"Understanding between Western Germany and the government of Israel has now been substantially reached and negotiations between Western Germany and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany are in their final stages," Jacob Blaustein of Baltimore, president of the American Jewish Committee and member of the Presidium of the Conference, declared today (Monday, July 14) upon his return from sessions in London, Paris, The Hague, and Bonn, Germany.

"The written treaties covering the understandings are now being drafted," he declared. "The basic understandings as to amounts, methods of payment and guarantees on the part of Germany are being arrived at after long negotiations, which, among other things, required the members of the Presidium to go to Europe three times since February of this year.

"A legislative program proposed by the Conference will enable individual claimants to obtain more adequate restitution and indemnification for damages sustained under the Nazi regime.

"In addition, the global sum to be paid by Western Germany is intended to defray the cost incurred by the Israel Government in rehabilitating the Jewish victims of Nazi persecution who came to Israel to resettle; and to satisfy partially the claims of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany with respect to heirless Jewish property which had been improperly seized by the Nazis. The funds that will be turned over to the Conference will be used for aiding Jewish victims of Israel who survived the Nazi regime. Obviously, however, no material compensation can atone for the moral aspects of the unprecedented Nazi crimes.

"The agreements, which, it is hoped, will be concluded in the near future, would not have been possible without the support of President Truman, the State Department and of our High Commissioner in Germany, John J. McCloy. As on previous trips, I had talks with Mr. McCloy about these claims and other matters pertaining
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to Germany; and his and our Government's interest and helpfulness have been in the best American humanitarian tradition."

While in Paris Mr. Blaustein and other members of the Presidium conferred with Foreign Minister of Israel Moshe Sharett regarding coordination of the Israeli and non-Israeli claims against Germany.

Mr. Blaustein was accompanied by Dr. Simon Segal, Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee.

7/14/52

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