacles in their way. On the
contrary, as an expression of sympathy with the persecuted
Jews of Europe, a New Year (1943) order was issued under
which all illegal entrants, whether in prison or in hiding,
were to be given full legal status as transit travelers. Those
imprisoned were thereupon released and granted permission
to move to the coastal village of Ericeria where they were
supported by relief organizations, subsidized by the J. D. C.

Prior to this in December, Isaac Weissman, president of
the Lisbon Refugee Relief Committee, appealed to the Arch-
bishop of Canterbury, to intervene on behalf of thousands
of Jewish refugees in Spain and Portugal to enable them to
immigrate into Palestine.

The first museum of Jewish history and culture in Portugal
at Tomar, the site of a synagogue which antedates the ex-
pulsion of Jews in the fifteenth century, was opened on
April 7.
OWING to the German-Russian war and the general difficulty in obtaining precise objective information from the U. S. S. R. we are able to see only the broad outlines of the events and developments in the life of the Jews of that country during the past year. The startling changes brought by the first year of the war continued, and many events which took place during that year were duplicated.

In brief, these changes and events may be summed up as follows: the shifting of the Jewish population of Russia from the west to the east; the incorporation of Jews from the border states into the Jewish population of Russia; the relaxation of the bans against religion, Hebrew and Zionism, with a subsequent growing consciousness among Jews of Russia of a common past and present with Jews elsewhere; intense Jewish participation in the war against the invader, both as members of the regular armed services and of partisan bands; and large-scale massacres of Jews in Nazi-occupied towns.

The shifting of the Jewish population from the western provinces to the interior of Russia was an acceleration of a trend begun immediately after the Revolution when the Czarist restrictions on Jewish settlement were lifted and the “pale” destroyed. It received further impetus with Stalin’s program of industrialization of the Ural provinces and Siberia, but it was not until after the German invasion, that it involved the shifting of masses of population. All of western Russia occupied by the Nazis has been denuded of Jews through massacre and migration. As early as August 1942, Russian partisans reported that no Jews remained in White Russia, that there were none left in such once large centers of Jewish population as Minsk and
Vitebsk. Those Jews who escaped the Nazis by going eastward were accompanied, if not, indeed, preceded by almost half a million Jews fleeing from Poland and the Baltic States.

New settlements were established in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Chuvashia, the Bashkir Republic and other Soviet areas east of the Urals. Kokand, the capital of Uzbekistan, has become a place where the Yiddish of Jews from Wilno and Kaunas can be heard in the streets. For more than a year “miniature centers” of historic Polish yeshivoth have been established in small Siberian villages. Faculties and students from Poland continue their studies in an area where there were formerly few, if any, Jewish inhabitants.

Tashkent, in Uzbekistan, has been swelled by a tremendous influx of Jews from Russia proper, especially from the Moscow area. With them came the entire organization of the Moscow Jewish community. Jews from the Ukraine and White Russia were evacuated by the thousands to the Bashkir Republic where many of them now work on collective farms. The Kiev Jewish State Theater has been moved to Jambul in the Asiatic republic of Kazakhstan. The White Russian Jewish Theater opened its season in Novosibirsk, industrial center of southern Siberia. The presence of thousands of Russian and Baltic Jews has created an acute housing shortage in Samarkand and other Uzbek cities, which the authorities are trying to meet with new buildings.

The situation of the 350,000 or more Polish Jews in the U. S. S. R. was complicated by Soviet policy toward Poland, by the differences over boundaries between the Soviet Government and the Polish Government-in-exile, and by the under currents of anti-Semitism among Polish officials.

All Jews of the eastern provinces of Poland are now considered citizens of the U. S. S. R. by the Soviet Government, which bases its claim on the results of a plebiscite held after the Russian occupation of eastern Poland in the fall of 1939. In addition, all Jews from the central Polish provinces who were in eastern Poland as refugees from the Nazis at the time of the plebiscite are also considered citizens of the U. S. S. R. Many of these Polish Jews wished to leave Russia because of economic hardships, political differences, or the mere desire to go elsewhere. The fact that so large a
proportion of them were considered as Soviet citizens made departure difficult. Meanwhile, in the early stages of the war, before the Soviet economy could absorb an appreciable number of them, the absence of organized assistance and the difficulty of organizing foreign relief in the U. S. S. R. made the position of the Polish Jews desperate.

On the other hand, out of 140,000 Polish citizens evacuated from the U. S. S. R. to Iran only some 2,500 were Jews. According to representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the smallness of the number was due more to the anti-Jewish bias of Polish military authorities in Russia than to Soviet policy. Polish officials discriminated against Jews in recruiting men for the Polish army, as well as in the evacuation of persons wishing to leave the U. S. S. R. This discrimination, according to the same source, was resisted by Soviet officials who often interceded in behalf of Jews.

Many communal leaders among the Polish and the Baltic Jews, formerly identified with political movements which the Soviets consider inimical, faced additional difficulties. Some were imprisoned; the whereabouts of others is unknown. The action taken in one such instance aroused indignation abroad, especially in the United States. This was the execution of the Polish Jewish Socialist “Bund” leaders, Victor Alter and Henryk Ehrlich, who were arrested in 1939, then released and again arrested, on the alleged ground that they had sought to influence Soviet soldiers to lay down their arms and make peace with the Nazis. The first intimation the public had of the death of the two leaders came in a letter from Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet Ambassador to the United States, to William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor. The date of the execution, originally given as December 1942, was later corrected to December 1941.

The influx of such a vast number of Jews from the border states into Russia has, for the first time in over twenty years, brought the Jews of Soviet Russia into direct contact with Jewish traditions and institutions which the Bolshevik regime had sought to discourage or suppress. The refugee Jews brought with them their Talmudic academies, their religious practices, their Jewish garb, and their interest in
the Hebrew language, in Palestine and in the destiny of the Jews in other countries. General Soviet policy was somewhat modified in relaxing bans on religion and Hebrew. The consciousness of the common destiny of Jews throughout the world, and interest and pride in the Jewish past have been greatly encouraged during the present war.

In September 1942, for the first time in the history of Soviet Russia, the Jewish community of Moscow, now situated in Tashkent, addressed High Holiday greetings to the Jews of the world. And a month earlier, the same community joined the Jews of the world in a "Day of Fasting and Prayer" proclaimed by the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada.

The promptness with which the Jews of Palestine responded to the call of Russian Jews for helping the Red Army was hailed by Einigkeit, the official organ of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Kuibyshev, as an example for the Jews of the English-speaking countries. In August 1942, Pavel Mikhailovitch, First Secretary of the Russian Embassy at Ankara, Turkey, in a speech in Jerusalem, thanked Palestine Jewry for its aid, and became the first Soviet diplomat to deliver a public address in Palestine.

The most remarkable change in the attitude of Soviet Jewish leadership is to be found in the stress upon the peculiarly Jewish aspect of the war. Bar-Kochba, the Jewish leader of an unsuccessful revolt in Palestine against the Romans in the days of Emperor Hadrian, has become the most popular Jewish hero in Russia. The Maccabbeans, too, are often mentioned in articles and addresses on the war and the war effort intended for Jewish audiences. Among those who speak of the Jews as the descendants of the Maccabbeans is Ilya Ehrenburg, the famous Soviet writer who until recently was never identified with any Jewish interests.

The Nazi atrocities against the Jews of Warsaw, of Amsterdam and Prague are constantly mentioned in appeals to Jews to fight the Nazis, thus emphasizing the common destiny of the Jews all over the world. The latest move in the direction of establishing closer contact between the Jews of the Soviet Union and those of other countries was the visit to America in June and July 1943 by S. Mik-
hoels, leader of the Moscow Jewish State Theatre and chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Kuibyshev, and Itzik Fefer, one of the most prominent Yiddish writers in the Soviet Union.

There are few accurate data available on the number of Jews in the Soviet army and still fewer on the number of Jews in the guerrilla bands fighting Hitler behind the lines. In August 1942, Dr. Shlomo Kaplansky, principal of the Haifa Polytechnicum, and one of the leaders of the Histadruth in Palestine, in an address delivered at a conference called by the Palestine League to Aid Russia, estimated the number of Jews in the Soviet army as “more than 200,000.”

In the same month, the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Kuibyshev announced that, “although Jews rank seventh in population among the various nationalities in the Soviet Union, they are fourth in number among the heroes who have received awards in recent months for exploits at the front or unusual feats in production.” In March 1943, the same Committee announced that more than 25 Jewish officers in the Red Army had been promoted to the rank of General during the then current Soviet offensive. Several Jews were among the Soviet officers who accepted the surrender of the Germans at Stalingrad — a fact upon which the Soviet press commented as an instance of poetic justice. Stories are plentiful of heroic exploits by Jewish soldiers and partisans, including old men, women and children. Early in the fall of 1942, there were reports of Jewish heroes such as Isaac Tkatch Leizer Paperennik, Lea Kantorowitch, Leiba Rappoport and others. In September, the Russian press featured the heroism of Captain Moishe Landsun, commander of an artillery unit which destroyed 14 tanks and 51 cannons, and annihilated more than 1,700 Germans. In October the story was told of Sarah Maisel, a twenty-three year old Jewish girl, who saved Russian army units from destruction by risking her life to maintain telegraphic communications when Nazi shells demolished the railway station where she worked as a telegraph operator; of a nurse who dropped with Red parachutists behind German lines; of a shoemaker who saved a Russian battalion from falling into a Nazi trap; and of Jewish heroes in embattled Stalingrad. In November a
girl, Gita Shenker, was cited for her bravery in assuming command of a Cossack unit at the Stalingrad front; after the Cossack commander had been critically wounded, Gita telephoned instructions to the embattled unit.

It was announced that five thousand Jews had been decorated for bravery since the outbreak of the German-Soviet war. Outstanding among these was M. Isensohn, a pilot, who became the first Jew to be awarded the new military decoration, Order of Alexander Nevsky. In January 1943, several Jewish heroes at Stalingrad were praised in the Soviet press, and in February Reizel Budkevitch, woman first mate on a ship, and Isaac Fischer, engineer of a locomotive, were cited for their brave deeds. Grandfather Leizer, a sixty-year old Jewish partisan, was the hero of the Soviet Jewish press in September 1942, while in May 1943 the story was told of the rabbi of Konstantinov, tortured by the Nazis and forced to witness the massacre of the Jews in his town, who managed to save himself and join the guerrillas. Many similar tales came through, each a story of courage and fortitude.

Reports are frequent of Russian guerrillas saving Jews from annihilation by the Nazis and of friendly neighbors in occupied territory helping Jews by shielding and feeding them and their children. A Soviet officer who escaped Nazi captivity tells of a group of prisoners who preferred death to pointing out to the Nazis the Jews in their midst. When the only Jew in the group who, because of his appearance was mistaken by the Nazis for a Russian, stepped out to save his comrades, all the rest stepped out with him. In the Kabardin-Balkary Soviet Republic in the Caucasian Mountains, the mountaineer Jews and the Balkary refused the Nazi offers to betray one another and joined forces to attack the Germans with knives and daggers.

Details of Nazi massacres of Jews in occupied territory were revealed on the re-occupation of those regions by the Soviet troops and new massacres took place in towns freshly occupied by the Germans during the past year. Various reports from Jewish refugees, partisan leaders and Soviet military commanders, who re-occupied Soviet territory held by the Nazis, tell of 5,000 Jews killed in Kerch, 72,000 in Minsk, 11,000 in Ponevezh, 13,000 in Kharkov, 5,000 in
Dniepro-Petrovsk, 2,800 in Piatigorsk, 3,000 in Kislovodsk, and of tortures inflicted on Jewish prisoners of war. The accuracy of these figures cannot as yet be ascertained and the total number of Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis in occupied Soviet Russia cannot be estimated, nor is there any way of telling how near the truth is the seemingly over-optimistic estimate given by David Bergelson, chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Kuibyshev, that 80 per cent of the Jews in the occupied territory had been evacuated. There are reports of Jewish deportees from Holland and other Western countries having been sent to the occupied Soviet territories for military work, but their number and their fate are still shrouded in darkness.

Outside of the army, few Jews besides Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, have received public mention as playing a leading role in the direction of Soviet affairs. Lazar Kaganovitch, the only Jew in the Polit-Bureau, and his brother Yuli, the only Jew in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R., are occasionally mentioned.

**Occupied Countries**

**2. Poland**

The fourth year of the German occupation of Poland was marked by the most horrible campaign of mass extermination known to modern history. The number of victims and survivors cannot at present be determined. But the fact of the campaign of extermination is beyond any doubt. Thousands of Jews in Poland died before firing squads, in overcrowded boxcars or gas chambers. Thousands of others died from overwork, starvation and in other ways which constitute direct or indirect murder.

The situation in Poland was tersely described in a secret message sent out in December 1942 by the Jewish underground movement: “What the Germans are doing now to the Jews is a war, a war in which on one side the Hitlerite gangsters are armed to the teeth, while on the other side the
unarmed and defenseless Jewish community stands entirely helpless."

That the aim of the Germans was the utter extirpation of the Jews in Poland was obvious both from the numerous pronouncements of Nazi spokesmen and from their policy during the first three years of occupation.

The Nazi pattern for dealing with the Jews appears to consist of four consecutive stages: (1) to deprive the Jews of civil rights; (2) to drive them out of the economic life, thus making it impossible for them to sustain themselves; (3) to segregate them in ghettos where they perish of famine and disease; (4) to destroy those who have not been killed off during the previous stages.

This last stage was entered in the spring of 1942. At that time the whole of the Generalgouvernement was in the grip of a terror far exceeding anything previously achieved during the German occupation. In the general view this was linked up with Himmler's visit when special "extermination squads" (Vernichtungskolonnen) were set up for the purpose of liquidating the Jews.

The first manifestation of the new repressive measures took the form of mass shootings. Later came the liquidation of the ghettos through deportations, gassing, executions and other methods. According to early reports (Polish Fortnightly Review, July 1, 1942), a number of Jews from the Lublin ghetto were shut up in boxcars, which were taken outside the town and left on a siding for two weeks, until all inside had perished of starvation. The majority of the Jews of Lublin were carried off to the locality of Sobibor, near Wlodawa, where they were murdered by gas, machine guns and bayonets. The Nazis sought, wherever possible, to enlist the local non-Jewish population or imported fascists and hoodlums in tormenting the Jews. In this procedure they met with very limited success with Poles, but some Lithuanians and Ruthenians were more responsive.

Enough evidence was available by July 1942 to justify the statement by Samuel Zygielbojm and Ignacy Schwarzbart, the two Jewish members of the Polish National Council in London, that a monstrous plan of slaughter was being ruthlessly executed in Poland, and that at least 700,000 Jews had already been killed. The extent of the tragedy was
more apparant in single communities. In Wilno only 15,000 Jews remained out of 65,000. The remainder had been taken to the Ponar Mountains where they were slain by Nazis and Lithuanians. The 15,000 survivors were artisans and therefore useful to the Germans. In Pinsk about 8,000 had been killed; in Brzesc 6,000. And so it went. The story was the same; only the details differed.

As the summer of 1942 waned, reports came from underground Polish sources in touch with the Polish Government-in-exile, from neutral sources in Switzerland and Sweden and from refugees in Soviet Russia and in Palestine, telling of massacres of Jews in Poland on an unprecedented scale. Jewish and Polish police in the Warsaw ghetto were replaced by picked Ukrainian, Latvian and Lithuanian guards who were prepared to "collaborate" with the Germans in the extermination of the Jews. The horror of events was conveyed by Samuel Zygielbojm's announcement, on August 16, that Adam Czerniakow, burgomaster of the Warsaw ghetto, had committed suicide rather than prepare a list of 100,000 Jews for deportation to the East for forced labor, which he knew meant death for his fellow-Jews. He had been most ingenious and resourceful in evolving plans for social welfare and for continuing a semblance of normal economic and cultural life under the most trying conditions and had always kept up the courage of his people in the ghetto. His death was regarded as a sign that the fate of Polish Jewry was now sealed.

According to reports reaching London during September, more than 300,000 Jews had already been deported from the Warsaw ghetto, reducing its population by half, and deportations continued at the rate of several thousand a day.

One of the most gruesome tales of torture and deaths, dating from a time shortly before Himmler's visit to Poland, was contained in reports received by the New York Representation of the Bund (General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland) in October 1942. According to these reports, several thousand Jews from various towns were driven together into isolated districts, ostensibly for some work. Instead they were herded into specially constructed trucks and killed by suffocation. The report reads in part: "The arrivals were, at the start, treated very courteously and kindly.
They were helped in getting down from the truck. Finally, the entire group would be led into the ‘bath’; in reality, however, they were taken through a bitterly cold hallway to the ramp. There, the Germans’ treatment of the Jews would suddenly change. With whips and gun butts the Jews would be driven into an automobile. After the victims were thrown into the truck, it was sealed. The car would drive into the woods. The truck would halt about a hundred meters from the grave. The chauffeur, who served both as driver and executioner, would turn on the gas apparatus (in the truck) and leave the truck. From the truck would come stifled cries, howls, and poundings on the walls. After a quarter of an hour, however, all would be quiet. A little while later, eight Jewish grave-diggers would proceed with their job. The Lubrodzy woods were at all times guarded by gendarmes, so that the only witnesses of the execution were the unfortunate grave-diggers, who were confined in the cellars. On numberless occasions, the diggers tried to escape, smash windows, and inform the outside world of what was happening in Chmelno. They threw letters out of the stove chimney, and out of autos. Finally, three grave-diggers succeeded in escaping, and it is from them that we have the present chronicle.

A member of the United Polish Underground Organization, who left Poland at the end of October 1942, brought out with him a message to the Jews from the Underground General Jewish Workers’ Union in Poland which he communicated in December to Zygielbojm and Schwarzbart in London. Through his own eyewitness account, this secret messenger underlined the message he carried: “Tell them there that there are moments when we hate them all. We hate them because they are safe ‘there’ and do not rescue us. Because they don’t do enough. We are only too well aware that in the free and civilized world outside it is not possible to believe all that is happening to us. Let the Jewish people, then, do something that will force the other world to believe us. We are all dying here. Let them not retreat until the civilized world will believe us — until it will undertake some action to rescue those of our people who will remain alive. Merely protests and threats are not sufficient. We shall never forgive them for not having supplied us with
arms so that we may have died like men, with guns in our hands."

The courier told of hunting parties organized by the Hitler Youth who shot Jews, especially Jewish children, at sight. He told, too, of people crazed by hunger; of the wholesale slaughter in the ghettos. "Every day one can see thousands of Jews being led from the concentration points to the trains. On various pretexts dozens are shot during the march so as 'to teach the Jews order before they die'. . . . 140 people are loaded into cars in which normally only forty are supposed to travel. Special S. S. men with guns and whips are stationed on both sides of the entrance . . . A long train thus packed with several thousand men, women and children is switched to a siding where it remains from two to eight days. The doors are never opened. . . Many cars are painted with lime which begins to burn from the dampness of the human urine and increases the tortures of the barefoot and the nude. Because there are not enough cars to kill the Jews in this relatively inexpensive manner, many of them are taken to nearby Belzec where they are murdered by poison gases or by the application of electric currents. The corpses are burned near Belzec. Thus within an area of fifty kilometers huge stakes are burning day and night."

Similar accounts were received from other sources by the Polish Government-in-exile in London. Depositions by Palestinian citizens formerly resident in Poland and who had been exchanged for German prisoners, tend to corroborate these accounts. Nearly all of these latter witnesses were examined under oath by the Central Representation of Polish Jews in Tel Aviv. The affidavits thus obtained from men, women and children of various ages and coming from different towns in Poland constitute the most complete and most reliable information we have on the situation in that unhappy land. The cumulative evidence leaves no doubt that the Nazis were engaged in a brutal campaign of extermination against many thousands of Jews who were considered unfit to work for them.

There are variations in detail and in sequence of the events, but the general pattern is the same in every eyewitness account. The able-bodied Jews were employed in work
useful to the Germans, while the rest were “liquidated” in one form or another. Everywhere the victims or their friends were made to dig the graves and everywhere there was sadistic torture. In eastern Galicia, fascist Ruthenians readily collaborated with the Nazis in rounding up and executing Jews.

The Underground Jewish Organization in Poland made it clear in its messages that it was anxious to offer resistance to the Nazis, but it had no arms. Arms finally were obtained with the assistance of the Polish Underground Movement with which the Jewish Organization had maintained continual contact. Led by the Bund and by the various Labor Zionist groups, a Jewish defense corps was then organized. It first took the field against the Nazis in Warsaw in January 1943. The American Representation of the Bund received a cable, dated February 7, telling of these operations. Sporadic acts of resistance by Jews in other places were reported even earlier by sources in Soviet Russia.

But it appears that a full-scale organized resistance did not get under way until sometime in April and that it continued well into May. As far as can be gathered from reports, the fight between the Jews and the Germans ended in the complete eradication of the Warsaw ghetto and other ghettos. It was a daring, if futile thing for the Jews to undertake against the overwhelming superiority of the enemy. But even from the garbled and clouded reports received so far, we can piece together a heroic story that will forever light up the dark and sordid tale of the Nazi-built Warsaw ghetto. Jews and Poles together fought off the Nazis for days and accounted for over a thousand of them. Warehouses and factories, (800 according to SWIT, the secret Polish radio) were put to the torch by the defenders, who were assisted by Polish underground squads. If, after achieving their “victory,” the Nazis proceeded to liquidate the ghetto, it must have caused ironical laughter somewhere—but it was not the Nazis who laughed.

On April 21, SWIT broadcast a message: “The last thirty-five thousand Jews in the ghetto at Warsaw have been condemned to execution. Warsaw again is echoing to musketry volleys. Women and children defend themselves with bare hands. Save us” It was the last word.
On May 11, in London, Samuel Zygielbojm, who had been the chief link between the Jewish underground in Poland and the outside world, committed suicide when he learned that his whole family had been wiped out in the Warsaw fight.

Late in May, persons in this country learned the names of many well-known Jewish writers who had been killed during the battle and of some of the heroic leaders of the ghetto uprising, including two young women, members of labor Zionist organizations who for three years refused to avail themselves of the opportunity to leave Poland. They remained to help, at first by organizing charitable work, later by organizing the defense. Both young women, Zivia Lubertkin and Tova Atman, met their death in the battle of Warsaw.

Thus the period under review, from the summer of 1942 to the summer of 1943, marks the year of the worst massacre of the Jewish people. The extent of the slaughter was epitomized by a message from underground Poland, according to Stockholm sources on February 5, which said: "Doctor Harigah visited the Lwów Jewish community during . . . January and remained there for several days, after which he proceeded to the neighboring Jewish communities." Harigah is a Hebrew word; it means slaughter.

During the period under review, life had to some extent gone on in the ghettos. Able-bodied Jews were employed at various occupations for which they received slight remuneration. While one member of a family enjoyed comparative immunity for the time being, his aged parents might be condemned to death by the firing squad and his wife and child to deportation.

During the same period the Germans employed many Jews for various services. Jewish girls were frequently recruited for brothels. In January 1943, a letter smuggled out of Poland reported the death of 93 Jewish girls in a suicide pact when the Nazis rounded them up and brought them to a military brothel. The girls, aged 14 to 22, were from the Beth Jacob religious schools.

In October and November, evidently as a preparatory step for easier extermination, the number of Jewish communities in Poland was reduced from nearly 700 to 55. Two orders
dated October 28, 1942, and November 14, 1942, respectively, issued by Krueger, Secretary of State for Security in the Generalgouvernement, listed 13 ghettos and 42 “townships” in which Jews and persons legally designated as Jews were permitted to dwell.

As far as can be ascertained, no organized body of Poles responded to the invitation of the Nazis to help exterminate the Jews; individual peasants and merchants, induced by the profit accruing to them from buying Jewish-owned property and businesses at low prices, were ready to cooperate. Refugees in Palestine told of many cases in which Poles reported Jews who failed to wear the yellow badge to the authorities. On the other hand, there were numerous accounts of Poles hiding and feeding Jewish children. The organized Polish labor movement actively cooperated with the Jews and continually warned its members against anti-Semitism. The Church, too, on several occasions, voiced its vehement protest against the maltreatment of the Jews.

Government-in-Exile

During the period under review the official attitude of the Polish Government-in-exile in London remained friendly to the Jews. This attitude has been demonstrated not only by the numerous pronouncements of government spokesmen with regard to the future constitution of Poland, but also by concrete actions. In every part of the world, Jewish refugees from Poland received relief allowances from the Polish authorities and the Polish Government was the first one of all Allied governments to recognize the unique position of the Jews under Hitler. It urged upon the governments of Great Britain and the United States and the other Allied governments that some definite action be taken to halt the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis. It is probably with the approval of the Polish Government in London that arms were supplied by the Polish Underground Movement to the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto. In his letter to Premier Sikorski, written before he committed suicide, Samuel Zygielbojm said that the Polish Government had done more than any other to help the Jews in the ghettos.

Nevertheless, there have been forces at work both within
and outside the government and the Polish National Council, which have given cause for alarm. Some Polish circles have expressed the desire that the ghettos and the economic structure of the ghettos instituted by the Nazis should be retained in liberated Poland, while others went so far as to voice their satisfaction that the Jewish problem was being liquidated in Poland by the Nazis.

The representatives of the Socialist Party in the government have been the most consistent advocates of full freedom and equality for the Jews in postwar Poland, but the representatives of the old parties on the Right have not given up their anti-Jewish bias. The Polish civil service and the army have, in numerous instances, shown that they are influenced by rightist forces.

The number of Jews in the Polish army is not known, but in the Middle East there were reported to be thirty-three hundred by the end of June 1943.

3. Baltic Countries

In the absence of any recognized representatives of any of the former Baltic governments in the democratic countries, our information about the Jewish situation in those areas is even more limited than our information about the Jews in Poland, and the reports reaching us from the few sources available are less capable of corroboration. We have the eyewitness reports of refugees from the Baltic countries who managed to escape to Palestine or Soviet Russia, and a few other sources, such as German newspapers.

The three Baltic countries of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia now form the Nazi administrative unit, Ostland. During the second year of the German occupation of these lands, the position of the Jews there became progressively worse. Where there were once more than 250,000 it is doubtful if more than a handful of Jews survive. In January 1943, Hebrew newspapers in Palestine published a detailed eyewitness account of the slaughter of all Jews in the Baltic states. While we have no corroboration of this extreme statement, there is little doubt that many thousands of Jews in the three countries lost their lives as a result of
Nazi persecution. The wholesale slaughter of the ghettoized Jews has been going on since the spring of 1942. Those whose lives were spared were either deported to Poland and the Russian front or were enrolled in labor battalions at home under frightful conditions.

Estonia (total pre-war population, 1,125,000; Jewish population, 5,000) was the first of the Baltic countries to be made entirely "Judenrein." By September 1942, it was reported that the Jews who had not fled with the retreating Russian armies were killed by the Nazis in mobile gas chambers or deported from the country to an unknown destination. But it was not until February 1943 that the Deutsche Zeitung im Osten, published in Riga, reported that there were no Jews left, and that Estonia was the only country in Europe now completely without Jews. Still later the same newspaper reported that the Estonians had been forced to proclaim October 26 an annual national holiday to signalize the departure of the last Jews.

In October 1942, the Belgian Information Center in New York released a report stating that fourteen thousand Jews had been killed in Riga, Latvia, by the Gestapo, during the previous April. Mass-executions were said to have continued for 14 days. Several hundred Jews from the Netherlands and about one hundred Jews from Belgium were said to have been among the executed. The executions took place in a ditch-lined field, under the personal direction of the local Gestapo chief. It was shortly after, that Furst, the Nazi District Commissar in Riga, urged the Latvian population to make every effort to ensure the annihilation of the Jews, because "America and England are led by Jews who sold the Baltic States to Stalin."

Latvia appears to have been made a general slaughterhouse. A Nazi lieutenant captured by the Russians testified in Kuibyshev in November 1942, that not only had the majority of the one hundred thousand Latvian Jews been executed, "in accordance with the order of the Fuehrer," but thousands of Jews from Byelorussia (White Russia), Lithuania and Poland had also been brought to Latvia and massacred. The few Jews remaining in Latvia, the officer said, are not permitted to maintain any contact with the general population and must perform forced labor, existing on
an inadequate diet, deprived of medical care, and barred from any means of transportation.

The Manchester Guardian published in October a comprehensive survey of the Jewish situation in Latvia, revealing that only four thousand remained out of the fifty thousand Jews who lived in Riga before the Nazi occupation. Most had been killed; others deported to unknown destinations. Many German Jews were among the deportees.

Jews in Lithuania met the same fate. In October, M. Bilevithius, a former member of the Lithuanian Government, told Soviet authorities that thousands of Jews in the small towns of Lithuania had been massacred.

German newspapers published in Wilno, Kaunas and Bialystok, according to a report from Kuibyshev, in January 1943, related that the Nazi authorities had staged a "witchcraft trial," in which students of the yeshivah of Novogrudok were accused. The convicted youths were burned at the stake. The action was vigorously protested by the Polish Catholic Archbishop Jalbrzykowski, who was arrested by the Nazis when he sought to intercede in behalf of the victims. The Lithuanian Archbishop, Most Rev. Joseph Skvireckas, warned all Lithuanians in February against helping the Nazis to execute Jews.

It seems clear, however, that in the Baltic countries the Nazis have succeeded in securing the collaboration of certain elements of the population in their anti-Jewish campaign. Auxiliary police were recruited in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, as well as among the Ukrainians in eastern Galicia, to speed up the extermination of the Jews in the Polish ghettos. Capitalizing on the Soviet annexation of the Baltic countries before Hitler's attack on Russia and linking up the Jews with Bolshevism, the Nazis have succeeded in arousing many elements in those countries to acts of brutality against the Jews. An official German broadcast recorded in Zurich in February 1943, stated: "One remembers the terroristic rule of the Jews who, in the security of Bolshevism, carried out the sadism of the Old Testament. In no other country, therefore, have the Jews been so radically exterminated as here." What corroboration there is points to the fact that the sentence of extermination has been ruthlessly carried out.
4. Yugoslavia

In the New York Times of January 18, 1943, C. L. Sulzberger reported from London: "At the close of last year the Jewish section of the Serbian Gestapo closed down — there were no more living Jews within its operating sphere." This statement was corroborated, in February, by the diplomatic representatives of the Yugoslav Government-in-exile in Washington, who said that 99 per cent of the eighty thousand Jews of Yugoslavia, as well as six thousand refugees who had sought asylum there, had been killed by the Nazis and their puppet governments in Croatia and Serbia, and that fewer than one thousand Jews remained alive in Yugoslavia, while no more than 220 had succeeded in escaping. Those remaining in the country, were practically interned or were living in constant danger.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, official Yugoslav sources point out, Jews have suffered not only because they were Jews, but also for their traditional loyalty to the Yugoslav cause. Their doom in "independent" Croatia, has been no less certain. Except for those who fled to the forests and hills, and a handful who for special reasons were granted "honorary 'Aryan'" status, the Jews of Croatia have been annihilated.

Naturally, the number of survivors who hide in the hills and the forests protected by the friendly Serb population, cannot be ascertained. Nor do we know the number of Jews in the guerrilla bands. That Jews play a prominent part in these bands is suggested by dispatches such as the one from Zurich by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in April, which reported that the quisling press of Croatia had appealed to the Croat population to aid in the capture of the Jewish leaders of a guerrilla band operating in the mountains. These leaders were described as Moses Piade and Reuben Weiss and his wife Yelka. We also do not know how many Jews are still employed in forced labor battalions in Yugoslavia, but a report in March reaching us by way of Tangier stated that the Croatian Government had ordered all Jews and individuals of Jewish descent who live in Zagreb and its vicinity to register for forced labor.

That all these things met with the acquiescence of the Yugoslavs was belied by a report from Geneva, in March,
which stated that the heads of the Churches of Dalmatia and Croatia had issued vigorous protests against the Nazi atrocities and executions of Jewish and other civilians.

5. Greece

According to the most recent reports, about 45,000 out of some 72,000 Jews have been deported from Greece to Poland and to Crete. The exact figure cannot be ascertained, but there is ample corroboration of the fact that deportations of Jews began during the year past. Thus, the Polish Government-in-exile received information in April that a transport of five thousand Greek Jews from Athens and Salonika had arrived in Poland.

The Greek population which has shown remarkable solidarity with the Jews throughout the period of occupation and starvation, prevented the deportations from being as drastic as they might have been. When, in July 1942, the more than fifty thousand Jews of Salonika were ordered by the Nazis to register, and it was rumored that plans were afoot to deport them to Poland and Crete, the Greek Orthodox Church vigorously protested, warning of popular disorders, if the plans were carried out. Many Greek priests were arrested by the Gestapo, but the plan had to be dropped. Deportations have taken place, however, on a less extensive scale. In March 1943, the Nazis deported two thousand of the most prosperous Jews in Salonika and distributed their property among German and Italian residents. During the same month twelve thousand Jews were deported from Thrace to Germany for forced labor.

Of the Jews remaining in Greece, several thousands have been put to forced labor. Yellow badges were introduced in Salonika in March 1943, and ghettos were set up in Thrace some time earlier.

6. Bohemia-Moravia

The fourth year of the war saw a further deterioration of the Jewish situation in the Czech Protectorate. There were deportations, discriminatory laws and regulations, and the continuous process of impoverishment.
In February 1943, it was reported that the Nazis were planning to banish all Jews from the Protectorate by the end of the following month. The process was hastened by an order prohibiting Czech Jews from receiving certain foods. What deportations could not accomplish, death by starvation would. Whether the expulsion of Jews from Bohemia-Moravia has been completed is not known, but it is certain that their number has greatly diminished. A report by the Czechoslovak Press Bureau in London, in January, said that of the 90,000 Jews in the Czech Protectorate more than 77,000 had died in concentration camps or had been deported to Polish ghettos where they had “disappeared.”

Confirmation of the worst news came from several sources. In February 1943, the Czechoslovak Government-in-exile learned that the last few Jews had been deported from the towns of Melnik and Mlada Boleslav. About the same time, the German radio in Prague announced that 77 per cent of the Jews residing in the Protectorate had already been deported by January 7, 1943.

Early in the fall of 1942 the Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt of Prague, the officially authorized organ of the Jewish community, published a summary of all anti-Jewish regulations then in force in the Protectorate. The Jewish population was warned that any violation of these regulations would bring severe punishment.

They were forbidden to enter meeting halls, museums, reading rooms or libraries; to use busses, street cars (on certain days); to enter the forests near Prague; to linger along the banks of the Moldau; to buy sugar, sweets, pork, wine, tobacco, garlic, leather goods and certain textiles; to export merchandise; to enter official buildings; to enter certain squares and streets in the inner city; to walk in the parks; to use public baths, laundries, cleaning and dyeing establishments, or public telephones; to make any change in living quarters.

As time went on there were more measures restricting the life and activities of the Jews, and non-Jews were prohibited from helping Jews circumvent the restrictions. In December 1942, for instance, non-Jews were forbidden to give Jews articles which the latter were not permitted to buy. The infinite pains, furthermore, to which Nazis go to torture
victims was revealed by the decree, published in London in February, which deprived Jews of many foods. The decree declared: "It is forbidden to supply Jews against payment or otherwise with fruit, vegetables, mushrooms of all kinds — whether fresh, dried or otherwise preserved — including dried fruits and nuts, wines, fruit juices and syrups of any kind, as well as alcoholic beverages, marmalade, jams, cheese, sweetmeats, fish and fish products of all kinds, any kind of poultry and game, as well as conserves of these. This prohibition applies equally to growers, producers, manufacturers, traders and consumers."

A two-way traffic in death is in operation. Thousands of Jews were exiled from former Czechoslovakia to Poland. Thousands of others were deported from other places to concentration camps in Bohemia-Moravia. By September 1942 the notorious fortress of Terezin (Theresienstadt) had become so overcrowded as a result of the arrival of tens of thousands of Jews from the Reich and western Europe that a new concentration camp for Czechoslovak Jews had to be established in a village near Tábor. Terezin, in turn, disgorged its miserable occupants to Poland and Transnistria. Thousands of Jews are said to be involved in this mad scheme of transport and death.

Many of the surviving Jews were put to forced labor. Late in the summer of 1942, twelve hundred Jews, including young girls and married women, were sent to work in the coal mines at Moravska-Ostrava and Karvinna, where they were required to work 12 hours daily and were paid only 15 per cent of the wage received by the other miners. Part of their wages was paid in food at exorbitant rates while the balance was payable in government bonds redeemable only after the war.

Although there are quislings and quisling newspapers in the Protectorate, the population, by and large, seems to be sympathetic with the Jews and responds readily to the appeals of the Czechoslovak Government-in-exile to help Jews in every possible way.

After the introduction of the yellow badge a number of Czechs were severely punished for showing their sympathy with the Jews by wearing it. Lists of persons known for
their friendly conduct were published in the local press under the heading “Pilloried.” German papers in the Protectorate complained, in December, that Jews were being treated with particular kindness by the population, and a month later, the Nazi-controlled Prague radio warned the Czech population to refrain from helping Jews. But public sentiment was not swayed for, in February, the authorities found it necessary to warn the non-Jews against hiding Jews facing deportation. The population was, moreover, urged by officials to remove Jewish residents from all towns in the interest of the Czechs themselves. One appeal called upon communities to remove Jewish children “as well as Jewish influence.”

The Czechoslovak Government-in-exile in London continued to show its traditional friendly attitude in every possible way. Its appeals to the Czech population at home to cooperate with the Jews and to help them have already been mentioned. Members of the government, notably President Eduard Beneš and Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, on many occasions showed their interest in the welfare of the Jewish people generally. The only Jewish member of the Czechoslovak State Council, Ernest Frischer, was reappointed for one year in October 1942 on the understanding that his main task would be to look after the interests of Czechoslovak Jewry. In January 1943, the Czechoslovak Government gave official recognition to the Central Office of Orthodox Jews, thus becoming the first government-in-exile to re-establish Jewish communal organization.

Satellite Countries

7. Slovakia

The mass expulsion of Jews from Slovakia, which began in March 1942, was scheduled to be completed by January 1943, but according to available information the task has not yet been finished. Of the 90,000 Jews who lived in Slovakia in 1939, probably not more than 20,000 are left; the rest have been deported to Poland.
The confiscation of Jewish-owned property, including a large amount of land, and the deportation of the Jews were carried out by the intensely pro-Nazi puppet government of Slovakia, which constantly does the bidding of the Nazis. The latter presented to the Slovak Government, in December, a huge bill of 700,000,000 crowns for Germany's "services" in carrying out the deportations.

A London newspaper reported in April that Slovakia had reduced the amount of this debt by "selling" Jews to Germany for labor use on the Russian front. It seems, however, that the sympathy of a large part of the Slovak population for the Jews and the growing dissatisfaction with the Axis ties, especially after the heavy casualties on the Russian front, have prevented the process of liquidation from being as thorough as had been intended.

In July 1942, Gardista, the official organ of the Hlinka Guards in Bratislava, declared that the total number of Jews deported from Slovakia was 56,000. During the same month the Bratislava broadcasting station quoted the pro-Nazi Slovak newspaper Casovosti as complaining that reports of the inhuman treatment of Jews by the Slovak authorities were being spread throughout small towns and municipalities in Slovakia in order "to undermine every radical measure of the government." Information reaching the Federation of Czechoslovakian Jews in London indicated that some of the deported Jews had been sent to forced labor camps at Sawin and Koyszow; the remainder were sent to the Polish towns of Lukow, Chelm, Międzyrzecz-Podlaski, Lubartow, Ostrow, Rejowiec, Kamionka, Firlej, Opole, Naleczow, Zamosc and the notorious concentration camp at Oswiecim. No opportunity to harass the victims was overlooked. In the town of Bardejov, for example, in July 1942, Hlinka Guardsmen drove twelve hundred Jews into the largest synagogue where they were compelled to shave off their hair, side-locks and beards after which they were loaded into freight cars and dispatched to Poland.

The authorities made every effort to be thorough. In September 1942, Sano Mach, Minister of the Interior, ordered the revocation of all the labor permits which had been granted to certain categories of Jews, considered essential to the nation's economy, thus making the holders liable to
deportation. At the same time Mach ordered that baptismal certificates granted to Jews be cancelled in order to prevent the Jews from escaping deportation in this way. But his Nazi masters were obviously not satisfied for, in February 1943, Mach announced that the twenty thousand Jews who remained in Slovakia would be deported to eastern Poland within the next two months. There was, however, no intention to relax demands upon the hapless Jews for, in March, a two-year period of compulsory labor service was decreed for them. Later reports indicated, however, that Mach's order to cancel baptismal certificates had not been seriously enforced.

The value of Jewish possessions confiscated in Slovakia amounts to 17,000,000,000 crowns, according to the Swedish newspaper *Trotsalt*, in February 1943, although the Slovak Government announced it as only 4,000,000,000. The latter figure, according to the estimate of the Swedish newspaper, represents the sum received by the Slovakian Government; the balance was said to have found its way into the pockets of Slovak and German Nazis. A total of 19,771 hectares of Jewish-owned land were gradually transferred to so-called "Aryans," according to Dr. Juraj Slavík, Czechoslovak Minister of the Interior, in his report to the Czechoslovak State Council in London in February 1943.

The pauperization of Jews remaining in Slovakia was further accomplished by "legal" means. All bank deposits over 2,000 crowns belonging to Jews were impounded in August; all insurance policies held by Jews were confiscated in February; and later measures restricted the income of the Jews. Furriers in Bratislava, in February, urged all customers who had brought in fur coats for repair or storage to prove their "Aryan" descent to prevent the confiscation of their property.

Aided by non-Jewish friends and simple country folk, many Jews were able to escape the terrible fate decreed for them. The Slovak police, it was reported in August 1942, found nearly two hundred Jews from the townships of Poprad and Kesmark and other places living in caves in the Tatra mountains. They had brought their furniture and belongings, their Torahs and religious books. In their wild sur-
roundings, they lived, prayed and studied. A number of Slovak peasants supplied them with food. Other evidences of sympathy have been reported. When two football teams played in Bratislava, Jewish internees from a nearby camp were invited to the match at the request of the teams. As usual, a Nazi newspaper — this time the Grenzbote of Bratislava — complained that Jews were discarding their yellow badges and that Slovak officials were testifying that those Jews were indispensable to the country’s existence. The same paper complained, in April 1943, that as a result of collusion between Jews and friendly Slovak employers, there was widespread evasion of anti-Semitic laws in Slovakia.

Although the Slovak Government is rabidly anti-Semitic and Dr. Joseph Tiso, its President, declared that in deporting Jews, “Slovakia is acting in accordance with the Lord God’s command,” other voices are heard in Slovakia. Monsignor Pavel Machacek, Vice-President of the Czechoslovak State Council in London, broadcasting to his country in September 1942, warned his people to disassociate themselves from “the government appointed by Hitler,” especially in that government’s persecution of the Jews, while in July 1942, the two Lutheran bishops of Slovakia, Dr. Vladimir Cobrda of Presov and Dr. Stefan S. Ousky of Bratislava, issued a joint pastoral letter assailing the anti-Jewish policy of the government. And in June 1942 and March 1943, local Catholic dignitaries raised their voices in protest against the same policies.

8. Hungary

Hungary is something of a maverick among the Nazi-dominated states. From its writers and leaders have come frequent expressions of a comparatively independent and articulate attitude toward the New Europe and the relation of Hungarian traditions and institutions to it. Thus Laszlo Toth, writing in January 1943 in Nemzeti Ujsag, a Catholic newspaper, insisted that Hungarians have their own way of living “and have never slavishly imitated other nations.” From the New Order, he pointedly said, Hungarians expect “satisfaction and justice.” And in the Magyar Nemzet,
Gyorgy Parragi effectively quoted past Hungarian leaders upon the evils of Jew-baiting and its dangers for society. At the same time, Cardinal Primate Seredi, the head of the Church in this Axis country, boldly attacked racial theories and anti-Semitism in an address before the annual meeting of the St. Stephen Academy in Budapest.

Throughout its partnership with Germany, Hungary has not hewed completely to the Nazi line in the suppression of parliamentary institutions and the press. Its Jewish policy has been more moderate than that of Slovakia, Bulgaria or Rumania. It resisted Nazi pressure in the matter of introducing the ghetto and the yellow badge and has even permitted Jewish refugees from Slovakia and Rumania to remain within its borders. Yet it cannot be overlooked that the anti-Jewish laws in Hungary during the past five years have brought about the transference of Jewish-owned property valued at about $125,000,000. In the recently annexed Carpathian Russia 46 per cent of Jewish businesses were confiscated and “aryanized.”

Encouraged by the attitude of many Hungarians, the Jews of the country have shown a spirit of independence and defiance. During the High Holidays in 1942, young Jews in Budapest and other cities organized special squads to guard the synagogues when they were informed that Nazis planned to break into them and disrupt the services. Many of the Jews appeared in the synagogues wearing their uniforms and medals of World War I. In February 1943, three thousand Jewish young men organized a mass demonstration against the decision of the Hungarian Government to send them to the Russian front for forced labor. This spirit is probably engendered by the fact that the Jews have been well integrated into Hungarian life for several generations.

More moderate tendencies in official Hungarian policy have appeared since the German defeat at Stalingrad. Most of the anti-Jewish measures promulgated in Hungary during the past year date from the early part; the relaxations came later. In July 1942, for example, about 3,200,000 acres of Jewish-owned land, mainly forests, were placed under government management. Later, it was decided to distribute the land among soldiers and orphans. Subsequently, about 26,000 Jewish-owned farm properties, seized by the state
from 11,000 small land-owners, were ordered sold to non-Jews. In October, Nikolas von Kallay, Hungarian Premier, speaking before Parliament, called for a merciless fight on the Jews and predicted that their confiscated lands would never be returned to them no matter what the outcome of the war. He then announced that both forced labor and a higher tax were decreed for Hungary's Jewish population.

In January 1943, the government decided that Jews working in forced labor battalions were also subject to the special Jewish war tax. Forced labor for Jews, according to the Hungarian Minister of War in November 1942, was "not punitive or humiliating," but was rather a type of national defense service. The number of Jews enlisted for forced labor, according to a statement made by the Hungarian Labor Minister in February 1943, amounted to about 80,000 men between the ages of nineteen and forty. Of these, 32,000 had been sent to Russia to build railroads, bridges and fortifications, where they were maltreated and exposed to fire from both sides. Until January, the families of Jews working in auxiliary battalions received 40 per cent less than the wages paid to Hungarian families. After January 1943, the pay was equalized. Russian sources said that Jews serving in the auxiliary battalions were forbidden to receive mail, and an order, issued in February 1943 and published in the Pester Lloyd, permitted parcels to be sent only to baptized Jews serving in the labor battalions on the Russian front. As late as last Passover the food ministry in Hungary refused permission to the Jews to bake matzos.

In December 1942, Premier von Kallay refused, however, to accede to the demand of a member of Parliament that anti-Jewish legislation should be tightened up. Such demands were reiterated in the German-language press, but a strong body of public opinion in Hungary has been loud in its objection to the anti-Jewish laws. Protests by the clergy have already been noted. Other instances were multiplied. For example, in January, the opening of the Institute for Investigating the Jewish Question in Hungary was marked by a near riot when Dr. Zoltan Bosnyak sought to expound his anti-Semitic views. In the following month, the leading literary society in Hungary, Petöfi, refused to expel its
Jewish members in spite of strong pressure by anti-Jewish elements. Hungarian women found a way of displaying their contempt for the regime by donning the Star of David on their spring suits. Cardinal Seredi came into the picture in April again when he intervened to prohibit the circulation of the Protocols of Zion by the government. Even official circles reflected something of a change of heart when, in June 1943, the time came to receive new food cards. Jews were surprised to find that they had been given extra ration cards to obtain kosher butter, margarine, oil and fats, foods unknown to them since Hungary's entry into the war.

No Jews have been deported from Hungary during the past year. According to the Deutsche Stimme, Budapest, in March 1943, about twenty thousand Slovakian Jews had emigrated illegally into Hungary to avoid deportation to Poland. The paper said these Jews had found refuge with Hungarian Jews and with sympathetic non-Jews. Jewish refugees have also come in from other countries. There have been roundups and arrests of illegal immigrants, but no deportations.

9. Rumania

The traditionally unsteady edifice of the Rumanian state was violently shaken by the country's entry into the war as an Axis partner. Rumania's army has been bled white on the Eastern front. The worst sufferers from the resulting political convulsions were the Jews who have always been caught in a maelstrom of opposing forces. On the one hand, there is their historical economic importance to a backward country; on the other hand, there is the exploitation of their allegedly alien character by nationalist elements. The Rumanian nationalists are engaged in a task of "Rumanizing" a country in which there are many ethnic groups and in which even the Rumanians themselves are divided by traditions, dialects and cultures. At the same time one factor has produced a slightly favorable result for the Jews. The Nazi policy of substituting for the Jew in the Rumanian economy, the German minority living in that country does not arouse much enthusiasm even among the most anti-
Semitic Rumanians. This factor, as well as the fear of a Nazi defeat, may be responsible for the apparent relaxation of anti-Jewish measures and for the stoppage of massacres in Rumania during the closing months of the year under review.

The net result of the two years of war has been the reduction of the Jewish population in Rumania to about half its pre-war total and the tremendous impoverishment of the remaining half. A prominent Rumanian political leader, in April 1943, according to the Stockholm newspaper Afton Tidningen, said that the Jewish population of Rumania which numbered 750,000 before the war, has been reduced to about 300,000. At least 126,000 Jews have been murdered since Rumania joined the Axis; 100,000 were in territories annexed by Hungary; 60,000 are now in the deadly labor camps in Transnistria.

The latest Rumanian census of May 1942, according to our Swedish source, showed that there were 272,409 Jews in Old Rumania, as compared with 340,000 in the pre-war period. In Bukovina only 34,000 remained out of about 100,000. No Jews were left in Bessarabia, where more than 200,000 Jews once lived. Many Jews in these two provinces had been massacred; others had been deported to Poland and Transnistria; some fled to Russia. On the other hand, Jews from western Europe had been deported to Rumania or directly to Transnistria.

Rumanian policy, which always tended to divide Jews into categories, now seems to make a distinction between the Jews of Old Rumania and those in the disputed territories. In the former, where no walled ghettos have been established, the outlawing of the Jews proceeds less drastically and the "Rumanization" of Jewish property less thoroughly. The situation has been much worse in the disputed areas, where massacres, deportations and ghettos are the ugly order of the day.

Premier Antonescu summed up the results of the first two years of the expropriation of Jewish property in an address printed in the official gazette, Monitorul Oficial, September 10, 1942. Rural property encompassing 52,527 hectares had been taken, as well as 113 lumber mills, 263 flour mills, 83 other rural establishments and 152 sailing vessels. The
chief prize was 30,691 pieces of urban real estate yielding an annual income of over two billion lei.

In November 1942, according to a Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) dispatch from Istanbul, a new "Jewish Law" was drafted in Rumania separating the Jews into four categories, each of which would be treated differently. The four categories were to be: (1) Jewish war veterans and Jews crippled in previous wars; (2) Children of mixed marriages and baptized Jews; (3) Jews born in Old Rumania; (4) Jews born in Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania, as well as stateless Jews. There has been no confirmation of the adoption of this law.

It is one of the bitterest ironies of Hitler's brand of anti-Semitism that it is precisely in those countries — Slovakia and Bessarabia — where the proportion of Jews in agriculture was the largest, that the most thorough purging of Jews took place.

Bessarabia has been for many years the object of dispute between Russia and Rumania. It had passed from one to the other, until in 1939 it was annexed by Russia. When Hitler attacked Russia, Rumania re-annexed Bessarabia. The Jews of that territory were made the objects of all the intense bitterness bound to arise in such a struggle for a province whose national character is indeterminate and whose population is mixed. The Rumanians sought to remove all Jews from Bessarabia, accusing them of siding with the Soviets. Thousands were massacred and the remainder removed to Transnistria.

Reports were current as early as June and July of 1942 that no Jews remained in Bessarabia. According to the Donau Zeitung, Nazi newspaper published in Belgrade, the last group of Jews was deported from Kishineff on June 13. On July 31, the German radio, quoting the Kishineff newspaper Basarabia, also confirmed that all Jews have been removed from Bessarabia to Transnistria.

Massacres also took place in Bessarabia. The number of victims is not easily ascertained but, early in the fall of 1942, there were reports that when the Rumanian army entered Kishineff, it shot 90,000 Jews and that altogether
about 190,000 out of the 250,000 in the province perished in massacres. The total was reduced to 50,000, according to the Moscow radio in March 1943.

Bukovina was also the scene of Rumanian anti-Jewish fury. Formerly an Austrian province with a mixed population containing many Ruthenians, Bukovina also has had a checkered political career. Annexed by Russia at the outset of the war, the area was retaken by Rumania when she joined Germany in the war against Russia. In Cernauti (Czernowitz), once an important Jewish center, the Rumanians instituted a large ghetto. In November 1942, the non-Jewish inhabitants of the slums of the city were invited to move into any Jewish home they desired outside the designated ghetto district.

Northern Moldavia, a part of Old Rumania adjoining Bukovina, was also the scene of some of the worst anti-Jewish massacres during the initial period of the Rumanian-Russian war. The most harrowing massacre occurred in Dorohoi where thousands of Jews were said to have been shot down by Rumanian soldiers during a funeral. In Moldavia, too, ghettos were instituted and Jewish property was transferred to non-Jews. In February 1943, Argus, the Bucharest financial newspaper, carried an announcement of a public auction sale of property formerly belonging to Jews in southern Bukovina and northern Moldavia. It was stated that the goods had been left behind in the districts of Campulung, Radauti, Suçeava and Dorohoi, "as a result of well-known events."

The situation of the Jews in the newly-acquired Rumanian territory of Transnistria, an occupied part of the Ukraine between the Dniester and the Bug rivers, is worse than in any other part. Information is, of course, sketchy and uncertain. Some reports say that 200,000 Jews have been deported to that province; others give a much lower estimate. The figure of 185,000 occurs several times in German reports. C. L. Sulzberger cited the same figure in his dispatch to the New York Times of February 12, 1943. It was on this occasion that he cabled that the Rumanian Government had approached the Allies with a plan to remove 70,000 Jews from Transnistria to any haven they may choose provided
their passage was paid for. The proposal which, incidentally, was never confirmed, caused a sensation in Jewish circles in America, but no action was taken on it. Earlier, a decree of September 22, 1942, provided the death penalty for Jews over 15 returning to Rumania from Transnistria.

In March, the JTA reported that an appeal had come from the Jews of Transnistria, stating that the 75,000 Jews who remained alive were in imminent danger of death. The appeal disclosed that the Jews were located in the following sections of Transnistria: 40,000 in the region of Mohilev-Podolsk; 15,000 in the region of Balta; 5,000 in the region of Jugastru; 4,000 around Tulczyn; 3,000 in the Berzowka district; with an additional few thousands scattered in the same general area. Starvation and illness were everywhere. Adults were allowed a pound of bread a day; children got half that ration. Theirs was the worst condition of all.

In Old Rumania there was a more or less "orderly" process of depriving the Jews of their rights and property. Under Nazi pressure there had been talk of introducing ghettos and the yellow badge and of deporting all Jews from Bucharest to Moldavia or to Transnistria. These plans have not materialized so far.

The past year in Old Rumania was marked by arrests of Jews, the confiscation of Jewish communal property, the abolition of the whole Jewish educational system and the "aryanization" of many Jewish-owned businesses. The Jewish religion was no longer accorded official recognition. Among the numerous discriminatory measures against Jews were the prohibition to use Rumanian names, the prohibition to employ "Aryan" servants, and the reduction of the bread rations. Jews were pressed into forced labor and were barred from using air raid shelters.

It appeared, however, that the anti-Semitic measures in Old Rumania were opposed by a large portion of the population and by some of the political leaders.

In July 1942, a JTA correspondent in London was told by Nicolas Dainu, a former officer of the Rumanian cabinet, that Dr. Iuliu Maniu, famous peasant leader, and George Bratianu, leader of the National Liberal Party, had pro-
tested to Premier Antonescu against the Nazi-fostered anti-Semitic policy of his government. Reports reached Zurich in October that then Patriarch Nicodim, head of the Greek Orthodox Church in Rumania, had notified Premier Antonescu that he intended to resign his post in protest against the continued massacres of Jews.

Despite the anti-Semitic decrees of the government, the friendship between Rumanians and Jews became stronger during the year. This was ruefully admitted by the Bucarester Tageblatt, a Nazi newspaper, in January 1943. In the same month, Porunca Vremii, a Rumanian anti-Semitic newspaper, complained that too many Christians were friendly with Jews.

Many Jews in Rumania sought to escape their fate by adopting Christianity. This escape was closed to them, however, by the prohibition to join the dominant Greek Orthodox Church. But many still found it possible to become Roman Catholics.

10. Bulgaria

The puppet Bulgarian government, under Nazi pressure and in the face of strong opposition at home, proceeded during the past year to impose Nuremberg Laws upon a country which, before 1939, had not known such things. Jewish-owned property was confiscated. The economic activities of Jews were limited. Jews were segregated into ghettos, made to display the yellow badge, drafted into labor battalions and deported.

The Nuremberg Laws were introduced into Bulgaria in August 1942, and a special Commissariat for Jewish Affairs was established. Various restrictions followed. In September, all Jews had to surrender their radios, and no Jewish family was allowed to occupy more than three rooms. Jewish-controlled companies were liquidated and commodities produced by Jewish firms had to display yellow labels. In October, the Jews of Sofia were prohibited from appearing in the main streets of the city and from riding streetcars during certain hours. In Plovdiv, Jews were forbidden to enter first-class hotels, all theaters and motion picture houses.
As 1943 began, the tempo of the persecution increased. In January, the government banned Jewish physicians and nurses from all hospitals but when an epidemic of typhus broke out, ordered them back for the duration of the epidemic. Apparently to close every avenue of escape, Jews were forbidden to use Bulgarian names, and the Bulgarian Synod issued an order prohibiting the conversion of Jews.

In February, Jewish children were barred from the schools and in the following month Jewish students were expelled from the Sofia University. By April the government was ready to deport all Jews from Bulgaria, but on the personal intervention of King Boris they were allowed to remain. According to the Jerusalem correspondent of the Jewish Chronicle (London), over two thousand Jews had already been put in sealed freight cars. Church, parliamentary and press circles were all said to have protested against these acts. Several Danube river boats, carrying three hundred Jews from Yugoslavia and Macedonia to Poland, were stopped and the Jews were removed and saved from deportation. But in Thrace, which the Bulgarians took from Greece, all non-Bulgarian residents except the Jews were given the choice of leaving the country or adopting Bulgarian citizenship. The Jews were deported. Later reports indicated that the Jews of Sofia were segregated into a ghetto, and many of them were deported.

The number of Jews liable to be deported was put at forty-five thousand, and the number of Jews already deported from Bulgaria to Germany by March was said to be ten thousand.

In contrast to these incidents was the fact that the government negotiated with the British regarding the release of forty-five hundred Jewish children for emigration to Palestine. Few obstacles, furthermore, confronted those Bulgarian Jews who wished to emigrate to Palestine.

The strength of the opposition to the anti-Jewish policy of the Bulgarian Government was attested by the parliamentary opposition to the measures, as reported in the Jewish Chronicle (London) on April 2. According to this source, 57 deputies, led by Deputy Staniev, were on record as opposed to the German-imposed anti-Jewish policy. The government was upheld by 123 members.