

# THE GHETTO

*speaks*

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**SHOULD YOU MAKE**  
use of this release, please  
forward a clipping to us.

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*re-submitted  
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Issued by the **AMERICAN REPRESENTATION** of the **GENERAL JEWISH WORKERS' UNION** of **POLAND**

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## *An Appeal to The International Red Cross to Investigate Nazi Atrocities Against Jews*

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*In accordance with a special request made by the Jewish Underground Movement of Poland, the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland sent the following appeal to the International Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland, through the American Red Cross:*

June 11, 1943

International Red Cross  
Geneva, Switzerland

Gentlemen:

It is now almost four years since the war began. There has never been a war accompanied with so much tragedy, so much death and such destruction for the civilian population, as the present war, which started on September 1, 1939, with the German Army's march on Poland. Not only hunger and death reign in those countries, that have been occupied by the German Army, but also legalized persecution of the civilian population. Millions of innocent persons have already lost their lives because of Germany's disregard of all international treaties and laws. Entire districts, growing cities and other habitations, far behind the fronts, have been demolished by the German Army.

However, even in these gruesome conditions, the situation of the Jews in all countries, that have been occupied by Germany, and particularly in Poland, stands out as a nightmare.

For more than a year we have been continuously receiving authentic reports from Poland, that the German authorities no longer limit themselves to shutting the Jews of that tragedy-stricken country within ghetto walls, that they are no longer satisfied with starving the Jewish population. In May, 1942, we received the first report that the German authorities have commenced with a plan of annihilation of the three and a half million Jews of Poland through mass-shootings, poisonous gases and by means of other horrible methods. There are reports, from the same date, which tell of mass-deportations of hundreds of thousands of Jews from the ghettos; deportations carried out in a manner which spells death for the deportees.

Since February 7, 1943, the remnants of the Jewish population have been waging armed resistance, during further attempts at deportation. That is sufficient evidence of the desperate state of the Jews.

The governments of the United Nations, the public opinion of the entire anti-Fascist world, high-ranking representatives of the Christian world, of science and literature, have protested against these unheard of acts. However, despite the millions of victims on the part of the Jewish civilian population, despite all warnings and protests, the Germans continue their "work."

In this hour of greatest peril for the remnants of the Jewish population of Poland, we appeal to you, in the name of humanity and justice, in the name of the most elementary laws of culture and civilization, to employ immediate means in order to investigate the inhuman treatment that is being meted out to the Jews in the ghettos, concentration camps and labor camps, by the German authorities, and to fulfill your obligation and help rescue those, that are still alive.

Thanking you sincerely in advance for your utmost efforts in this most urgent matter, we are,

Very truly yours,

AMERICAN REPRESENTATION OF THE  
GENERAL JEWISH WORKERS' UNION  
OF POLAND

*The American Red Cross sent the following reply to the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland:*

June 16, 1943

Dear Mr. Nowogrodsky:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated June 11, 1943, and an enclosure of a letter which you requested that we submit to the International Red Cross in Geneva.

We are arranging for the letter to be brought to the attention of the International Red Cross Committee.

Sincerely yours,

PHILIP E. RYAN  
Assistant Director  
Insular and Foreign Operations

## INSIDE EVIDENCE ABOUT THE TRAGEDY OF THE JEWS IN POLAND

The numerous clandestine publications of occupied Poland recently carried a significant appeal to the Polish population signed by the Commander in Chief of United Public Resistance. We now reprint this appeal from one of the oldest Polish Underground monthlies, "Rzeczpospolita Polska", of March 11, 1943, No. 4/5:

*"WARNING! The entire Polish community, being alone committed to terror and oppression, looks with utmost horror at the Nazi murderers and expresses the deepest compassion with the remnants of the Jewish population of Poland, who are now being slaughtered by the Germans. The Polish community has already raised its voice in protest against this crime, a voice that awoke the conscience of free people throughout the world. The Poles are also lending support to those Jews who have escaped from the ghettos and slaughter camps to such an extent, that the occupation authorities have found it necessary to publish a special decree, which provides the death penalty for Poles who help Jews hide. However, there are some among us without honor and without a conscience, virtual criminals, who have now developed for themselves a new source of income through blackmailing those Poles who give shelter to escaped Jews as well as the Jews themselves."*

*"The Commander in Chief of Public Resistance warns that all cases of such blackmail are being registered and all guilty parties will be severely punished, if possible, immediately, and if not, decidedly after the war."*

COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF PUBLIC RESISTANCE"

## GHETTO DEPORTATION STATISTICS

Figures of German deportations from the Warsaw ghetto carried out in the summer and autumn of 1942, have just reached the Polish authorities in London.

Between the 22nd and the 31st day of July, last year, 56,089 Jews were deported from the Warsaw ghetto; during August, the figure was 135,120; between the 4th and 12th of September, the number was 51,969. Altogether during these few months, the Germans deported 245,374 Jews from Warsaw. The report maintains that they were all sent to the Tremblinka slaughter camp.

## ARMED RESISTANCE OF THE JEWS IN POLAND

The most recent phase of armed resistance of the Jews of Warsaw against an attempt on the part of the Nazi murderers to deport them to slaughter camps, which began on April 19, 1943, lasted almost a week. This heroic act of the inhabitants of the ghettos gained renewed esteem throughout the world for the Jewish underground fighters of conquered Poland. We haven't as yet received any further particulars about this remarkable act of armed resistance against the Nazi beast. The new underground radio station of Poland, "Swit", which is being used by the Commander in Chief of Polish Public resistance, in order to keep the world informed about the situation inside Poland, recently broadcast that:

*"In the recent struggles to conquer the ghetto of Warsaw, three hundred German soldiers were killed. More than one thousand of them were wounded."*

## EXECUTE GESTAPO CHIEF AFTER GHETTO BATTLE

Herr Sommer, head of the Warsaw Gestapo, is reported to have been sentenced to death by a Nazi tribunal in Warsaw and executed. Nazi authorities refuse to disclose the reason for sentence of the court martial, but a report received from a reliable source states that the Gestapo head was executed because of his failure to forestall the Jewish resistance in the ghetto of Warsaw.

## A LETTER TO J. V. STALIN FROM HENRYK ERLICH AND VICTOR ALTER

*We publish the following letter, addressed to J. V. Stalin, head of the Soviet Government, by Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter in order to further reveal the true attitude of these two executed Jewish labor leaders towards Hitler Germany and Soviet Russia. This letter leaves no*

*doubt as to the standpoint of these two men and the activities towards which they were determined to direct their energies. It must be emphasized, that the program of their activities was drawn up on the initiative of the Soviet authorities and with their full agreement.*

October, 1941.

## TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF THE U.S.S.R.

J. V. STALIN.

Esteemed Josef Vissarionovitch,

Civilized mankind was never before faced with dangers like the present: Hitler and Hitlerism are a deadly menace to all achievements of culture, to the independence of all nations, and the freedom of all peoples.

The outcome of the gigantic battles now fought on the vast plains of the U.S.S.R. will decide for years to come the fate of working-class movements, the fate of all mankind.

The fight against these dangers demands supreme efforts of all those who are resolved to save themselves, their culture, their country and the whole world from the horrors of Fascist barbarism led by Hitler.

Hitler aims at the subjection of all countries and peoples without exception, but his persecution of the Jews is particularly cruel. He drags through the mud the human and national dignity of the Jewish people, he places it outside all law, even his own Fascist law. He aims at the complete extermination of the Jews. Therefore, the Jewish masses must fight Hitlerism with particular energy and the greatest self-sacrifice. This is true of the Jewish citizens of those countries in which the threat of Hitler's barbarian rule has already become cruel reality. This is equally true of the Jewish citizens of all other countries.

Under such circumstances, the undersigned, as representatives of Jewish populations of countries violated by Hitlerism, consider it essential to form a special Jewish Anti-Hitler Committee. Being the Initiative-Group of this Committee we approach you, esteemed Joseph Vissarionovitch, in your capacity as the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., with the request that you should grant per-

mission to form such a Committee on Soviet territory. The work of this Committee would be based on the following principles:—

### A. General Principles

All work of the J.A.C., and above all its propaganda, is to be founded on the conviction that—

- (a) the liberation of the Jewish masses from enslavement, particularly Hitlerite enslavement, is, in any country, inextricably bound up with the liberation of all national groups of that country;
- (b) real emancipation of Jewish masses is possible only where the whole life of the country is based on principles of social justice;
- (c) Jewish masses of all countries must, therefore, together with the rest of the people, fight for social and national emancipation.

### B. Aims

1. To stimulate, organize, and direct the energies of the Jewish masses and, if possible, entire Jewish communities of all countries, in the supreme fight against Hitlerism.

2. To organize relief for the Jews in countries under Hitlerite (or generally Fascist) rule. In particular, J.A.C. would extend help to Jewish refugees from these countries, now in the U.S.S.R.

The J.A.C. would endeavor to achieve these aims in constant collaboration with the Governments and Consulates of countries fighting against Hitlerism and possessing more or less considerable Jewish populations.

### C. Means

1. The J.A.C. in the U.S.S.R. will try to maintain constant communication with Jews in countries under Hitler's rule, with the purpose of obtaining correct information on the position of the Jewish masses there, of strengthening the spirit of these masses, and of helping them with all means available in their fight against Hitlerism.

2. The J.A.C. will establish permanent connection with the main settlements of Jewish refugees from such countries in the U.S.S.R. with a view to:

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- (a) sponsoring the enlistment of all able-bodied persons in their respective national armies;
- (b) organizing auxiliary working parties serving the needs of these armies and the war industries;
- (c) helping to provide work for all other refugees in their settlements.

3. Contact will be established with personalities and organizations in the U.S.A., in support of their anti-Hitler propaganda and campaigns for—

- (a) maximum help to the U.S.S.R. from the U.S.A. in form of war materials and supplies;
- (b) maximum credit facilities for the U.S.S.R.

4. The Jewish population of the U.S.A. will be asked to shoulder some part of the expenses (both in money and supplies) necessary for the relief of Jewish refugees from Hitler-occupied countries, now resident in the U.S.S.R.

5. The J.A.C., together with American comrades, will work out further plans to ensure a more active participation of American Jews in the fight against Hitlerism, the main brunt of which has so far been borne by the U.S.S.R.

6. Similar activities to those outlined above for the U.S.A. to be initiated in Great Britain, taking account of the conditions prevailing in that country.

7. The J.A.C. will use propoganda by word of mouth as well as the printed word in all possible ways.

## D. The Organizational Structure of the J.A.C.

1. The projected composition of the J.A.C. in the U.S.S.R.: seven representatives of Jewish populations in countries under Hitler's rule, and one representative each of the Jewish populations in the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., and Great Britain, respectively.

2. The activities of the J.A.C. are to be directed by a Præsidium of three: Erlich, Chairman; Alter, Secretary; Michoels, Vice Chairman.

3. The J.A.C. in the U.S.S.R. proposes to elect as honorary members (obtaining, of course, previously

their agreement) representatives of the Soviet Government, the Ambassadors of the U.S.A., Great Britain, and Poland, as well as a number of outstanding personalities from various branches of public life (science, art, industry, etc.) in the U.S.S.R. and other countries.

4. The J.A.C. may appoint its representatives to the main centers of Jewish refugee settlements in the U.S.S.R. and also in other countries.

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Such are the principles and the aims of the proposed Committee.

We hope that the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. will have no objection to its formation.

With Socialist greetings,

H. ERLICH. V. ALTER.

## ABOUT A PAID ADVERTISEMENT IN THE NEW YORK TIMES

In the New York Times of May 18, 1943, there appeared an "Open Letter to the American People on American-Soviet Friendship." The case of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, internationally prominent labor leaders, who were executed by the Soviet Government, was mentioned in this paid advertisement in a distorted manner. The American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland sent the following letter to some of the signers of this very characteristic document:

June 9, 1943

Dear Sir:

*We are taking the liberty of writing to you because your name appears as signer of "An Open Letter to the American People on American-Soviet Friendship," published as a paid ad in the NEW YORK TIMES of May 18th, 1943.*

*Our concern is with the last paragraph in the first column of the ad which reads:*

*"They (the forces trying to disrupt American-Soviet friendship) prejudice and play up every accusation levelled at the Soviet Government by the*

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*die-hard Russophobes among the Polish emigres, deliberately provoking disunity over such issues as the Erlich-Alter case and the Nazi-inspired charge that the Russians murdered 10,000 Polish officers."*

*Of course, we are second to none in the appreciation of the need of sustained American-Russian friendship and cooperation — a need so vital to the success of the United Nations in the war against the Axis powers and to the security of the peace after victory. But we indignantly reject the narrow Communist-partisan trick of this casual, nonchalant linking of the tragic Erlich-Alter case with sordid, provocative, Nazi-inspired actions aiming at disrupting the United Nations' alliance.*

*The many tens of thousands of persons who vigorously protested the political assassination of the two Socialist, anti-Fascist leaders, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, at the hand of a Soviet military court, at no time failed to dissociate the cause of their protest from the professional Soviet enemies or antagonists. Both martyred men were consistent, incessant, outspoken advocates of Polish-Russian Soviet friendship and cooperation even though equally and consistently they were outspoken opponents of the Comintern now liquidated by Mr. Stalin himself.*

*We submit without hesitancy or fear of successful contradiction that there is not an honest person who is intelligently informed that would for one moment maintain that the Erlich - Alter case is in a remotest sense related to espionage and treason, that their lives and actions and thinking presented anything less than a sustained record of devotion to and activity for social democracy, international brotherhood of men, and of unstinting fighting enmity to Fascism of all shades and in any form whatsoever, at home, in their native Poland, or abroad. The protests voiced by outstanding leaders in many walks of political and social life in the United States, in England and in the Latin American countries, against the Soviet execution of Erlich and Alter were in all instances accompanied by careful, most scrupulous, indeed, emphatic affirmation of the importance of close friendship between the two major allies on the United Nations' side, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Only the Communist Party of the U.S. and their fellow-travelers have made the Erlich-Alter protest an occasion and the vehicle for waging a campaign of political blackmail. However, our letter aims not at the Communist Party blackmailers, but at the responsible persons who have been led to sign the Open Letter with the "joker" in it.*

*We doubt very much indeed, that you, and many, if any, signers of the advertisement in the NEW YORK TIMES, were actually shown the text, except possibly a very general outline of what was to appear in print. We wish to think that you would not have wanted to make yourself a partner to so tricky a performance of indecently mixing an appeal for sustained Russian-American friendship in the war and in the peace to follow, with an exercise in fraudulent partisanship.*

*We enclose with this letter a brief statement of the Erlich-Alter case prepared for those who participated in the now celebrated Mecca Temple memorial meeting. We owe it to the memory of the two martyred leaders of labor to leave nothing undone to keep intact the public esteem of their lives and their sacrificial deaths clear of the infiltration of political bias, political phobia and blackmail. And we likewise deem it our duty to keep the matter of American-Soviet friendship, for which we consider no price too high to pay, free of the same elements, of bias, political phobia and partisan blackmail.*

*We respectfully submit all this for your consideration and confidently leave the matter with your sense of integrity and your political conscience.*

*Very truly yours,*

EMANUEL NOWOGRODSKY

**Professor Albert Einstein and Van Wyck Brooks have already sent in their replies, which read as follows:**

June 11, 1943

*I have always been convinced that the execution of the two Polish-Jewish labor leaders was a fatal political error and that the accusations are very improbable in themselves. I would never have signed any statement containing assertions to the contrary. In the "Open Letter" I signed, there was only said that an obnoxious misuse has been made of this case by the adversaries of honest collaboration with Russia. There was, therefore, no reason for me to refuse to sign this Open Letter.*

*Very sincerely yours,*

PROFESSOR ALBERT EINSTEIN

June 13, 1943

Thank you for your letter and the fine pamphlet about the Erlich-Alter case. I know about this case and its shocking injustice, and I regret that the statement I signed did not refer to this injustice. It should have done so parenthetically. The trouble is that this case (like the film "Mission to Moscow") is being used as a red herring by people who hate Stalin, and it seemed to me when I signed the statement, that the reference to the case was entirely without color and did not attempt to justify it. But I agree with you, that no reference to this case can be made without affirming the gross injustice of it, and I have so expressed myself this morning in a letter to the Committee on American-Soviet Friendship.

Yours sincerely,

VAN WYCK BROOKS

## THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY'S RESPONSE TO OUR BERMUDA CONFERENCE MEMORANDUM

One of the last issues of the "Ghetto Speaks" carried the full text of our memorandum to the Bermuda Conference, which contained demands of the Jewish Underground Movement of Poland to rescue the remnants of the Polish Jews immediately. It also suggested ways and means of solving the Jewish problem after the war.

We are in receipt of a letter from William Gillies of the British Labor Party, regarding our memorandum to the Bermuda Conference, in which he expresses in the most touching manner, the sympathy of the British Labor Party to our viewpoint. The following is the text of the letter:

May 4, 1943

American Representation of the General Jewish  
Workers' Union of Poland  
175 East Broadway, Room 401  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Nowogrodsky:

I have received this morning your letter dated April 23rd, 1943, enclosing a copy of the memorandum which you considered it your duty to send to the Bermuda Conference.

I can assure you that your British comrades are most profoundly in sympathy with your point of view. Words cannot express what we feel. The most intimate collaboration exists between your comrade, Zygielbojm, and myself. Zygielbojm must have found the friendship of the British Labor Movement some little consolation in his loneliness. Nothing has been left undone to give him every assistance possible. He himself is undertaking his terrible task with an understanding and industry which has been wholly admirable.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM GILLIES, Secretary  
International Department

## DR. EMANUEL SCHERER APPOINTED TO POLISH NATIONAL COUNCIL IN LONDON

On the suggestion of the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, the Polish Government-in-Exile appointed Dr. Emanuel Scherer to the Polish National Council in London in the place left vacant by Szmul Zygielbojm, who committed suicide in order to draw the attention of the world to the gruesome tragedy of the Jewish masses in Poland.

Dr. Scherer, a lawyer and a talented journalist, was born in Poland, in 1901. While still a very young man, he was one of the leaders of the Socialist youth movement in Poland. He joined the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland and soon became prominent in that Party because of his abilities.

He was one of the founders and for many years the editor of the theoretical Socialist publication of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, which appeared in the Polish language, "Walka" and of the magazine "Nowe Zycie". These publications played an important part in creating closer cooperation between the Jewish and Polish Socialists of Poland.

In 1931, during a convention of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, Dr. Scherer was elected to the Central Committee of that Party. In 1938 he was elected to the City Council of Warsaw. How-

ever, his work in the Party and his journalistic activities did not prevent him from devoting a lot of time and interest to the Jewish trade union movement. For years before the outbreak of the present World War, Dr. Scherer was the general secretary of the Office Workers' Union of Poland. Until the outbreak of the present war, he was vice-president of the general council of the Jewish Trade Unions of Poland.

When Warsaw was occupied by Hitler Germany in September, 1939, Dr. Scherer left that city together with a group of leaders of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, in order to be able to continue the struggle against Hitlerism and Fascism. After two difficult years, he finally succeeded in arriving in the United States. Since that time he has been a member of the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland.

He has now been appointed by his Party to one of the most responsible positions in behalf of the Jewish working masses of Poland — to be their representative in the Polish National Council in London; to continue the work, that was done with so much energy and zeal, by the late Szmul Zygielbojm.

## SZMUL ZYGIELBOJM'S LAST LETTER

Before his tragic suicide, Szmul Zygielbojm, the representative of the Underground Jewish Labor Movement of Poland in the Polish National Council in London, wrote a letter to the Polish Government, to be delivered after his death. Although this letter has already been published elsewhere, we deem it our duty to print it here too. It reads:

### TO PREMIER WLADYSLAW SIKORSKI

*"I take the liberty of addressing to you my last words, and through you, to the Polish Government and the Polish people, to the Governments and the peoples of the Allied States—to the conscience of the world.*

*"From the latest information received from Poland, it is evident, that the Germans, with the most ruthless cruelty, are now murdering the few remaining Jews in Poland. Behind the ghetto's walls the last act of a tragedy unprecedented in history is being performed. The responsibility for this crime of murdering the entire Jewish population of Poland falls in the first instance on the*

*perpetrators, but indirectly it is also a burden on the whole of humanity, the people and the Governments of the Allied States which thus far have made no effort toward concrete action for the purpose of curtailing this crime.*

*"By the passive observation of the murder of defenseless millions, and of the maltreatment of children, women and old men, these countries have become the criminals' accomplices. I must also state that although the Polish Government has in a high degree contributed to the enlistment of world opinion, it has yet done so insufficiently. It has not done anything that could correspond to the magnitude of the drama being enacted now in Poland. From some 3,500,000 Polish Jews and about 700,000 other Jews deported to Poland from other countries—according to official statistics provided by the underground "Bund" organization—there remained in April of this year only about 300,000, and this continuing murder still goes on.*

*"I cannot be silent—I cannot live—while remnants of the Jewish people of Poland, of whom I am a representative, are perishing. My comrades in the Warsaw ghetto took weapons in their hands on that last heroic impulse. It was not my destiny to die there together with them, but I belong to them, and in their mass graves. By my death I wish to express my strongest protest against the inactivity with which the world is looking on and permitting the extermination of my people.*

*"I know how little human life is worth today, but as I was unable to do anything during my life perhaps by my death I shall contribute to breaking down the indifference of those who may now—at the last moment—rescue the few Polish Jews still alive from certain annihilation. My life belongs to the Jewish people of Poland and I therefore give it to them. I wish that this remaining handful of the original several millions of Polish Jews could live to see the liberation of a new world of freedom, and the justice of true Socialism. I believe that such a Poland will arise and that such a world will come.*

*"I trust that the President and the Prime Minister will direct my words to all those for whom they are destined, and that the Polish Government will immediately take appropriate action in the fields of diplomacy. I bid my farewell herewith to everybody and everything dear to me and loved by me."*

(Signed) S. ZYGIELBOJM.