



Volume Five

The Ringelblum Archive

Underground Archive
of the Warsaw Ghetto

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THE JEWISH HISTORICAL
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The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death. Pomiechówek, Chełmno on the Ner, Treblinka

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AJDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
ARG	<i>Archiwum Getta</i> , (Warsaw) Ghetto Archive, Ringelblum Archive
AŻIH	<i>Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego</i> , Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute
BŻIH	<i>Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego</i> , Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute
CENTOS	<i>Centrala Związku Towarzystw Opieki nad Sierotami i Dziećmi Opuszczonymi</i> , Headquarters of the Union of Associations for the Care of Orphans and Abandoned Children
CEKABE	<i>Centrala Kas Bezprocentowych</i> , Interest-free Provident Societies Centre
CKM, ckm	<i>ciężki karabin maszynowy</i> , heavy machine gun
CKU	<i>Centralna Komisja Uchodźców</i> , Central Committee for Refugees
CKŻP	<i>Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce</i> , Central Committee of Jews in Poland
DAW	<i>Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke</i> , German Arms Plant
Doc., Docs.	document, documents
Dr	Doctor
Gestapo	<i>Geheime Staatspolizei</i> , State Secret Police
GG	<i>Generalgouvernement</i> , Government General
HASAG	Hugo Schneider Aktien-Gesellschaft
HIAS	Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
Joint	see: AJDC
JSS	<i>Jüdische Soziale Selbsthilfe</i> , Jewish Social Self-Help

kilo, kg	kilogram
KKO	<i>Komunalna Kasa Oszczędności</i> , Communal Savings Bank
km	kilometer(s)
KOM	see ŻKOM
KOP	<i>Komitet Opiekuńczy Powiatowy</i> , County Welfare Committee
Kripo	<i>Kriminalpolizei</i> , Criminal Police
MD	medicine doctor
Mr, Mrs, Messrs	used before name(s) Mister, Mistress, Messieurs
NSDAP	<i>Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei</i> , National Socialist German Workers Party
NSV	<i>Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt</i> , National Socialist People Welfare
ONR	<i>Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny</i> , National Radical Camp
Orpo	<i>Ordnungspolizei</i> , Order Police
p., pp.	page, pages
POW	prisoner of war
PPS	<i>Polska Partia Socjalistyczna</i> , Polish Socialist Party
Rmk	<i>Deutsche Reichsmark</i> , German currency
RSHA	<i>Reichssicherheitshauptamt</i> , Main Office for Security of the Reich
Sipo	<i>Sicherheitspolizei</i> , Security Police
SK	<i>Sonderkommando</i> , Special military unit
SS	<i>Die Schutzstaffel der NSDAP</i> , The NSDAP Defense Echelons
TOZ	<i>Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce</i> , Society for Protection of Health of the Jewish Population in Poland
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
WWII	Second World War
ŻKOM	<i>Żydowski Komitet Opiekuńczy Miejski</i> , Jewish Welfare Municipal Committee
ŻSS	<i>Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna</i> , Jewish Social Self-Help

Abbreviations used for the authors of handwritten material

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Introduction

This volume of materials from the Ringelblum Archive contains accounts and documents relating to the fate of the Jewish population in the towns and cities of the General Government (GG). The material is arranged in geographical order according to the German occupation administrative division into four districts: Kraków, Lublin, Radom, and Warsaw.¹

The vast majority of documents are testimonies of the inmates of the Warsaw ghetto, refugees and deportees from different cities and towns of the GG. In addition, the volume contains journals, diaries, and some personal letters,² as well as other personal documents, such as registered passes, health certificates, or identification papers. They are complemented by official documents: German ordinances, reports, and minutes of several Jewish Councils (*Judenräte*), papers of Jewish Social Self-Help (*ŻSS*) and the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), as well as correspondence.

Most of the files relate to the Warsaw District; these are testimonies of deportees and refugees. Many accounts originate from cities and towns in the Lublin District, mostly from Lublin, Chełm, and Hrubieszów. From the Radom District, there are relatively few accounts, but quite a number of official documents from Częstochowa, Piotrków Trybunalski, and Radom. Only

1 See *Amtliches Gemeinde- und Dorfverzeichnis für das Generalgouvernement auf Grund der Summarischen Bevölkerungsbestandsaufnahme am 1. März 1943*, Krakau 1943. The Ringelblum Archive materials from the District Galicia, annexed to the GG on 1 August 1941, are published in *Accounts from the Borderlands 1939–1941*, ed. Andrzej Żbikowski (Warszawa, 2018).

2 Large collection of letters, also from the GG, see *Letters on the Shoah* (forthcoming).

a few files concern the Kraków District, and most of them from the city of Kraków itself.

Chronologically, many of the materials date back to September and October 1939, the time of the military administration of the Polish territories occupied by the German army; some diaries relate to the time before the war. Two accounts date from November 1942: they concern escape from the ghetto at Majdan Tatarski in Lublin and the Jewish self-defence units near Jadów and Radzymin (Docs. 22, 179).

Jews under military rule in 1939

On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded the territory of Poland. At the same time, the bombing of many cities began. German troops moved rapidly: on 3 September, the Germans occupied Katowice, Częstochowa, and Radom; 6 September, Kraków; 8 September, Łódź; 10 September, Poznań; 15 September, Przemyśl and Białystok; 17 September, Lublin. On 8 September, troops attacked Warsaw; the siege of the capital lasted until 28 September. The local population fled from the bombing and attacks of the German army. Thousands of people left their homes, heading for the area still unoccupied by the Germans. On 17 September, the Soviet army entered from the east, occupying the Vilna region; the Polesie, Volhynia, Galicia, Białystok regions; and initially the Lublin region. The war ended on 5 October, with the surrender of the army of General Franciszek Kleeberg near Kock. Earlier, on 28 September, in Moscow, the German and the Soviet governments signed a treaty on borders and friendship, which established a new division of the occupied Polish territories, thereby changing the decisions of the secret protocol to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939.³

In addition to the German army, the *Einsatzgruppen* entered Polish territory. These were police forces whose task, according to the Main Office for Security of the Reich (RSHA) order of 31 July 1939, was to “neutralise any

3 See Czesław Łuczak, *Dzieje Polski 1939–1945. Kalendarium wydarzeń*, Poznań, 2007, pp. 9–40; Tadeusz Jurga, *Obrona Polski 1939* (Warszawa, 1990); *Kampania polska '39. Militarne i polityczne aspekty z perspektywy siedemdziesięciolecia*, ed. Jerzy Kirsza, Daniel Koreś, Wrocław 2011; Leszek Moczulski, *Wojna polska 1939*, revised edition (Warszawa, 2009).

elements hostile to the Reich and Germans.” Such a broad definition gave ample opportunity for action against the civilian population. In the first days of September, executions, expulsions, and plunder on a grand scale had already taken place. In many towns, the civilian prisoners were interned. Men capable of bearing arms were arrested and sent to camps. Places of internment were established, for example in Rastembork, Stablack (now Kętrzyn and Stabławki, respectively), Tomaszów Mazowiecki, and Węgrów. Occasionally, however, after days or even weeks of marching, during which beatings, starvation, abuse, and murder were common, the prisoners were set free. The brutality of officers and soldiers of the *Einsatzgruppen* were directed at the Jews in particular. Jews were assembled in one location, beaten and humiliated by having their beards and sidelocks cut off, locked in buildings without water or food for several days. Torah scrolls and ritual objects were defiled and synagogues were set on fire. Plundering Jewish property and round-ups for emergency work were common. Jewish civilian prisoners were interned in separate camps, which included Kozienice, Łaskarzew, Góra Kalwaria, and Tarczyn (Docs. 94, 113, 117, 119). Individuals and entire groups were killed. The number of Jewish victims of executions carried out in the period September 1939–January 1940 is estimated at 7,000.⁴

The territories occupied by the army until 25 October 1939 were under military administration, functioning together with heads of civilian boards. From 25 September, these territories were divided into four military areas: Łódź, Kraków, Poznań, and Gdańsk–West Prussia. Civilian boards issued various regulations targeting Jews, particularly when dealing with Jewish property, such as banning the transfer of property, targeting Jewish businesses, limiting the amount of money Jews were allowed to hold, and blocking their bank accounts. Companies with absentee owners were seized, which, given

4 See Tatiana Berenstein, Adam Rutkowski, *Prześladowania ludności żydowskiej w okresie hitlerowskiej administracji wojskowej na okupowanych ziemiach polskich (1 IX 1939 – 25 X 1939 r.)*, BŻIH, part 1: 2(38): 3–38; part 2: 3(39): 63–87; Jochen Böhlér, *Prześladowania ludności żydowskiej w okupowanej Polsce podczas trwania zarządu wojskowego (od 1 września do 25 października 1939 r.)*, in *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy*, ed. Aleksandra Namysło (Warszawa, 2008), p. 58; Jochen Böhlér, *Zbrodnie Wehrmachtu w Polsce. Wrzesień 1939. Wojna totalna*, transl. Patrycja Pieńkowska-Wiederkehr (Warszawa, 2009); Szymon Datner, *55 dni Wehrmachtu w Polsce. Zbrodnie na polskiej ludności cywilnej w dniach 1 IX – 25 X 1939 r.* (Warszawa, 1967).

the large-scale migration during the September 1939 Polish-German war, was frequent. Supplying raw materials to Jewish craftsmen was banned. On 18 October, the Łódź area administration (including Warsaw and the area that later became the Warsaw District) issued a regulation on the prohibition of trading textile and leather articles by Jews, undercutting the Jewish textile and leather industry in Łódź destroying the livelihood of many small traders and craftsmen.⁵

Administrative divisions and authorities in the General Government

Part of the German-occupied Polish territory was annexed directly by the Third Reich: the voivodships of Pomerania, Poznań, and Silesia, northern and western part of Warsaw voivodship, and the western parts of Białystok and Łódź voivodships, forming four administrative units: the province of East Prussia, Gdańsk–West Prussia, the *Wartheland*, and the province of Silesia. A 26 October 1939 decree from Adolf Hitler stated that the remaining lands of central Poland formed the newly established General Government. It was now divided into four districts. The Kraków District included the pre-war Kraków voivodship, excluding the counties of Chrzanów and Wadowice and without the regions of Spisz and Orawa. The Lublin District corresponded territorially to the voivodship of Lublin, excluding the Siedlce county, but including the counties of the Lwów voivodship not occupied by the USSR. The Radom District consisted of the Kielce voivodship and part of the Łódź voivodship. The Warsaw District was made up of the Warsaw voivodship with the counties of Łowicz and Skierniewice (formerly in the Łódź voivodship) and Siedlce county (formerly in the Białystok voivodship). The final form of the GG boundaries was established after 8 November 1939, when Soviet troops withdrew from the Lublin voivodship.⁶

5 See Tatiana Brustin-Berenstein, *Hitlerowskie dyskryminacje gospodarcze wobec Żydów w Warszawie przed utworzeniem getta*, BŻIH, 2(4) (1952): 162–165; Czesław Madajczyk, *Polityka III Rzeszy w okupowanej Polsce* (Warszawa, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 51–53, 60–63.

6 C. Madajczyk, *Polityka III Rzeszy...*, pp. 64–72.

The central authority in the GG was in the hands of the government headed by the Governor-General, who throughout the occupation was Hans Frank in Kraków. At the head of districts were governors: in Kraków Otto Wächter and later Richard Wendler, then Curt Ludwig von Burgsdorf; in Lublin Friedrich Schmidt, then Ernst Zörner, and Richard Wendler; in Radom Karl Lasch and then Ernst Kundt; in Warsaw Ludwig Fischer. Districts (*Distrikt*) were divided into counties (*Kreis*), and these into communes (*Gemeinde*). At the head of each county was a *Kreishauptmann*. In some larger counties, delegations were formed called *Landkommissariat*, managed by commissioners. In some cities, namely Warsaw, Kraków, Radom, Lublin, Częstochowa, and Kielce, municipal administrations were established, with a *Stadthauptmann* at its head.⁷

Police authorities in the GG were subject to the higher SS and police commander in Kraków, who was initially Friedrich Krüger, and from the summer of 1943 Wilhelm Koppe. The commander of the SS was subordinate to Governor-General Frank. Jurisdictional disputes between these two officials continued throughout the period of occupation. Police in the GG were divided into Order Police (*Ordnungspolizei*, *Orpo*) and the Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*, *Sipo*). The Security Police consisted of the Criminal Police (*Kriminalpolizei*, *Kripo*) and the Secret State Police (*Geheimstaatspolizei*, *Gestapo*). The Order Police consisted of Protection Police (*Schutzpolizei*, *Schupo*) in cities and gendarmerie in towns and villages, as well as Special Service (*Sonderdienst*), such as traffic police (*Verkehrschutz*), railway police (*Bahnschutz*), forest police (*Forstschutz*), factory police (*Werkschutz*), and postal police (*Postschutz*). In addition, every district police commander had an SS regiment at his disposal. The *Orpo* was also superior to the Polish Police (*Policja Polska*, *Polnische Polizei des Generalgouvernements*) and the Jewish Order Service (*Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*). At the command of the Governor-General, additional formations were established, reporting exclusively to him, especially within the Special Service. Its members took part in the collection of

7 See Markus Roth, *Herrenmenschen. Die Deutschen Kreishauptleute im Besetzen Polen – Karrierewege, Hereenschaftspraxis und Nachgeschichte* (Göttingen, 2009), pp. 65–86, 441; Max Freiherr du Prel, *Das Deutsche Generalgouvernement Polen. Ein Überblick über Gebiet Gestaltung und Geschichte* (Krakau, 1940); *Amtliches Gemeinde- und Dorfverzeichnis für das Generalgouvernement auf Grund der Summarischen Bevölkerungsbestandsaufnahme am 1. März 1943* (Krakau, 1943).

levies, deportations from ghettos, or destruction of partisan groups. In October 1942, command of the Special Service was transferred to the authorities of the Order Police.⁸

Jews in the General Government

In October 1939, there were about 1.5 million Jews in the General Government. Not all were indigenous to the area, many had fled from the western areas during the September 1939 Polish-German war, and others were resettled by force.⁹ One of the objectives of the Nazi population policy was to rid the territories directly annexed to the Third Reich of as many Jews and Poles as possible. From the first days of the war until October, their unrestrained resettlement to central Poland took place, its scope estimated at 30,000 people. On 30 October 1939, Heinrich Himmler, the Reich commissioner for the strengthening of German values (*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums*), issued an order for resettlement of all Jews from the lands that had belonged to the Reich before World War I and all Poles from the District of West Prussia, and from the former Congress Kingdom, the Poznań voivodship, and East Prussia, considered “the particularly hostile Polish population.”

The first wave of resettlement to the GG took place in December 1939, the next in February and March 1940, and another one in January and March 1941. According to German data, by 16 March 1941, 364,665 people were resettled, most from the *Wartheland*. It is estimated that 80,000 to 90,000 Jews were among them.¹⁰ The second large territory from which the Jews were

8 C. Madajczyk, *Polityka III Rzeszy...*, vol. 2, pp. 254–255; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, “Akcja Reinhard” w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943, in: *Prowincja noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim*, ed. Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, Dariusz Libionka (Warszawa, 2007), pp. 40–45.

9 Czesław Łuczak, *Polityka ludnościowa i ekonomiczna hitlerowskich Niemiec w okupowanej Polsce* (Poznań, 1979), pp. 122–128; *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki 1939–1945. Atlas ziem Polski*, ed. Witold Sienkiewicz, Grzegorz Hryciuk (Warszawa, 2008), p. 110.

10 Figures cited from Maria Rutowska, *Wysiedlenia ludności polskiej z Kraju Warty do Generalnego Gubernatorstwa 1939–1941* (Poznań, 2003), p. 37. Estimated percentage of Jews cited from *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki...*, pp. 62–65; C. Łuczak, *Polityka ludnościowa...*, pp. 117–132.

expelled was northern Mazovia. Still in 1939, all Jews were removed from Goworowo, Nasielsk, Serock, Nowy Dwór, Ostrołęka, Ciechanów, Pułtusk, and Wyszaków, a total of about 30,000 people. In early 1941, about 10,000 Jews were expelled from the Ciechanów *Regierungsbezirk* to cities and towns in the Radom District of the GG.¹¹

Within the GG itself, several major expulsions were carried out. On 18 May 1940, the *Stadthauptmann* of the city of Kraków, Carl Schmid, ordered the expulsion of most Jews; 15,000 people would remain. Until 15 August, the Jews were allowed to leave Kraków voluntarily and choose their own place of residence within the GG. After this period, resettlement was forced, therefore in September 1940, 9,000 Jews were moved to various towns in the Kraków District, and then in December, 11,000 to the Lublin District.¹²

From January to March 1941 another large operation within the GG was the deportation of approximately 50,000 Jews from the small towns of the Warsaw District to the Warsaw ghetto: from the counties of Sochaczew-Błonie, Grójec, Łowicz and part of the Warsaw County. This operation was preceded by the resettlement of Jews from villages and smaller towns to larger towns. In the spring of 1942, the Jewish residents from villages near Warsaw: Wawer, Okuniew, Miłosna, Pustelnik, Tłuszcz, and Radzymin; later in July, from Biała Rawska – all were forced into the Warsaw ghetto.¹³ Meanwhile, the population was also migrating in the opposite direction. Many of the resettled, unable to support themselves, escaped from the Warsaw ghetto, often for the Lublin District, since in the open ghettos obtaining food was less problematic than in Warsaw (Docs. 27, 35, 36, 53).¹⁴

In several towns, the poorest were the subject of the forced resettlement. In Radom in December 1940, 2,000 Jews were expelled on the basis

11 Michał Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej 1939–1942* (Warszawa, 1984), pp. 90–97; *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki...*, pp. 62–65, 110–114; *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich* (forthcoming).

12 Aleksander Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie* (Kraków, 1985), pp. 32–33, 39–40; *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki...*, pp. 123–125.

13 Andrzej Żbikowski, *Żydowscy przesiedleńcy z dystryktu warszawskiego w getcie warszawskim, 1939–1942 (z pogranicza opisu i interpretacji)*, in *Prowincja noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim*, ed. Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, Dariusz Libionka (Warszawa, 2007), pp. 227–228.

14 *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki...*, p. 120.

of the welfare beneficiaries' register (Docs. 58 and 59).¹⁵ A similar expulsion was carried out in Lublin in March 1941, when 9,200 Jews were removed from the city.¹⁶

In the GG, there were also Jews from the Reich and the countries occupied by Germany. In February 1940, about 1,200 Jews from Szczecin (Stettin) were deported to towns in the Lublin District, such as Bełżyce, Piaski, or Głusk. In February and March of the following year, a transport of Jews from Vienna, a total of nearly 3,000 people, arrived at Opole Lubelskie and Modliborzyce. From February to April 1941, approximately 4,000 Austrian Jews were resettled in the Radom District. From January 1942, a large group of Jews from Western and Central Europe was sent to the GG within the framework of Operation Reinhardt.¹⁷ These people were sent to transit ghettos (in Izbica Lubelska, Piaski, and Rejowiec); after several weeks or months, they were deported to death camps. In the Lublin District, the number of resettled Jews was close to 130,000. In addition, about 4,000 Jews from Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Hanover, and other German cities were brought to the Warsaw ghetto in April 1942.¹⁸ Forced mass relocations were characteristic of Nazi occupation, reflected in numerous documents and accounts. There was virtually not a single city in the GG in which there were no problems with housing, food distribution, employment, and integrating so many deportees.

In cities with considerable Jewish populations, the Germans established representations of the Jews, the *Judenräte*. Depending on the size of the community, these were comprised of 12 to 24 members. Often, the Councils consisted largely of board members of the pre-war Jewish communities. The Radom District was the only one with a Supreme Council of the Elders,

15 Sebastian Piątkowski, *Dni życia, dni śmierci. Ludność żydowska w Radomiu w latach 1918–1950* (Warszawa, 2006), pp. 171–172, 198.

16 Tadeusz Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta* (Lublin, 1999), p. 29.

17 German *Einsatz Reinhardt* or *Aktion Reinhardt*, code names for destruction of the Jews in the General Government and Białystok province, 1942–1943; part of the Nazi plan to annihilate all European Jews, resulting in approximately 1,850,000 deaths during this operation.

18 Robert Kuwałek, *Getta tranzytowe w dystrykcie lubelskim*; Janina Kielboń, *Deportacje Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939–1943)*, both in *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*, ed. Dariusz Libionka (Warszawa, 2004), pp. 138–160, 163, 166, 171–177; Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City* (New Haven, 2009), p. 49; *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki...*, pp. 120–124.

which supervised the *Judenräte* in the individual localities. The *Judenrat* was in charge of administering the Jewish community and implementing German orders. Over time, these Councils developed an extensive bureaucratic apparatus with a separate policing service to enforce their regulations.

Very soon after they had established the civilian authorities, the policy of the Germans in the GG was to force the gradual isolation of Jews from the rest of the population. On the first day of the existence of the GG, two orders were issued which affected the Jewish community negatively: forced labour for men aged 14 to 60 years and a ban on the ritual slaughter of animals. Soon, collective prayers in the synagogues and private flats were also banned.¹⁹ At the same time, confiscations continued: the looting of movable property, as well as taking Jewish homes and businesses under receivership. Jews were deprived of their property, which was passed over to trustees (*Treuhänder*), who gave a large portion of the income obtained from it to the state board of trustees (*Treuhandstelle*).²⁰ Another method of economic exploitation was imposing levies on the Jewish community; failure to pay was punishable with arrest or the death of hostages. For example, in Lublin, the Jews were unable to collect enough money for their second levy of 1 December 1939; thus, Jewish owners of larger companies were incarcerated by the authorities.²¹

On 1 December 1939, the obligation to wear a white armband with a blue Star of David by all Jews over ten years of age was introduced in the GG. In some towns, wearing marks such as a yellow badge or a band had already been ordered. At the same time, Jewish shops were marked with the Star of David. From 26 January 1940, Jews were forbidden to travel by rail. Opportunities to move decreased dramatically.²²

Forced labour for Jews was introduced on 26 October 1939. An order of forced labour meant that every German soldier or official had the right to

19 B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto...*, pp. 37–38

20 T. Brustin-Berenstein, *Hitlerowskie dyskryminacje gospodarcze...*, pp. 156–190; Jan Grabowski, “Polscy zarządcy powierniczy majątku żydowskiego. Zarys problematyki,” *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały*, 1 (2005): 253–260.

21 T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 89–98; T. Berenstein, A. Rutkowski, *Prześladowania ludności żydowskiej w okresie hitlerowskiej administracji wojskowej...*; T. Brustin-Berenstein, *Hitlerowskie dyskryminacje gospodarcze...*, pp. 156–190; C. Łuczak, *Polityka ludnościowa...*, pp. 226–257; C. Madajczyk, *Polityka III Rzeszy...*, vol. 1, pp. 60–63, 560–598.

22 B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto...*, p. 38.

hire Jews without paying them. At the beginning of the occupation, roundups to work were a daily nightmare for the Jews. Promptly, the *Judenräte* negotiated an arrangement in which the relevant German authorities reported their requirement for a certain number of workers, with the Councils providing the prearranged quotas. An accurate census of the Jewish population with detailed information regarding age and profession was taken, and on this basis the Council would send the work summons. Failure to report to work was punishable by imprisonment. It was common practice for wealthy Jews to bribe Council members so that they would not be called for forced labour. Sometimes an official decree from the *Judenrat* allowed paying for exemption from forced labour.²³ The labour usually took place in the same locality or in its vicinity, and the designated person had to work a specified number of days per week. The situation changed in 1940, when, under the ordinance on forced labour, camps of various types were established in remote towns for agricultural work, regulating rivers, drainage of farming land, and construction of roads. Many camps were located in the Lublin District. The system of camps in which labourers were assigned to build fortifications on the border with the Soviet Union was systematically expanded. Beginning in August 1940, numerous groups of Jews from all parts of the GG were directed to these camps. By the end of the war, there were 491 labour camps for Jews, representing 58 per cent of all labour camps in the GG.²⁴

On 1 January 1940, a decree was issued forbidding Jews to change their place of residence without special permission.²⁵ In practice, the restriction of the right to leave one's place of residence had begun even earlier in certain regions. The first ghetto was established in Piotrków Trybunalski by an ordinance of 5 October 1939. The municipal authorities designated streets for the Jews, outside of which they were forbidden to live. However, the reiterated reminders from both the German and Jewish authorities suggest that the ordinance was not observed (Docs. 72, 85, 92). In Radomsko, already in December 1939, the Jews were pushed into one street (Doc. 110). In January

23 Barbara Engelking, *Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego*, in *Prowincja noc*, pp. 137–140.

24 J. Kielboń, *Deportacje Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego...*, pp. 167–170; Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin, 1998), pp. 13–15, 116–121.

25 B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto...*, pp. 38

1940, the first ghettos in the Warsaw District were established in Góra Kalwaria and Parysów, and then in May in Łowicz County. In November 1940, the ghetto in Warsaw was sealed; in March 1941, ghettos in Lublin and Kraków; in April in Radom; and in August in Częstochowa. Ghettos continued to be established until the end of 1941.²⁶ In small towns, ghettos were usually open, not walled nor fenced around; Jews were required to live in certain buildings, but they were not banned from going outside the ghetto. This was eventually changed by Hans Frank in the ordinance of 15 November 1941, which assigned the death penalty for Jews found outside the designated districts and allowed the police to use weapons against Jews trying to escape from the ghettos.²⁷

Jews usually ventured outside the ghettos in search of food. When the Germans introduced rationing of food in the occupied territories, Jews received food ration cards to purchase minimal food products, insufficient for daily sustenance and at artificially fixed prices. At the same time, Polish peasants had to sell their food products at official low prices and within forced quotas, thereby losing their profits. A black market arose as German ordinances forbade peasants to trade with the Jews. However, illicit trade flourished especially in small towns, and the local German authorities made profits on bribes. The Jews sold services, crafts, and all their movable property in exchange for food (Docs. 35, 124). An interesting phenomenon is mentioned in several accounts concerning Jews resettled to the Warsaw ghetto. Some of them periodically left the ghetto, heading for villages in the area from which they originated, where they worked or begged, and their former Polish neighbours usually responded with sympathy (Docs. 136, 159).

The outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union in June 1941 brought a radical change in German policy toward the Jews in the occupied territories. The *Einsatzgruppen* which had entered with the German army were meant not only to intimidate the local population (as in September 1939 in Poland), but also to carry out mass executions of the Jews in the newly

26 B. Engelking, *Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach...*, in *Prowincja noc*, pp. 168–173; Teresa Prekerowa, *Wojna i okupacja*, in: *Najnowsze dzieje Żydów w Polsce w zarysie (do 1950 roku)*, ed. Jerzy Tomaszewski (Warszawa, 1993), pp. 282–283.

27 J.A. Młynarczyk, *“Akcja Reinhard” w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego...*, in *Prowincja noc*, pp. 51–52.

occupied territories. By the end of 1941, more than a million Jews were murdered in the former Polish eastern voivodships.

In December of that year, in the village of Chełmno nad Nerem (Kulmhof am Nehr), the first permanent death camp was established, where Jews from *Wartheland* were murdered *en masse*. By March 1942, Chełmno claimed 145,500 victims.²⁸

Operation Reinhardt began on 14 March 1942, with the deportation of approximately 15,000 Jews from Lwów to the death camp at Bełżec. On 17–31 March, about 18,000 Jews from the Lublin ghetto were murdered there. Between March and June, Jews were deported from small towns of the Lublin District, including Izbica, Zamość, Józefów, Końskowola, Turobin, Chełm, Hrubieszów, Bełż, and Biała Podlaska. People were taken not only to Bełżec, but also to another death camp established in May in Sobibór near Włodawa. In early June, 7,000 Jews from Kraków were murdered in Bełżec; in mid-June, about 3,500 Jews from Tarnów (several thousand Tarnów residents had been shot before leaving the town). On 22 July 1942, the *Grossaktion* in the Warsaw ghetto began, during which about 300,000 people were murdered in the newly established death camp Treblinka II. It operated from July 1942 to August 1943. Approximately 800,000 Jews, mostly Polish, died in its gas chambers, along with approximately 2,000 Romanies.²⁹

Between August and October, Jews from the Otwock, Sobienie-Jeziory, Kałuszyn, Siedlce, Radzymin, Jadów, and other places in the Warsaw District were deported there. On 4–5 and 16–17 August 1942, Jews were deported from Radom; in late August, from Kielce, and then from the Jędrzejów County. From 22 September to 7 October, Jews from Częstochowa were deported to Treblinka.³⁰

28 J.A. Młynarczyk, *Wpływ inicjatyw oddolnych Arthura Greisera i Odilona Globocnika na decyzję o wymordowaniu Żydów*, in: *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy*, pp. 26–27.

29 See *The Last Stage of the Resettlement is Death. Pomiechówek, Chełmno on the Ner, Treblinka*, ed. Barbara Engelking, Alina Skibińska, Ewa Wiatr (Warszawa, 2021), Introduction and Docs. 19–26.

30 Detailed discussion of the chronology of the destruction of the Jews in the GG see Tatiana Berenstein, *Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)*, BŻIH, 1(61) (1967): 5–58; Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (München, 1996); Thomas Sandkühler, “Endlösung” in Galizien. *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen*

By autumn 1942, the majority of the Jewish population in the GG had been murdered. Only a handful of residual ghettos³¹ remained: in the Kraków District, in Kraków, Przemyśl, Rzeszów, Tarnów; in the Lublin District, in Łuków, Parczew, Międzyrzec, Włodawa, Końskowola, Piaski, Zaklików, Izbica; in the Radom District, in Sandomierz, Szydłowiec, Radomsko, Ujazd; in the Warsaw District, in Warsaw, Kałuszyn, Sobolew, Kosów, Rembertów, and Siedlce.³² Some prisoners were left alive in the camp including the ones at Majdanek, Trawniki, Poniatowa, Budzyń in the Lublin region, in Kraków-Płaszów, the HASAG camps in Częstochowa, Kielce and Skarżysko-Kamienna, and about a dozen camps in the District Galicia.³³ Residual ghettos existed until early 1943. The last deportation from Kraków took place on 13–14 March 1943. In mid-May 1943, one month after the outbreak of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, its remaining survivors were killed, and buildings were destroyed.

und die Rettunginitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944 (Bonn, 1996); Ernestyna Podhórzner-Sandel, *O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim*, BŻIH, 30 (1959): pp. 87–109; T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” BŻIH, 1(21) (1957); Dieter Pohl, *Von der “Judenpolitik” zum “Judenmord”: der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993); David Silberklang, *Żydzi i pierwsze deportacje z dystryktu lubelskiego*, in *Akcja Reinhardt*, pp. 54–68; J.A. Młynarczyk, *Organizacja i realizacja “akcji Reinhardt” w dystrykcie radomskim*, in *Akcja Reinhardt*, pp. 182–202; Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” BŻIH, 3–4 (15–16) (1955): 75–182; Krzysztof Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim* (Kraków, 2004); T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim,” BŻIH, 1(3) (1952): 83–125; J.A. Młynarczyk, “*Akcja Reinhardt*” w *gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego*, in: *Prowincja noc*, pp. 39–74.

31 The term is based on German *Restghetto*, forced concentration of the Jewish population remaining alive (around 20 per cent) after *Aktionen* of the summer 1942, and before the ultimate annihilation. Of the residual ghettos in the GG, 32 were in District Galicia, six in the Warsaw District, six in the Lublin District, five in the Kraków District, and four in the Radom District. The largest was the Warsaw ghetto, with approximately 60,000 people (remaining from some 450,000) in a much reduced area.

32 See *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów*, ed. Tatiana Berenstein, Artur Eisenbach, Adam Rutkowski, Warszawa 1957, Docs. 163 i 164, pp. 311–317; J.A. Młynarczyk, “*Akcja Reinhardt*” w *gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego*, in *Prowincja noc*, pp. 69–70; idem, *Organizacja i realizacja “akcji Reinhardt” w dystrykcie radomskim*, in *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 195.

33 See Felicja Karay, *Żydowskie obozy pracy w czasie “akcji Reinhardt”*, in *Akcja Reinhardt*, pp. 248–260; Docs. 56 and 67.

On 3 and 4 November 1943, in the camps of Majdanek, Trawniki, and Poniatowa, the German police carried out the largest mass execution of World War II, killing approximately 42,000 Jewish prisoners, deported from ghettos from entire occupied Poland.³⁴

Documents on Jewish communities in the GG and their origin

The above described events and situations are reflected in the materials published in this volume. Most of them are narrative texts, which Ringelblum described as follows:

“The most valuable are monographs of cities and towns. They describe experiences from the outbreak of the war, then deportation, until the liquidation of the Jewish settlement. Monographs, written according to our template, covered all aspects: economic life, the attitudes of Germans and Poles to the Jewish population, Jewish Community³⁵ and its activities, social assistance, the most important events in the life of the Jewish settlement, such as the invasion by the Germans, massacres, resettlements, atrocities on Jewish holidays, religious life, work and issues of work (labour camps, forced labour, roundups for labour, labour department in the Jewish Community, the attitude of Germans to the Jews during work, etc.).”³⁶

The word “monographs” used by Ringelblum was somewhat exaggerated. Most of the materials of this type relating to cities and towns are in fact accounts or testimonies. Some were written and given by the authors to the members of Oyneg Shabes to be included in the collection or to be copied. In the Archive, there are sometimes both, the original written by the author and the duplicate made by the copyist. Some documents are preserved only in duplicates. Accounts in the Polish language were sometimes translated into Yiddish due to necessary secrecy. An example of this practice is the account

34 See *Erntefest, 3–4 listopada 1943. Zapomniany epizod Zagłady*, ed. Wojciech Lenarczyk, Dariusz Libionka (Lublin, 2009).

35 Here and below in this quote it means a *Judenrat*.

36 See [Emanuel Ringelblum], ARG II 263/1 (Ring. II/233), p. [11v–12]. Two templates on the research on the destruction of Jews in the provinces, see *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, ed. Aleksandra Bańkowska and Tadeusz Epsztein (Warszawa, 2020), Docs. 16 and 17.

of B. Janowski, resettled from Jeziorna to the Warsaw ghetto, written by him in Polish, the initial piece of which was preserved in the Yiddish translation (Doc. 168). Most of the accounts were written on the basis of interviews conducted by associates of Oyneg Shabes.

The template mentioned by Ringelblum was intended to help the interviewers; however, it was not applied rigorously. Ringelblum admitted it himself: "Monographs of cities are also not free of a subjective approach. In order to give the authors the opportunity to convey their experiences in the most direct way, in many cases we ignored the methodology, accepting the story being told in any order the narrator saw fit."³⁷ Informants, authors of the accounts, often did not know for what purpose they were being interviewed. Members of Oyneg Shabes claimed that they were collecting materials necessary for the operation of *landsmanshaftn*. In the last period before the *Grossaktion* (which began on 22 July 1942), interviewers from Oyneg Shabes did not even take notes during the conversation, writing and editing the material later. It was necessary to keep the real purpose secret, although it did affect the accuracy of the accounts.

However, we may assume that sometimes interviewers did manage to take notes, using them to write the edited text for the Archive. Such notes are probably records taken by Hersh Wasser³⁸ (Docs. 9, 15, 16, 20, 71). Their edition poses serious difficulties, as they contain few full sentences, and many dangling clauses, ellipses, abbreviated expressions, dashes, and single words. Finding links between them is possible, but risks confusion. Wasser probably intended to edit these texts or have them edited at a later date. He also had a habit of taking notes on various issues on a single sheet. For example, next to the account of the situation of Jews in the Lublin ghetto, there is a report of the meeting of the Central Commission for Refugees in the Warsaw ghetto

37 See [Emanuel Ringelblum], ARG II 263/1 (Ring. II/233), p. [13].

38 Hersh (Hirsh, Herman, Henryk) Wasser (1912–1981), economist, member of Left Poalei Tsiyon, director of the party's library in Łódź. From December 1939 he was in Warsaw, active in ŻSS as secretary of the Central Commission for Refugees (CKU); secretary of Oyneg Shabes, he wrote and recorded many documents. One of the three surviving members of the group and the only one who knew where the Archive was buried, and organised the searches. After the first part was retrieved in September 1946 he helped to identify the authorship of documents. In 1950 together with his wife Bluma he left Poland for Israel. He founded the Emanuel Ringelblum Institute in Tel Aviv.

and a list of fees for co-workers of Oyneg Shabes.³⁹ Another example is the account from Końskowola, whose author was a Jewish policeman from the Warsaw ghetto; the document is only preserved in a draft form, as a survey filled in according to the Oyneg Shabes template (Doc. 49). Most of the original notes were not preserved.

Many accounts are preceded by the profile of the author, formulated by the interviewer.⁴⁰ Frequently, the text contains short descriptions of the situation of the interlocutors, notes on their emotional reactions during the conversation, and comments by third parties.⁴¹ Some documents are dated, but it is uncertain whether these are the date of the interview, date of preparation of the final text, or date of copying the original. Some are in several copies, often written with carbon paper; the intention was apparently to hide each copy in a different place, though this could not be achieved.

Authors of the accounts are usually unknown, or with very few detailed personal data. Sometimes authors signed documents with a pseudonym or initials. Sometimes the content of the account helps to establish the given name of the author. The safety of individuals did not allow to give out more information. The text by Hanna Lewkowicz of Kosów Lacki is interesting in this respect. The handwritten original was completed, probably by Szmuel Bresław,⁴² with personal details and several additional comments. However, the Oyneg Shabes copyist did not include the personal details in the copy, even though he copied other comments (Doc. 166).

Most accounts were submitted by Jews resettled to the Warsaw ghetto from the counties of Warsaw, Grójec, Łowicz, and Sochaczew in the Warsaw District. The first wave of resettlement was in the winter and spring of 1941,

39 See Doc. 16 which contains only the part pertaining to Lublin; for the list of fees, see *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, Doc. 7.

40 Such as Doc. 37: "My interlocutor is a 19-year-old boy. A refugee from Włocławek who came to Warsaw at the beginning of the war. He lived there with his family under difficult conditions; in May 1941, with the help of a friend working in the *Judenrat* in Hrubieszów, he went to work on a farm and received employment on a property about 50 km away from Hrubieszów, in Dłużniów."

41 "No," her husband interrupts, ["I] was forced to leave Warsaw because of the exorbitant prices [. . .]" or in Doc. 174: "(the wife, who is sitting nearby, starts to cry even more)".

42 Shmuel Bresław (1920–1942), pre-war member of Hashomer Hatzair; in the Warsaw ghetto he cooperated with Oyneg Shabes, recorded the news broadcasted by the clandestine press; he was member of the ŻOB; he was shot on a street in the ghetto on 3 September 1942.

the second in the spring of 1942. About 50,000 people were jammed into the already overcrowded Warsaw ghetto, where most inhabitants were already destitute and dependent on the help of social welfare institutions. Groups of people from the same town formed *landsmanshafts* to facilitate the distribution of social help, though utterly insufficient. *Landsmanshafts* were united in the Central Commission for Refugees, which was subject to the Section of Care for Refugees and Fire Victims of the ŻSS Coordinating Committee. From April 1940, Ringelblum was the head of the Section for Social Work of the ŻSS in Warsaw and, from January 1941, he was a member of the Commission for the Resettlement Issues, which grouped activists of the ŻSS and the *Judenrat*.⁴³

His affiliations helped members of Oyneg Shabes reach out to the relevant informants and to obtain reports regarding the fate of the Jews in over twenty towns of the Warsaw District.

Two accounts relate to the beginnings of the occupation in Chełm, four from the ghetto in Radom, three from the ghetto in Częstochowa. From other towns, only isolated texts remain. Several authors of testimonies describe the situation of Jews in more than one place, for example “an informant from Częstochowa” writes extensively on the events in Częstochowa, summarises the discussions of Poles on a train, and then moves to Ostrowiec and the HASAG camp in Skarżysko. Another account contains brief notes about the Jews in Skarżysko, Chmielnik, and Janów Podlaski (Docs. 56 and 67). A fairly large number of accounts from the Lublin District concerning the period of deportations to death camps (from Hrubieszów, Zamość, Sosnowica, Łomazy; Docs. 27, 31, 35, 53) is significant. The authors went to the provinces because of hunger, however, when in the spring of 1942 the deportations began, they returned to the Warsaw ghetto. Several accounts describe the deportation from Hrubieszów and the surrounding areas, several others from Lublin itself.

The Archive also contains reports of people whom Oyneg Shabes members contacted through private channels. This was probably the case of the account of Mr and Mrs Z. of Łomazy, in which the interviewer, Nehemia Tytelman, admits at the outset that they were “pre-war friends from his club” (Doc. 27).⁴⁴

43 B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto...*, p. 660.

44 Nekhemia (Natan) Tytelman (1905?–1943), founder the Shtern (Yiddish: star) Sports Club associated with Left Poalei Tsiyon; in the Warsaw ghetto, he documented the ghetto folklore and recorded testimonies for Oyneg Shabes.

Among the authors of accounts there are Jewish underground activists. Mordekhai Auerbach, a member of Hanoar Hatzioni, went to the regional conference of the movement and then summarised it for Hersh Wasser. The account “Hrubieszów and other towns during the *Aktion*,” was probably written by Chava Folman and Fruma Plotnicka, liaisons of the Dror organisation sent to the Lublin region in order to obtain information about the deportations to death camps and the mass murder of the Jews in June 1942 (Docs. 15 and 32).⁴⁵

The texts by Bernard Kampelmacher, close associate of Oyneq Shabes, are quite different. A social activist and director of the Jewish school in Grodzisk Mazowiecki before the war, he became a member of the local *Judenrat*, and periodically even its chairman. After the expulsion of the Grodzisk Jews to the Warsaw ghetto, he co-established the *landsmanshaft* and became an active member. Ringelblum encouraged him to write a monograph of Grodzisk, and Kampelmacher enthusiastically agreed. In the Archive, there are at least twelve essays written by him, most of them on the history of Jews in Grodzisk: history of the synagogue, the cemetery, the mikvah; industry and education in the town before the war; description of the activities of the *Judenrat* and characteristics of Grodzisk workers during the occupation. He also wrote short accounts of other towns in the Sochaczew County: Podkowa Leśna, Wiskitki, and Sochaczew (Docs. 137, 145–153, 157, 158).⁴⁶ Kampelmacher died of typhus in early 1942.

Among the accounts, an extensive diary from Głowno written by a haberdashery shopkeeper named Yakov Volf is quite exceptional. It gives a day-to-day account of life of the Jews in the town from September 1939 to March 1940, describing religious life, commerce, and problems caused by subsequent German orders (Doc. 123). There are also accounts pretending to be personal letters, like an anonymous detailed description of the deportation from Hrubieszów in June 1942 (Doc. 34). The extensive texts written by Hanka Wermus from Sosnowica and by a woman named Gołda to Alfreda Winnik are original testimonies containing details of life in the provinces (Docs. 31, 92). Others relate to the current situation in the ghetto, everyday life, etc.

45 See more: Maria Ferenc, „Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie”. *Mieszkańcy getta warszawskiego wobec wiadomości o wojnie i Zagładzie* (Warszawa, 2021), pp. 364–369.

46 See also [E. Ringelblum], ARG II 263/1 (Ring. II/233), p. [9].

Several letters are simple postcards with no fully understandable content (Docs. 23–24, 38, 39, 45, 50, 128, 167). It is not always known how this correspondence ended up in the Archive. A postcard from Samuel Stieber to Józef Landau was submitted to the Archive probably by Józef's brother, Aleksander, an associate of Oyneq Shabes (Doc. 50). The greetings on the card from Idl Lajfer sent to four major Zionist party activists in the Warsaw ghetto are puzzling; perhaps the card came to the Archive via party contacts (Doc. 167). Other letters in the volume are also addressed to Oyneq Shabes members or associates. Thanks to them, some personal documents, such as the delousing certificate of Shmuel Bresław, issued by the *Supreme Council of Elders of the Radom District*, or the identification card of Necha Żyłkowicz, cousin of Jakub Rosenberg, secretary of the AJDC in Kraków (Docs. 6 and 57), are included in the Archive. In many cases, however, the circumstances of the inclusion of documents into the Archive remain unknown.

An important part of the material are official documents of varied nature and provenance. Some of them are German proclamations. Some came to the Archive in the original, others in duplicate. Original announcements could simply be taken from the walls of buildings or message boards. Original documents were also obtained from the offices of the ghettos' administration. Documents which could not be taken were copied. Such duplicates sometimes look like a supplement to the account, for example the order of the village head of Bychawa of the confiscation of the Torah scrolls and religious books perfectly complements the extensive account from the town (Docs. 47 and 48). Also worthy of attention are large collections of original official documents from Piotrków Trybunalski and Radomsko, which undoubtedly indicates contacts with employees of respective local *Judenräte* (Docs. 72–90, 95–109). A similar situation may be observed in the case of materials from Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Minutes of the meetings of the *Judenrat* in Grodzisk were submitted by Bernard Kampelmacher and Jehuda Glicensztajn, members of that council (Docs. 140–144). There are also copies of official correspondence that the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Chełm, Marek Frenkel, exchanged with the German authorities, a report on the activities of the *Judenrat* in Piotrków, and correspondence of the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Piotrków, Zelman Tennenberg, the original report of the Committee for Refugees and the Poor of the *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, and a very interesting duplicate of the report of the *Judenrat* in Częstochowa (Docs. 28, 63, 64, 68, 81, 86).

The latter deserves special attention. In the Częstochowa *Judenrat* in early 1941, engineer Feliks Galewski, an employee of its statistics department, wrote a comprehensive report on the activity of the Council in 1940, entitled “Second Statistical Yearbook of the Council of Elders in Częstochowa” (*II Rocznik Statystyczny Rady Starszych w Częstochowie*).⁴⁷ In spite of the dry title, it contains a full picture of the life of the Jewish community: statistics of the population, a description of the economic situation, the fate of the resettled, the problem of forced labour, social welfare, etc. The “Second Yearbook” consists of three thick volumes, containing many hand-drawn charts and tables. The text is dated January 1941, but the dates of the tables and graphs are often later, the latest on 9 January 1942. In May 1942, the study was submitted to the mayor of Częstochowa, Stanisław Rybiński, by the chairman of the *Judenrat*, Lejb Kopiński. This copy, with the handwritten signature of Kopiński, survived and after the war was included in the ŻIH archive.⁴⁸ On the other hand, in 1941 or 1942, Jerzy Winkler and some unknown copyist of Oyneg Shabes made handwritten duplicates of fragments of the “Second Yearbook,” either *in extenso* or in a summary. These fragments concerned issues of demographics, forced labour, taxation, and economic life. However, among them are also pieces absent from the above-mentioned copy of the “Second Yearbook.” This raises suspicion that there was another version of the document. It seems that the copy sent to the mayor was in some places redacted and censored. One example of a redaction is a piece suggesting that not all prisoners of labour camps returned to the city. Thus, the copyists of Oyneg Shabes must have seen the original version. Regardless, their duplicate contains inaccuracies and errors. They wrote in fine letters on small pieces of paper. They also reorganised the composition: since they needed space on the sheet for statistical tables, they divided the text into parts, so it is difficult to link the pieces together. In addition, the paper was seriously damaged when it was buried underground. Comparison of the duplicate from the Archive with the original copy of the “Second Yearbook,” which was preserved undamaged, helped to arrange the text and fill in certain missing fragments.

47 The title suggests that a similar report was written in 1940 for the year 1939.

48 See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1–3.

Still another document from the Archive has its equivalent in the AŻIH collection: a report on the activities of the Committee for Refugees and the Poor of the *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa for the year 1940.⁴⁹ In this case there are two equal originals. The text in both is almost identical (differences relate to the arrangement of the text on page and single insignificant words), written on the same typewriter and on the same paper. The document further includes five inserts with 12 photographs. The Oyneg Shabes copy was sent from Włoszczowa in March 1941 to the AJDC Director in Kraków, Izrael Falk. Thus, it came to the Archive via contacts of Oyneg Shabes associates with the AJDC. The second copy was submitted by the Council in Włoszczowa to the County Care Committee (*Komitet Opiekuńczy Powiatowy*, KOP) of the ŻSS in Jędrzejów. It was kept until 1943 by Dr Henryk Beer, member of the KOP and the head of the Jewish hospital in Jędrzejów. After almost all of the local ghetto inmates were sent to death in Treblinka, Beer briefly hid with Feliks Przyppkowski, well known physician and astronomer, with whom he left a copy of the report. Feliks's son, Tadeusz Przyppkowski,⁵⁰ donated it to the Jewish Historical Institute in 1951. The title page describes the history of this document. This copy is well preserved, unlike the Oyneg Shabes copy which is missing a few pages, tops of almost all of the surviving sheets are cut off, and the photographs are torn and smeared. In this volume, missing text fragments are filled in, and photographs are published based on the better-preserved copy (Doc. 68).

A slightly different case is a report of an inspection visit that Artur Reinberg, AJDC inspector made on 15–22 June 1941 to the cities of the Radom District (Doc. 55). The Oyneg Shabes document is much worn, torn, with many missing pieces. Since it is impossible to read it as a whole, in the Archive catalogue it was treated as two documents of unknown origin.⁵¹ It turned out, however, that the ŻSS collection in AŻIH contains the original of this report, preserved in excellent condition.⁵² As a result, in this volume the dis-

49 See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, 223/1.

50 Tadeusz Przyppkowski (1905–1977), photographer, collector, designer of sundials, conservator, director of the Przyppkowski State Museum in Jędrzejów after WWII.

51 Robert M. Shapiro and Tadeusz Epsztein, *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes–Ringelblum Archive. Catalog and Guide* (Bloomington, 2009).

52 See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/865, pp. 53–57.

cussed report is presented in its entirety. The duplicate found in the Archive is a carbon copy of the original from ŻSS. Most probably, other ŻSS documents in the Archive were included in similar ways. Although among the Oyneg Shabes files there are more ŻSS and AJDC inspection reports from various cities and towns of the GG, neither their originals nor duplicates could be found in the archives of the Jewish Historical Institute.

Editors' Note

The present publication is based on the Polish edition of selected documents from the Oyneg Shabes Archive, included in volume 6 of the series *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy* (Ringelblum Archive. The Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto): *Generalne Gubernatorstwo. Relacje i dokumenty* (General Government: Accounts and Documents) edited by Aleksandra Bańkowska and published in 2012. For details on publications mentioned in this note see Bibliography.

As the research on the Ringelblum Archive continues, and as subsequent volumes are prepared for publication in English, the necessity has arisen to slightly change the set of materials in this volume. One document concerning Cieszanów (ARG I 713) was moved, according to its contents, to the volume *Forced Labour Camps*, and one document concerning Nowe Miasto nad Soną/on the Sona River (ARG I 935, confused with Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą/on the Pilica River) was moved to the volume *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich*. Four documents (ARG I 854, ARG I 1023, ARG I 782 and ARG I 879) were moved to the volume *Letters on the Shoah*. There is continuity in the numbering of documents and footnotes throughout the volume and as a result of the above-mentioned changes, the numbers of documents beginning with Doc. 24 differ from those in the Polish edition.

Materials from each of the districts start with those relating to their respective capital city, Kraków, Lublin and Radom. In the case of the Warsaw

District, the volume only contains materials from the provinces.⁵³ Materials pertaining to capital cities are followed by those referring to the entire territory of a given district. Next, the materials for counties and localities of a given county begin with the county seat and then continue in alphabetical order. Within materials for a given town or village, official documents are placed at the beginning, followed by personal documents, studies, diaries, and testimonies. Materials of one category for one town or village are arranged chronologically. In case a document includes information on several localities, its place in the volume has been assigned following the one given the most attention.⁵⁴

The original texts are in four languages: Polish, Yiddish, German and Hebrew. They are translated into English directly from the original. The translations are faithful to the texts as they are written, with clarifications in footnotes or the glossaries. Just to mention some of the issues here: the authors only used the name Oświęcim, not Auschwitz, even when it clearly refers to the concentration camp, and not the town; they did not use the term “Nazi”, but “Hitlerites”. Since the use of tenses is different in English than in Polish, in some cases the translation was modified for clarity.

Documents are presented in their entirety. Paragraph breaks have sometimes been added to make the texts easier to read. Missing fragments of texts, due to physical or biological destruction, are marked [. . .]. For orientation, the original pagination is provided in square brackets.

Each document opens with a descriptive heading, providing the following information: date or approximate time of creation of the document, place of its origin, its author (first name and/or surname, or the name of the office, institution, social organisation) – if known (if not known, we use the formula, respectively, date unknown, place unknown, author unknown); type of document (account, journal, letter, telegram, report, etc.), its subject or title

53 Documents pertaining to Warsaw and to the Warsaw ghetto are published in separate volumes, the first of which in English is *Warsaw Ghetto. Everyday Life*, ed. Katarzyna Person (Warszawa, 2017).

54 For example, Doc. 32 concerns Hrubieszów and surrounding towns, and incidentally also Częstochowa, and is assigned to the Hrubieszów County; Doc. 56, concerning Skarżysko-Kamienna, Chmielnik, and Janów Podlaski, is located at the beginning of documents from the Radom District; Doc. 67, concerning Częstochowa, Ostrowiec, and Rejów (now in Skarżysko-Kamienna), is placed among the accounts of Częstochowa.

(the latter in the original language and in translation); and a brief abstract. In cases where it is known who among the Oyneg Shabes associates recorded a testimony, his or her name is mentioned, and basic biographical data are put in footnotes where they appear for the first time.

Below the text of each document is a file number according to both new (2009, see below) and the old (1955) catalogues, as well as the technical description of the document. The description includes information on whether a document is an original or a duplicate; number of duplicates and number of their copies; whether the document is handwritten (including the tool and/or technique), typewritten, or printed. Information on handwritten inserts and stamps in printed or typed documents, or typed inserts in the printed documents is also included. In the case of a recognised handwriting, the writer or copyist's initials are given (see their list in Acronyms and Abbreviations). There is information on language(s) of the document, dimensions, number of sheets, and number of pages of the whole archival unit; information of annotations and text damages, and other data, depending on a case. Post-war notes attached by Hersh Wasser or other persons are also quoted. Technical descriptions may also refer to documents bearing old file numbers, which comprise one new archival unit. In cases where a document consists of several copies, there is indication which copy served the basis for publication. These descriptions are based on those in the catalogue of the collection, by Robert Moses Shapiro and Tadeusz Epsztein, *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes-Ringelblum Archive*, published in 2009, sometimes with additions and corrections of dates, names, authorship, etc. resulting from re-examination of documents during the process of editing.

Editors of the English edition have updated footnotes and references. References to documents in this volume do not have any additional information, just Doc. 1, 2, 3 etc., sometimes with specific page number of the original in square brackets. References to documents from the Ringelblum Archive which have been translated and published in this series (including in forthcoming volumes), cite the volume's title and the document number. References to documents from the Archive which have not yet been included in this series cite the file number, according to the catalogue mentioned above. Also, the Bibliography has been extended and new publications on the subject have been included. Therefore, this volume provides the English-language reader with an enlarged editorial apparatus, taking into consideration current research in the field.

Names of persons mentioned in the documents have been checked in databases of the ŻSS and AJDC records collections and in the Internet database of the Warsaw ghetto <https://new.getto.pl/>, and also on websites pertaining to particular towns. Whenever information was found, a short biography is given in the footnote. When determining the dates of Jewish holidays, and the conversion of the Jewish calendar dates to the Gregorian calendar, the website www.hebcal.com was consulted.

A standardized system of spellings has been introduced. Spelling of geographical names is usually standard Polish. Exceptions are made for localities or regions that have accepted English names, such as Warsaw or Silesia. Towns smaller than county seats are footnoted, with their county name given. Spelling of names of individuals depends on the language of a document. Transliteration from Yiddish is adopted from the YIVO system. Hebrew words and phrases are transcribed phonetically in accordance with modern Israeli pronunciation.

Documents contain numerous words or phrases in other languages than the basic text. In most cases, they are transcribed in italics and footnoted; those that repeat in several documents, including religious Hebrew terms, are explained in glossaries. Plural foreign nouns have usually English plural ending, e.g. (Russian) *pyziaks*, (Hebrew) *minyans*, following their usage in the original documents, with Polish plural endings in Polish and Yiddish plural endings in Yiddish; we only use plural specific for a given foreign language if it is in plural in the original, e.g. (Polish) *placówki* or *taksówki*, we also use German plural for *Judenräte* and *Aktionen*. When foreign words or phrases are written in a different alphabet than the basic text, we add the information in footnotes. The obvious spelling mistakes in any language are corrected without footnotes.

Words or phrases crossed out by authors are marked [x] and footnoted; the removed text is put in footnotes, if legible. Sections inserted in the basic texts, e.g. phrases existing only in one version or copy, notes added by copyists, paragraphs added following their authors' instructions, are marked ^{c-c} and footnoted appropriately. Words or phrases in Yiddish, when they appear in Polish texts in Polish transliteration, are translated into English and marked ^{y-y}. In Doc. 128, which is in Polish and Yiddish, fragments are marked appropriately ^{y-y} and ^{p-p}. In Doc. 166 fragments added by Shmuel Bresław are marked ^{sb-sb}. All of these cases are footnoted as well.

There are many obsolete measurements used by the authors; these are recalculated into modern ones and explained in the footnotes. However, when temperature is mentioned, it is always in Celsius degrees. For weights, the only units used are kilograms and grams (where decagrams are used in the originals they are recalculated into grams). In the documents, there is no consistency in writing the numerals. They are sometimes written in words and sometimes in figures as in the text. These haven't been changed even when they appear differently in the same text. It was decided to unify the writing of dates, so wherever Roman or Arabic figures are used in the original they are replaced with names of months (with exception of Doc. 34, explained in the footnote xxxx). The word "Street" is added wherever the name of a street appeared, in order not to confuse it with other place names.

The specific terminology, including abbreviations, acronyms, names of institutions, political parties, social organisations and terms pertaining to Jewish religion have been included in the abbreviations list and two glossaries. Jewish holidays, mentioned in many documents, are included in a calendar, thus they do not need to be footnoted each time. The bibliography is at the end of the volume. It is accompanied by two indices, of names and of places.

Documents

Part I

Kraków District

KRAKÓW

1

After September 1939, Kraków, German occupation authorities. Announcement, regulations on conduct of Jews in Kraków.

By order of the authorities, the following regulations are hereby announced to the Jewish inhabitants of the city of Kraków!

- I. Ban on visiting Aryan restaurants in the Kraków city centre.
- II. From here on, persons of Jewish race are obliged to inform that they are Jewish when meeting Aryans.
- III. In principle, Jews are forbidden to engage in discussions on politics.
- IV. Beards and sidelocks are to be shaved off as ordered by the authorities.

ARG I 813 (Ring. I/785/3)

Description: original, print, German, 425×500 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

September 1939–July 1940, Kraków, Provisional Board of the Kraków Jewish Community. Announcements:

- (1) *On the appointment of the new board of the Provisional Board of the Jewish Community in Kraków;*
- (2) *On the compulsory work of all Kraków Jews on filling the air raid trenches;*
- (3) *On registration of all Jews of Kraków and Kraków County, starting on 8 November 1939;*
- (4) *On compulsory resettlement from Kraków of some of the Jewish population until 15 August 1940.*

(1)

L. 24/39

To the Jewish Population!

By decree of the Municipal Board of the Capital Royal City of Kraków of 13 September 1939, the Provisional Board of the Jewish Community in Kraków has been dissolved and a new board was simultaneously appointed with the following composition:

Members of the Board:

1. Professor Marek Biberstein,¹ chairman of the board [Rejtana Street 10]²
2. Doctor Wilhelm Goldblatt, attorney, deputy chairman [Grodzka Street 42]
3. Councillor Teodor Dembitzer³ [Królewska Street 11]
4. Engineer Władysław Kleinberger [Starowiślna Street 8]
5. Ferdinand Schenker, private clerk [Bonifraterska Street 3]
6. Engineer Bernard Willer⁴ [Żuławskiego Street 1]

1 Marek Bieberstein (Biberstein) (?–1944), teacher, social activist, first chairman of the *Judenrat* in Kraków, member of the ŻSS Presidium. Arrested in mid-1940, imprisoned in Kraków and Tarnów until 1942, died in the concentration camp in Płaszów.

2 Addresses in square brackets are added in handwriting.

3 Teodor Dembitzer (1887–?), electro-technician, owner of a workshop on Poselska Street in Kraków, married to Sara, née Wischnitzer, had a daughter Irena, survived the war. See a duplicate of his identification card of 1941 in AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Kraków, 218/37/1685 and CKŻP, Records and Statistics, 303/V/425/D1108.

4 Bernard Willer (1879–?), engineer, married to Tekla. See duplicate of his identification card in AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Kraków, 218/37/21.

7. Ascher Spira, property owner [Dietla Street 50]
8. Rabbi Schabse Rappaport [Dietla Street 63]
9. Counsellor Izydor Gottlieb,⁵ commercial agent [Dietla Street 3]

Deputies:

10. Chairman Joachim Steinberg,⁶ industrialist [Łokietka Street 11]
11. Samuel Majer, merchant [Brzezińska Street 7]

Announcing this, we call on all members of the Jewish Community to remain calm, abide by the Authorities' orders, and strictly comply with our instructions.

The said Jewish Community Board runs the Community's agencies daily and offers guidance and help at the Community Office (Skawińska Street 2) every day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

By order of the authorities, we call:

1. All merchants, industrialists, and craftsmen to immediately open and run their shops and workshops as usual;
2. To immediately pay all outstanding denomination taxes as well as all other outstanding communal fees to the Jewish Community.

Jews of the City of Kraków!

It is only by conscientiously doing your duties within the Jewish Community, and without duress, as well as by complying with the Authorities' orders, that you will enable us, the current Jewish Community Board, to properly perform our duties and the entire population to survive the harsh war times.

We call on all social activists to cooperate and help!

Kraków, 17 September 1939

Provisional Board of the Jewish Community in Kraków

Professor Marek Bieberstein *m.p.*,⁷ Chairman

Attorney Dr. Wilhelm Goldblatt *m.p.*, Deputy Chairman

5 Izydor Gottlieb (1880–?), commercial agent in the paper trade, married to Rozalia, née Durstenfeld. See duplicate of his identification card in AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Kraków, 218/37/12653.

6 Joachim Steinberg (1875–?), carpenter, owner of an artistic woodworking shop at Dajwór Street 12, flat 16, chief of the taxation department in the *Judenrat*, married to Amalia, née Reich. See duplicate of his identification card in AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Kraków, 218/37/11196.

7 Short for *manu propria* (Latin), (signed) with one's own hand.

(2)

To the Jewish Population of the City of Kraków!

The Jewish population of the city of Kraków has been ordered to fill all air raid trenches within the Kraków city limits.

The work must be completed within 48 hours.

Consequently, the Provisional Board of the Jewish Community calls on the entire Jewish population of the city of Kraków to immediately carry out the said work.

Everybody is to report to perform the said work, with spades and pick-axes if possible, on Friday, 22 September 1939, at 5:30 a.m. outside the building of the Jewish Community in Kraków, at Krakowska Street 41, where they will receive further instructions.

Jews! Nobody shall evade this work.

Provisional Board of the Jewish Community in Kraków

(3)

To the Jewish Population living in the City of Kraków and its Vicinity!

By order of the Authorities, the Board of the Jewish Community in Kraków is to register all Jews living permanently or temporarily in the area of this community, that is, in Kraków and the following localities: Skawina, Prokocim, Wola Duchacka, Bronowice Małe, Borek Fałęcki, Czernichów, Liszki, Mogiła, Piaski Wielkie, Prądnik Czerwony, Radziszów, Ruszcza, Świątniki Górne, Tyniec, Zabierzów, Zielonki, Ochojno, Rzeszotary, and Jurczyce.⁸

All men and women above the age of 16 are subject to the registration.

In accordance with the order of the Authorities, persons who left the Jewish Community and their descendants are also subject to the registration.

The registration shall begin on 8 November 1939 and it shall be conducted in the following order:

Persons living in Kraków (city quarters I-XXII) by surnames beginning with letters:

A, B on 8 November 1939

C, D on 9 November 1939

8 Localities in the Kraków County. Currently, Prokocim, Wola Duchacka, Bronowice Małe, Borek Fałęcki, Piaski Wielkie, Prądnik Czerwony, and Tyniec are within the city limits of Kraków.

E, F	on 10 November 1939
G, H	on 13 November 1939
I, J	on 14 November 1939
K	on 15 November 1939
L, M	on 16 November 1939
N, O	on 17 November 1939
P, R	on 20 November 1939
S	on 21 November 1939
T, U, V	on 22 November 1939
W, X, Y, Z	on 23 November 1939

The registration offices shall be in the following premises:

Kraków Association of Traders, Grodzka Street 40

Keren Kayemet Leisrael,⁹ Jasna Street 8

Keren Hayesod,¹⁰ Librowszczyzna Street 6

CENTOS, Sarego Street 3

Jewish Craftsmen Association, Podbrzezie Street 6

*Ezra[t] Halutzim*¹¹ Association, Grodzka Street 9

Zionist Social Club, Grodzka Street 71

Non-boarding School for Poor Jewish Children, Dajwór Street 13

Maccabi Jewish Sports Club, Mikołajewska Street 9

Social Services, Józefińska Street 5 (22)

They will be continuously open on the stated days from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Persons domiciled in Skawina, Prokocim, Wola Duchacka, Bronowice Małe, Borek Fałęcki, Czernichów, Liszki, Mogiła, Piaski Wielkie, Prądnik Czerwony, Radziszów, Ruszcza, Świątniki Górne, Tyniec, Zabierzów, Zielonki, Ochojno, Rzeszotary, and Jurczyce shall report for registration on 24 November 1939 during the stated opening hours at the Kraków Traders Association at Grodzka Street 40.

9 (Hebrew) The Fund of the People [of Israel], known as KKL or Jewish National Fund, established in 1901.

10 (Hebrew) The Foundation Fund, established at the World Zionist Congress in London on 7–24 July 1920, to provide the Zionist movement with resources needed for the Jews to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.

11 (Hebrew) Aid for the pioneers; the Zionist organisation supporting the settlers in Palestine.

Individuals subject to the registration shall report in person to one of the enumerated registration locales closest to their place of residence with documents proving their identity (birth certificate, identity card, military identification, passport, etc.).

Registration is compulsory. Persons who fail to report for registration shall be liable to severe punishment imposed by the Authorities.

On behalf of the Provisional Board of the Jewish Community in Kraków
Chairman: Marek Bieberstein.

(4)

To the Jewish Population of the City of Kraków!

Beforehand, the Authorities ordered voluntary resettlement of most Jews of the City of Kraków to other localities in the General Government, at the same time allowing all those who voluntarily left Kraków by 15 August 1940 to choose where they wished to settle and with all their property.¹²

At the same time, the Authorities threatened forced deportation to all Jews who failed to voluntarily leave Kraków by 15 August 1940.

As the above order was not sufficiently performed, the Authorities have decided to subject all Jews of Kraków to forced deportation.

Recently, that is on 23 July 1940, the Authorities decided that the forced evacuation of all Jews of Kraków shall begin on 16 August 1940, simultaneously maintaining the Jews' right to resettle voluntarily by 15 August 1940.

Consequently, beginning on 16 August 1940, the Authorities shall begin to expel Jews from Kraków by the police.

We call all Kraków Jews to immediately begin to voluntarily resettle from Kraków to other towns and localities in the General Government, in principle to localities far away from Kraków, to thus ensure their right to voluntarily choose their future place of residence and their right to freely take their

12 The expulsion of Jews from Kraków was conducted pursuant to *Stadthauptmann* Carl Schmid's order of 18 May 1940. Until 15 August, the Jews could leave voluntarily for localities of their choice in the General Government. The number of Jews to remain in Kraków was to be 15,000. In September and November, 20,000 people were forcibly resettled to localities in the Kraków and Lublin Districts. See Aleksander Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie* (Kraków, 1985), pp. 32–33, 39–40.

property, particularly their furniture and objects of daily use, regardless of whether or not they have received a resettlement order.

Persons who fail to meet the said deadline for voluntary resettlement will lose the said rights.

Hence, it is in the best interest of every Jewish man and woman not to wait for forced evacuation, but to voluntarily leave Kraków before 15 August 1940, preferably as soon as possible.

Permission to travel by train,¹³ identification cards, and all other information regarding possible exemptions are issued and provided by the Resettlement Bureau of the Jewish Community in Kraków at Brzozowa Street 5.

JEWISH COMMUNITY IN KRAKÓW

Chairman: Marek Bieberstein.

Kraków, 25 July 1940

ARG I 811 (Ring. I/785/1)

Description: original, print, handwritten additions, German, Polish, 615×475, 625×470, 620×465, 235×314 mm, minor missing fragment of Announcement (2), 4 sheets, 4 pages.

3

1 August 1940, Kraków, author unknown. Memorandum to the AJDC and ŻSS regarding protection of property left by Jews leaving Kraków due to resettlement.

[1] [. . .] order regarding deportation of Jews from Kraków [. . .] that Jews leaving the city voluntarily until [. . .] are allowed to take and transport all their property.

[. . .] with regard to this order we take the liberty to present [. . .] the following issue:

¹³ Jews were banned from travelling by train in the General Government pursuant to Governor-General Hans Frank's ordinance of 26 January 1940.

[. . .] within the city limits of Kraków most Jews are in possession of [. . .] sometimes for decades, or even longer, their own trading companies, industrial companies, craft workshops, dental surgeries, technical devices, and other workplaces [. . .].

The deadline set in the orders for the Jewish population of Kraków to liquidate or transfer [its property] to other localities is too short to [complete] this work within the specified period of time without massive losses. It also often happens [. . .] carry out the liquidation for lack of purchasers.

Hence, upon leaving the city the Jews will abandon [. . .] many Jewish companies, workplaces, real estate, which very often constitute the only source of income of the individual owners, as well as much blocked capital in bank accounts, deposits, and a significant number of items of furniture and furnishings.

A Jewish Social Trust Company (*eine Jüdische Soziale Treuhandgesellschaft*) should be established to protect the abandoned property of the Jews who will leave the city due to the resettlement campaign.

The purpose and duty of this institution shall be to ensure that the property is maintained in proper condition, possibly leased out, or, if necessary, liquidated, and that the owners have an opportunity to receive their means of subsistence in accordance with binding rules of law, or that the property continues to be professionally managed, and finally that any debts, outstanding taxes, and other fees are paid in full and that liabilities are discharged.

The following divisions, or subdivisions, could be established:

1. real estate
2. bank capital and deposits
3. movable property
4. trading, industrial, and craft companies
5. freelance professions' workplaces

[2] [. . .] shall ensure [. . .] are [. . .] on blocked accounts [. . .] *Treuhandstelle* sums for [. . .] paid out or transferred [. . .] Moreover, this division would ensure [. . .] all houses which so far [. . .] not [. . .] administration.

[. . .] blocked capital in banks and deposits [. . .] that payments [. . .] in accordance with binding [. . .] to individual owners of the said [. . .]

[. . .] to craft workshops as well as [. . .] furnishing of such workplaces, for instance, [. . .] etc., shall be placed in special storehouses [. . .] shall be

transferred upon request of the individual owners after their settlement [. . .] in a different locality.

The real estate division shall act to the same end.

Finally, the trading, industrial, and handicraft companies division shall be managed by [. . .] forces.

Finally, we take the liberty to suggest that the institution [. . .] should be run exclusively on [social?] basis.

We wish to stress that both the selection of people running the said institution and the proposed constant supervision by the Board of Supervisors composed of persons designated by the ŻSS (Jewish Social Self-Help) and the AJDC (American Joint Distribution Committee) would fully guarantee that this very much needed institution would properly perform its function and that it would be fully trusted by the Jewish population, forced to put its property under its supervision.

In order to carry out the said steps, we apply to the AJDC and the ŻSS in Kraków to support the said idea and obtain legalisation from the Authorities.

Kraków, 1 August 1940.

ARG I 824 (Ring. I/287/2)
Description: duplicate, typewritten, Polish, 185×240 mm, major damage and missing fragments, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

4 [After October 1939], Kraków, Jewish Community in Kraków. Registration form for the Jewish population of Kraków. Blank form.

Jewish Community in Kraków, Jewish population registration.¹⁴

1.	Number			
2	Registered person	Surname		
		Name		

14 In the original, the table has a horizontal layout.

3.	Parents	Father	Surname			
			Name			
		Mother	Surname			
			Name			
4.	Date of birth	Year				
		Day				
		Age				
5.	Residence	Town				
		Street				
		No.				
6.	Marital status	Married				
		Not married				
		Widowed				
		Divorced				
7.	Profession					
8.	Stay	Permanent				
		Temporary				
9.	Knowledge of German language	Yes				
		No				
10.	Identification by	Identity card				
		Military service book				
		Birth certificate				
		Other documents				
11.	Children below 16 years of age	Sons				
		Daughters				
12.	Religion	Mosaic				
		Roman Catholic				
		Lutheran				
		Non-denominational				
13.	Remarks					

ARG I 817 (Ring. I/351)

Description: original, print, German, Polish, 693×248 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

5

[After October 1939], Kraków, Jewish Community in Kraków. Form confirming obligatory registration of the Jewish population.

Jewish Community in Kraków
Certificate.
Registration number

.....

Surname	First name
domiciledStreet No.Flat No.

has complied with the Jewish population's obligation to register.
Kraków, November 1939.

.....
Signature

ARG I 812 (Ring. I/785/2)

Description: original, print, German, Polish, 155×117 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

6.

10 August 1940, Kraków. Identity card of Necha Żyłkowicz, exempted from resettlement from Kraków.

Identity Card No. 209¹⁵

Żyłkowicz Necha¹⁶

Born in 1912, resident of Kraków, at Tarnowerstrasse¹⁷ 19, flat 4,

15 For a collection of identity cards of Jews exempted from resettlement from Kraków between August and December 1940, see AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Kraków, 218/35. The card number, surname and first name, year of birth, address and the date are typed.

16 Necha Żyłkowicz was a cousin of Jakub Rosenberg, secretary of the AJDC in Kraków. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/38, p. 42, 210/41, p. 71.

17 Fragment torn out from the original. Supplemented on the basis of Necha Żyłkowicz's data in the AJDC files, *ibidem*; Tarnowerstrasse was before and is now Limanowskiego Street.

is exempted from resettlement.¹⁸

Kraków, 10 August 1940

Stadthauptmann

/-/ Schmid¹⁹

Office of the Governor-General for the Occupied Polish Territories

Application: submitted on 24 October 1940, examined on 25 November 1940

ARG I 816 (Ring. I/1220/14)

Description: original, print, typewritten, stamps, handwritten stamped signature, German, 137×104 mm, substantial damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page.

7

15 February 1941, General Government, Kraków District Chief, Second Department for Resettlement. Permission for Rivke Wittenberg to remain in Kraków.

[1] *Generalgouvernement* Kraków, 15 February 1941
Chef des Distrikts Krakau
Aussiedlungsstelle

To Jew

Jewess

Wittenberg Rivke²⁰

¹⁸ See Doc. 2, Announcement (4).

¹⁹ Carl Schmid (1889–1966), administrative clerk of various ranks in Wittenberg from 1915. Joined the NSDAP in 1933. Between 21 February 1940 and 31 March 1941, *Stadthauptmann of Kraków, then of Prague*. In June 1942, became the director of the Internal Affairs Department of the government of the General Government. After the war, returned to work in the administration in Wittenberg. See Markus Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 501.

²⁰ In AŻIH, there is a duplicate of Rivke (Rywka) Wittenberg's identity card. Born on 25 July 1890 in Kraków, wife of Chaskiel Wittenberg, a tailor, and mother of Izaak, Berta, and Oskar, glover. AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Kraków, 218/37/5099 and 5100.

Kraków, *Kommandantur* 5/14²¹

The request for permission to remain in Kraków has been granted.
The applicant is to report between 8 and 12 o'clock on the day 21.2.1941 to personally collect the identification card and the identification sign for Jews to be worn on the arm as required by law.

The applicant is to bring two photographs, 4×4 cm, and proofs of identity.
The fee for the identification card and the arm sign is 20 zlotys.

Aussiedlungsstelle II.

Krakau, Lubicz 4.

Translation on the following page.²²

ARG I 815 (Ring. I/1220/3).

Description: original, print, typewritten, stamp, German, Polish 180×140 mm, substantial damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

8

January 1942, Kraków, Kraków Police Command. Pass to leave the Kraków ghetto, issued to [Leon] Neustadt (5–10 January 1942).

Polizeidirektion Krakau

Pass No. 1030

Entitling its holder to leave and enter the Jewish district
during 5–10 January 1942
between 12–7 p.m.

Valid with identity card No. Neustadt²³

²¹ Located on Stradomska Street.

²² Translation into Polish on the reverse.

²³ Leyb (Leon) Neustadt (1883–1943), AJDC employee since 1919, head of section for children and orphans' affairs and the health section, deputy chairman of the CENTOS branch in Warsaw; between September 1939 and January 1940, chairman of the Coordinating

Fee: 2 zlotys

German Police Station
/-/Fehringer[?]

Permission to cross over for Jews!

ARG I 814 (Ring. I/785/4).

Description: original, print, handwritten dates, name and signature, stamped number, ink, German, 106×75 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

9

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account “קרֶאָקע” [Kraków], recorded by Hersh Wasser. Expulsion of the Jewish population from Kraków, activity of the Judenrat, labour camps: Pustków near Dębica, Lipie near Nowy Sącz.

[1] KRAKÓW

18 May – The *k[ehillah]* in writing [. . .] forced evacuation of the Jews.²⁴ Before that date also certain steps by the *kehillah* towards evacuation – only refugees and lower classes. Former Councillor [. . .] anticipated the intentions of the Germans, wanted to [. . .] prepared projects – refugees and other [. . .] elements, motives. The *kehillah* is not [. . .] to meet the needs of the population. [. . .] 70–80 thousand – the item [. . .] which was outlined. On 17 May [. . .] showed me their projects – the worst item was forced labour. On 18 [May] – a surprise: every Monday reports – 1) From [. . .] not a clever approach – individual and collective 3 to 4 thousand people – even [. . .] gave money, 20 zlotys – 1[?] August – a decree concerning [. . .] applications – motives – econ[omic] needs – older [. . .] By the 15th [. . .] The *kehillah* – 2 Germans, 1 [. . .] Mr Bieberstein found a contact with [. . .] several tens of thousands of zlotys – 400,000 zlotys supposedly

Commission. Later director of the AJDC in the General Government. Died at the Pawiak Prison. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/41, p. 69; B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, pp. 301, 328, 342, 598, 672.

24 On 18 May 1940, an order was issued for the resettlement of Jews from Kraków.

for the costs of resettlement – they both knew and took double – denunciations – to the Germans [. . .] Bieberstein – they confiscated 400,000 – ordered to pay double [. . .] because it was not allowed to pay more than 500 zlotys.

The Jewish *kehillahs* want to derive profits from the Jewish misfortune and the money does not go to the supposedly lofty purpose, for example labour camps. People buy themselves out,²⁵ and the money should actually go to those who are leaving – but no! Forgotten. With [. . .] random people – others either run away or hide.

Bieberstein – a teacher of religion in an elementary school – respectable, limited, cannot adjust to the situation. Because of the need for bribery, [it] falls into the hands of dishonest people.²⁶ For example when buying food products for the kitchens – maximum prices – 2 [. . .] nothing is legal – gangrene – a vicious circle. A weak character – can't say “no” to the Germans – and still he received attention and respect. Except for [. . .] thievery, everything in order and [. . .] active and beaming – situation – Dębica – Tarnów – Goldberg²⁷ – the newspaper affair.

Now the resettlements – the younger– labour camps – the older ones – the Lublin area²⁸ – either you report, or the districts are surrounded.

Major – physician – 180 zlotys in the hand [. . .] Rożnów – official receivers – the Kraków trial – zigzags.

Standard of living – Nowy Sącz, Tarnów, Kraków, any standard whatever – local Poles – good – Ukrainians – P[olish] refugees – on Jewish misery – duplicity. A German officer committed suicide.

Labour camps – 2 larger: Pustków (Dębica),²⁹ Lipie (near Nowy Sącz). 2 types. 1. SS – military – they pay 40 groszes an hour – the *Judenrat* in a camp

25 Persons designated for forced labour had the possibility of buying themselves out by paying a specified sum to the *Judenrat*.

26 Marek Bieberstein was arrested in the summer of 1940 for paying bribes to Reichert, a representative of the Resettlement Commission, for the purpose of increasing the number of permits for Jews to remain in Kraków. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

27 Shloyme Goldberg was the chairman of the Tarnów *Judenrat*.

28 In November 1940, 11,000 Kraków Jews were forcibly deported to many localities in the Lublin district.

29 The camp in Pustków (Dębica County) was established in 1940 as a forced labour camp. At first, it employed approximately 800 Jewish prisoners from the surrounding localities, who worked on the construction of an SS training ground. In autumn 1941, a camp

receives 2.50 to cover all expenses – the rest – cash – living quarters [. . .] factory hall – on the floor – rarely changed straw –not washed for weeks – no barracks for the sick – in the second [. . .] special barracks used all year round – unheated – straw mattresses.

ARG I 826 (Ring. I/674/9)

Description: original, handwritten (H.W.*), ink, pencil, Yiddish, 158×179 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

10. *After 14 June 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony די " [1942] (8.06.-29.05.) געשעענישן אין קראָקע [Events in Kraków, 29 May – 8 June [1942]]. Description of the first Aktion in the Kraków ghetto.*

[1] 14 June 1942

The events in Kraków, 29 May – 8 June

On Friday, 29 May, the Germans issued an order that by 4 o'clock on Sunday afternoon all Jews must register and have their work cards stamped.³⁰ The command was carried out and the *Judenrat* stamped the work cards of only 14,000 persons; 6,000 were left without stamps.

On Sunday night, the ghetto was surrounded by the *[Sonderdienst]*.³¹ Some went into homes and dragged out 2,000 Jews. They allowed the Jews to take up to 10 kilos of luggage per person. This luggage was later loaded onto boxcars that the SD plundered for themselves. The *Sonderdienst* confiscated all cash and valuables from the Jews, leaving only 20 zlotys per person.

for Soviet POWs was set up on the site, as well as a penal camp for Poles. In autumn 1942, Pustków became the central SS camp in the District of Kraków. See ARG I 1172 (Ring. I/400), ARG I 1173 (Ring. I/669).

30 Permission to remain in the ghetto could be officially obtained by individuals employed in German companies in the *Judenrat* and its institutions, such as hospitals, the orphanage, and soup kitchens, as well as in the Jewish Social Self-Help. Permission was not granted to people over 55. See A. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 58.

31 In the original: SD.

The Jews who were removed were assembled in Prokocim [2] (a train station 3 km from Kraków), and from there they were sent away in sealed train cars. The elderly were shot on the spot in the Niepolomice forests. According to existing reports, the transport was sent off to the forests between Tarnopol and Złoczew to “camps”; most likely they were all killed.³²

The chairman and 7 members of the *Judenrat* were sent with the first transport.³³

Monday passed quietly.

However, on Tuesday, 2 June, two SS cars drove through the ghetto and shot into the crowds. 14 people were killed. A further 15 were wounded.

In the meantime, the price of necessities in the ghetto rose sharply because the Jews could not leave the ghetto and there was a lack of produce.

On Thursday, 4 June, divisions of the SS and SD entered the ghetto at 6 o'clock in the morning and, together with [3] the Jewish police, they took up positions around all the houses and extracted people from their homes according to a list. Eighty people were killed during this episode and 76 were wounded (among them, accidentally, 2 German civilians). The *Aktion* lasted until 8 o'clock at night, and then 4,000 people were led out. The transported prisoners walked by foot to Prokocim, from where they continued to travel in sealed trains. The entire route to Prokocim was soaked in blood. An eyewitness counted 25 dead on the highway. At 9:30 at night, the train was seen in Brzesko-Słotwina, where the local *Judenrat* prepared bread and coffee for the deportees. However, the guards would not allow food to be given to the prisoners and doused the people with the coffee that had been brought. The same thing happened at 12:30 at night at the Tarnów station. This transport was also seen in Tarnopol.

On Friday, 5 June, all of the sick were removed from the hospital, a total of 250 people. It is not known what happened to them. [4] We can only imagine the worst.

On Saturday, the ghetto was surrounded without interruption by SD officers. The day passed quietly. In the evening, a new registration was

32 The Kraków Jews were deported to the death camp in Bełżec. It was in operation from 17 March until December 1942. It was located by the railroad Warsaw-Lublin. Approximately 600,000 Jews were murdered there, mostly Polish, but also from Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia, as well as several thousand of Romanies.

33 The chairman was Artur Rosenzweig.

decreed, which had to be completed by 10 o'clock on Sunday morning. The sign was a double stamp and a blue tag. Another 2,000 Jews had to be deported.

On Sunday, these 2,000 Jews were assembled and sent out of the ghetto. Of this number, 500 of them, aged 18 to 28, were sent to the camp at Płaszów.³⁴ The remainder was sent to an "unknown destination." 20 were killed on the spot.

The furniture left behind by the deportees was later taken by the Polish *Służba Budowlana* and stored at the SD barracks.

Monday, 8 June, the SD divisions left their positions in the ghetto.

Before the deportations, Kraków's Jewish population numbered 20,000. There now remained 12,000, [5] all unsure of what tomorrow would bring.

The numbers of the murdered and wounded were officially given by the *Judenrat*. In reality, the number of victims was much higher, according to estimates by eyewitnesses, closer to double this number.

ARG I 827 (Ring. I/833)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LEG*), ink, Yiddish, 145×196 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, 3 sheets, 5 pages. Hersh Wasser's note on p. 1 in Yiddish (ink): "2 st[andard] pages. June 1942."

34 The labour camp in Kraków-Płaszów was established in autumn 1942. In January 1944, it was transformed into a concentration camp. The author is referring to the *Judenlager I* (Jewish camp I), located on Wielicka Street, in the area of the Jewish cemeteries in Płaszów, where the forced labourers of the *Ostbahn* (Eastern Railway) were quartered.

KROSNO COUNTY

DYNÓW

11

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony about the execution of a few hundred Jews in Dynów in September 1939.

In September 1939, when they³⁵ entered Dynów in Galicia, there was an SS vehicle that was called *Tod den Juden*.³⁶ They travelled from place to place, from town to town; and they murdered and burnt Jews. The details were told by a person who saw everything. In Dynów, they also killed several hundred Jews.³⁷ The remaining Jews were all chased out. There remained only one Jew there: an American citizen. Following these frightful acts, the head the Jewish community of Sanok, a very energetic and respected person who did a lot for the surrounding towns, decided to bury the Jews who had been murdered in Dynów.³⁸ He only received permission several months later. When they dug up the martyrs, a frightful sight presented itself.³⁹ The victims had clasped their hands tightly together, and it was impossible to separate them. An interesting [point] is that they found a note on one body which read: "I am about to die and my name is such and such, and I ask that I am given a Jewish burial."

ARG I 729 (Ring. I/463)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten, pencil, Yiddish, 148×208 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish: "1939. Dynów by Sanok. Anonymous note on the murder of group [?] of Jews." Printed in *To Live With Honour and Die With Honour!*... p. 682.

35 The Germans.

36 (German) Death to the Jews.

37 On 15 September 1939, the entering German troops murdered approximately 200 Jewish men in the town of Dynów and in the nearby Żurawiec forest. Approximately 50 Jews were burnt alive in the synagogue. See Waław Wierzbieniec, *Z dziejów społeczności żydowskiej Dynowa* (Rzeszów-Dynów, 2003), pp. 55–56.

38 The chairman of the *Judenrat* in Sanok was Leon Werner. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/618, p. 1.

39 Before 28 May 1940, bodies of 200 victims of executions were exhumed and buried in six graves in the new Jewish cemetery. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/618, p. 11.

RZESZÓW COUNTY

RZESZÓW

12

After 23 January 1942, Rzeszów ghetto, Laybush Jakubowicz, Jewish Community in Rzeszów, Section for the Resettled. Letters of 21 December 1941 and 23 January 1942 to the Central Committee for Refugees in Warsaw (CKU), care of Hersh Wasser.

[1] SECTION FOR THE RESETTLED OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN
RZESZÓW

L. 1301/41

21 December 1941

Department: Secretariat

With regard to: Dr Namiot

P.T.

Central Commission for Refugees in Warsaw
care of Mr Hersh Wasser

Dear Friend,

We heard that persons who recently lived in Vilna have arrived in Warsaw. I ask you to kindly verify this hearsay and obtain some information from those people about Doctor Lipman Namiot, his wife, and sister-in-law, Miss Aszkenazy, who recently lived in Vilna at Wiłkomirska Street 28, flat 11.

Hoping that you will be so kind as to do us this friendly favour and waiting for the fastest possible reliable answer, we are ready to reciprocate.

Yours sincerely,
Section for the Resettled
of the Jewish Community in Rzeszów

L. Jakubowicz⁴⁰
/-/ [illegible signature]

[2] SECTION FOR THE RESETTLED OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN
RZESZÓW

L. 53/42

23 January 1942
Department: Secretariat
With regard to: Dr Namiot

P.T.

Central Commission for Refugees in Warsaw
In care of Mr Wasser

As we have not received any reply to our letter L. 1301/41, we once again ask you to kindly inform us whether there are people from Vilna in Warsaw and, if so, whether they can give us any information regarding Doctor Lipman Namiot, his wife, and sister-in-law, Miss Aszkenazy, who lived in Vilna at Wiłkomirska Street 28, flat 11 during the period immediately before the Bolshevik war.

Hoping that this time we will receive a swift and thorough reply to our letter, we remain ready to reciprocate your kindness.

L. JAKUBOWICZ
Director of the Department for the Resettled
of the Jewish Community in Rzeszów⁴¹
/-/ [illegible signature]

ARG I 993 (Ring. I/1104)

Description: original, printed, typewritten, handwritten numbers and signatures, stamps, German, Polish, 224×250 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

40 Laybush Jakubowicz, member of the *Judenrat* in Rzeszów and the financial commission of the Social Self-Help Committee in Rzeszów. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/614, p. 69.

41 In the German original, the title is *Leiter des Umsiedlerreferates bei der jüd[ische] Gemeinde in Reichshof*.

TARNÓW COUNTY

TARNÓW

13

After February 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Zygmunt Millet.⁴² Testimony “Urlop z ghetta” [Leave from the ghetto]. The author’s journey to Dębica and Tarnów in the summer of 1941.

[1] Leave from the ghetto

I was overcome by a strong desire to leave the ghetto, if only for a short while, and to breathe in the air of freedom. That was mostly why I began thinking about acquiring a pass. That desire was even stronger than the one to see my parents. The idea came to me as early as June 1941. As there was a camp in Pustków near Dębica,⁴³ I turned to the district [police] commander L. and asked him to obtain a pass for me to inspect that camp. Initially, L. promised that he would obtain it easily and that he would talk to Ziegler.⁴⁴ Later, however, he told me that it was impossible.

In a final attempt, I submitted an application to the *Kreishauptmann* D.,⁴⁵ in which I stated that the journey was necessary on account of my family and financial situation, particularly the matter of the renovation of my house, which was under receivership. Almost immediately, I received a document granting me permission for a temporary stay in Dębica for within 8 to 10 days. I went [2] with that document to the Department of Passes of the *Judenrat* to transfer my case to the Jewish district commissioner.⁴⁶ The clerk who was head of that department told me that I would get a pass without any problems. Nonetheless, at least several weeks passed before I was finally called

42 Zygmunt Millet, the Order Service functionary in the Warsaw ghetto. For his testimonies concerning the Jewish police, see *Warsaw Ghetto. Everyday Life*, Docs. 51 and 65.

43 See Doc. 9.

44 Ziegler, chief of the Warsaw Labour Office.

45 Possibly, a reference to the Dębica *Kreishauptmann*. In 1942, it was Ernst Schlüter.

46 German official supervising the Warsaw ghetto. This position was held by Heinz Auerswald.

by the *Judenrat* to come to the Department of Passes “to obtain information regarding my application for a pass”. Obviously, I went to the Department of Passes the very next day, my heart pounding. They told me there that I had been granted a pass and that I had to pay a 200 zloty fee. When I told the clerk that I was unable to pay such a large sum of money, he showed me other passes, the prices of which were even higher. He then told me that even though the amount of the fee depended on the community, it was set by the Jewish district commissioner’s office in each individual case. [3] I said that I would apply to that commissioner to reduce the fee and that I would attach proof of my poverty.

Indeed, the next day I submitted an application with that clerk for a reduction of the fee and I attached a proof signed by the Order Service director stating that I was in a very dire financial situation and that I was unable to pay the required fee. The clerk promised me that I could perhaps have the fee reduced internally, but he did not say how. During my next visit, he told me that the German authorities forbade submission of any requests for fee reduction. As proof, he showed me a document from the Commissariat granting reduction of the fee in the given case, but at the same time informing that in the future submission of such applications would be prohibited. I then pointed out to that clerk that the document was not a circular letter and I firmly demanded submission [4] of my application. I also stated that otherwise I would submit the application directly to the Commissioner without the agency of the *Judenrat*. I also criticised the *Judenrat*, and particularly him as its representative, for the fact that, even though the Council knew that one must pay to obtain a pass, it had failed to inform the petitioner, who could otherwise include in his application a presentation of his financial situation, as well as attach suitable proofs of poverty and then be granted exemption from payment or reduction to a minimum. Obviously, the clerk was unable to offer any explanation to my accusation. As far as I know, the manner of handling these matters has not been altered even though at least a couple of months have passed.

The valid period of my pass was gradually running out. Two days before its expiration, I filed another application to prolong its validity. After two or three weeks, I received another notification [5] from the *Judenrat*. This time I was informed that the fee had been reduced to 50 zlotys, but when I wanted to make the payment they demanded 100 zlotys, saying that, even though

the Commissioner reduced the fee to 50 zlotys, I should pay another 50 zlotys for the pass that had expired. I tried to explain to the clerk that I did not obtain that first pass and that on the second one it was written that the fee was 50 zlotys. Nonetheless, the clerk categorically claimed that I pay 100 zlotys. There was something so illogical in the clerk's demand that I went to the *Judenrat* chairman's secretary, Attorney W.,⁴⁷ and I convinced him to go with me to the Department of Passes, where after long negotiations I finally settled the matter in such a way that I had to pay 50 zlotys. Moreover, I promised in writing that I would pay the fee in the amount of 50 zlotys for the first pass, which expired, provided that the Jewish district Commissioner made such a demand.

After that formality, the clerk told me that [6] on the basis of that pass (it was a so-called train pass,⁴⁸ allowing the Jew named ... to travel in a third-class carriage from Warsaw to Dębica from ... to ...) I would receive permission to leave the Jewish district. The pass was valid beginning on 10 October. On 9 October at approximately 3 p.m., I received both documents, the said train pass and the other pass allowing me to leave the Jewish district on 10 October. I asked how I would return because there was no permission on the pass to return into the ghetto. I was told that after my return I should go to the *Transferstelle* at Królewska Street 21, where I would get a pass to re-enter.

The very same day on 9 October, I decided to cross to the Aryan district in order to visit a friend of mine. Even though the pass was valid for one day only, 10 October, I [7] hoped that the gendarme would not notice. Indeed, I crossed without any problems. I will never forget that feeling. I will never forget the feeling I had when I went through the *wacha*, leaving the biggest concentration camp in history. Of course, decency, sentimentalism, mercy, and other similar feelings had been numbed for every Jew in the ghetto. Even so, I could feel tears streaming down my cheeks after I had left the Jewish district. I headed toward Wolska Street, walking along the once familiar streets. The sights I saw were totally different from what I had seen in the Jewish street. The streets were peaceful, without any sign of that hectic bustle one saw in the [Jewish] district. But poorly-dressed people queued outside shops,

47 Possibly a reference to Zygmunt Warman, deputy of the *Judenrat* secretary general. The secretary to the *Judenrat* chairman was Leon Tenenbaum.

48 Ban on travelling by train. See footnote 13.

particularly outside the ones selling tobacco. Moreover, it was not the Wolska Street from the past. It seemed that a sense of melancholy and oppression radiated from every stone, [8] from every building.

I returned home that day after several hours. A blue policeman stopped me by the *wacha*. Then a gendarme approached and they both frisked me, concentrating on my pockets, to check that I was not smuggling anything, and they let me go. The next day I set out again, this time to leave Warsaw, carrying a small briefcase containing only underwear. I decided not to travel in the Order Service cap, so as not to attract attention. I also feared that upon my second leave it would be difficult for me to walk out with the briefcase, in which I had my underwear. I stood by the gate on Chłodna Street and at that moment the gendarme was busy talking with some woman, so I walked confidently toward the blue policeman, showed him my pass, and walked through.

It was a beautiful day. I walked along Chłodna Street, past Żelaznej Bramy Square near my former flat, along the street joining Żelaznej Bramy Square with Marszałkowska Street, and then along Marszałkowska Street. The streets looked as if they were in a deserted [9] city. It was quiet with almost no traffic. This world seemed different from the Jewish district, which was just about a dozen or even only a few metres away.

First and foremost, I visited my very close lady friend. When we saw each other, we embraced, and we did not say a word to each other for a long while. I had not seen her for over a year. I visited several other friends of mine, too. I often took off my armband since I could see from my friends' faces that they did not like me wearing it. Whether I wore it or not, nobody paid attention to me. I removed the armband particularly when I had to travel by tram. I did as follows on such occasions: I went into my friend's home wearing the band and I went onto the street without it. At first, it seemed to me that I would stay in Warsaw for several days. But after I had seen [10] my friends and taken care of some personal matters, I concluded I had nothing more to look for in that other Warsaw and I decided to continue my journey the very same evening.

I went to the railway station without the armband. I bought a ticket there and then visited some friends of mine, who advised me not to try to board the train at the Main Railway Station, because I could not board the train there. I was told to go to the Eastern Railway Station instead. So, I removed my armband and I boarded a tram. The passengers behaved totally differently than before the war. They all sat quietly and did not talk to one another. One could

see that they were either feeling alien or that something was bothering them. That was how I reached the Eastern Railway Station. The station was blacked out, even the tunnels. There was no information. I found out from the porter from which platform the train was leaving. I saw a number of soldiers and uniformed Germans from various [11] formations and organisations.

The train arrived three hours late. I entered a totally dark compartment and I sat by the window with my right arm to the carriage wall. I carefully took out the armband and pulled it over my sleeve. Two gentlemen sat down in front of me. With coats over their right arms, they whispered to each other. I saw immediately that they were Jews, too. A few other people sat in the compartment. The two gentlemen asked about our location. They found out that the train had just pulled out of the station where they wanted to get off. They ran out into the corridor, when one of the other passengers pointed out that they were Jews with covered armbands. When those gentlemen wanted to return to the compartment, the other passengers would not allow it. An anti-Semitic conversation began. One of the passengers, a labourer, said that he had been in the ghetto. He described [12] with total objectivity how shocking it was for him to see people dying on the street. But due to the anti-Semitic atmosphere displayed in the compartment, he kept saying that he did not pity the Jews at all.

That was how I reached Kraków, where I was to wait two hours for the train to Tarnów. I stepped out and went into the waiting room. When I was about to return to the platform, I showed my ticket to the German porter. He stopped me, called a German from the *Bahnpolizei*,⁴⁹ and told him to collect a six zloty fine from me for my failure to show the pass. I took out my pass to show it to him, but it was too late. The policeman escorted me to the railway police station, where I tried to explain [the matter] to an elderly German (we were alone), but he told me that he must collect the fine. [13] *Sie verstehen in welchen Zeiten wir leben*,⁵⁰ he added.

The crowding was so bad that I had great difficulty in boarding the train bound for Tarnów. I need to point out that I could see many more Jewish travellers than in Congress Poland. It was conspicuous. My pass allowed me to travel to the town of Dębica, but I decided to make a stop in Tarnów. I was

49 (German) railway police.

50 (German) You understand in what times we are living.

afraid that I would have some difficulty departing from the train, but I noticed that, even though there was a German guard by the exit in Tarnów, nobody was checking the train passes for Jews. Consequently, I walked into town with no problems. There is no ghetto in Tarnów.⁵¹ Half the trams were for Jews and half for non-Jews. The fare for Jews, however, was twice the standard one.

I travelled by tram to my relatives, who told me more about the life of the Jews in T[arnów]. There was no ghetto, but the Jews were allowed to walk only on one side of the street. [14] Yet even on the same street, sometimes the Jewish path was on the right side, other times on the left, depending on where the pavement was better. There were no signs, but those who trespassed were punished by the Polish police.

As for my real estate, the administrators had not yet been appointed. The municipality appointed administrators for the entire property only in cases in which the owner or co-owner was absent. Moreover, the administrators paid full income to the owners. The Jews could run the shops themselves. Most of the enterprises, particularly major companies, voluntarily asked for an appointed administrator. The situation was much better than in Warsaw, even before the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto. Germans were quartered in many Jewish homes. My relative, for instance, had the fourth German lodger in a row. During my stay, it was a [15] Gestapo functionary and his wife. The man came at midday with a document confirming his assigned accommodation. He came again in the evening, this time with a box of chocolates for my niece. When he found out that I had come from Warsaw, he took out a pack of cigarettes and gave it to me. He was from Graz and his wife had come to him for three weeks, which was why he was assigned accommodation.

On the main street, Krakowska Street, there were only German shops, in which only Germans were allowed to shop. There had been no robberies or requisitions of furniture of the kind one saw in Warsaw. Yet there had been, particularly recently, round-ups on the streets. The captured people were sent to Pustków. I also learned that a few friends of mine had disappeared after “interrogations” by the Gestapo.

After my two-day stay in Tarnów, I set out again. Dębica is a small town located 45 kilometres from Tarnów. There was no ghetto here either, but there [16] were other kinds of restrictions. For instance, Jews could not

51 The ghetto in Tarnów was established by order of the town commissioner on 9 July 1942.

make purchases in shops or in the market square. I also saw a peculiar thing: Many of the shops were run by Poles, particularly the intelligentsia, such as judges, former clerks, and public prosecutors, who used to hold positions in other towns. Due to the war, they had returned to their hometowns or to their families. The Dębica municipal board, headed by the middle school teacher S., not only did not help the Jewish population, but even made the lives of the Jews more difficult whenever possible. For instance, a bomb dropped on our house in Dębica during a German air raid, cutting it in half as if with a knife. In the surviving part, we had an engine that kept the water supply system running. The municipal board took it away, along with all the bricks and wood, under the pretext of [17] covering the clearing costs. Moreover, the part of the plot where our damaged house stood was allocated for a street without any consultation.

As for prices, in Dębica they were several times lower than even the prices in Aryan Warsaw.

After a few days in Dębica, I made another stop in Tarnów on my way. A certain change had taken place there: The Jews were now forbidden to walk along certain streets. They could walk only along side streets (February 1942).⁵²

ARG I 721 (Ring. I/610)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), handwritten (CA*), pencil, Polish, 3, 150×210 mm, 51 sheets, 51 pages. Attached is Hersch Wasser's note in Polish: "1942. 3 duplicates. No. 610. »On leave from the ghetto« (temporary leaving of the Warsaw ghetto on the basis of a pass) (Warsaw Polish side – Tarnów – Dębica – Warsaw). Comments – Polish-Jewish relations. Submitted by Salomea Ostrowska, written by Attorney Milet."

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 17 sheets, 17 pages.

52 The ordinance of 7 February 1942 forbade the Jews to walk along Krakowska, Małe Schody, Wielkie Schody, and Wałowa Streets, as well as from Basztowa Street to Wałowa Street, from Rybna Street to Żołnierska Street, and from Kupiecka Street to Wałowa Street. These ordinances limited the possibility to walk from the eastern part of the city to one place in the western part of the city, Pilzneńska Gate.

18 June 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony "Tarnów," on the Aktion in Tarnów, 11–13 June 1942.

[1] 18 June 1942

Tarnów

Somebody arrived from Tarnów after going there to bring several people to Warsaw. According to this person, ten days before the pogrom the Jews were forbidden to leave their flats. That order not only forbade them to leave their homes and go out onto the street, but even to step out of their corridors and enter their neighbours' flats. The Jews who did not have food supplies in their home suffered from hunger. After ten days of this house arrest, the gendarmes surrounded the buildings inhabited by Jews, while a detachment of Germans, who arrived especially for that purpose, began to ruthlessly murder the Jews, killing a few thousand people. The Germans then threw eight thousand Jews out of their homes, gathered them all in a park and ordered them to kneel for 24 hours. After that time, some of them were packed onto lorries and transported in an unknown direction, while others were escorted to the Jewish cemetery. The Jews were ordered to strip naked there, after which all of them [2] were executed with machine guns. The total number of the Jews killed in Tarnów is estimated at eight thousand people.⁵³ The German soldiers took the clothes of the executed Jews from the cemetery to the town. Purportedly, the German population of Tarnów greeted them enthusiastically with flowers. The first day the massacre took place in a totally chaotic way. It seems that later some of the Jews were released on the basis of appropriate employment certificates.

The person that arrived from Tarnów went there as an Aryan. That person did not manage to transport the said persons to Warsaw, for the Jewish tenements were locked and rounded up and there was no access to them.

53 The first Aktion in Tarnów was conducted on 11–18 June 1942. Some 3,500 people were deported to the death camp in Bełżec, approximately 3,000 people were killed on the spot, and approximately 6,000 were executed in the forest in Zbylitowska Góra near Tarnów. See Adam Bartosz, *Tarnowskie judaica* (Warszawa, 1992), p. 54.

During the period when the Jews were detained in their homes, the prices in Tarnów went up so much that a kilogram of bread cost 40 zlotys.

ARG I 1026 (Ring. I/919)

Description: original, handwritten (E*), pencil, Polish, 154×193 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. On p. 2, Hersh Wasser's information in Yiddish (ink): "1 st[andard] page. 1942."

Part II

Lublin District

After March 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Mordecai Auerbach.⁵⁴ Testimony “נסיעה וואַרשע - לובלין” [Journey from Warsaw to Lublin], recorded by Hersh Wasser. Report of a youth activist on his journey in March 1941 to a Hanoar Hatzioni conference.

[1] Journey from Warsaw to Lublin

Beginning of March. 4 March, 7 a.m. Left with a group of workers of the *Wehrmacht*⁵⁵ [. . .] Solna Street, Mirowski Square. On the way, he threw away the armband and walked out of the line. Went to the appointed address (his cousin – fake documents – as a Christian – goes to church every Sunday – for business). He packed a suitcase with contraband – brings back food. To Main Train Station. Travelled by 10:45 fast train, crowded. An incident with a restaurant owner from Zamość – *polskie świnie – wstyd – cham*⁵⁶ [. . .] the bones. Lublin, 2:30, at a certain address – the goal (regional conference). Encountered a youth gathering; immediately spoke out. It is only on

54 Mordecai Auerbach, activist of *Hanoar Hatzioni*, maintaining contacts with Shmuel Bresław. See Yitzhak Zuckerman (Antek), *A Surplus of Memory. Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, translated by Barbara Harshav (Los Angeles, 1993), pp. XXX

55 People working for the *Wehrmacht* outside the ghetto.

56 (Polish) polish pigs, a disgrace, lout.

Krakowskie Przedmieście that Jews are not allowed,⁵⁷ generally freer. Jews do business with the Poles on a large scale. The Jews say that the Poles have already sobered up.

The regional conference of 14 towns: Zamość, Wąwolnica, Bychawa, Sienno, Kraśnik, Chełm, Dęblin, Staszów, Lipsko nad Wisłą, Bodzentyn, Chmielnik, Opatów. The goal: to present the direction of the work, to give the comrades the orientation in the general work – organisational – reports. Reports (brought with him expenses[?] in a suitcase with a double cover).

Zamość – periods change – good ones and bad ones – split into 3 groups – the very young ones, the medium, and the older ones – permission for conducting Hebrew classes – every week and every two weeks – circulars – instructions. For the inauguration, two *parnasim*⁵⁸ came and Mrs Dobrzyńska⁵⁹ – the *kehilah kedosha*⁶⁰ in a very poor house.

Wąwolnica – one group – 20 active members.

Bychawa – the town suffered greatly from the bombardments – the Germans are living in requisitioned Jewish flats – among ours Shmuel Erlich – Mund[?] Haltern – very fine work – (sending food parcels to Warsaw the whole time).

Siенno – mayor, a local *Volksdeutsche*, particular hatred of Poles – fond of Jews. There is no military authority – active meetings in ruins and cellars.

Chełm – in January several thousand people forced out to Bełżec, shot.⁶¹

Dęblin – announced that a ghetto was to be established, there were still denunciations by Poles about the boycott, [they] robbed. Jews-Germans not bad – Poles-Jews [relations] very strained, denunciations.

57 At the very beginning of the occupation, the German authorities removed Jews from the buildings on Krakowskie Przedmieście, the main street of Lublin. In summer 1940, Jews were banned from walking on that street.

58 (Hebrew) traditional Jewish community leaders; here probably some local youth leaders.

59 Probably some coded information.

60 (Hebrew) holy (Jewish) community, traditional community title; here probably a local youth group.

61 Reference to the death march from Chełm towards the Soviet border, which took place in December 1939, when the Germans drove approximately 2,000 Jewish men, 440 of whom they killed on the way. In January 1940, approximately 600 Lublin Jews were killed in the vicinity of Chełm. See Dieter Pohl, *Znaczenie dystryktu lubelskiego w „ostatecznym rozwiązaniu kwestii żydowskiej,”* in: *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*, ed. Dariusz Libionka (Warszawa, 2004), p. 40.

Staszów – Jews-Poles – [relations] good. They warn each other before searches, hide one another's merchandise, buy merchandise for themselves.

[2] Lipsko – devastation, 90 per cent destroyed. Suspected [?] – 35 Jews and 15 Christians shot on the market square – buried [?] near a fence. Dreadful poverty – 14 people in one dwelling. The guard, a *Volksdeutscher*, takes money openly.

Bodzentyn – Chmielnik – often [. . .], SS – one runs to the forests[?].

Opatów⁶² – the regional conference – three days – entire days (14 delegates, and 10 local delegates decided to create a seminar for Jewish studies – courses. The community[?] must be there. In the small towns, there is precise radio news. The peasants have radios – as do the Germans... Mood of resignation. Back to Warsaw. The journey – nothing special – 9:30 p.m.

Questioning the new delegates about the wealthy – the peak of our involvement.

ARG I 851 (Ring. I/1174)

Description: original, handwritten (H.W.*), ink, Yiddish, 150×198 mm, sheet 1, page 2. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish: "1941. Original. Report on the journey of a Zionist youth activist Mordecai Auerbach to the regional conference in Lublin. Recorded by H.Wasser."

LUBLIN

16

After 19 January 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony (case study?) "לובלין" [Lublin]. The status of the Jewish population, persecutions, forced labour, levies.

[1] Lublin

The problem of [catching] to work. Locked in homes the entire [winter?] tormented [. . .] work. Only 5 o'clock at night, it was still not [. . .] I myself also

62 In the original, the town is Apt, the name used by Jews.

worked – received [. . .]. The [. . .] of separating Jews from Christian streets continued. Winter [. . .] orders 3–4 times a day – [. . .] anarchy. SS [. . .] four – beds[?] [. . .] for several hours – whatever one needed was collected either in nature or in money – every hour [a new tragedy – carpets, special [. . .], furniture – only in the end let go. [. . .] commandant. It is impossible to assess the [amount of] levies in Lublin. The *kehillah* [. . .] did not say. The first levy–[in] December – 200,000[?] diamonds, several kilograms of gold and half [million?] zlotys⁶³ – How much was collected remains unknown [. . .] one is certain ([. . .] silver cups, candlesticks[?]) known, that [. . .] the whole time later. The Jewish community [?] lived from this money.

In the time [. . .] the epidemic [because of] greetings. Greetings – blows, no greetings – blows – quite a few months until a decree was issued that Jews were not permitted to greet.⁶⁴ One did not earn, patches⁶⁵ only from [. . .] the end of November. The shame before the Poles. The Poles did not [. . .] a bad treatment. [Workers?] duty [?] community 21 days in [. . .] led back.

The first time to the labour camps ([. . .]) at night – SS [. . .] the police not once [. . .] took to helping Jews [. . .] a man. Only [. . .] members of the *Judenrat* (also in a cellar – shot [. . .] a guard in Jewish houses in case something is [. . .] in [. . .] bad for the fight – fatal in the war). [. . .] Bekker [. . .] man, a fool [. . .], not a degenerate, not a bad person [. . .].⁶⁶ Dr. Alten a native of Galicia, lawyer, also a [. . .] bad person[?].⁶⁷ He thought that [. . .] to command[?] of

63 That second levy was imposed on 1 December 1939. With the Jewish population of Lublin unable to pay it, the Germans arrested and detained in the Castle a group of Jewish owners of the city's largest shops and wholesale stores. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 89–90.

64 In January 1940, Jews were forced to bow to German pedestrians. The ordinance was cancelled on 17 January 1941. *Ibidem*, pp. 94–95.

65 Beginning on 1 December 1939, Lublin Jews above the age of ten were forced to wear two yellow patches on their outer layer of clothing: one on the right side of their chest and the other in the middle of their back. In January 1940, the patches were replaced with white armbands with a blue Star of David. *Ibidem*, p. 90.

66 Henryk Bekker (1886–1942), construction engineer, before the war an activist of ORT and TOZ, leader of the Jewish People's Party (*Folkspartei*), Lublin Councillor during 1927–1934, Jewish Community chairman, 1936–1939, during the war the *Judenrat* chairman. Murdered in Bełżec. *Ibidem*, pp. 59–60.

67 Marek Alten (1883–1942), doctor of law with chambers in Lublin before the war, Zionist activist, Councillor since 1929, chairman of the Lublin ORT branch, secretary and then

the [...] they will become[?] [...] which will [...] impossible[?] the remaining are [...] tiny [...] [Ke]stenberg. [...] a presidium[?] member used for himself[?] [...] Jew.⁶⁸ On Krakowskie Przedmieście [...] Kestenberg [...] the Germans.

Bełżec – the issue of [...] 5,000 unfortunates [...] [p]eople.⁶⁹ Barteczko [...] many victims [...] 300–400 victims.⁷⁰ And [...] the murdered [...] until October. The [...] very [...] several [...] unfortunately[?] [...] was from time to [time] [...] And approximately up to [...] people) [...] Jews were not allowed to [...] and [...] and [...] On the field[?]

[2] [...] 6 p.m. in the street spotted Jews [...] unrest[?] . . . Several [...] wagons to [...] Christians, fear, expulsion (permitted to go until 7¹¹) [...] surrounded with [...] Jewish streets. The expulsion 3 days [...] the housing office could [...] 8–900[?] [...] to [...] and Siedliszcze.⁷² The [...] were received[?]. Immediately on the following day's news, within a short time [...] came back. 33,000 Jews and about 40,000 – ran [...] in [...] constantly [...] calmed down. [...] summer[?] – much calmer – [...] *Aktion*[?] 1,000 kilos of wool[?] the [...] Globocnik.⁷³

member of the board of the Jewish Community. During the war, supervised the Order Service as the deputy chairman of the *Judenrat*, held the position of the ŻSS consultant at the office of the Lublin District Head. Murdered during the *Aktion* at Majdan Tatarski. *Ibidem*, p. 60.

68 Salomon Kestenberg (Kastenberg) (1891–1942), merchant, activist of Jewish professional and social organisations, in 1931. Became a member of the board of the Jewish Community and in 1933 its deputy chairman. During the war, a member of the *Judenrat* responsible for its finances, marital status affairs, and cemeteries. *Ibidem*, p. 60.

69 Labour camp for Jews in Bełżec, established in May 1940. Its prisoners built a fortification belt on the border with the USSR. Lublin Jews were the first victims of the camp. *Ibidem*, pp. 121–123.

70 Probably a reference to the Trawniki labour camp commander Franz Bartetzko (Barteczko).

71 Curfew for Jews was 7 p.m., while for Poles it was 9 p.m. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 93.

72 Camp in Siedliszcze (Chełm County), water management (*Wasserwirtschaft*) labour camp for Jews established in 1940. Its prisoners carried out drainage work on arable land on the Mogielnica River. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 41–42.

73 Odilo Globocnik (1904–1945), commander of the SS and the police in the Lublin District between November 1939 and September 1943. One of the organisers and supervisors of the *Aktion Reinhardt*, in 1943 transferred to the operational zone on the Adriatic coast. Captured by the British; committed suicide.

10 a.m. [. . .] in [. . .] at Lipowa [Street] 7 and SS[?] camp⁷⁴ – frost [. . .] undressed and barefoot [. . .] (Dr. Alten, Bekker, Kastenberga, Attorney Kerszman⁷⁵) ½ hour Glob[ocnik?] [. . .] 500 Jews, saboteurs, engineer Bekker a [. . .] and [. . .] 24 hours, allowed[?] the shoes – in a bunker – hostages – brought a lot more[?] than was needed.

ARG I 852 (Ring. I/1212)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (H.W.*), Yiddish, 145×200 mm, many damages and fragments missing, 2 sheets, 4 pages. Edited part of the document is 1 sheet, 2 pages; the other part is included in *Oyneyg Shabes. People and Works*, Doc. 7.

17

After 28 January 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account “לובלין” [Lublin]. The beginnings of the German occupation; registration of Jews; the arrest of a group of Jews on 25 October 1939, their confinement and mistreatment.

[1] Lublin

I arrived in Lublin on Tuesday, 19 September 1939. The Germans had been there since Monday, 18 September. The city seemed sinister and hushed. Ruins stared at the sky. An intermission. There was something still to come. I moved

74 Labour camp at Lipowa Street 7 in Lublin, established in December 1939. A year later, it came under management of the German Arms Plant (*Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*, DAW), which specialised in wood industry. In 1941, most of its prisoners were Jewish craftsmen from Lublin. More than 2,000 Jewish POWs were detained there. Having murdered the Jewish prisoners on 4 November 1943, the Germans employed a few dozen Majdanek prisoners of various nationalities. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 133–135; J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 95.

75 Izaak Kerszman (1892–?), economist and lawyer in Lublin before the war, TOZ activist. In 1939, co-opted to the Jewish Community board, member of the *Judenrat*, chairman of the Commission to Aid Refugees (*Komisja Pomocy Uchodźcom*), supervised the Postal Department (*Wydział Pocztowy*) and collection of fees and communal taxes. T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 63.

in with a certain acquaintance of mine, who treated me splendidly. Until after *Sukkot*, the Germans, not knowing in which world they found themselves, behaved quite tolerably. We actually celebrated *Sukkot* in a *sukkah*. In due course, a *Judenrat* was appointed. Jews used to escape to nearby Piaski, where the Reds⁷⁶ were. People were still deluding themselves that Lublin would be taken by the Reds. Shortly after *Sukkot*, the Germans tightened their hold on the city. And immediately, there began systematic legal and random robbing and looting of Jewish property. Beating on sight became widespread in Lublin. Seizure for work, duly illustrated⁷⁷ by beatings, became a weekly occurrence.

The date 25 October (I believe) was set for the registration of all Jewish men aged 16 to 60. Jews did not know whether to go or not. Some thought it was not so straightforward, because why did everyone (around 20,000 people) have to arrive and present themselves all on one day, if there was no system, no plan? Others advised going. General plunder had been announced for that day and the Germans did not want any witnesses. Thus it was not advisable to remain at home.

It was a dreary, wet day, the first great Jewish mass calamity. Everyone's sleep and rest was disturbed. Crowds of people streamed to the square by Lipowa Street. The assembled Jews arranged themselves according to their occupations. At first, no officials were to be seen apart from soldiers. Not until 12 o'clock were several Jewish community officials spotted. They began to release certain occupational groups. Each released group had to leave the square singing various Jewish songs.

About 8,000 men remained. They were not downhearted. People joked and teased each other. Gradually the Germans showed their claws. Here a beating, there a blow, a slap. But it was still bearable. Some SS men even made supposedly sympathetic comments about the negligence of the Jewish communal authorities. Many Jewish folksongs and religious songs were sung: *Mir veln zey iberlebn*,⁷⁸ *Ma na'im goralenu*.⁷⁹ Many people clapped along.

76 Part of the Lublin area, including the small town of Piaski, was occupied by the Red Army until 8 October 1939.

77 Thus in the original; probably should be: accompanied.

78 (Yiddish) We shall survive them; sung to the tune of the popular folksong *Lomir zikh iberbetn* (Let's make up).

79 (Hebrew) How good is our lot.

In the afternoon, people became very uneasy. They could see no end. The few scribblers from the *kehillah* board got on with their job, but you could already feel something in the air, something sinister. Nobody was allowed to move from the spot. Night fell quickly. There was a penetrating drizzle. The square and all present, including, let me stress, the elderly and weak, were soaked through. Sneaking off to the side to relieve oneself was a risky business, because woe to anyone spotted by a soldier. The afternoon and dusk would have been enough to give a good idea of the brown-shirted rulers.

But the greatest tragedy was only just beginning. Around 6 [o'clock] in the evening, our group was driven out into Lipowa Street. They pushed us on for 45 minutes, but we [were sure] they were driving us all to slaughter, so no one even tried to run away.

[2] Beaten with rifle butts and whips, falling into puddles and struggling to our feet, dragging many others with us, we were driven in an unknown direction, probably to certain death. What is more, we had to act happy and constantly sing various songs. Overweight Jews were already exhausted. Blows from whips and sticks threatened at every moment. They drove us on somewhere, far away, to a place where barracks had been set up. On the side was an open, half-finished barn. There we were given shelter. The barracks were for groups which came after us.

We expected the worst. It did not even occur to anyone that we would be set free. Based on our good knowledge of German practice from hearsay, we expected, at best, to be sent to a concentration camp. We were 2,000 people, head to head, body upon body, and everything in clinging, stinking mud smeared with horse dung. Our guards were *Volksdeutsche*, and they vented all their fury and savagery on us. They pelted us with stones, beat us with rifles, or just screamed at us. Time passed slowly, and we grew increasingly gloomy. Late at night, they again began to drive us on. The entire area, apart from a narrow passageway, was surrounded by barbed wire. Due to the pitch darkness, masses of people were injured, falling onto the wire. I must add that even then they hounded us. The beams from electric torches, the screams of the wounded, the rain, the mud, the hoarse shouts of the torturers, all combined in a hellish din and pandemonium. After struggling free, we began running home. We were shaking with fear, as it was well past curfew time. We arrived home crippled, beaten, broken in spirit.

Those thrown into the barracks suffered a far worse fate. They were kept all night without food and not allowed to relieve themselves. All 2,000 of them, particularly the overweight and elderly, were forced to do murderous exercises. With limitless sadism, they were ordered to get undressed and perform those ghastly tricks, half-naked. More than 20 people [were] seriously wounded, some of them tortured to death.

The next morning the city looked like the aftermath of a catastrophe.

Brown fascism had revealed its full horror.

28 January 1941

ARG I 847 (Ring. I/852)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten, pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Title followed by the comment “second continuation” in Yiddish, in the author’s handwriting. In the margins, the Hebrew letter “ע”. The document was kept in a binder. Edition based on both duplicate copies, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

18

After 7 January 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “לובלין” [Lublin]. Situation of Lublin Jews from the beginning of the war until early 1942, influx of refugees, levies, smuggling, collaborators, forced labour, the fate of Jewish prisoners of war, the deportation of 10,000 Jews in March 1941, labour camps.

[1] Lublin

Pre-war Lublin had approximately 120,000 inhabitants: Jews and Christians. After the outbreak of the war, the population – Jews and Christians – greatly increased. Today, Lublin has up to 90,000 Jews, compared to 45,000 before the war.⁸⁰ The growth of the Jewish community in Lublin was the result of

80 According to the 1931 census, 38,935 of the total of 112,285 Lublin inhabitants were Jews. Tatiana Berenstein gives the number of Jews in the city as 43,000 in 1939 and 37,034 on 25 October 1939. In 1940, that number steadily increased, reaching 45,000 in November 1940.

the extraordinary wartime events and the mass expulsions and persecutions of the Jewish population in the surrounding area and in far-distant places in the Polish Republic.

Jews came to Lublin from Kraków and Łódź, Bielsk, and Sieradz, from near and distant places. There were various reasons. Lublin, as a large pre-war trade centre, attracted big merchants who fled from the places in which they were established, taking with them large amounts of property and stocks of goods which they had managed to rescue. Long after their cities had been taken by the occupying troops, when the SS, the Gestapo and other military formations were already in charge and operating their “plunder economy”, big merchants, with the help of bribed *Volksdeutsche* and SS, brought the rest of their possessions and goods to Lublin from their previous homes – after paying large sums of money, of course. Thus the “Cełka” shoe factory, for example, moved here from Krakow, as did textile warehouses from Łódź, Bielsk, and Tomaszów.

[2] The second reason was the spread of rumours that the Germans intended to transfer the bulk of Polish Jewry to the Lublin region.⁸¹

In this way, the number of Jews in Lublin grew to 90,000.

The *Judenrat* set up after the arrival of the Germans largely consists of former members of the *kehillah* administration. The top positions in the *Judenrat* were taken by Dr. Alten, a Zionist; Engineer Bekker, a Folkist; and the Revisionist Kestenberga. The other members of the *Judenrat* include: Attorney Kirszman,⁸² Tenenbaum,⁸³ Dr. Zygfryd,⁸⁴ Attorney Szach,⁸⁵ Attorney R. Ergemajn,⁸⁶ and so on.⁸⁷ There are 24 members in all.

The newcomers were from Kalisz, Sieradz, Złoczew, Łódź, and Szczecin. Tatiana Brustin-Berenstein, „Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim,” BŻIH, 1(21) (1957): table 1.

81 During the first months of the occupation, the German authorities did consider the establishment of a reservation for Jews in the Lublin region. Many Jews expelled from the territories incorporated into the Reich were deported there.

82 Izaak Kerszman.

83 Bentsiyon Tenenbaum (1896–?), shoemaker, member of the Council of Jewish Craftsmen (*Rada Rzemieślników Żydowskich*) in Lublin and the Chamber of Crafts (*Izba Rzemieślnicza*), on the *kehillah* board from 1931, on the *Judenrat* supervised workshops operating for the Germans, and a member of the Male Forced Labour Commission (*Komisja Pracy Przymusowej Mężczyzn*) and the Health Commission (*Komisja Zdrowia*). See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 63.

From the beginning of the war until December 1941, three levies were imposed on the city (Jewish population). The first levy was the hardest, because the Germans were threatening to impose the “yellow star”. Jews gave money and jewellery to have the Germans repeal the harsh decree and free the Jews of Lublin from the great “disgrace”.⁸⁸

Buying them off, however, had demoralising results. It led to further harassment on the part of the Germans, with the unrestrained SS and Gestapo constantly threatening and misusing the new “instrument” to extort money and valuable household effects on various occasions, both from the *kehillah* and from the Jewish population.

It got to a point that if an SS man or Gestapo agent used a droshky in the street or took goods from a Jewish shop, he would send a bill to the *kehillah* finance department demanding payment. There was no limit to their wild ideas. For Christmas 1940, they [3] (the Gestapo) demanded three “dolls”.⁸⁹ Their crazy demand was met and the *kehillah* supplied the “dolls”. There is no lack of Jewish helpers to assist the Germans in their mad antics. A bunch of informers, known troublemakers and underworld types, distinguish themselves in this work.

84 Yoysef Zygfryd (Siegfried), economist and doctor of law, on the Lublin *Judenrat* from November 1940, where he managed human resources and the Health Commission. *Ibidem*, p. 64.

85 Probably a reference to Maurycy Szlaf (1897–1941), lawyer in Lublin, General Zionist activist, town Councillor from 1934. On the *Judenrat*, headed the Levies Commission (*Komisja Kontrybucyjna*) and the Education Department, treasurer of the Jewish Aid Committee (*Żydowski Komitet Pomocy*). *Ibidem*, p. 64.

86 Probably a reference to Dovid Hochgemajn (1905–?), lawyer in Lublin, philanthropist, member of the *Judenrat* from January 1940. Responsible for setting and collecting a communal levy and for running the Civil Records Commission (*Komisja Stanu Cywilnego*) and the Cemetery Commission (*Komisja Cmentarna*). *Ibidem*, p. 61.

87 The remaining *Judenrat* members were Yitskhok Bursztyn, Arn Bach, Urysz Cymerman, Dovid Dawidsohn, Dovid Edelsztajn, Yoysef Goldsztern, Avrom Goldsobel, Leon Hufnagel, Arn Yankl Kantor, Yankev Kelner, Dovid Rechtman, Yosl Wajselfisz, Shloyme Halbersztadt, Shloyme Kerszenblum, Nakhman Lerner, and Aleksander Lewi. *Ibidem*, p. 61–65.

88 The Germans imposed the first levy in the amount of 300,000 zlotys on 14 October 1939. Despite that, the wearing of yellow patches was imposed on 1 December 1939.

89 The Yiddish word *lalke* (doll) is a euphemism for prostitute.

The following are known collaborators of the SS and Gestapo in the city: Shamay Grajer,⁹⁰ the owner of an “entertainment venue”,⁹¹ also known in town as a big “facilitator” – for a pretty penny, of course. He is also a partner in all the flour dealers’ smuggling affairs and, in general, in all “non-kosher” Jewish war-time money-earning activities. His accomplices are “Mates Szczerba”, “Sholem Babe”, and the Piniker brothers.

Their affairs go so far that, despite the harsh foreign-exchange restrictions, they conduct their currency trading quite openly. Dealings with the *Devisenstelle*,⁹² as it is officially called, are conducted by “Wacek Krawaciarz”; “Sender Sztokman”; *para nie para*,⁹³ “Diament” and Avrom Fajgenbojm. Those are the names of the “upright Jews” who became the scourge of the local Jewish population.

The assignment of Jews to public forced labour and the decree on labour camps led to the creation of a special *Judenrat* labour office. The labour office is managed by Mr Kestenberga, who spearheads the sacred task of assigning Jews to all kinds of hard labour, rounding them up and sending them to forced labour camps, freeing the sons of the rich sons in exchange for large sums of money which he puts in his own pocket, taking as his “partner” the finance department of the Lublin *kehillah*, which legitimises the whole business and creates a new source of income for the *Judenrat*, a modern method of raising money for the needs of the *kehillah*.⁹⁴ In December 1939, the Lublin *kehillah* was required for the first time to supply a large number of Jewish labourers.

90 Shamay (Shmaya) Grayer, barber before the war, purportedly a pimp, at the beginning of the occupation detained in Lublin Castle, from where he was released as a Gestapo informer. Informed the Germans about concealed merchandise, acted as a middleman in the transfer of bribes to them, and organised their entertainment; set up a restaurant in the ghetto. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 245–248.

91 Term used here as a euphemism for a brothel.

92 (German) Foreign Exchange Office.

93 (Polish, slang) not going well together.

94 The Labour Office of the *Judenrat* was established in October 1939, with Hersh Goldfinger as its director. In July 1940, its functions were taken over by the German *Arbeitsamt*. From October 1939, there also existed a *Judenrat* Obligatory Men’s Labour Department, headed by Bentsiyon Tenenbaum, with Moyshe Glikstajn as its director, and an Obligatory Women’s Labour Department (*Wydział Pracy Obowiązkowej Kobiet*). Shloyme Kestenberga was not directly responsible for running these departments. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 100, 104–106.

Around 1,500 people were seized and locked up in the Lublin *Zamek*⁹⁵ (a prison). After they had been kept in the *Zamek* for a few days, a large number of them were released in exchange for payment. The others [4] were supposed to be marched off to the Bug,⁹⁶ but the order never came.

The artisans among the prisoners remained permanent forced labourers. They work in “Lipowy Square,”⁹⁷ where they perform various tasks for low wages.

The biggest round-up in the city was carried out in February 1940 to get hold of workers for the labour camps in Puławy and Hrubieszów.⁹⁸

People in the city became aware of the approaching round-up in advance. All men aged 16 to 60 tried to hide, as best they could. For this purpose, hiding places were prepared in the houses, and a “technique” was adopted whereby someone kept watch and alerted people at the appropriate moment, when danger threatened and the *khapers*⁹⁹ (Jewish police) were close or about to fall on the endangered house.

However, not everyone managed to hide. The Lublin poor were caught and dragged off mercilessly, mainly the refugees from Kalisz, Łódź, Sieradz, Zduńska Wola, Złoczew, and other small towns. Once again, the sons of the wealthy managed to buy their way out through Mr Kestenberg and remained sitting at home, while the few broken and economically ruined refugees and poor inhabitants of Lublin were taken to gruelling work in the camps.

95 (Polish) castle.

96 During World War II, until Hitler broke the non-aggression pact between Germany and the USSR in June 1941, the River Bug served as the border between the territories occupied by the German and Russian armies.

97 Probably reference to the labour camp at Lipowa Street 7. See footnote XXX.

98 Camp in Hrubieszów, one of ten labour camps whose inmates built the Chełm-Hrubieszów-Mircze-Sokal road near the border with the USSR. Established in 1940, it had approx. 150 Jewish inmates. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 67, 143. Camp in Puławy, probably also a reference to the labour camp which was responsible for building the Puławy-Kurów or Puławy-Kazimierz-Poniatowa road. It had approx. 100 Jewish inmates. *Ibidem*, pp. 68, 150.

99 (Yiddish) grabbers. The word was originally applied to the press gangs who seized young Jews for military service in the Tsarist empire. Here the same word is used for those who seized Jews for forced labour (very often to replace exempted sons of the wealthy).

The second round-up took place in July 1940. The Jewish slaves were sent to Tyszowce, in the county of Hrubieszów.¹⁰⁰ The Jewish forced labourers were employed in land improvement works, many of them on construction of the narrow-gauge railway. Typically, it was rumoured in the city that the Warsaw *kehillah* had bribed the Lublin *kehillah* to send workers from Lublin in place of workers from Warsaw. It is difficult to establish whether those rumours were well founded. The Lublin *kehillah* was to take care of the Jews sent to forced labour and supply them with food. In that labour camp, there were several hundred Jews from Lublin [5] living in the worst conditions. The workers there were broken both physically and psychologically by the dreadful housing conditions, hunger, and epidemics. Those who still received money from home somehow managed to survive; the others died of disease and starvation.

There remains to mention the tragic case of young Yisroel Bornsztajn, a 17-year-old schoolboy who contracted *czerwonka*.¹⁰¹ The German murderers could think of no way to cure the sick boy and combat the wretched disease which had started to spread in the camp, other than to shoot him.

The third round-up took place in August of the same year. Gendarmes and *kehillah* officials took part in the night-time raid. Those seized for forced labour (about 1,500 people) were sent to Szczonów [?].¹⁰²

For the following reasons, it seems likely that the August round-up was simply self-motivated.

The *kehillah* had quite openly begun to engage in a legal slave trade. It was run by Kestenberg, already mentioned, and his accomplices, a large section of the *kehillah* officials. A labour exchange was set up. Freeing oneself from assignation to a labour camp cost 800 zlotys and more. In addition, a new practice was introduced: the possibility of supplying purchased individuals.

100 Camp in Tyszowce (Zamość County, author's error), labour camp of the water management (*Wasserwirtschaft*), established in 1940. Its inmates, approximately 500 Jews, carried out drainage works on arable land on the Huczwa River. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 42.

101 (Polish) dysentery.

102 On the night of 13–14 August 1940, 1,362 Jewish men were rounded up in Lublin and deported to the labour camp in Bełżec. It seems that the author is describing this event. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 123. No locality by the name of Szczonów has been identified, it was probably Cieszanów.

Naturally, the *kehillah* and its henchmen were not behind and in this respect: in each individual case they charged a special head tax. Poor people presented themselves for assignment at the labour exchange for a few hundred zlotys. People sold themselves in order to keep their hungry [6] families (fathers, mothers, and children) from starving to death. By that means, the sons of the rich sons avoided forced labour camps and legally sent in their place the Jewish slaves whom they had purchased. The slave trade flourished in Jewish Lublin and later served as a model for other Jewish communities. In Lublin, as in all other towns of the occupied Polish republic, a ghetto was also created for the Jews. At first, a Jewish *Wohnbezirk*¹⁰³ was set up. That was done in March 1940. The ghetto, as such, was established on 9 December 1941.

The Jewish ghetto is not enclosed. They only designated the streets where Jews are allowed to live. (At the time when these events are being recorded, there is news that the Lublin ghetto is being enclosed by walls.)

The ghetto comprises the following streets: Kowalska, Krawiecka, Sienna up to Franciszkańska, Unicka, the even-numbered side of Lubartowska Street, Żelazna, Świętoduska and Staszica.

In January 1940, the Germans established assembly area in Lublin for Jewish POWs who had been released from prison camps and were supposed to be sent back to their previous places of residence.

The assembly area for the Jewish prisoners of war in Lublin was, as later became clear, conceived from the outset with the cruel and cold intention of carrying out a diabolical piece of work (sending people to the Bug and shooting them on the way).¹⁰⁴

The number of imprisoned Jews, former Polish soldiers who were sent to Lublin, reached 10,000. [7] The Germans demanded that the *kehillah* provide the prisoners with clothes, underwear, and shoes.

103 (German) residential district.

104 Approximately 7,000 Jewish POWs were sent to the Lublin district from *Stalags* in Germany. The prisoners from eastern parts of Poland occupied by the USSR were gradually released and sent home. Some of them died during the death marches as they were driven towards the border; some were sent to work in Biała Podlaska and Ryki, and still others, approximately 2,000 who arrived in December 1940 and January 1941, remained in the camp in Lublin at 7 Lipowa Street. See Benjamin Meirchak, *Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Armies in World War II*, vol. 3: *Jewish Prisoners-of-War Murdered by Germans in the Lublin District 1939–1943* (Tel Aviv, 1996), pp. 4–7.

Kehillahs from the surrounding area helped to provide clothes, but the aid was insufficient.

One party of war-prisoners, which was sent in January 1940 in the direction of Parczew, was escorted by SS men and the *Sonderdienst*. The group came to a tragic end. In harsh winter weather, they were forced along on foot, while their escorts travelled on wagons. Their hellish journey began as soon as they left Lublin. Outside the city, they started to be hounded along and anyone who lagged behind, fell by the wayside, or failed to maintain straight military ranks at *Lauf-Marsch*¹⁰⁵ pace was shot. Hundreds died before the group reached Parczew.¹⁰⁶

When they arrived, they were led into a barn, supposedly to rest, but no one came out alive: they were brutally shot to death. The rest of the group had barely reached Parczew when their escort brought them to the local synagogue and kept them there. The Jewish women of Parczew accomplished heroic feats in rescuing and buying out the prisoners of war from the savage hands of the Germans. Women's clothing was brought to the synagogue, and prisoners of war disguised in women's clothes were saved from certain death. As an eternal stain of shame upon the German barbarians, and a memorial to those who fell at their murderous hands, there remain, as witness for future generations, the two large communal graves in the Parczew cemetery.

But for many other *kehillahs*, the issue of *pidyon shvuyim*,¹⁰⁷ the manner in which they helped to free unfortunate Jewish prisoners of war, remains a stain of shame for generations. [8] The case of the Biała Podlaska *Judenrat* will serve as an example.

The burden of supporting the prisoners was too heavy for the Lublin *kehillah*, which came up with the "ingenious idea" of sending prisoners of war to forced labour in the camps. A labour camp of that kind was also set up in Biała Podlaska. The captured soldiers were the "property", the latter-day "Gibeonites"¹⁰⁸

105 (German) quick march.

106 Approximately 400 men people died on that death march. See B. Meirtchak, *Jewish Military Casualties*, p. 5.

107 (Hebrew) redemption of captives, a religious duty considered in the Talmud as a major good deed.

108 The Gibeonites, descendants of the Canaanites who remained in Jerusalem by means of a stratagem, were condemned to be "perpetual bondmen, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the house of God" (Joshua 9: 23 and 27).

of the rulers of the local *Judenrat*, and the whole heavy yoke of slavery and bitter fate which the whole Jewish community had to bear was cast on those unfortunates, who were made into the town's scapegoats.

When, in large part, relatives of the unfortunates discovered that they had been sold off to the last man and came to rescue them, the *kehillah* actually made some easy money by demanding large sums for the release of its "serfs" from forced labour. Taking money from the families and close relatives who had spent weeks there, was done on the pretext that the Germans were charging "ransom money".

However, the fact that the *Judenrat* made good profits was confirmed by an eyewitness who negotiated the release of one Yerakhmiel Helfgot with a member of the *kehillah* board. Of the above mentioned prisoners of war, a group of 2,500 men managed to remain in Lublin. They are known in the city as *yentses*.¹⁰⁹ They all come from the other side of the Bug. Their camp is situated in Majdanek.¹¹⁰

At first, the group was much admired by the Jewish population of Lublin for its proud and dignified behaviour towards the Germans. When the Germans were unable to transfer the prisoners of war across the Bug, because the Russians had hermetically sealed the border against those whom they had been expelled, [9] they set up a special camp for them in Majdanek, a suburb of Lublin, and demanded that they, as Jews, wear the Jewish sign (an armband with the Star of David).

The group declared, however, that, as Russian citizens, they categorically refused to wear the armbands. And they are indeed not wearing any armbands to this day.¹¹¹ The group worked at various labour sites and received partial support from the *kehillah*. In time, they established relations with the Germans and made all sorts of deals with them. It went so far that they themselves began to round up Jews for labour, beating them in the process and taking bribes for their release.

Many of the *yentses* have become rich and are well-dressed.

109 Yiddish form of the Polish word *jeńcy* (POWs).

110 Author's error. The POWs were kept in the camp at 7 Lipowa Street.

111 The prisoners from Lipowa Street strove to retain the status of POWs, on which basis they refused to wear yellow patches or armbands and wore military uniforms. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 135.

Their fine clothing led to some curious occurrences, as a result of which they were forced to decorate their uniforms with a distinguishing mark. This happened because of the Lithuanian *Totenkopf*¹¹² men (a Lithuanian military unit) who arrived in Lublin. On seeing such well-dressed “soldiers”, the Lithuanians saluted. This led the Germans to issue an order that the *yentses* must wear a star on their lapel.

Until a short while ago, the commander of the *yentses*’ camp was Fiszer, a Jew from Stanisławów. He was recently shot. People say he was caught swindling, and 30,000 zlotys was supposedly found on him.¹¹³

Among the *yentses* an epidemic of typhus broke out recently and some 600 of them fell ill. The sick were installed in the Mahar[sh]al’s synagogue,¹¹⁴ where a *Seuchenspital*¹¹⁵ [10] was set up for them.

For the Jews of Lublin, the *Übersiedlung*¹¹⁶ (known in Polish as the *przesiedlenie*), which took place in March 1941, was a tragic experience. Totally unexpectedly, some 10,000 Jews were evicted from their homes within 30 minutes.

At the same time as the order was given to leave their homes and take only hand luggage, dozens of wagons arrived from various towns and villages. These carts were sent at the expense of the *kehillahs* to which the Jews were to be transferred.

Those *kehillahs* are: Lubartów, Parczew, Bełżyce, Chodel, Siedliszcze near Chełm, Trawniki, Izbica, and others.¹¹⁷

112 (German) death’s head; an emblem used by SS and Waffen SS units; insignia worn on their caps.

113 A reference to Roman Fiszer (1909 – ?). In fact, he escaped from the camp in March 1943 and survived the war, hiding in Warsaw outside the ghetto. AŻIH, Holocaust testimonies, testimony of Roman Fiszer, 301/2808.

114 The 16th century synagogue on Jateczna Street. In 1940–1942, it housed a refugee centre and a soup kitchen. During the *Aktion* in March 1942, it was a centre for persons designated for deportation to a death camp. The synagogue was blown up in 1943. The hospital for POWs was set up in the *Talmud Torah* building near the synagogue. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 138.

115 (German) infectious diseases hospital.

116 (German) resettlement.

117 From 10 to 14 March 1941, 9,200 Jews from Lublin were resettled in the following small towns: Bełżyce, Bychawa, Brzeziny, Kazimierzówka, Lubartów, Wysokie (Lublin County), Chodel, Michów (Puławy County), Żółkiewka (Krasnostaw County), Siedliszcze, Rejowiec,

The square in front of the municipality building was designated as the assembly point for the deportees. At the same time, a pogrom began throughout the city. The Polish mob fell on the abandoned Jewish homes and started looting them.

The Polish looters dragged everything they could from the Jewish homes. After a while time, when things had calmed down a bit in town, some 2,000 Jews came back. But by then their homes had been completely destroyed and the possessions which they had left behind had been stolen. Finally, it should be noted that the labour camps to which the *Judenrat* had sent forced labourers included: Bełż, where the Jews built “General-Hammermann-Strasse”,¹¹⁸ Sztawic[?], a burned down shtetl where the housing conditions were disastrous and the Jews worked on the regulation of the Huczwa River;¹¹⁹ Szczonów[?] – fortification work. On Lipowa Street, there is a permanent workplace where [11] Jewish specialised craftsmen, such as carpenters, shoemakers, tailors, radio technicians, etc., are employed. The *kehillah* issues additional ration cards for this group.

The enterprise is a German *Aktiengesellschaft*¹²⁰ which goes by the name *Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke Lublin*.¹²¹

As for the general relations between Poles and Jews there, they are generally good.

In the period covered by the events described here, Polish activists from Polish and Jewish parties were arrested.

Among those arrested and sent to concentration camps are such prominent activists as Bela Szpiro, Nissenbaum,¹²² and the PPS activist Kunicki,¹²³ in whose home the first government of Lublin was founded.¹²⁴

Sosnowica (Chełm County), Parczew, and Czemierniki (Radzyń Podlaski County). They were expelled from the city because of the lack of flats for *Wehrmacht* officers. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 29–30.

118 Bełż, now in Ukraine, in the Lviv region. There is proof of the existence of the forced labour camp there in 1941–1942, but no details are available about the camp.

119 The work on regulation of the Huczwa River was carried out by the inmates of camps located in Rachanie, Mikulin, Tyszowce, Turkowice, Perespa, and Obrowiec. “Sztawic” could be deformed name of Tyszowce. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 42.

120 (German) joint-stock company.

121 See footnote 74.

122 Bela Szpiro (Szapiro) (1887 or 1891–1941 or 1944), political and social activist, one of the Bund leaders, councilwoman of Lublin. Yakov Nissenbaum was her husband.

Today, news arrived that, in connection with the latest German order to hand over pelts, furs, and other warm underwear (in Lublin),¹²⁵ something was done to the Germans' dissatisfaction, and the members of the local *Judenrat* were punished with a mad, outlandish and crazy punishment: they were made to dance barefoot, without shoes, in their full complement, for more than an hour in the *kehillah* courtyard. This happened on 7 January 1942.

January 1942

ARG I 848 (Ring. I/855)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (U*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 22 sheets, 22 pages.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 11 sheets, 11 pages.

19

After 31 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony "Lublin;" the Aktion in the Lublin ghetto in the second half of March 1942.

[1] Lublin

Suddenly, at midnight on 15 March,¹²⁶ the lights were turned on in the Jewish district and the SD and the Ukrainians¹²⁷ surrounded Lubartowska Street.

123 Władysław Kunicki (1872–1941), teacher, active in the self-government, member and politician of the Polish Socialist Party. Owner of a middle school in Lublin, a freemason.

124 *Tymczasowy Rząd Ludowy Republiki Polskiej* (Provisional People's Government of the Republic of Poland), formed in Lublin on the night of 6–7 November 1918, with Ignacy Daszyński as prime minister.

125 On pain of death. The order was issued on 25 December 1941.

126 It was March 16.

127 The *Aktion* in Lublin was conducted by the local SS and police forces as well as four companies of former Soviet Army soldiers in German service trained in the camp in Trawniki. The author calls this formation "Ukrainians." See D. Silberklang, *Żydzi i pierwsze deportacje z dystryktu lubelskiego*, in *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 55.

The people thought that it was an ordinary round-up to Majdanek.¹²⁸ But it proved to be an *Aktion*. The functionaries knocked on the gates and ordered the people to prepare for resettlement. The synagogue was to be the rallying point. 1,600 people were taken that night. There were casualties, mostly old men, but the young were not spared either.

The rest, over 160 people, were released, but they were not allowed to return to their flats. Those hidden in shelters could not avoid falling into the hands of the Ukrainians, who guarded all the flats all the time. They were taken to the hospital.

The next day the Jewish Community announced that those who had no SD seal, that is no work record, must prepare for resettlement.¹²⁹ They were allowed to take 15 kilos of baggage and they were to walk 2 km. The rest were obliged to move to ghetto “B,”¹³⁰ which was enlarged to include the streets: Rybna, Grodzka, Kowalska, Cyrulicza, and Lubartowska up to number 5.

During the first two [days?], the resettlement continued only at night and it was very peaceful during the day. The Jewish police force was also engaged [2] in the resettlement. 1,600 people were resettled each night.

After 7 days there was a 3-day break and then the resettlement continued day and night. All those trying to escape were killed immediately.¹³¹

ARG I 849 (Ring. I/948)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (GG*), ink, Polish, 100×149 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

128 Majdanek, camp in Lublin. Its construction began in the autumn of 1941, initially as a POW camp. In 1943, it was transformed into a concentration camp. During Operation Reinhardt, the camp also functioned as a death camp. The total number of its prisoners amounted to 150,000 people of various nationalities. Approximately 60,000 Jews died there. See Tomasz Kranz, *Obóz koncentracyjny na Majdanku a “akcja Reinhardt,”* in *Akcja Reinhardt*, pp. 243–244.

129 A reference to the *Sicherheitsdienst* stamps on work records provided to employees of German companies and the *Judenrat*.

130 On 22 February 1942, the German authorities gave an order to divide the ghetto into parts “A” and “B”. The latter was for the Jews working in German enterprises and in the *Judenrat*, while the former was for the remaining Jews. Both ghettos were tightly sealed. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 40–41.

131 During 17–31 March 1942, approximately 18,000 Lublin Jews were murdered in Bełżec.

[1] Monday evening, on 16 March (3 weeks),¹³² midnight, entire Lubart[owska], from 15 to 59 – guarded all gates – Ruska, Czwartek,¹³³ night round-ups – hiding places – on-duty hours – observation points. The whole time. For several months already, in mortal danger – Lithuanians, Germans. Majdanek, January, 500–600 young people, in the course of 6 days did not remain. Took off and put on paper clothes blue-black and clogs.¹³⁴ 8 March – a decree, all with work documents (about 6,000) have to report to SD. They stamped (40,000 Jews in Lublin), guarded by Ukrainians – either Majdanek, or expulsion – shut Grodzka and Kowalska – small streets. Only the stamped ones were let into the streets – all those remaining ready for ‘resettlement’ – these two streets of approximately 50 houses – out of the ghetto and with detours into the streets. During the course of the day, 25,000 Jews who had connections entered there, 70–80 in one room; the rest remained in the courtyards.

During the first night approximately 5,000 people – 200 killed. A place in Targowa Street – lost children – the Ukrainians without bullets – German SD-men shooting – those with the documents were released with the families (if added in the papers, and if there were no great differences of opinion).¹³⁵

No one was allowed to take any luggage.

It turned out that because of transport[ation] difficulties of 1,600 a day [they] tried to remove[?] many of the hideouts; some were killed, others died of hunger.

132 Possibly “three weeks ago.” Later in the testimony: “. . . on Saturday, eight days ago,” which suggests that the interview was conducted on Sunday, 5 April 1942.

133 Neighbourhood in Lublin.

134 Probably a reference to the events of 11–12 December 1941, when 150 Jews from the Lublin ghetto were imprisoned in the camp at Majdanek for evading forced labour. On 6 January 1942, 17 of them were released. The remainder perished. 250 Jews were executed at Majdanek on 24 February 1942. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 146–7.

135 The Germans carried out selections on the square near Targowa Street, killing the sick and infirm on the spot, sending holders of stamped work records to ghetto B and all the others to transports to Bełżec. In the course of the whole operation, 2,500 people were murdered on the spot. *Ibidem*, p. 42.

Those for expulsion in the synagogue (*Maharshal* Synagogue, Jateczna Street), no contact at all with the synagogue. They said that from there to the slaughter-house on the Wola and from there a side track.

Three kinds of policemen – *Ordnungsdienst*, *Arbeitsamt* pol[icemen] and *SK*. The commander of the *Aktion* and SK-man Kupferminc.¹³⁶ The entire *Aktion* 4 members of Gestapo – Dr. Sturm, Knitzki, Worthoff, Kalech.¹³⁷ The Jewish police – 300 policemen – the streets brightly illuminated. In 4 rows – sent back – deathly fear – terror – made life miserable – until the Saturday a week ago. On Saturday,¹³⁸ one began to acknowledge the fact that people are also sent on wagons – the last grave – on 14 – last Friday¹³⁹ – in vans with meat. Some saved themselves by lying among the dead – at the cemetery – or in a hospital – it was thought that this was safer – old age home – 8 days later – then 10 minutes orphanage is cleared out – 150 children in the building of the Jewish community [2] in their shirt sleeves – ½ hour – told to be brought in again – On Tuesday 4 p.m. ordered again – and taken away – in cars (only the orphans). Within half an hour it was already known that they had been shot outside the town and buried in a mass grave. On Wednesday morning, 11 – old age home. Approximately 70 people – shot in old age home – provisional hospital at Lubart[owska] 9 – 170 patients – one German – within several minutes killed – Mekhl Shokhet, 30 years-[old], wife and five children, oh my God I have, forgive me, shot him – Thursday 3 p.m. – in the Jewish community – the staff of the hospitals – approximately 50 people – in the white aprons and caps – patients almost 600 – led out and shot. On Monday, 30 March, 2 p.m. – 15 Gest[apo] (during the day – 5 victims – they earned it cheaply) each took with himself 1 member of the *Judenrat* – took them home – removed the family – sealed the houses – brought them back to the front of the community [building] and all taken to the synagogue – starting with the chairman, eng[ineer] Bekker and 2 pres[idium?] members Dr Siegfried and

136 SK are Yiddish initials of the *sanitarishe komisye* (sanitary commission), which assisted the police in the resettlement operation. See footnote XXX. Daniel Kupferminc was a member of the *Judenrat* from 31 March 1942.

137 The *Aktion* in Lublin was led by four SS-men: SS-Untersturmführer Harry Sturm, SS-Untersturmführer Knitzky, SS-Obersturmführer Hermann Worthoff, and SS-Untersturmführer Walter. It remains unclear who Kalech was. *Ibidem*, p. 43.

138 28 March.

139 Illegible number, probably a date. Friday fell on 20 and 27 March.

Shloyme Halbersztadt. They said cynically that they were sent there in order to be the *Judenrat* there.¹⁴⁰ After throwing out all the clerks of the *Judenrat* – they left 12 out of 400, and reduced the 12 to 6 – and announced that only those who had the J-s¹⁴¹ could stay. Approximately 2,500 people (many J-s withdrawn, for example, 15 members of the *Judenrat*).

On Lipowy Square [. . .] on 31 March – at the hands of SS 700–800 Jewish workers, earlier the families were taken – later the privileged were also taken.

ARG I 850 (Ring. I/1172).

Description: original, handwritten (H.W.*), ink, Yiddish, 155×197 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish and Polish: "1942. Lublin. Original. First report on the liquidation of the Lublin community, March 1942. Kronenberg, a resettled Lublin refugee, recorded by Hersh Wasser."

21

After April 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown (a woman). Testimony "Lublin," recorded by Daniel Fligelman. The entry of the Germans on 23 September 1939, searches, arrests, deportations to the forced labour camps in Bełżec and Tyszowce; resettlement into the provinces, the camps on Browarna Street and at Lipowa Street 7, executions, hunger, the "fur campaign," typhus epidemics; the Aktionen in March and April 1942, deportation to the ghetto in Majdan Tatarski.

[1] Lublin

Immediately on the first day after their entry in Lublin, on 23 September 1939, the Germans issued an ordinance obliging all men living in the centre

140 The Germans promised the *Judenrat* chairman, Henryk Bekker, and a *Judenrat* member, Shloyme Halbersztadt, that they would take up duties on the *Judenrat* at their destination, but instead the two men were murdered in Bełżec. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 66.

141 On 31 March 1942, the Germans summoned a session of the *Judenrat* at which they announced its reduction from 24 to 12 members. Marek Alten, Izaak Kerszman, Dawid Hochgemajn, Leon Hufnagel, Jakub Kelner, and Nachman Lerner remained; Wolf Wiener, Ajzyk Brodt, and Daniel Kupferminc were co-opted to the *Judenrat*.

to come to one of the squares. After the men had assembled on the square, which was surrounded with machine guns, the Poles were separated from the Jews. The latter were compelled to do penal drills. At the same time posters were put up in the city to announce that if it remains calm, the hostages (the men assembled on the square) would be released. Otherwise, they would be executed. Fortunately, there were no incidents and the hostages were released within three days, with the exception of those who were detained for a longer period of time in the newly established labour camp.

Late November 1939 brought the introduction of yellow patches in the shape of the Star of David to be worn on the chest and on the back. For half a million zlotys, the Jewish Community managed to obtain cancellation of only the back patch.¹⁴²

The first winter with the Germans was a period of searches and requisitions. The Jews were removed not only from better flats, but from the centre in general, and they were concentrated in the worst districts of the city. Making matters worse, the spring brought the plague of forced labour camps. The men were seized mostly at night. The captured men were escorted onto the square which was the assembly point. They were also mercilessly beaten. A number of men were beaten to death. There were several forced labour camps in the Lublin [District]. The two most infamous ones were the one in Bełżec (12 weeks)¹⁴³ and the one in Tyszowce.¹⁴⁴ The director of the first one, Dolp,¹⁴⁵ was the real terror of Lublin. He would 'storm out of the blue' onto a square or a street and open fire at the pedestrians for no reason. It is easy to guess the fate of the forced labour camp prisoners who depended on that deviant.

On 10 March 1941 in the evening, a rumour about a planned deportation and a round-up came from nowhere and spread in the city. Indeed, in the morning the inhabitants of the suburbs saw a long line of peasant's carts. The resettlement campaign proceeded as follows: the gendarmes went from flat to flat and seized everybody, practically only in the clothes they were wearing. The people could take only a bundle of belongings and 20 zlotys.

142 See footnote XXX.

143 The prisoners were detained for the period of 12 weeks at a time.

144 Labour camp in Bełżec, see footnote XXX. Labour camp in Tyszowce, see footnote XXX.

145 The Bełżec labour camp commandant was SS-*Sturmabführer* Hermann Dolp. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 119.

It should be stressed that the community offices, hospitals, orphanages, etc., were respected and omitted, as it was known that private persons were hiding there. If there was a sick person in a flat the functionaries left that person with one of the household members. Approximately 150 community clerks were deported, probably by way of a misunderstanding, but they were allowed to return within the next few days. The resettled were transported not only by carts, but also by lorries. The people were severely beaten and maltreated during the loading, especially during the loading onto the lorries. Having reached the destination, the people were thrown out like pieces of baggage. [2] The resettled went to the nearby villages and towns, such as Lubartów, Rejowiec, Izbica, Kurów, and others. Some of the resettled returned home immediately, often on the same carts on which they were taken away.¹⁴⁶

The resettlement campaign lasted three days. As soon as it ended there were rumours about the forthcoming reduction of the area of the Jewish district. (The Jews had been assembled in a certain unclosed district as a result of their planned resettlement commenced back in the winter of 1939.) It became a fact with the exclusion of Lubartowska Street and its side streets. [There were also rumours] about its closure, but so far they have remained only rumours.

In the summer of 1941, a forced labour camp was established on Browarna Street. After some time, it was changed into a penal camp.¹⁴⁷ Its prisoners were smugglers, criminals, or those who had failed to pay the Jewish *Arbeitsamt*.¹⁴⁸ The inmates were obliged to perform various unpleasant works, such as coal loading, rubbish collection, etc.

The Lipowa Street 7 square was another camp.¹⁴⁹ Polish POWs from the territories conquered by the Soviets were interned there with all sorts of criminals.

During that summer, Majdanek was established, the concentration camp (not only for Jews); the name came from the suburbs where it was located. The first round-up conducted to populate that camp showed what could be

146 See footnote XXX.

147 The labour camp at Browarna Street 9 in Lublin was established in December 1940 and was supported by the Judenrat. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, p. 139.

148 The Department of Labour (*Wydział Pracy*) of the Judenrat.

149 The labour camp at Lipowa Street 7. See footnote XXX.

expected. Namely, the Germans told the POWs from Lipowa Street that the Jewish community had offered or would offer to pay two million zlotys if they took the POWs instead of the Jews from Lublin. ‘It remains unknown if it was true or if it was just a bluff on the part of the Germans.’¹⁵⁰ When the POWs learned about that, 100 of them volunteered, saying that, if that was the case, they were ready to help capture the Jews. The Germans eagerly accepted that help. Their newly acquired allies indeed showed more zeal than the occupiers. Even the work detail labourers and *Gruppenführers*¹⁵¹ were deported as a result of that round-up. The Jewish *Arbeitsamt*, which was at daggers drawn with the latter, acted to their detriment. All those arrested from the prison were co-opted, too. A few hundred people were shot during those round-ups. The fate of those detained at Majdanek was horrible. Those who were released in exchange for many thousand [zlotys] ‘were half-mad, exhausted’. They told tales that made one’s blood curdle. The guards were Lithuanians and each guard would shoot a Jew after breakfast for dessert, or two Jews if he was in an exceptionally good mood. The prisoners were not given food and they were exhausted by hard labour and penal drills. Moreover, the camp had special instruments for torture. The town inhabitants could see those poor souls only when they were escorted somewhere, usually to wash themselves. During the worst freeze, the prisoners walked barefoot or in clogs, wearing striped paper clothes. When that sad procession walked along the street, the escort beat the pedestrians to drive them into the gates. God forbid, if somebody threw them as much as a loaf of bread. God forbid, if such a “Majdaner” bent down to pick it up. At Majdanek, there were no [3] sick people, as they were immediately killed.

In the winter of 1942, the Jews were ordered to submit all fur and wool.¹⁵² (As for the demanded amount of wool, there are various versions, some claiming that a contingent of 1,500 kilos had been specified. 3,500 kilos were collected.) In order to stimulate the Jews’ generosity, seven Councillors were arrested and forced to stand barefoot on snow. Two hours later, they were locked in the infamous bunker (dungeon) on Lipowa Street and the Germans announced

150 ‘‘Throughout the text: inserted from the margin, as indicated by the author.

151 A reference to the Jewish commanders of labour *Kommandos*.

152 The ordinance regarding requisition of furs and fur accessories was issued on 25 December 1941.

that in case of failure to collect that contingent, the hostages would be shot, and the rest of the Jews would be resettled. The ordinance for this collection was issued at 6 p.m. By 8 a.m. of the next day, all the fur and wool had been collected, sorted, and packed in such a neat way that even the Germans were impressed, and they refrained from effecting any of their threats.

Other persecutions began, however. Round-ups of women were organised. The women were detained for many weeks and had to pluck down feathers. They were also beaten and mercilessly maltreated. Prisons were emptied – the male inmates were taken to Majdanek, while the women also endured deteriorating conditions.

With the spread of the epidemic, the rumours about [the establishment of] the ghetto began to sound more and more probable. Finally, they became factual. Ghetto “B” was established on Grodzka Street for those working for the Germans, while ghetto “A” was established on Szeroka, Cyrulicza, Kowalska, Unicka and Kalinowszczyzna Streets.¹⁵³

On 8 March 1942 the authorities ordered those working on German details, in hospitals, in the *Judenrat*, and in other institutions to have their work records stamped. The Germans stamped them themselves in the garages located on Uniwersytecka Street. It is difficult to explain how it was possible to process 15,000 people that filled the square within only 4 to 5 hours. That success should be attributed partly to the SS-men, who maintained order and massacred a few dozen people with their rifle butts. Everybody entitled to a stamp could have the names of their family members included on the card as well; in theory, because in practice everything depended on a German on duty. Many people were denied inclusion of even their wives or children.

Immediately after the stamping the people started wondering about its purpose. The majority suspected that there would be a resettlement. That suspicion was confirmed by the denunciator Szama Greger,¹⁵⁴ very well connected and ‘welcomed’ in German circles. Purportedly, Greger had heard about a forthcoming resettlement from the *Stadthauptmann*¹⁵⁵ himself. Everybody thought that it would take place on the anniversary of the previous one, on 10 March. But that day passed and nothing happened. The next day passed

153 22 February 1942. See also Doc. 18.

154 Shmaya (Shamay) Grajer.

155 Fritz Saurmann. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 451.

peacefully as well and it seemed that nothing would happen. Consequently, the *vox popu[l]*¹⁵⁶ concluded that Greger was a liar, that all he wanted was to make a profit from the stamps, which he provided at a high price, and that the deportation was his invention. Earlier everybody was on the alert. They tried to be prepared or they were hiding. Now by contrast, they stopped [4] taking any precautions.

At 10 p.m. on 16 March, the men were set apart. Such manhunts in Lublin were nothing new as they had been sporadically organised since the Germans' entry. This was why all the wealthier Lublin inhabitants had a hiding place prepared in their homes, often very ingenious ones, such as walls opening at the press of a button, passages through old wardrobes, secret rooms, etc. In short, everybody hid wherever they could. Those who were captured, were captured and it seemed that was it. But about at approximately 11:30 p.m. the city was unexpectedly brightly illuminated (it had been blacked out) and the Germans, accompanied by the Ukrainians, started the second act of the resettlement campaign. It began on Lubartowska Street.

It proceeded in the following way: A group of Germans or Ukrainians stormed into a flat and drove out everybody into the yard, without letting them take anything. The people were segregated in accordance to age, sex, family, or stamps, depending on the thugs' whim and obviously with an accompaniment of shouts, blows, and even gunshots. That first *Aktion* (the colloquial name in Lublin for what the official statements called an *Umsiedlung*¹⁵⁷) 'which lasted approximately three hours', resulted in the execution of 30 people. The emptied residential buildings were immediately surrounded by Ukrainians. But what happened to the resettled? They were escorted to Ma[ha]rshal's synagogue,¹⁵⁸ where the families with the stamps were separated from those without. The former were then released at dawn.

As late as the morning, the authorities officially announced the beginning of a two-week resettlement campaign. 160 people without the stamps were to be resettled every day. The [Jewish] Community received an order to establish a *Krankensamme[l]stelle für Nichttransportfähige*¹⁵⁹ on the border

156 (Latin) Voice of the people.

157 (German) Resettlement.

158 See footnote 114.

159 (German) gathering point for the unfit for transport.

of ghettos “A” and “B.” Ghetto “A” was to be liquidated and the released stamp-holders were to go to the adequately enlarged ghetto “B.” People without the stamps were to report voluntarily.

From then on, the *Aktionen* were to take place several times a day. They never lasted longer than two or three hours. With time, they began to be more and more brutal. Those who failed to come downstairs on time, those who stood unevenly in a row, marched in an unsatisfactory way, were sick or deemed unfit for transport could be shot. In the yard the people were segregated into families. Their stamps were then checked ‘and those without’ were escorted into the synagogue, from where they were taken first to the slaughterhouse and then to the railway station. Hiding was punished with death. 18 men found hiding in the cellar in the tenement at Ruska Street 8 were shot. Once people locked in the synagogue accidentally opened the ark¹⁶⁰ and found two bodies of shot people. Panic broke out and the Jews started shouting. The Germans who were guarding the synagogue heard that noise, rushed in and opened fire, killing several dozen people.

The stamps were often disregarded or even families were separated with satisfaction. “During yesterday’s *Aktion*, they took my wife, and today they took my child” – such snatches of conversations could be heard on the street during breaks between one *Aktion* and another.

[5] Jewish policemen, the military police of the Jewish *Arbeitsamt*, and the SK¹⁶¹ also participated in those *Aktionen*, as they did in all the earlier round-ups.

On March 22, the children from the orphanage (I do not know the exact number. All in all, there were about three lorries filled with them) were taken

160 In the original, *Urenkodesz*, usually pronounced *aron kodesh*, i.e. Torah ark, a place to store the Torah scrolls in a synagogue; a niche in the eastern wall or a special container, often richly decorated, by this wall.

161 (Author’s or copyist’s explanation): In winter 1941, Bolesław Tenenbaum, one of the leaders of the Warsaw “Thirteen”, came to Lublin. He was supported and welcome by the Germans, so he had no trouble receiving permission to establish the Sanitary Commission (its members were later known as SK) despite the *Judenrat*’s Sanitary Department existing since long. As head of the Commission, Tenenbaum closely cooperated with Germans even on issues beyond his competence. For example, the SK helped Germans in almost all round-ups and searches. Moreover, Tenenbaum supported many anti-Jewish measures, including the closure of the ghetto as “a unique way to stop the spread of epidemics raging among the Jews and to protect Germans from them.”

outside of Lublin, shot, and then dumped into a pond.¹⁶² The next day, several murderers rushed into the *Krankensammelstelle* and shot all the people who were there, *summa summarum*,¹⁶³ 13 people including the attendant. That institution had no more patients, because, as I have mentioned, the sick were usually killed on the spot.

Based on these facts, rumours began to circulate that there would be an *Aktion* directed against hospitals. The hospitals (there were three in Lublin) were overcrowded. The sick and the malingerers were paying thousands of zlotys to be admitted, because during the previous resettlement the hospitals had remained untouched. In the hospital ‘where I worked as a nurse,’ there had been 130 people before the *Aktion*. Now, however, that number increased to 400. The Germans knew this perfectly well, as they received lists of patients.

On 26 March at 3:30 a.m. the Germans came into our hospital and announced that it had to be emptied within an hour. Having made that announcement, they left, leaving about a dozen Ukrainians, who surrounded the whole building as well as the whole hospital grounds. Sheer panic broke out. The sick, the convalescents, and the malingerers ran naked from room to room. But they were unable to obtain clothes, as the Ukrainians had blocked the storeroom. Several SS-men finally came at 7:30 and ordered the clothes to be distributed. We, the personnel, were ordered to dress the seriously ill and transport them into one of the rooms. A selection was then conducted. The personnel with the stamps were ordered to stand with the slightly ill who had the stamps and that group was deported. The slightly ill without the stamps and the personnel without the stamps were then removed. Finally, it was the turn of the seriously ill. We, the sanitary and nursing staff, were ordered to remain and clean the hospital.

The next day, a physician from the *Gesundheitskammer*¹⁶⁴ arrived with cards with the letter “J” (The J-cards had been issued the day before to substitute the invalidated cards with the stamps. Earlier, there were 4,000 stamps in Lublin for the 15,000 Jews in Lublin. Now, the number of the J-card holders

162 On 24 March 1942, approximately 200 children, aged 3 to 18, 100 patients and staff of the hospital for infectious diseases, and 90 residents of the old age homes were shot on the spot in Lublin. See D. Silberklang, *Żydzi i pierwsze deportacje z dystryktu lubelskiego*, in *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 58.

163 (Latin) in total.

164 (German) health care chamber.

was 2,600) – 8 cards for 22 people. 14 of us were obliged to leave; I was included. As for the physicians, the majority of them did receive the J-cards.

Initially, the POWs treated in the hospital thought that they would stay but they were deported too.

In the meantime, the *Aktion* in the town continued. The transports were sent in an unknown direction. To free themselves from the spectre hanging over them, the people without the J-cards volunteered for the resettlement, their numbers being so large that the Germans needed to send away a few hundred people every day, saying that there was no space.

[6] The epidemic hospital was deported on March 26, too.

The *Judenrat* labourers and their families were assembled in order to be issued the J-cards, but contrary to the announcements, they were unexpectedly deported.

The families of all the labourers working at Lipowa Street 7 were also assembled to be issued the J-cards. Contrary to the promises, they were also unexpectedly deported.

All major tanneries, metallurgic plants, and other major institutions assembled the family members of their labourers in order to provide them with the J-cards, but contrary to the announcements, those people were also unexpectedly deported.

Five members of the *Judenrat* were deported with their families, while the Council chairman Kestenberg was shot. Those who could tried to save themselves, leaving for other localities, usually Warsaw, using passes issued by *Kreis-* and *Stadthauptmanns* (naturally such a pass cost a lot of money) or due to the fact that the *Judenräte* from the neighbouring towns sent requests for labourers to the *Arbeitsamt*.

Latest news from Lublin: Bolesław Tenenbaum (he was no longer needed. . .) was shot. Purportedly, over 2,500,000 zlotys was found in his flat. According to the rumours, the Jews stoned the corpse of Tenenbaum lying on the street.¹⁶⁵

On 14 April, an order was given that all J-card holders must move to Majdan Tatarski, where a special closed ghetto had been established for them.

165 Bolesław Tenenbaum was executed by the Germans before April 8, 1942 for theft conducted on his own initiative.

In mid-May we received the first piece of news from those resettled: a postcard with a “Józefów über Zamość” stamp. They were being sent east in the direction of Równe.¹⁶⁶

ARG II 351 (Ring. II/305)

Description: original, handwritten (FLIG*), ink, Polish, 210×297 mm, 6 sheets, 6 pages. Published in: *To Live With Honour and Die With Honour! ...*, pp. 181–188.

22

After 9 November 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony of escape from the ghetto in Majdan Tatarski, Aktion there on 9 November 1942; author's stay with his wife and sons in a hideout, their escape and journey to Warsaw.

[1] After the resettlement of the Jewish population from Lublin, the only Jews left were the several thousand craftsmen and labourers employed in German companies. They were relocated and quartered in Majdan Tatarski (a village in the suburbs of Lublin).¹⁶⁷ The life in Majdan Tatarski continued peacefully and the financial situation of the surviving Jews was bearable. The villagers were convinced that there would be no resettlement campaign in Lublin. The Jewish population of the nearby villages and Lublin, who had hidden from the resettlement wave, was returning to Majdan Tatarski. This was how the number of the Jews living in Majdan Tatarski increased to [1a] about 12,000.¹⁶⁸

166 This was false news. The Jews deported from Lublin in March 1942 were murdered in the Bełżec death camp.

167 After the *Aktion* of 17–31 March 1942, the official number of the remaining Jews was 3,300, while in fact the figure was approximately 7,000. The ordinance given by the Lublin District Governor Ernst Zörner regarding the establishment of the ghetto in Majdan Tatarski (Lublin suburbs) and ordering the Jews to move there by April 19 was given on April 16. The author of the testimony consistently uses “Majdany” as the name of the locality.

168 The ghetto in Majdan Tatarski was the site of successive selections, during which the people without certificates, the elderly, the sick, and children, were executed or sent to

In early November, worrying rumours began to spread in the village. There was more talk of a forthcoming resettlement. Those worrying suspicions stemmed from the fact that Majdan Tatarski was not on the list announced by the Germans, which noted the localities in the General Government where the Jews were permitted to remain.¹⁶⁹ The local German authorities continued assuring the *Judenrat* that the Jewish district in Majdan Tatarski would not be liquidated, that it had been omitted from the list only through an oversight, and that there was no need to worry. [2] The rumours subsided, but the Jews continued to be plagued by anxiety.

Finally, lightning struck. On 7 November, the Germans summoned the Jewish Order Service and demanded its participation in the deportation campaign.¹⁷⁰ As a reward, the police functionaries and their families were to be protected. Majdan Tatarski was surrounded that night, with the Ukrainians blocking all entries into the village. The residents were forbidden to leave their homes. They were then gathered in the centre of the village with accompaniment of a terrible fusillade. They were then escorted into the boxcars. There was no search of homes, so those who stayed in their flats and hide-outs survived.

They survived the resettlement, but their situation was hopeless. Officially, [2a] Majdan Tatarski had been purged of Jews. The surviving Jews had no right to be in the village. The very fact of their being alive was illegal too.

I was among those Jews who did not assemble by order of the Germans. I hid in the cellar, leaving everything in the flat. I hid with my wife, mother, and three sons. In the cellar, we could hear gunshots and shouting. The food supplies were running out. The people hiding in the same building gathered at night and exchanged news.

the camp at Majdanek. At the same time the Jews who took shelter during the March *Aktion* were streaming into the ghetto. According to the 22 April 1942 registration lists, the ghetto had 4,383 inhabitants. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 51–55.

169 A reference to the 28 October 1942 ordinance regarding the establishment of residual ghettos. In the Lublin District, the Jews were allowed to live in Łuków, Parczew, Międzyrzec, Włodawa, Końskowola, Piaski, Zaklików, and Izbica Lubelska. See the Introduction.

170 The *Aktion* in Majdan Tatarski began on 9 November 1942. A few hundred people were shot on the spot; approximately 3,000 were taken to Majdanek. See T. Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta*, pp. 55–56.

At that time the Germans fetched the *Judenrat* chairman.¹⁷¹ They demanded an explanation of why the number of the resettled differed so much from the number of the Jews employed [3] in Majdan Tatarski. The chairman did not answer and was immediately executed. The JP¹⁷² director was murdered under the same circumstances.

Despite the promises of protection made to the Jewish policemen, the Ukrainian guards shot them as soon as they dared appear in the village after the *Aktion*.

I decided to escape with my family regardless of the risk. People were saying that there were Ukrainian guards wandering on the streets and that they shoot anybody they saw on the street. Several days later, I found the courage to leave the cellar. [3a] We saw a Ukrainian guard in the distance. He saw us, too. We ran back toward the hideout. He heard gunshots. My mother, who was unable to run so fast, did not return to the hideout with us. Two days later, we tried to escape again. That time the Ukrainian guard did not shoot and let us approach him. We bribed him with the sum of 500 zlotys and we crossed the border of Majdan Tatarski and headed towards Lublin.

Nobody paid any attention to us on the streets of Lublin. Our Polish friends turned us down when we asked them to shelter us. [4] It was night. There were not many pedestrians. We were trying to hide our heads in the collars of our coats. At some point, two SS-men accompanied by group of Poles passed us on the pavement. The Germans did not notice us, but one of the Poles did recognise us. I flatly denied the accusation that I was a Jew. The Germans did not understand a word of our argument. At some point, seeing that I was getting into trouble, I offered the Poles some money. The Germans understood the word “money”. They realised that we were Jews. After a few blows and kicks, they ordered us to walk ahead. They escorted us into the suburbs. [4a] We walked fully convinced that our death was inevitable. After some time, we found ourselves in a deserted area outside of Lublin. The Germans searched us there, beating and kicking us and threatening to shoot us. They undressed us and ordered me to take off my shoes and my wife to take off her fur coat. They took away our valuables and a large sum

171 It was Marek Alten.

172 Abbreviation for German *Jüdische Polizei*, i.e. Order Service. Its commander was Henryk (Moniek) Goldfarb.

of money. Robbed and half-naked, we waited for the shots. Suddenly, one of the Germans seemed to change his mind. He put away the revolver, pointed at the empty stretch of the field and shouted, *Los!*

It was a miracle that we reached Lublin without attracting anybody's attention. I recalled the address of a certain Polish [5] merchant, with whom I had maintained business contacts before the war. His flat was nearby. We went there. He, too, stated that he could not provide shelter to us. But he gave us a large sum of money, 10,000 zlotys, and necessary items of clothing. He also gave us the address of a certain railwayman living in the suburbs, claiming that he would help us. That man received us almost enthusiastically. He stated that he was in the International¹⁷³ and that he regarded assistance to Jews as one of his duties. We thought that we had finally found a haven. [5a] After we had slept through the night the hospitable railwayman stated that he had changed his mind and that despite his best intentions he feared to shelter Jews at his place. That new attitude of his was a result of his wife's attitude and her grumbling. We could not stay in that flat either.

The railwayman sent us to a hotel porter he knew, a *Volksdeutscher*, who agreed to transport us to Warsaw for 6,000 zlotys. The next day, we went to Warsaw by car along with some Lublin municipality clerks.

We alighted on Nowy Świat Street.¹⁷⁴ The *Volksdeutscher* escorted us to the guard post on Leszno Street. [6] We waited for the Jewish labourers' return from a work detail. This is how we entered the Warsaw ghetto.

ARG II 353 (Ring. II/307)

Description: original, handwritten (Tr*), ink, Polish, 150×192 mm, 6 sheets, 11 pages. Note on p. 1 (pencil): "Majdan."

173 The Communist International (Comintern), international organisation associating communist parties from European countries and the United States, established on Vladimir Lenin's initiative in 1919; dissolved in 1943.

174 That is, far from the ghetto area.

1942[?], Lublin, Dawid Lewkowicz. Letter to the House Committee[?] in Warsaw,¹⁷⁵ in search for Mrs Krasnopolska from Kalisz.

[1] Dawid Lewkowicz
Lublin, Szeroka Street 44, 1st floor

Jewish House Committee [in] Warsaw

[2] [. . .] Committee [. . .] I ask you kindly for this [letter?] [. . .] given [. . .] to Mrs Krasnopolska from Kalisz, who is staying in a synagogue in Warsaw.¹⁷⁶

Beloved sister,

I can write to you that we are in Lublin. When you receive [this letter], please reply at once. I will write to you about everything concerning us. We send our regards to you all and we kiss you from the bottom of our hearts. Please reply immediately.

ARG I 857 (Ring. I/552/5)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark (Lublin), German, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 149×102 mm, substantial damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

175 In the original, *Jüdische Haus Gemeinde Warschau*.

176 At a refugee centre in a synagogue.

24

27 March 1942, Lublin, sender unknown. Telegram from Lublin [?] to an unidentified addressee in the Warsaw ghetto; request for money.

No. 060 Telegram

Received on 27 March 1942 at 12.28 p.m.

Warsaw Office

[Please] write immediately to the community, send money.

ARG I 855 (Ring. I/552/3)

Description: original, print, typewritten, German, Polish, 208×147 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

BIAŁA PODLASKA COUNTY¹⁷⁷

25

8 June 1942, Biała Podlaska, County Governor Lippkow. Circular letter of 8 June 1942 to the County Commissioner in Wisznice and mayors and commune heads in the Biała Podlaska County. Ban on sale of Jewish property.

County Governor
Communal Supervision¹⁷⁸

Biała Podlaska, 8 June 1942

To County Commissioner in Wisznice
To Mayors and Commune Heads
in the Biała Podlaska County

¹⁷⁷ Another testimony from this county, from Janów Podlaski, see Doc. 56 in the “Radom District” chapter.

¹⁷⁸ In the German original, *Kommunalaufsicht*.

Regarding deportation of Jews,
sale of valuable objects

We need to state that the Aryan population has already begun selling valuable objects in connection with the deportation of the Jews.¹⁷⁹ Undertaken without permission, this activity has contributed only to spreading confusion among the population, which is why I ban all sale of such objects. Those who violate this ordinance shall meet a severe punishment. This ordinance applies to buyers as well. Moreover, I point out that, pursuant to binding rules of law, Jews are forbidden to leave their place of residence without suitable permission. Failure to comply shall be severely punished. The local population is also forbidden to enter Jewish flats until the 20th of this month. Those who unlawfully enter their area of residence shall meet the consequences mentioned above.

By Order. Lippkow

ARG I 690 (Ring I/1083)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, 150×201 mm, German, 1 sheet, 1 page.

Attached is a note by Hersh Wasser in Polish and Yiddish: “Biała Podlaska.

Resettlement. A *psheytl*¹⁸⁰, given by Mr Leyb Fridman, member of *Aleynhilf*¹⁸¹ in Biała Podlaska.”

179 They were deported to the death camp in Sobibór, which was in operation from early May 1942 until mid-October 1943; it was located by railroad from Chełm to Włodawa. It is estimated that 250,000 Jews, mostly Polish, but also from Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, France, Holland and maybe others were murdered there. The deportation of approximately 3,000 Jews from Biała Podlaska took place on 6 June 1942. Based on ŻSS documentation, T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Martyrologia,” provides an incorrect date of 10 June, which differs from that in Docs. 25 and 27. According to the Oyneg Shabes bulletin of 18 June 1942, the date was 6 June. See *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, Doc. 57, p. [4].

180 (Hebrew, Yiddish) diminutive from *peshat*, biblical literal exegesis; here ironic.

181 (Yiddish) Jewish Self-Help, ŻSS.

26

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, Tsvi Kleinman.¹⁸² Testimony זכרונות
 “ביאלע פאָדלאָטק” פֿון אַ געטריבענעם. [Recollections of an exile. Biała
 Podlaska]. Description of the living conditions of exiles in Biała Podlaska.

[1] Klejnman Tsvi¹⁸³

Serock exile

Memoirs of an exile

Biała Podlaska

On Friday, 8 December 1939, I and over 70 per cent of the expelled Jewish population of Serock on the Narew River¹⁸⁴ were released from the sealed railway carriages in which we had been imprisoned on Wednesday, 6 December, after a very rigorous search at the Nasielsk railway station. We were taken first to Eastern Prussia, to Willenberg,¹⁸⁵ and then back along the Russian-German border to Biała Podlaska, where we arrived on the evening of Thursday, 7 December, and were not freed until the next day around 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

My family consisted of six members at that time: I, my wife, two sons, aged 14 and 17, and two daughters, aged 7 and 9. Because of the great panic in the Nasielsk station or, to be more precise, because of the blows we had

182 Tsvi Hirsh Klejnman, a resident of Serock, was married, had two sons and two daughters; before the war, he probably worked for the local Jewish Community. See Aleksandra Bańkowska, „Nieznani i mniej znani współpracownicy Ringelbluma, czyli co wynika z odczytania książki kasowej Oneg Szabat,” *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów/Jewish History Quarterly*, 256 (2015): 627–628.

183 There are three more testimonies by Tsvi Klejnman of deportations of the Jews of northern Mazovia in 1939. See *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich* (forthcoming), Docs. 81, 86, 87.

184 The entire Jewish population of Serock was deported on 5 and 8 December 1939, mostly to Biała Podlaska. See M. Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, p. 94.

185 Today, Wielbark, near Szczytno.

received, we were dispersed over three separate carriages, with no knowledge of each other throughout the journey. When we were let out of the carriages at Biała station, we found ourselves 3 km. from the town. The German escorts began to keep order among the freed prisoners, making sure that on entering the town we looked decent and respectable. They lined up the entire group in rows, three persons per row, and began to herd us into town. The members of my family found each other and we marched together in two rows with the entire group. Since the herding was a bit [2] too difficult for people who had not had a small piece of bread or a mouthful of water for several days, many people collapsed. Amongst those who fell was my wife, whose tooth was knocked out when she fell. We helped her up and marched on together.

When we arrived in Biała, the yellow Stars of David which the local Jews wore on the left side of their chest disheartened us. The “badges of shame” were large and looked repulsive, but [. . .] the hearts that beat beneath those repulsive signs were certainly not. On the contrary, the hearts of the Biała Jews, who a few days previously had taken in more than 3,000 Jews from Suwałki with much hospitality, now stood before the doors of their shops and houses and, with tears in their eyes because of the recent tragic events, gave the exiles, still led by German guards, bread, rolls, bits of *challah*, and cakes. This was done almost on the run, because the “escorts” would not allow anyone to approach. Only upon arrival in the centre of town was the crowd released and the Biała Jews from everywhere began to bring bread, saucepans, boxes of food, tea, and coffee. We were so thirsty, we could not drink enough. Jews with a sense of smell immediately detected the aroma of better food being cooked in well-to-do houses and “settled in”, while the owners of those houses gave maximum hospitality to large numbers of exiles, giving them food and drink in the finest fashion, and offering lodging. Others, the majority, spread themselves among the study houses and *shtibls*, with which Biała was so replete, and found temporary refuge there. Likewise, there was no shortage of food for the newcomers to the study houses and *shtibls*, [3] because the Biała Jews were constantly bringing pots of food and, in the literal sense of the word, satisfied the terrible hunger suffered by all [the newcomers].

My family and I were not among the first nor the second group to enter a study house or *shtibl*, and I was somehow unable to properly figure out where to go. I did not have possessions and, fortunately before I was almost left on the street, I suddenly came upon an empty flat, in which I found some

[. . .] on which we sat down to rest. My wife went into a neighbouring room to find a hot drink for the children. She soon returned with a cup of tasty, sweetened tea with milk which she was given for the children, as well as an invitation for the whole family. Needless to say, we did not hesitate and immediately took ourselves to the lodgings of the family who had invited us.

The flat of the aforementioned family consisted of one long room, shaped like the Hebrew letter *dalet*.¹⁸⁶ A large tiled oven took up almost half the room and, because it was winter, its warmth was very welcome. Wood was plentiful in Biała and an entire cart of peat could be had for 10 to 12 zlotys. The owners of the dwelling were a mother, an already elderly woman, and two daughters, whose livelihood came from selling vegetables at the market. Poor people, a poor dwelling with poor furniture. They had never had any gold or silver; but they had hearts of gold. As soon as we crossed their threshold, we were given tasty, hot, tea with milk, which they had prepared earlier, and which we drank with great relish. We sugared the drink with our own sugar and ate a little bread which I had brought from home. It seemed such a rarity to us, [4] because we had been starving on the train and here we could suddenly have bread and sugar! When we were driven from our home on Tuesday, 5 December, at dawn, I had grabbed two loaves which were in the house, cut them into smaller pieces, and divided them among household members, so that each person should have a little bread for themselves. I packed a separate large piece of bread with a little sugar into a satchel, which my wife carried. On entering the railway carriage following the inspection, my wife placed the satchel on the shelf. Meanwhile, the police had come and they dragged some people out of the carriage, including my wife, and the satchel with the bread and small amount of sugar remained inside the carriage. The people who remained in the carriage showed much restraint in resisting the temptation to eat, as they left a bit of bread and sugar in the satchel.

My new hosts did not merely welcome my family with a drink, but also provided a considerable amount of food which we relished. The problem then arose of finding lodging for the night, because it was out of the question to spend the night in that narrow room which [already] housed three people, since there were six people in my family. Thus I went out to find a place to stay. An acquaintance from my town, who had already found accommodation

186 This Hebrew letter looks like this: ד. In English, the room would be called L-shaped.

in the house of a local resident, informed me that there was an empty room near where he was living. I went there immediately and learned that the room belonged to the owners of a house in which they themselves had occupied a three-room dwelling with a kitchen for themselves. The last room, which they called the pantry,¹⁸⁷ had two windows, from which some window-panes, destroyed during the bombardment, were covered with pieces of plywood and wood, through which the wind [5] blew in with full force. The room was almost entirely empty. The owners of the pantry, the P. family, had been very wealthy and owned several houses, but, thereafter, they fell on hard times. Before the war, the husband of the family went to Eretz Israel, two grown-up sons went to Russia during the war, leaving the mistress of the house and two daughters at home. One daughter was divorced and the other, unmarried, was older and had a limp. The divorced woman's seven-year-old daughter also lived there. This whole family, which could live quite comfortably even in one room of the large flat, were not persuaded to give the pantry to a family of exiles. In response to my request that they make their room available to my family, they replied that the room was already taken by another refugee family. To confirm this, they had laid down on the floor bedding wrapped in an eiderdown and asserted that this had been left by the refugees who had reserved the room for themselves. Their every word was an obvious lie. They simply had no understanding or sympathy with people who had been unexpectedly driven out of their bright, warm homes into exile. Their tenant, a shoemaker called Pinkhes Murzynek who had taken in quite a large family from his hometown, said, "You won't get anything from them! Go to the *gmina*. They will send [their] people with you and they will be nicer!" I took his advice and went to the *gmina*, telling them about the empty room belonging to the P. family.

From the first day that the first groups of refugees arrived, the Jewish *gmina* of Biała was extremely active in helping them. The special activists from the *gmina* were willingly joined by a whole crowd of young people from both [...] and helped the *gmina* [6] organise collections of bread and other foodstuffs and find accommodation for the refugees. There were more than 3,000 people from Suwałki alone, for the greater part of whom suitable accommodation was found and who were supplied with food. It was already more

187 In the original, *komer*, most probably from the Polish *komora*, chamber, a storage room.

difficult to organise lodging for those who came later. Nevertheless, the Biała leaders were not stopped by these obstacles and successfully provided help when the groups of refugees from Serock came, 1,700 of them. On that *Shabes* more than 90 per cent of the Jews from Biała responded to the call from their [. . .] and gave beyond their means. Many of them simply shared everything that they possessed with the refugee families, whom they took in, making available to them all the food they had.

As one came into the *gmina* building, one was struck by the sight of a large table containing sliced loaves; one loaf of bread surely weighed 5–6 kilos, and whoever came immediately received bread. I left the bread until later, because the most important issue for me was the question of accommodation. The *gmina* official, having listened to my reason for coming, immediately sent to the P. family a young woman who demanded, in the name of the *gmina*, that they make their empty room available to my family. Mrs P. had no choice. Like most people, she was afraid of the community and relented. “But what will you all sleep on? And with what will you cover yourselves?” she asked me. She had a point and I went to find straw for a bed. The community once again provided someone to help me and I obtained a bundle of straw from a Biała resident, which I immediately carried off to “my” room, spread it on the floor, and thus had 4 places to sleep on.

[7] When I came back to my [earlier] temporary lodgings, where I had left the members of my household, I found that the owners of the house, the old woman with her daughters, had worked out a plan to accommodate us should I not find better housing elsewhere. I thanked them warmly, but I was made to promise to spend *Shabes* with them and to eat with them after *Shabes* until I was able to get settled. The words of the three poor women, who were prepared to give away their last bit of food to a refugee family, moved me so strongly that I could hardly keep myself from weeping, not from distress or pain but from joy and contentment. Their words were a great consolation to me, like precious balm poured over my tired, painful limbs. The evening meal which we ate there was very meagre, but compared to the situation in which we had found ourselves and the poverty of my hosts, the meal was so lavish that the wealthiest man could not have paid for it. We were served fish for dinner, in truth very small in size, and a soup with bits of meat, and even a carrot *tsimmes*. The invitation to eat with them came with such graciousness and friendliness that it looked as though we had done them the greatest

honour by agreeing to eat with them in their home and allowing them the gift of such a good deed.

Immediately after the meal, I took my hosts and together we went to my second set of lodgings in the house of the P. family. The difference between the two lodgings was colossal: There a poor attic room with no furniture and an uninviting appearance, and here the comfortable rooms, beautifully furnished, beautifully restored, and clean. The difference between the two hosting families was even greater than that of their lodgings: the first, modest, full of understanding and empathy for the poor and those more unfortunate than they, serious and upright, ready to give away [8] their last morsel to those in need and distress, not pretending to feel pity and magnanimity; the second cold, reserved in their behaviour towards the poor, for whom they are prepared on [this] occasion to do a favour, but with doubtful grace and questionable benevolence do they hand over a bit of bread to a poor man!

I found my new hosts sitting around a large table in the dining room, lit by a small electric lamp on a very lovely little candelabra (electric current was very cheap at that time. . .). The first welcome with which we were honoured was a reproach that we had come so late. They had already locked the outside door and, because of me, they had had to take the trouble to open it. In fact, it was not late at all, but a reproach is a reproach! They asked us to sit down and began to ask various questions about our exile: where we came from, who we were, what we did at home and, in particular, why we hadn't brought anything with us, no money, no clothing, and no bedding. The last question was indeed a difficult one, although only I felt the difficulty. I began to feel very badly. It seemed as if I myself were guilty of my own misfortune and then the three women came, as prosecutors in a courtroom, if you will excuse the comparison, and sat down on the prosecution bench and began tormenting me with their investigation. I made every effort to justify myself, describing first briefly and then in detail, how we had been driven out, how we had not anticipated this, because we had already paid all the taxes and paid off the bribe three times that was demanded, that we had been driven out at dawn when we were fast asleep, that, as far as money was concerned, I had never been a rich man, [9] that what little I had, was taken from me during the search, that there was no question of taking clothes or bedding because we were not given time to take the slightest thing with us, and many people left their homes in nothing but their underwear, despite the fact that a road

of some twenty kilometres awaited us, which we had to cover by foot. Thus we were unable to take any baggage with us and instead of baggage, we had to carry our children, who were not able to walk such a long way, etc., etc. But all of my justifications did not mitigate against my “crime”; the main question was how one could set out without all the above mentioned necessary articles. “The court” did not accept my justification. Nevertheless, we were offered tea and sweets, unlike our first hosts “the beggar-women”, who had given us well-sweetened hot milk. Slowly their tongues began to loosen and they gave out some information about themselves and surprise, surprise! They told us that the woman and the two girls could sleep with them in the bedroom, where there was an empty bed. In the straw bag, there remained some straw, so I could take a bit of straw from what I had brought and put it inside. On that bed there was also an eiderdown and a pillow and thus they would have a comfortable bed. Furthermore, the bundle of bedding which they had purposely laid down in the pantry in order to drive us away from there, was made available to the men, that is to me and my two sons. The bundle contained an eiderdown, a pillow, and a blanket. Who would have expected such a thing? Such unexpected kindness after such a cold welcome [10] I certainly did not expect and I became angry with myself for thinking badly of Jewish women, who gave the impression of being evil and mean, but who in truth were very good people. . .

It turned out that my description of our suffering when we were driven from home and the journey to Biała made the needed impression on the women, to the extent that they gave me and my family quite a lot of bedding, in great contrast to their [general] bad character about which I only later learned.

The room, or the so-called pantry which my sons and I had received to sleep in, was cold, because the windows were not properly closed. The Almighty, however, always sends relief from the plague. Next to the room lived a tenant of my landladies, whom I have mentioned previously, Pinkhes Murzynek. In the evening, Pinkhes had said to the family whom he had taken in, “those people in the pantry will really freeze”. What did he do? He took a good deal of wood and peat and, before lighting candles,¹⁸⁸ lit the stove in his room. The back side of this stove was [part of the wall of] my room, and he stoked

188 Before the beginning of the Sabbath.

it so strongly that the heat blocked all the open holes and cracks in the windows. When my sons and I came into the room, it was simply a pleasure, and instead of going to sleep, we sat down and warmed ourselves by the stove. At this point, I heard the voice of my neighbour who shouted to me through the closed door leading from the pantry to his living space: "Mr Klejnman! Is the stove talking to you?"

[11] He had found out my name from the family that he had taken in. We slept with relish. In the morning, we left for our "food station" in the alley where the *mikvah* stood, in the house of the women who had received us in such a welcoming fashion. For a second time, I marvelled at the goodness of these people. Again, we were offered breakfast, which they themselves had not tasted, fearing that there would not be enough for us. We also ate egg and onions, vegetable soup with radishes, a *cholent*, specially made in a separate pot for us: all of this food which they served despite their great poverty tasted really wonderful to us, because it was seasoned with love and sympathy towards me and my family.

In the afternoon, a rather large number of people from my town visited me. Our mood was not tense; we were sure that we would manage to cross the border. Irrespective of age or gender, we were all striving at the time to leave this area, which was occupied by the Germans, and to go over to the other side, the Russian side, which was considered paradise. We began to work on various plans, to search out suitable nearby places where one could cross the border on foot. We soon learned that this was not as easy as we had imagined. On the contrary: to smuggle oneself across was actually more difficult than from other places (our goal to smuggle ourselves across the border was indeed more difficult from our location). It was more dangerous here than anywhere else and to smuggle oneself over the border commanded a high price. The group became heavy-hearted. Nobody had any money, because it had been taken away during the search. Perhaps individuals had possessed something, [12] but most were without money or clothes.

In the morning, along with the president of the Jewish community of our town at that time, Mr Menakhem Kronenberg, may he rest in peace, I received a communication from the *kehillah* in Biała to produce a list of all of our refugees and to supply their address, age and occupation. The representatives of the Suwałki refugees were required to make a similar list. Therefore, even away from home, we had to involve ourselves in communal work. We went

out into the street and informed everybody we met that we would register all Serock refugees in the Radziner *shtibl*.¹⁸⁹ On hearing of this registration, the crowd was filled with joy. After receiving a hearty welcome from the Biała Jews, everyone fantasized about what benefit the registration would bring. Maybe each person would be settled in a flat, supplied with a livelihood, and given assistance. There was a rush to the Radziner *shtibl*, people trembled with fear lest, God forbid, they would come too late.

I remember a small detail which clearly illustrates how frightened our refugees were that, God forbid, they might not get registered. I obtained paper from the Biała *kehillah* and drew lines to make the necessary columns. I did not have what to do it with, so I asked if someone could find a carpenter to ask for an evenly-cut piece of wood to draw the lines on the paper, but no one wanted to take the risk of leaving the room for a few minutes. Thus I had to make the lines without the appropriate tools. Later I learned the reason for this. Near the stove in the Radziner *shtibl* [13] stood several refugees holding the following conversation: What do you think? They're going to write to America, just as they did in the other war, and America will send lots of good things, with which they alone will stuff themselves and they won't give a fig for us! Of course, naturally! Whoever holds the pen in hand, writes for his own advantage. So that means that everyone has to keep a careful eye on those "who hold the pen in their hand" and not leave them alone to snatch the entire American aid, God forbid, parcels and packages, just for themselves. Poor, lonely creatures! Their imagination had run wild and they thought that on the very next day their American relatives would send them ships full of food, linen, and clothes. Fantasy is its own illusion and looks wonderful, but the reality in which the refugees found themselves was truly a sad one. The refugees whom the warm-hearted Biała Jews had taken into their homes were still in a relatively good situation; however, those who had found their place of refuge in the *shtibls* and study houses were, generally speaking, not in an enviable position. They had food, but the sanitary conditions were very bad. A risk of an epidemic arose. After finishing the registration of our refugees, I, together with Mr Kronenberg, may he rest in peace, carried out an inspection of all the places occupied by our fellow countrymen.

189 Prayer house of the *rebbe* from Radzyń [Podlaski], probably Shmuel Shloyme Lajner (Leiner) (1909–1942).

From the *gmina*, we received carbolic acid,¹⁹⁰ with which we disinfected all the places.

The aid committee set up by the *gmina* functioned very well.¹⁹¹ Every morning they distributed to the refugees a quarter of a kilo of bread per person [14] and a cup of coffee. After a few days, a kitchen was set up which initially was not able to supply all refugees with a mid-day meal. Later, however, the obstacles were overcome, i.e. the refugees were provided with some food. I too became “independent,” that is to say I had renounced enjoying the benefits of the family with whom I had dined on Shabes, because I saw that they gave away what they needed for themselves. I remained with the P. family, for whom I had to draw water every morning from a pump in a street far away. The first day, the elderly landlady began to grumble: Water, you all use a lot of water (I had already brought a bucket), so I brought more water. The next day the old woman did a wash, and one can’t be mean and refuse to draw all the water she needed to do her wash. However, to satisfy her completely, as well as her daughters especially the younger one, was beyond my capabilities, because many of the refugees would turn to me, as representative from my town, for help. There were people who were not adequately clothed, who were unkempt and unwashed, against whom the women took fright (a faked fear): they kept shouting that the people who were coming to see me would rob them or bring snow and cold into the house. The women chased my “clients” away with blocks of wood and sticks and would not allow them in to see me. The situation was not helped by the cries and curses of the refugees who, with all their hearts, wished their own bitter experience of exile upon the women. The curses [15] fell upon my head too, since the old woman vented her anger on me even more. Unfortunately, I was not allowed to respond, because I was an uninvited guest who did not pay for my lodgings. My situation became worse from day to day, because of something else as well. We had simply begun to experience the real taste of hunger. I was unable to obtain any warm water from my landladies. They always came up with excuses: There’s no fire, there’s no water, and so on, and if I did on occasion receive a glass of warm water, it was offered in such a way as to make me prefer hunger and thirst

190 Phenol solution used to disinfect rooms.

191 Full name in Polish: *Komitet Pomocy Wyszędleńcom w Białej Podlaskiej*. Its chairman was Simkhe Rozen. *AŻIH, ŻSS*, 211/201, p. 1.

rather than to accept their favours. When the *kehillah* opened the kitchen for the refugees, most of them saw it as a good thing; despite the fact that there was little food, at least they could warm themselves. There was no dining room where one could eat a mid-day meal, neither were there any utensils. Everyone was obliged to bring a cup/small pot and to take the food home. How it was with other refugees and where they obtained their utensils (they surely didn't buy them) I don't know, but I am sure that no one had the trouble that I did to find a cup. The cup my landlady used could not be given away. First, the women ensured it was always being used and second, who knew when the cup would be brought back, because sometimes one had to queue for hours to receive food. However, the old woman possessed a small room containing a large quantity of old pots and cups of every sort. On one occasion, she went to open the room and calamity struck. What happened? I just happened to arrive at that moment and caught sight of the entire store of old utensils. The old woman's hands began to shake and, in an attempt to hide her treasures, she [16] began to look for a plank to cover them, but the pots scattered in all directions and fell on all sides. Several minutes later, I sent one of my children to borrow a pot from the old woman to bring the meal from the kitchen. The old woman had no choice, and she sent a pot which should have been thrown away long before. My wife took some sand and scrubbed the pot down with all her might and managed to remove a little of the rust which had accumulated over many years.

Once food was brought from the kitchen, one needed a plate and a spoon, so I sent the children again: Go ask for two plates and spoons. The children knew the old woman well and did not want to risk their lives for a scrap of food. Nevertheless, they summoned up their courage and asked for the utensils, and were given two plates and three spoons for six people. Since the old woman could not wait until we had finished eating, she sent her grandchild to say: Grandma needs her utensils back. In the end, the children were not willing to borrow the pot (even the old rusted pot had to be returned every time we ate something) or a plate and spoon, And I would not have been able to enjoy a little bit of warm food were it not for my neighbour Pinkhes Murzynek who stood by me in my need and who took pains to make my situation a little easier.

My neighbour Pinkhes came from Łomazy, a small town on the outskirts of Biała, where he had married and obtained in dowry a small wooden house

in which his father-in-law lived. There were two small rooms in the house, one of which served as living quarters for Pinkhes and the other as a shoemaker's workshop. Pinkhes did very well in his trade. In short, three years elapsed after his marriage and in that short time he improved his standing quite considerably. In addition to a considerable sum of cash, he owned a fair amount of merchandise, leather hides [17] and ready-made boots which, during the battles between the Polish and the German armies around Biała, he buried in various places, in his own cellar and in the homes of good friends. As we know, when Poles were fighting the Germans, the Russians penetrated into Polish territory and occupied many towns big and small, including Biała and Łomazy, where Pinkhes lived. In the short time that the Russians controlled Łomazy, there were a number of Poles who had strongly opposed the local communists before the war. For this reason, those local communists did not shed tears over them as victims and some were shot and others deported somewhere. The Poles suspected that the Jews had a hand in this, because when the Russian troops had marched into Łomazy, the Jews had organized an enthusiastic welcome for them and remained on good terms with them for the entire time.

Shortly afterwards, when following a pact between Germany and Russia, the Bug River was established as the border between the two countries, the Russians left Łomazy and, for reasons unknown, the German army delayed their advance into the town for several days. The Polish population of Łomazy began to badly persecute the local Jews. In addition to calling for a strict boycott, they set up a guard by every Jewish shop or workshop to prevent, God forbid, all non-Jews from going in to purchase something. And one did not feel safe walking through the streets, because they beat and threw stones at every Jewish passer-by. Once, there occurred an actual battle between the local Jews and the Poles.

The Jewish residents heard that on a certain night, a Friday night it was, that the Poles were supposed to avenge themselves on the Jews. The Łomazy Jews were no cowards: they immediately organised themselves, set up a guard for that night, defended themselves and did not show any fear. [18] The Łomazy Jews' act of courage in defending themselves is a beautiful chapter in the history of Jewish self-defence. Those who had only their bare hands took part in the defence. Men and women, the elderly and young children, armed themselves with iron bars, axes, sticks, shovels and stones. They set up a guard

in every place from which the enemy was supposed to launch an attack. The enemy appeared behind the fences of the surrounding orchards and gardens. Both camps faced off against each other until midnight and waited for an opportunity to attack each other, although, in fact, you could only talk of an attack by the Polish faction, because the Jewish side wanted only to defend itself and prepared to that end. However, it turned out that the Poles were better prepared, because suddenly a gunshot was heard, which soon created panic in the Jewish ranks, because the Jews were suitably prepared for a battle using strategies and knives, but to fight an enemy with such powerful weaponry was impossible. Soon several more shots were heard, causing several Jews to fall, some of whom remained disabled for life. There was no point in fighting further. The Łomża Jews were forced to flee and hide. In many cases, hiding oneself did not help, because the enemy ran into many Jewish houses, demolished and robbed Jewish shops and many private flats of the [more] wealthy householders.

They also turned their attention to Pinkhes. He learned about this [attack] from a Polish client of his, who advised him to flee Łomża. Pinkhes was a Jew who did not like to think a great deal. [19] He was a simple man who had no love for deep contemplation. He rented a wagon, which he loaded with his household goods and under which he hid the merchandise that he had kept in the house. The hidden merchandise he left behind and took those things [. . .] which had a certain value. He took his wife and his one-and-a half year old son Khayim, whom they called Khaymele and fled to Biała where he rented a two-room apartment from the P.- family for which he paid six months' rent in advance. The old woman sensed that she had a good opportunity here, and he became a Biała resident.

Pinkhes Murzynek, as I have already mentioned, was an ordinary craftsman and, if you must know, also an ignorant man. Nevertheless, as if to spite our wise men who say there is no such thing as an ignorant Hasid, he had become a Hasid himself, or rather he considered himself one. Thus he was a Łomazy Hasid, because in Łomazy there lived a rebbe whom he held in great esteem, for the reason that he lived in Łomazy and not somewhere else. Thus, unlike other Hasids, Pinkhes was not obliged, for a festival, to leave his home, his wife and child Khaymele and travel to the rebbe and live a miserable life for several days. Pinkhes liked to have within hand's reach his hammer, his anvil, his last, his shoemaker's thread made of pig's hair, and, in general,

everything else he needed for his work. A fine thing, he said, if I had to travel all the way to Warsaw to buy a piece of leather for a sole; this was my neighbour's solution for Hasidism.

I found great favour with my neighbour Pinkhes for the following reason: As we chatted together and I found out that he [20] came from Łomazy, I remembered that my grandmother, may she rest in peace, always used to talk about the Łomazy rebbe, who had lived for some time in Serock next to my grandfather, and that she, my grandmother, was regarded by the rebbe as one of his own. When my neighbour learned this, I rose greatly in his esteem. In this way, the merits of my grandmother, may she rest in peace, protected me in exile. She really was a very pious and fine Jewish woman. Pinkhes became interested in me and, as far as possible, helped me out with whatever he could. It is true that his assistance was in fact minimal, but this was not due to him alone. It was my good fortune, if I may express myself thus, to be the responsible party. I am always a little bit late and that little bit sometimes has a decisive impact. Pinkhes was good-hearted and his wife was also of fine character, but to assist two families was too much for them. The family he had taken in received great favours from him: They set up a bed by the stove and placed at their disposal the kitchen and cooking utensils and many more things which, at first glance, seem very insignificant, but are of some importance for a family. For me, there remained only odds and ends which, nevertheless, had real significance given the conditions in which we found ourselves. We were free to use the kitchen when it was not being used and had as many kitchen utensils as we needed. I did not need to buy any wood. In addition, we were treated in a very friendly fashion and whatever they gave us, they did so without pretence. My children boldly borrowed what they needed from Mrs Murzynek without fear of refusal and Mrs Murzynek readily supplied them with everything.

[21] I also had no complaints about his congeniality, since Pinkhes befriended me in the true sense of the word. He set a chair for me in his workshop and chatted to me about Hasidism without neglecting his shoe-making work. While banging on the hammer, tugging on thread, cutting through the hard sole of a shoe with his knife, he would interject with questions about the old Łomazy rebbe, may his memory be a blessing, how long he had lived in Serock, how many children he had, how many Hasids there were, and other Hasidic issues as well. The children of the rabbi of our town

also enjoyed the merits of the old Łomazy rebbe's good name, may his memory be a blessing, because their father was a relative of his. The children had no mother and their father, the rabbi from our town, travelled to Warsaw two days before the war broke out and was unable to return home. Pinkhes's wife washed the [children's] clothes and gave the rabbi's son a shirt and a pair of underpants with a ritual undergarment to wear and washed the girls' hair. (They ate in another part of the flat.)

It would seem that everything should have been fine, but there was another problem, that of being seized for work. At that time, Biała was full of soldiers of various types, the majority of whom were dressed in black.¹⁹² On the other hand, thank God, there had never been a lack of Jews in Biała and now, when such a crowd of Jews arrived from Suwałki and Serock, certainly not. You can imagine that in any sort of encounter between those in black and those in long coats, one did not escape unharmed if the word 'work' was pronounced.

In truth, Jews were not afraid of work, on the contrary, [22] they wanted to work and earn a few zlotys (the *gmina* had to pay for the work), but soon they started seizing people for the kind of work which Jews had always feared. Approximately 12 km from Biała was the Krzna River. In this river, the Poles had left a machine which regulates river flow. This machine was sunk in the frozen river, and the Germans needed workers to clean away the snow and ice and pull out the machine. Nobody was keen to do this difficult and dangerous work, so Jews were snatched from the streets. And when they started avoiding the streets, house-to-house searches began, and those who tried to hide or flee were mercilessly beaten. The situation became worse from day to day. As I have already said, I was working in the Aid Committee as a representative of our refugees. Because people were being seized, I was not able to get to the community centre and, because of that, lost the post of secretary of the local *kehillah*, which had just at the time become vacant and which they had wanted to give me (the last one of our refugees whom I had presented to the Aid Committee had pleased them greatly).¹⁹³ This caused me much heartache, but to no avail. Again, a question of luck!

192 Black uniforms were worn by *Volksdeutsche* from auxiliary police formations (*Selbstschutz, Hilfspolizei*) and the railway police (*Bahnpolizei*).

193 A woman from Serock, whom Klejnman introduced to the Committee, was appointed.

In general, the situation in Biała was extraordinarily tense. The rumours were that the Russian-German border would be altered and would extend from the west side of Biała and this was to happen in the coming days. The Jews made a logical connection between this rumour and the fact that now that it was so very cold, people would need to drag the machine out of the river. Clearly, the rumours about moving the border were correct. At first, many [23] refugees had left Biała and gone to Warsaw where they had relatives or had hidden some of their possessions before they were driven out. Now, however, after the aforementioned rumours spread, those who remained sat tight and waited to be saved. People spoke of this with such assurance that every night they went to sleep with the firm conviction that the next day, when they awoke, they would be Russian citizens.

One morning, people noticed several Russian taxis which had stopped in front of the town hall. Out of the taxis stepped several somewhat important civil servants and soldiers. The appearance of the Russians, that is, real Bolsheviks, reinforced people's belief in the wide-spread rumours. For what other reason, speculated the Jews, would the Russian officials come, if not for the imminent moving of the border? Thus, for several days, people lived in a nervous state, a state reminiscent of an opium user who creates a euphoric fantasy to replace grim reality. People could not walk the streets for fear of being selected for work. People were snatched from the queues waiting for bread and the mid-day meal provided to the refugees by the aid committee. Neither were people safe indoors. Nevertheless, the mood among Jews was not pessimistic: People consoled themselves with the thought that this situation would not last and that salvation would come any minute. The Jews described the situation in the short period when Biała was occupied by [24] Russian soldiers, saying how friendly the Bolsheviks had been towards the population and to Jews in particular. And the Jews related that a few days before the Russian army had left Biała, Russian soldiers had informed them of their imminent departure and expressed their readiness to take anyone who wanted to join them. A fair number of Jewish families took advantage of the opportunity and departed with the Russian army. They were supplied with trucks and helped to load their household goods and kitchenware. The Jews told of the care with which the Russian soldiers had placed a noodle-board and a rolling pin on the truck. Hearing these stories, which were in fact true, the imagination of the Jews, and particularly the

refugees, ran wild. They constantly talked about it by day, and dreamt sweet dreams at night.

One day, a notice was hung on the gate of the townhall, in German, Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish, stating that there would be an exchange of population between Germany and Russia. To that end, a Russian Commission would officiate every day in the townhall to register those who had been born in Russia and those who had relatives who were willing to take them in. The news spread like lightning throughout the town. So this meant, asserted the Jews, that the rumour was becoming a fact. At first they did not know what to do, so they sent the children to the town hall – they themselves were too frightened – to find out what [25] was meant by the new proclamation. A Russian official did indeed sit in the townhall and communicated with those concerned with the help of an interpreter. We were to submit requests written in Russian, so there began a hunt for people who could write Russian. We worked on such requests very earnestly, giving much thought to what to write, what ancestral merits to use, whether to attach confirmation that one was a proletarian from a family of proletarians, that one was poor, that one's father, grandfather and great-grandfather had been poor, that they were not bourgeois, God forbid, and other such merits. In this manner, the beginning of redemption was supposed to occur.

The problem is that the world is full of nothing but paradoxes and contradictions: day and night, light and darkness, good and evil and the like. The same was true here in Biała. Jews had already moved on from the plan to shift the border and were now ready to embrace salvation at any moment, with the firmest conviction that the end of exile was near. And suddenly, who knows from where or when, the rumour spread that on the outskirts of Biała, barracks were being built. For whom were the barracks being built if not for the Jews, for whom preparations were being made to depart from Biała?

These rumours struck the Jews like thunder in the middle of a beautiful, bright day. Expulsion again! And besides, being packed into barracks, into cramped quarters, where the filth would be overwhelming and disease would break out as a result, together with hunger – where would one find food? – all of this would gradually consume us. And like anything one cannot know for sure and which is more present in fantasy than in reality, the power of imagination begins to work, not sparing the appropriate colours, in this case

quite black. Here, too, the power of imagination painted the most frightening pictures of the new expulsion to the barracks.

[26] First of all, a Jew arrived who claimed to have seen, next to the barracks where he was working, a sign bearing the inscription “Jewish camp”. So it was certain that the barracks were meant for the Jews. A disagreement now broke out about which Jews would be driven out and packed into the barracks. Some Biała residents, including my landlady and her daughters, maintained that only the newcomers, the refugees, would be expelled, those who had no home, no linen, and no clothes. The refugees, on the other hand, argued that the Biała Jews were no greater aristocrats than the refugees, that if Jews were to be driven out of Biała, no difference would be made between residents and strangers, just as there had been no distinction made in all of the towns and villages from which Jews had been expelled [previously]. Meanwhile, the Jews had forgotten the “seven good years”, i.e. those few days when people had spoken of the border change, and their faces became gloomy and sad. Those who still had a few zlotys or something to sell began to flee from Biała. The majority fled to Warsaw, although the journey to Warsaw by train was very difficult and dangerous for Jews. They were beaten on the trains, sometimes to death, and robbed of their remaining possessions. Some refugees went to the closest villages, to Łomża and Janów. The situation once again became tense and difficult. For many refugees, it had worsened because of the frost and the extreme cold which had set in. Not all of the refugees had received lodgings, so many of the refugee families had been settled in the *shtibls* and study houses, of which there were many in Biała. I have said “settled”, [27] but they were spread out on the floors of the abovementioned “quarters”, women, the elderly and children, all of whom shivered from cold and hunger, unwashed, uncombed, in the greatest filth and the worst sanitary conditions. I don’t know why, but it is a fact that in the abovementioned quarters, the *shtibls* and study houses, there were only refugees from Suwałki and not from Serock. One evening, together with the other representative of our town, Mr Kronenberg, may he rest in peace, and I carried out an inspection of the *shtibls* and we concluded that there was no one from our town living in those “quarters”. As I have indicated above, I am not writing in the role of a representative of Serock, but I must remark that we were always at the disposal of our refugees, for whom we would intervene in many cases where the refugees would forcefully occupy lodgings which the owners were not willing

to give them. I myself had difficulty negotiating this matter with my landlady, despite the fact that the issue did not have a direct effect on her. Should I then call this “class interest”?

During the abovementioned inspection, one of the “quarters” located in a study house made a very sad impression on us. The room was sufficiently large, wide and high, that is to say, sufficiently airy, but the cold was terrible. Nevertheless, in the few moments that we spent there we were compelled to hold a handkerchief to our noses, because the air was so putrid. Around the walls and the two big unlit stoves, men and women were lying in beds upon filthy bundles; for the most part they were older people who constantly let out another groan, ripping out a piece of our hearts. [28] We learned that a fair number of corpses had been borne away from these “quarters”. On one side near the wall, I noticed three long beams. When I asked why the stove was not lit when there was enough wood, I was told that they had no axe to chop the wood and that they could not find an axe to borrow. I don’t believe that the Jews had not wanted to lend an axe to chop up the wood in order to warm up old people and the sick who lay in the study house. There was simply no-one who could take this on. The majority of them were elderly and weak and the others, who were able and who should have done something, were lazy.

Many of the refugees who lived in private flats also began to sense the taste of exile. In the beginning, the landlords of those lodgings supported the refugees, whom they had taken in with a bit of food, heating material, and other things which a home needs to have. Later, however, the support stopped entirely or greatly decreased. The refugees had become too much of a burden. They simply became tiresome. It should not be forgotten that some of the Biała Jews who had taken in refugee families were poor themselves, and had initially given away food from their own mouths, and they could not continue to give. On the other hand, there were many refugees who thought – or convinced themselves – that they should be fed and lodged for free and that everything should be provided for them. And those became too aggressive and did not see themselves in partnership with their landlords, resulting in many quarrels.

[29] I, too, was not in an enviable position. I earned no money, I lived on the charity of the *kahal*, i.e. on the quarter of a kilo of bread and bowl of soup per person which the aid committee provided the refugees. But this

was minimal and we began again to feel hunger pains. From the outset, my landladies did not let us take advantage of the fact that they had things from which we could benefit. I wasn't aware of the more generous people, although they did exist in Biała. One day, one of my Biała residents came to me, saw that all was not well with me, and told me that he lived in the house of a Jew who had potatoes in his cellar, and whoever came to him to ask for potatoes, did not go away empty-handed. One of my sons, who yearned for a potato, took a small basket and set off in search of that Jew and brought back a fair amount of potatoes which lasted for several meals.

The following Friday, I was invited as a guest for Shabes. I had our rabbi's son to thank for this. My family was split into two: my two sons and I were guests in the home of elderly people. We were given enough to eat, even challah and goose-meat – poultry was cheap enough at that time. My wife and daughters ate with another family who had a great understanding of the plight of those driven from their homes. We had a good Shabes, but the problem was that it was followed by the grey weekdays. The brighter and lighter Shabes was, the greyer and darker the following weekdays seemed. My concern about practical matters became even greater. Now even the [30] question of lodgings became a serious one for me. My landlady simply wanted to get rid of me. She planned to rent the pantry and found a tenant who would pay money. In the pantry was a door which led to my neighbour Pinkhes's lodgings, where we would pass almost the entire day. This door was a great convenience to me, because I could go directly from "my" room to that of my neighbour. The old lady forbade me to open the door, so I had to make a detour via her [kitchen], which raised further complaints that I was making the house cold.

Those days were days of panic and flight, when many people fled from Biała on account of the fear of the barracks which had been erected on the outskirts of the town. I myself had begun to think about fleeing, but I was encumbered with a large family and to leave involved great difficulty for me. My neighbour Pinkhes was also caught up in the atmosphere of flight and because he was a person who had no love of contemplation, he said to me at a certain point: Actually, why should I sit in Biała at this time, when in Łomazy I have my own home, for which I do not have to pay rent, nor have anything to do with these witches (by this he meant the landlady and her daughters) and their patrimony. No sooner said than done. He rented a vehicle,

loaded up his household goods, and went back to his birthplace, to Łomazy (the reasons he had left Łomazy originally no longer applied).

My neighbour Pinkhes's departure from Biała was a great loss to me. True, before leaving, my neighbour had once again [31] left a fair amount of potatoes as a farewell present, but as a result I had lost a little corner where I could warm myself a bit, cook a little food, and likewise satisfy other needs, which were very significant for me. For my landlady, Pinkhes's departure was a happy occasion. The six months for which Pinkhes had paid her in advance for the lodging were not yet up and she had already found, thanks to my intercession, another tenant, a refugee from my town, who had paid her three months' rent in advance. The new tenant, however, did not possess Pinkhes's money, his merchandise, nor his cellar with potatoes, wood, and peat. Thus the stove, which gave brought heat to my room, was left orphaned and shamed, and I really began to shiver. And shivering was not the only thing I suffered from. We had left home in such circumstances that we were unable to take anything with us. We did not have a change of clothes and were made to suffer Pharoah's third plague.¹⁹⁴ How were we to solve this? We somehow managed to get by on the scarce existing food. But finding underwear was impossible for me, so I began to think of various solutions and finally decided that my wife should travel to Warsaw, where she had relatives, to ask for underwear and at the same time to stop in Legionowo where, before being driven out, I had brought an eiderdown to an uncle of mine. She was also to tell my uncle that he should send me at least 100 zlotys. (I was foolish enough at the time to imagine that once he heard about my tragedy he would immediately send me money.)

[32] The journey to Warsaw is indeed difficult and dangerous, but what could one do? I had money for travelling expenses: I had sold a gold chain, which I managed to bring with me and which was sold for half its value, and I thus had some money. My wife left and there was nothing left for me to do but wait for her return, which according to my calculations should be in about three or four days' time. When that time was up and my wife had not yet returned, I began to get really worried and uneasy. There was no way of knowing how the journey there had gone for her. And also the journey back frightened me, because it was said that on the way, people were robbed of

194 Lice; see Exodus 8:12–16.

everything they had. Another day passed, then two, then three, and I still had no news of my wife. Finally, I received a letter in which she confessed that when she had consulted with her relatives, she had come to the decision that Biała was not the place for us and that I should take the children and also leave for Warsaw. Warsaw is a big city. It would be easier to survive there than in Biała. She had collected the eiderdown and other valuable things which I had left with my uncle in Legionowo. My uncle had not given her any money. My wife was staying with her sister who lives in a basement room on Gliniana Street, and she is now waiting with great impatience and uneasiness for me and the children, who would have to undertake such a long, dangerous journey (the journey was more dangerous for men than for women).¹⁹⁵

[33] Upon receiving my wife's letter, I was both pleased that she had had no problems on the journey and unhappy about the decision she had taken about coming to Warsaw. I was afraid of Warsaw. The cost of living was very high there. In Warsaw, we would have to pay rent and I did not see how I would make a living. I decided that my wife would return from Warsaw with some linen and that we would temporarily make do as well as we could. The aid committee would give a piece of bread and a bowl of soup; I still had a little money from the chain that I had sold, so I would buy a little iron stove and put it in the pantry to be able to cook a little food at home. Food was cheap in Biała and we would see what to do thereafter. While remaining in Biała, I had already repaired both windows in my pantry, sealed up all the holes and cracks with clay so that the wind would not blow in, which delighted my landlady. The letter from my wife had left me totally confused. I wanted to respond to her letter that I had no intention of going to Warsaw, listing all the reasons and demanding that she return to Biała as soon as possible, but I did not have an opportunity to send a letter. One day passed, then another, and the children and I suffered greatly. The girls' hair needed washing, they needed bathing, food had to be cooked to warm us up, and I had nowhere to heat up a little water.

Since my new neighbour was unable to heat his entire living space [34] which consisted of two rooms, he had moved everything into one room in which he had placed a little stove and left the other room empty. We could have made

195 Jewish men in traditional dress were often harassed by German soldiers. The ban on Jews changing their place of residence without permission was issued on 1 January 1940.

use of that second room, but the stove was broken and gave off a great deal of smoke. One day, I went to a meeting of the aid committee early in the morning and around midday, as I was heading home, I was grabbed for work. I did not return home until evening. That day there was a lack of midday meals in the committee kitchen, the children stayed in the cold without any warm food all day. I began to prepare a midday meal on the broken stove in the empty room. At that point, the frost was so severe that I could not even put [as much as] a hand in the room because of the cold. It was dark and the stove began to smoke a great deal, so much that it burned my eyes. I opened the door to let the smoke out and it was so cold that I began to shiver violently. I gradually became accustomed to the smoke and the cold, but there was no solution for the darkness. I wanted to create some light with a splinter of wood, but the wood was wet and did not burn, even inside the stove. Seeing that I would not manage to cook anything that day, I went to my neighbour to ask for a piece of dry wood. The neighbour had forgotten the favour I had done him in helping him rent the apartment and made such a face that you'd think the tiny bit of wood was worth a fortune. At that point, I actually became hot from extreme agitation and my heart began to pound. Because of my neighbour's scowl, I stopped feeling the stinging smoke and the burning frost. [35] Even the darkness ceased to bother me. I consigned my cooking to fate which took pity on me this time, and finally, in the darkness, in the cold, in the smoke from the wet wood, my little pot of food finished cooking.

That little pot of food and the expression on my neighbour's face when he was too stingy to give me a few sticks of wood made me decide to leave for Warsaw. All my plans to arrange my affairs in Biała went up in the smoke that burned my eyes as I cooked. Also, my community work began to seem foolish and laughable to me. In short, yesterday I was handing out authorization slips to the refugees for bread and a mid-day meal; this took place on the street and I thought that my hands would fall off from the cold and I asked myself why I was doing this. For whom was I working? Did I get more bread and a bigger bowl of soup than my neighbour? I don't make demands and have never demanded a reward for my community work. I had always regarded community work done by an individual for his fellow man as something holy, something from which one must not derive pleasure; anyone who did so failed the poor. Nevertheless, my neighbour, someone from my town, should have shown me some understanding, even the tiniest bit, like the

sympathy which the Biała Jews had shown the refugees, when he saw how I struggled to prepare a little food. In fact, in all of my community work up to this point, I had more than once encountered such a “reward” and more than once had I resolved to instruct my children to run as far away as possible from any community work. [I wanted] to distance myself from it as if from a dirty, disgusting abomination. And if I myself did not run away, [36] the reason was that the work was too engrained in me. It had become, as one says, “my own flesh and blood”. I could not part with it. Whenever I had received a “reward” for my work, I would let it pass in silence and with great patience, but this time the “payment” was too great and I could not digest it.

Enough! I said to myself, I can’t remain in Biała any longer and, just like my neighbour Pinkhes, without further thought, I made the decision to leave Biała the next day. It was the night of 30 December 1939, three whole weeks after we had been dropped off with “great pomp and ceremony” at the railway station.

To make such a swift decision on such an important matter as that of leaving Biała for Warsaw, to leave a place where a litre of milk was to be had for 30 groszes, a kilo of bread for 35 groszes and the finest goose for 7 zlotys and go to Warsaw where prices were five times higher, was against my nature. I had always thought long and hard before making a decision. Besides, one should know that this was not simply a matter of economics. For Jews, the journey to Warsaw by train at that time put them in mortal danger. But I said to myself at that point: The whole matter of reflecting on and contemplating a particular question at length before taking a decision is extremely dubious. My former neighbour Pinkhes never pondered, never thought for long, and I don’t think he did badly. Specifically, reflection can be a consideration when one is sitting home or [37] working at the office, but not now in exile, when one is being forced from place to place, outside of one’s control and against one’s will. You are a speck of dust, a speck which is buffeted and driven by the slightest breeze! Can the speck of dust put up resistance to the wind and not allow itself to be carried away by it? Previously, the speck of dust was driven to Biała and now to Warsaw! In this way, and against my will, my nature also changed.

That being the case, everything that happened around me distressed me, beginning with the war that had broken out, expulsion from home, and all

other greater or lesser troubles and torments. Everything seemed to spite me, so why should I not also do something spiteful in turn?

After the mid-day meal, or more precisely after the evening meal, I informed my children of my decision to leave Biała. They were very surprised but soon thought that their father probably knew what he was doing. I did not need to make any great preparations for the journey. I informed my landlady that I was leaving. The old lady then became very nice to me. She was very happy to be getting rid of me: She would return to being the boss of the pantry for which she would earn a few zlotys. She reassured me that the journey was not as terrible as people said and that I would be much better off in Warsaw than in Biała where I suffered so much, that she could simply not witness my pain any longer, etc., etc.

As a sign of sympathy, she had her grandchild give me two pieces of bread and butter for the younger children. I thanked her very much for everything she had done for me, handing her back all of her things that we had used. I also gave her the potatoes which my neighbour Pinkhes had left me and which I had no way of cooking. [38] In fact, she simply would have liked them for herself, but she pretended to beg me for them. I opened my bundle and showed her the contents, to prove that, God forbid, I had not packed a single thing of hers in it. She responded by saying that the thought had not occurred to her; she had not even considered it, since, unfortunately, what could I possibly have taken, as the room was totally empty. Only then did I notice that the door to the neighbour's lodgings, upon which there had always hung a fair amount of clothes, had been totally cleared.

In that case, I thought to myself, the old woman was right in saying that she didn't suspect that there were any of her things in my bundle, because she was holding to the rule of "respect and suspect".

Early in the evening my children and I left our lodgings and set off for the station, about 3 km. out of town. We were allowed on the streets only until 6 in the evening. We had to be at the station before six o'clock. It was a beautiful evening. At first, a very fine snow began to fall, and then the sky cleared a little and it became frosty and hard underfoot. We arrived at the station at 5:30. The train for Warsaw was not supposed to leave until 9 o'clock. For Jews, to sit in a station full of soldiers at that time was the greatest ordeal. We had left our yellow Stars of David in Biała, so that no one would know that we were Jews. And the other Jewish passengers who were also waiting

for the train to Warsaw had done the same. [39] During this time, Jews had to change their habit of arriving late when they were travelling on a train and listen to reason; during this time each Jew made every attempt to avoid other Jews. We spread ourselves into the far corners, silent and stooped, not making a squeak, trying not even to cough.

According to our calculation, we had to wait three and a half hours for the arrival of the train. The children and I also did not sit together. The station was brightly lit, the stoves well stoked. We did not feel cold, but it would have been preferable and better to freeze on the street rather than to sit in a bright, well-lit station. The expression “to sit on burning coals” is insufficient here.

In those days, there had been an exchange between the Russians and the Germans, and that very day a group of *Volksdeutsches* had arrived at the station from their settlements and were also waiting for the same train, which was supposed to take them to Łódź. Their luggage had been sent by train and they carried only small bundles. They were seated, arranged in family groups around the long tables and chatted with the German soldiers who were in the station and who behaved in a very concerned manner towards the resettled families. I had noticed that, with some exceptions, the men among the resettled *Volksdeutsche* could speak no German. They made themselves understood to the German soldiers with the help of their wives who, it seemed, were real Germans and had influenced their husbands, the latter having no interest in things German, [40] to register as Germans and let themselves be resettled in their *Heimat*.¹⁹⁶

I sat down at a table with the resettlement group, took off my glasses (they were also a sign of Jewishness), leaned my head on my hand, pretended to doze, and waited with great impatience for the train to arrive, every few minutes furtively stealing a glance at the clock hanging opposite. However, the hands of the clock moved so slowly, with such laziness, that I thought that my nerves would not hold out until 9 o'clock. There was, in fact, nothing out of the ordinary; no one recognized the Jewish passengers, no one looked for them, no one beat them, and yet you felt the proximity of the tormentors, the awareness that you are about to be recognized as a *Jude*¹⁹⁷ who had purposely thrown away his “mark of shame” in order to trick the German authorities

196 (German) homeland.

197 (German) Jew.

and travel on the train without permission. To imagine the heavy punishment which would be meted out were that to happen, the anxiety about the children who would be forlorn, unable to speak and not let it be known that you were their father, all of this so tormented me, pained me so, made my nerves so taut, that I thought that I would go out of my mind. I really would have liked to have gone to sleep for a bit, but in front of my eyes were so many images of our being beaten and tormented for nothing. The wild sadistic pleasure which was mirrored in the faces of our tormenters who had wanted to gorge themselves on our flesh and get drunk on our blood, all those images did not allow me to close my eyes.

ARG I 691 (Ring. I/1000).

Description: original, handwritten (CK*), notebook, ink, Yiddish, 150×197 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 22 sheets, 40 pages.

ŁOMAZY

27

After 8 June 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account: "סעריע: פראָווינץ" [Series: The provinces], recorded by Nekhemia Tytelman. Situation of the Jews in Łomazy and Biała Podlaska, the Germans' savagery, mental and physical terror inflicted by the partisans in the nearby forests, and deportation of 2,000–3,000 Jews from Biała Podlaska.

[1] Series: The Provinces.¹⁹⁸

Husband and wife Z-n, Miła [Street] No. ... He is a stitcher and she is a knitter, before the war both were members of one club, earned well, healthy and during the war – had already borne a child. Fourteen months ago, they left the ghetto so as not to die from starvation. Were in Łomazy the entire time, 17 km. from Biała-Podlaska, lived well and quietly there. "We both had hands

198 Probably a reference to a section of the Oyneg Shabes plan "Two-and-a half-years", see *Oyneg Shabes, People and Works*, Introduction.

and strength to ‘knock out’ a bit of bread¹⁹⁹ (a tradesmen’s term for bootmakers which in their branches, call themselves *klappers*).”

They relate:

“We didn’t live badly during this entire time, food is cheap, everything can be obtained. We can work, but the murder of the Jews from the shtetls around us cast such fear that the food couldn’t be swallowed... The last misfortune with Biała depressed us most of all.

2,000–3,000 Jews were led out of Biała. It is said that they were killed on the way.²⁰⁰ Old people were asked to present themselves, as well as young people who were not fit to work and were [2] unemployed; unemployed women, whose husbands work at German *placówki* were spared. Entire families, including children, were taken. Whoever had the sense and hid themselves appropriately was saved. Those who fled to the forests, however, were killed in large numbers by gendarmes or by partisans’ bullets (more about this later).

We then started to alert our family in Warsaw that they should take us back. Sold our things and for the price of 1500 zlotys came back to Warsaw through a fixer.

The situation in Łomazy, as in Biała, is oppressive. The Jews in Łomazy live with a death sentence in their pockets, as though the executioner will arrive any minute to lead them to the gallows. In Biała, it is calmer now following the expulsion of almost all those remaining to work [3] at the *placówki* [. . .] one can endure [thanks to] the cheapness. We don’t have anything to work at. Food is harder to come by, as is trade with farmers – also due to the partisans.

With the partisans the situation is as follows:

The first partisans were made up of countless escaped prisoners. They approached the farmers to ask for bread and the farmers, out of pity and sometimes for “hatred of Haman”,²⁰¹ gave them work. More participants and weapons seemed to come out of thin air, and their numbers reached the thousands.²⁰² The forests were completely overrun by them. The military

199 In the Yiddish original: *oysklapn a bisl broyt*, an ironic reference to *klappers* which follows.

200 They were killed in Sobibór. The deportation took place on 6 June 1942. See Doc. 25.

201 Haman was the minister of King Ahasuerus who sought to kill the Jews (Book of Esther, 1:1p). The name here is used as a reference to the enemy, in this case the Germans.

202 The Red Army dropped soldiers by parachute into the territories occupied by the Germans in order to organise the partisan movement and subordinate it to the Red Army’s Central Staff of the Partisan Movement.

[Germans] did not dare go into the forests or the villages because [4] they would immediately be accosted by a hail of bullets. In order to eradicate the partisans, they would need to open up a front. The gendarmes and the Gestapo leave the forests and villages as they find them and shoot at anyone whom they see on the way, such as individual wanderers or groups of Jewish fugitives. The situation has reached the point that the farmers do not stray far from the village and we who had lived [on produce] from the village stopped going even for berries or mushrooms, because, as we know, the partisans also shoot Jews who cannot quickly give any [. . .]. The partisans are well-armed, live in large groups, carry out requisitions from anyone they can, in particular from properties of rich farmers.

[5] The attitude of the farmers towards the partisans (according to the words of the few that come to the shtetl):

In the beginning, the farmers benefitted greatly from them, they are good workers of the land, did the work of ten... And it was tragic, seeing how the Germans starved them... Now they [the farmers] are afraid. Incidentally, they are happier to get rid of the partisans than [of] the Germans. The farmer who dares to provoke or help the authorities to destroy a partisan group will be killed together with his whole *chatupa*.²⁰³ Many sympathize with them, perhaps more from hatred of Haman than love of Mordecai.²⁰⁴ Some clearly help.

[6] The couple Z-n name two large properties where they [the partisans] carried out a requisition according to all military rules. They also name various districts, kilometres in size, where they are to be found.

Meanwhile, thousands of Jews have fallen thanks to this very [. . .]. A Jew is afraid to stick his nose outside the shtetl and with resignation awaits his death.

The young people left the shtetl long ago and no one knows where they went.”

ARG I 873 (Ring. I/973)

Description: original, handwritten (Ł*), ink, Yiddish, 150×173 mm, damage and fragments missing, 6 sheets, 6 pages. Attached is a note by Hersh Wasser in Polish: “Łomazy, Biała Podlaska. Partisan movement. Interview taken by Natan Tytelman.”

203 (Polish) hut, meaning his whole household.

204 More from hatred of Germans than for love of partisans. Mordecai is the Jewish hero from the Book of Esther, who defeated Haman’s scheme and saved the Jews, see also footnote XXX.

CHEŁM COUNTY

CHEŁM

28

31 October–2 December 1940, Chełm, the town commissioner and the county governor. Correspondence with the Judenrat in Chełm:

- (1) Letter of 31 October 1940 to Marek Frenkiel, chairman of the Judenrat, regarding borders of the ghetto, with a list of the streets which the Jews had to leave by 10 November 1940.
- (2) Letter of 7 November 1940 to the Judenrat regarding vaccinations, construction of barracks, and closure of the ghetto.
- (3) Letter of 14 November 1940 to Marek Frenkiel, chairman of the Judenrat, granting him permission to go to Warsaw to buy vaccines and again obliging him to make the Jews leave the enumerated streets outside the ghetto borders by 10 December 1940.
- (4) Letter of 27 November 1940 to the Judenrat ordering removal of Jews from Lubelska Street.
- (5) Letter of the Judenrat of 2 December 1940 containing information about the number of the resettled and the volume of occupied and vacated flats.

(1)

General Government
for the occupied Polish territories
Lublin District
Commissioner of the town of Chełm
(Chełm County Governor)²⁰⁵

Chełm, 31 October 1940

²⁰⁵ Gerhard Hager (1896–1961), Chełm's town commissioner between November 1939 and May 1940. In July 1941 became the county governor of Chełm, then Tarnopol, and in March 1942 of Rawa Ruska, a position which he held until the end of the war. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 478.

To the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community,
to Mr Frenkiel²⁰⁶
in Chełm

I hereby give the following order: By 10 November 1940 all Jews are to be removed from the following streets:

Lubelska Street from the Orenstein plot (No. 24) to the border of the locality

Piramowicza Street
Reformacka Street
Ogrodowa Street
Zacisze Street
Strażacka Street
3 Maja Street
Narutowicza Street
Dreszera Street
Podwalna Street
Browarna Street
Krótka Street
Nadrzeczna Street
Łączna Street
Jordana Street
Olszowska Street
Kopernika Street

The Jews are to be quartered in the ghetto in Chełm. Attached is an outline of the ghetto borders.²⁰⁷ Doubts regarding any specific sections of the ghetto border should be cleared with the city construction inspector, Mr Fafronicz.

I insist that there will be no exceptions to the deadline for vacating the buildings and, that if necessary, on 11 November after 12:00 the enumerated streets will be vacated by force.

206 Meyer (Marek) Frenkiel (Fränkl), industrialist, chairman of the *Judenrat* and Municipal Welfare Committee of the Jewish Social Self-Help (KOM ŻSS) in Chełm.

207 Attachment is not preserved.

(2)

General Government
for the occupied Polish territories
Lublin District
Commissioner of the town of Chełm
(Chełm County Governor)

Chełm, 7 November 1940

To the Jewish Council of Elders
in Chełm

Regarding my letter of 31 October 1940

I hereby notify you that, aside from the streets you have been told about, two other ones, Pierackiego and Dworcowa, are to be cleansed as well.

I have taken note of your letter with the attached report of 4 November 1940.

Based on the statements it includes and your arguments regarding this topic which you presented to me in person, I have come to a conclusion that you are seeking postponement of the resettlement of the Jews to the area demarcated by me in consultation with the county governor and the security police chief commander.

As for your reservation concerning danger of epidemics and infectious diseases, I state that it is your duty to immediately carry out vaccinations among the Jews. Should there be even one instance of infection among the Jews in the town of Chełm, I shall hold you responsible for it with all severity. You are to report to me by 16 November 1940, whether you have ordered the launch of vaccination of all Jews in Chełm. As for point 2 of your letter, where you stated that you would be ready to resettle 1,200 Jews in place of 1,000 Aryan inhabitants, it is an impertinence, as the resettlement does not depend on whether the Jewish Council of Elders is ready for it or not, and you are to carry out the orders I give you.

You can erect wooden barracks in the future ghetto. As there are many craftsmen among the Jews, you should easily be able to construct suitable shelters.

Today I once again explicitly order you to immediately begin the emptying of the streets which I enumerated, to conclude by 10 December 1940.

(3)

General Government
for the occupied Polish territories
Lublin District
Commissioner of the town of Chełm
(Chełm County Governor)

Chełm, 14 November 1940

To the Jewish Council of Elders
Attention Mr Fränkl
in Chełm

I hereby confirm that you have notified me about your wish to go to Warsaw in order to purchase materials for the vaccination of the Jews in Chełm.

In consultation with the county governor, I notify you that the removal of Jews from the streets you have been told about must categorically conclude by 10 December 1940.

Jewish craftsmen are to settle in the houses in the front on the left side of Lembergerstr[asse]. It is your duty to ensure that barracks and wooden houses are erected on the territory of the future ghetto which I have demarcated. If necessary, the area of the settlement can be extended in the direction of the fields behind the slaughterhouse. Allocation of any additional streets in the direction of the town's centre is out of the question.

I give you time until 31 March 1941 to remove Jews from the remaining streets of Chełm. During the construction of the dwelling barracks in the ghetto, you are to ensure that the erected houses do not damage the townscape too much. Moreover, whenever you take up any additional land you always need to first consult with the construction department of the municipality in Chełm in order to determine its ownership.

Town Commissioner

(4)

General Government
for the occupied Polish territories
Lublin District
Chełm County Governor

Chełm, 27 November 1940

To the Jewish Council of Elders
in Chełm

Regarding the removal.

In connection to your letter of 22 November 1940.

I request that you vacate Lubelska Street within the deadline set by the Town Commissioner.

As for Mr Commissioner's other plans of removal [of Jews], you shall receive relevant orders from him.

(5)

2 December 1940

L 133/40

Accommodation, resettlement
To the Town Commissioner
in Chełm

Report

on the resettlement of Jews in Chełm by 1 December 1940.

858 individuals moved out, joining the other 365. 16,109 cubic metres have been vacated, while 7,317 cubic metres have been taken up. Therefore, 1,223 individuals are now staying in the 7,317 cubic metres.

Therefore, the difference between the vacated and taken up space is (16,109 minus 7,317) [is] 8,792 cubic metres.

Moreover, we have been commanded to vacate 3,542 cubic metres, mostly shops and workshops.

The individuals, owners of these workshops and shops, ordered [to move out] have not been allocated any commercial locales so far, which is why they have not been able to move yet.

Chairman of the Council of the Elders

ARG I 707 (Ring. I/817)

Description: duplicate, handwritten, ink, German, 208×295 mm, 5 sheets,
6 pages.

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony כעלם
 “1940 ביז יאנואר 30.11.39 פֿון דער צייט פֿון [Chełm in the period from
 30 November 1939 to January 1940]. Situation of the Jews during
 the first months of the occupation: establishment of the Judenrat,
 forced labour, death march in December 1939; good relations with
 the Poles.

[1] Chełm in the period from 30 November 1939 to January 1940

With the capture of the Chełm region by the occupier, difficult times began for the local Jewish population.²⁰⁸

The Jewish community numbers about 10,000 souls.²⁰⁹ Until now, Jews had been living very well. Trade and small-scale handicrafts flourished there, from which the Jewish population drew their livelihood.

With the occupation of the city by the Germans, the economic life in one of Poland's well-organised Jewish communities is disrupted. The former Jewish community administration is replaced by new people, who create the *Judenrat*. Its leadership is assumed by a certain Mr Mark Frenkiel, who is a simple Jew, a wealthy man, the owner of a large mill.

In Polish times, he had been close to government circles. He was treasurer of the main committee in carrying out the loan for air defence. He is not distinguished by any personal characteristics or merits. The only thing he has is “contacts”. The Chełm Jewish community pays a high price, with many victims, for his lack of social and political experience.

It happened in the following manner: On 30 November 1939, the local German commander turned to the *Judenrat* with the demand that it supply 1,200 Jewish men for forced labour.

Chairman Frenkiel immediately issued an announcement in the town that all Jews aged between 12 and 60 were to appear at 6 the following morning

208 The Germans captured Chełm on 7 October 1939. Soviet troops had been stationed there since 25 September.

209 Before the war, Chełm had 15,000 Jewish inhabitants, in 1940 approximately 10,000. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Martyrologia,” table 4.

on the church square.²¹⁰ About 900 adult men and youngsters appeared. The rest hid.

[2] All those who did appear were driven on foot in the direction of Hrubieszów.

The German SA people rode on horseback. The people being driven to military forced labour were unable to run after them and keep pace with the gallop. Chased and tormented, they fell under a hail of blows and bullets from the wild and bloodthirsty men hurrying them along. This occurred 6 km from Chełm.²¹¹

The first draft²¹² cost the Jewish community between 800 and 900 murdered victims, in addition to 500 widows and orphans left behind.

The community of Jewish people from Chełm in Warsaw was shaken by this unprecedented event.

With the help of the “Joint”, a local aid committee was established which set itself the task of helping the victims.

Local activists regard Mr Frenkiel as the morally guilty party in this tragic event, considering him fully responsible due to his incautious action.

In his further activity with respect to the *kehillah* there, the community regards him as adequately hard-working and energetic community chairman who, in his own particular way, does everything that can be done – within the framework of the possibilities – for the benefit of the Jewish population in such a difficult time.

In the *kehillah* council, there is also a certain Kirszenblat, a glazier, whose name must be mentioned. His role is more than questionable.

First of all, he heads the “labour department” that has been established in the *Judenrat*. He inspires the Germans, clearly intentionally, to create a constant source of revenue for himself and for the German bribe-takers from the continuous supply of forced labourers. [3] During the brief period of his time in office, he has been able to extract various permits for himself from

210 This was the market square.

211 The Germans then drove those people onto the other bank of the River Bug. Some of them later returned to Chełm (see Doc. 30). At least 440 people died during the death march. See also footnote 61.

212 In the original, *branka*, a Polish word designating the Russian military draft in the nineteenth century.

the Germans, such as, for example: 1) to set up a marmalade factory, 2) to open a large glassware store.

His only service to the Chełm Jewish community consists in his having helped, for suitable recompense, to get 60 Chełm Jews out of the well-known hellish Bełżec labour camp.²¹³

His downfall came about by chance, when bribing the German commander. He submitted a bill for 42 zlotys for material for a suit. The German bribe-taker found the price too high. He therefore told him that he was charging too much. To that Kirszenblat is said to have answered that he was asking for 60 and he should bring it to him. The commander found the Jew's cheekiness more than insolent, and ordered, then and there, that he be taught a lesson. At the commander's demand, he was given a good thrashing, with lowered trousers – and dismissed from his post.

That happened in January 1940. Kirszenblat was replaced by one Mr Szwarcblat, although nobody knew what "merits" spoke in his favour. Subsequent events showed that Kirszenblat's replacement didn't conduct affairs any worse than his predecessor.

In the city he is known as a "konizk" (wagon driver).²¹⁴ According to an informant, Mr Frenkiel does, after all, have a certain influence on the present head of the labour department.

Jews in Chełm are not taken for forced labour. The *kehillah* sends out the appropriate contingent of workers daily, in accordance with the number demanded. [4] The workers are paid wages in the *kehillah* for their work, partly in cash and partly in kind.

The *kehillah* obtains its revenue from various sources. The main ones are the *kehillah* tax and payments for provisions coupons. Those not paying the *kehillah* tax are subject to arrest. The Jews pay the tax and avoid arrest because they're afraid that the Germans will find out about them. The tax is broken down and assessed according to certain categories. The same applies to payments for coupons, of which there are three categories. Provision coupons are issued in three categories, in accordance with the recipients' financial means.

213 See footnote 69.

214 Probably a typographical error for *koniarz* (Polish for horse fancier), as suggested by the Yiddish word *balagole* (wagon driver, coachman) which follows in parenthesis.

The regular revenue enables the *Judenrat* to administer its various domains of activity, as far as possible, in a reasonable manner, principally in the area of police protection.

The distribution by the Germans of items requisitioned by them from the people is greater here than anywhere else. This can be explained by the fact that here there exist good connections and contacts with the decision-making agents. Oppressive Jewish police are unknown in Chełm. Here there are Jewish ghetto policemen.

There is no demarcated Jewish ghetto here. A Jewish residential district was established in a manner, but in fact was not carried out. On some streets, Jews are not allowed to live, but a solution was found: Jews don't walk on those streets, but enter their houses, which they haven't abandoned, through side entrances. Gateways have been cut through and passageways created via courtyards leading through back routes to their permanent dwellings.

Requisitions and confiscations of possessions took place shortly after the entry of the Germans. No small role in this was played by Jewish criminals and the Polish "rabble". The Chełm *kehillah* paid by way of [5] levy. The characteristic thing here is that the *kehillah's* note on the first instalment paid contained the expression "for the levy account". By the time of the second instalment, the *kehillah's* note was withdrawn and such an innocuously laconic phrase as "for the voluntary taxation account" was inscribed.

The mutual relations between the Polish and Jewish populations are good. The Polish intelligentsia behaves in a friendly manner to the Jews; following the wilful events mentioned above, many Poles sent sizeable donations in an anonymous manner to the *kehillah*, as well as supplies for the victim families left behind by those murdered.

The content of the first decree to appear in Chełm was that Jews were forbidden to greet the Germans – because for them that would be an affront to their honour. . . However, the SS people did not renounce the honour, and up to the present have demanded of the Jews that they should doff their hats to them.

The contact of the Jews with the leading German rulers is constantly expressed in the passing of monetary bribes and the giving of presents. For that reason, many people are given a gloss-over, both where it's permitted and where it isn't.

A characteristic little incident

The aforementioned Szwarcblat has spent time in Warsaw. (He always comes to buy presents and at the same time does rather good business, bringing products and taking back goods.) He stayed with a certain woman (in two separate rooms) at the “Britania” hotel.²¹⁵ At night, cries for help were heard from the woman. It turned out that SS men and the Gestapo had come [6] to pay a night-time visit to the hotel and at the same time had taken away with them whatever they could . . . From the woman they took a certain sum of money. Sz. interceded for her and demanded that the money be returned. Of course, the people searched his room as well, and took about 6,000 zlotys.

In his incautiousness – which, as it happened, turned out well – he presented himself as having come on official business, on assignment from the local commander, and therefore demanded a receipt for the money taken. He didn’t get any such receipt. The following morning, he therefore went to the Warsaw district, together with his escort – an SS man – and after some negotiation with a certain official the whole sum taken from him was returned.

In January, there were arrests among the Polish population. Certain social and political activists were among those arrested.

No arrests of Jews took place, the motive being that those who should have been arrested had already perished while being hounded along on the road to Hrubieszów for deployment as forced labourers.

ARG I 708 (Ring. I/818).

Description: duplicate (2 copies), typewritten, Yiddish, 208×296 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 12 sheets, 12 pages. Hersh Wasser’s note in Yiddish on p. 1 (ink): “109 – 1942/1 January. No. 17.”

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 6 sheets, 6 pages.

215 On Nowolipie Street 18, a place frequented by the notorious group of collaborators known as “the Thirteen”.

After 21 April 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony דער "פאָגראָם אין כעלם" [The pogrom in Chełm]. Execution of approximately 400 Jews in November 1939; death march, during which several hundred men perished.

The pogrom in Chełm

[1] The hundreds of thousands of Jews who found themselves on the Soviet side of the Bug were really shaken up by a terrible piece of news from "the other side". The news was so dreadful in content that one simply did not want to believe it. Unfortunately, however, the information was confirmed, and the reality surpassed the richest imaginings of sadism and insanity. It pertained to the mass slaughter perpetrated by the frenzied German soldiers against the Jewish population of Chełm, on the 2 November 1939, when the Soviet army, on the basis of the military agreement with the German military leadership, crossed over the Bug, in order to conquer Polish territory up to the Vistula, as a line of demarcation:²¹⁶ they only reached 14 km from Lublin. Soon came the order to turn back. Thousands of Jews, not wanting to fall into the hands of the Germans, then returned with the Soviet soldiers. An historical truth may be set forth here, that the Soviet Army upon its retreat, demonstrated a true humane feeling of sympathy for the Jewish population. Whoever wanted to, was able to be seated in the trucks of the army, which provided a limitless number of vehicles. Not only did the Jews place their merchandise in the trucks, but also their belongings which even included a rolling pin. In this manner, the Soviet Army took with it thousands of Jewish families. The same thing also happened in Chełm, where the Soviet authorities permitted the evacuation of the city's Jewish population, and for this purpose, had at its disposal not only hundreds of trucks, but also several freight trains.

[2] Soldiers of the Red Army travelled in the trucks to the Jewish flats and from there, they removed Jewish belongings and transported them to the train, from where they were transferred onto freight cars. Indeed, more than half of the Jews of Chełm used that opportunity to cross over to the other side of the Bug River. Most of what remained in Chełm were the poor, Jewish

216 Soviet troops were stationed in Chełm from 25 September to 7 October 1939.

labourers. Perhaps it is a paradox, but at that time, the Soviet army rescued mostly wealthy Jews. Soon afterwards, the German army entered the city. At the beginning, German soldiers behaved correctly. But the situation changed radically for the worse for the Jews of Chełm, when Miller,²¹⁷ the German commandant of the city, arrived. He began his reign with the mass murder of the helpless Jewish population. Following an order, all the Jewish streets were surrounded by the military, and a wild pursuit of all Jewish males began.

Approximately 2,000 Jews were captured and they were placed standing in the middle of the market. It was ordered that every fifth one had to leave the row and 400 Jews were shot before everyone's eyes. The remaining 1,600 Jews were chased along the road leading to Dorohusk, up to the Bug River. On both sides of the river, Germans riding on horses, and with whips, chased the unfortunate Jews. Whoever among the unfortunate ones did not have the strength to walk and trailed behind, was shot on the spot. The number of the unfortunate who perished in this manner is not precisely known. Some say that over 500 people died along the way. [3] Others give the number as 800.²¹⁸

Completely exhausted and almost crazed from their suffering, approximately 700 Jews reached Dorohusk. As they approached the bridge that leads across to the other side [of the river], the Germans began driving the Jews across the bridge. However, the Red Army guards did not want to let them cross over. It appears however, that not enough of blood of Chełm's Jews was spilled that day. For the Germans chased the Jews along the full length of the Bug for 2 km, and simply forced them into the water. The screams and the wailing of the several hundred tormented and harassed Jews did not move the sadists. Whoever refused to enter the water – was shot. Only 300 people managed to swim back across and to reach the other side of the Bug. All those remaining either drowned or were killed. Exhausted and without strength, the unfortunate reached Luboml,²¹⁹ where the Jewish population took them in like brothers and gave them a place of refuge. The author of these lines himself, in the name of these very Jews, sent a telegram to Stalin at the Kremlin with a great outcry, that he should use his influence to save the remaining Jewish population in Chełm. Unfortunately, no reply arrived. In our

217 In German, it could also be spelled Müller or Mühler. Person not identified.

218 See Docs. 15 and 29.

219 Now Lyuboml, Ukraine.

martyrology, the particular horror of that day will be compared only with the Haidamak massacres.²²⁰

21 April 1941.

ARG I 709 (Ring. I/1006)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×207 mm, 6 sheets, 6 pages. Signs “-” in the margins (green ink). The document was kept in a binder.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 3 sheets, 3 pages.

SOSNOWICA

31

25 January 1942, Sosnowica near Parczew, Hanka Wermus. Letter to an unknown addressee in the Warsaw ghetto concerning the author's work and the living conditions on the village head's farm.

[1] 25 January 1942

Sosnowica near Parczew

Dear Girls,

I am a bit of a “swine” for not writing to you at all since my departure. But I left with the intention to better my living conditions and I wished to write once I put my life in some order. But a new year has already begun and I am still [“feeding” pigs] and this position [. . .] which nobody knows when it shall come. Meanwhile [?] I am writing after such a long time [. . .] big changes during this time. Even though I think [. . .] you know the details already, I shall write [. . .] about everything in detail. First and foremost, let me explain to you where Sosnowica is. It is located 20 km off Parczew (this shall not tell you

220 The Haidamaks were Cossack rebels in 18th century Ukraine who ravaged Jewish communities in the course of their revolt. In Jewish collective memory, these events are associated with particular brutality.

much), but it is on the map. It is a village, but the “locals” all it a small town, because, just imagine, there is a post office, a pharmacy, a doctor [2], a *feldsher*, a police station, and two shops (a Ukrainian cooperative and a Polish one). Of course, calling Sosnowica a small town seemed funny to me at first, but after months spent here I learned that there are far worse ‘Godforsaken holes’ and in comparison to [. . .] call Sosnowica a small town. It is inhabited partly by Ukrainians and partly by Poles. There are also a few dozen Jewish families²²¹ and [. . .]. The local Jews [. . .]. They curse those who dare make a fire on Saturday or chop wood. They make an exception to their rules only when it comes to money, that is, they are allowed to take it, but, God forbid, they should give it or pay debts.²²² In addition, they cannot complain about having too few children, who (oddly enough) look [3] more like Ukrainian children than Jewish ones.

People often ask me why I chose Sosnowica. It is difficult for me to answer. It was just a coincidence. A friend of our neighbour from Śliska Street lives here. I may well have chosen a different hole or Kozia Wólka. I might have been better off there or worse. But I do not think about this [. . .] there is no manna from heaven here either; no matter where you go you have to work hard there or wheel and deal, which I truly hate and cannot even do.

I work here as a farmhand in return for complete maintenance, that is, full board, accommodation, shoe repair, dirty underwear washing, etc. My employers are local “aristocracy”. My “boss” is [4] a village council chair appointed by the authorities. They are Poles, intelligent people with some education. They treat me very well. My boss’s mother and sister are dressmakers and there is also a three-year-old moppet, incredibly clever and sharp-witted. My duties are farm chores and helping at housework; farm chores meaning preparing food for the cattle, hens, and ducks and feeding them, and doing everything connected with it. Now I have little to do because it is winter [. . .] about [. . .] (I would rather not waste paraffin). I light the stove and cook potatoes for the horse and the cows. I then feed the cattle (two cows) and give hay to the horse. Of course, this makes no difference to you. I might as well feed

221 In January 1942, Sosnowica had 550 Jewish inhabitants. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Martyrologia,” table 4.

222 According to religious law, Jews are forbidden to light fire, perform many types of physical work, and use money on the Sabbath.

them s . . t, but it is very important to me. I have to then cook the second course, and the first one is ready. After milking [5] of the cows (I do not do it), I prepare chaff (chopped straw) and chopped swede for the cows and swede with potatoes for the horse, and I feed the hens and the dog, too. I then give them water. This is my most strenuous duty. The water in the well is frozen, so I have to crush the ice. So there are chunks of ice floating on the surface. I use a bucket suspended from a long pole. By moving it in a special way, I tilt the bucket and fill it with water. A local can fill a whole bucket with one sweep, whereas I have to manoeuvre the pole several times. Restless from waiting, the cows approach me and lick my clothes, and making matters worse, there is frost and strong wind. I simply cannot feel my hands from the cold. Even though I have mittens, I do not wear them because, if I did, I would drop the bucket to the bottom of the well. Chilled, I walk back home. It is around ten o'clock by then. Only then do I brush my hair, wash myself, and eat breakfast. I have never felt so acutely [6] how tremendously important the stomach is. I eat with real pleasure. I eat my two or three slices of bread with butter, cheese, or marmalade (not the war kind) and I drink two mugs of white coffee with "solemnity" and reflection. I sometimes eat a bowl of barley groats or hasty pudding with milk. When it comes to quantity, perhaps I do not eat much more than you do, but the quality is beyond comparison. It is not [. .] scraped. I cannot imagine cooking tomato soup for my [people], not on meat and only adding sour cream to it.

After breakfast I clean the room and the kitchen and [. .] potatoes for dinner. And then I have two hours of free time which I spend reading [. .] writing letters, etc. After my noon chores (the fodder is ready) and dinner consisting of two, three, or four dishes, I have some free time. I do not return to my farm chores, that is, preparing the chaff, watering the animals, laying the cow shed floor with straw, etc., until around 5 o'clock and I work until 6 o'clock. In the evening, I darn or sew, I make supper, and I am in bed around 9 or 10.

[7] I must have bored you with this enumeration, but I wanted to give you an idea about what my day looks like. There are moments when I am very pleased with my work. At other times, I fall into despair thinking that after the war I might have to prepare chaff, peel potatoes, and chop swede for the rest of my life and that eating and sleeping might be my true pleasure. Because you do not [. .] how pleasant it is to stretch your legs out in bed knowing that you do not have to get up for the next 10 hours. I do not work so hard,

but [. . .] really a great pleasure. In such moments, I become so depressed that I excuse myself under any pretext and go to mama. There I let her convince me that I am young, that the world is my oyster, and that I shall manage to learn something aside from how to feed cattle. You must know that [8] nobody at home forced me to leave, and that mama, when I came to visit, wanted to take me home. Even though she has always claimed that nobody dies of work, while I might get tuberculosis from poor nourishment.

I wished to establish contact with you. Write to me in detail about what you do. Have you already finished the course? Has Lika [?] completed it too? What is [. . .] new with you?

I expect a quick answer.

Hanka

Address: T. Pogor[. . .]
Sosnowica near Parczew
Chełm county
for Hanka

Have any of you changed your address?

^yThe author of this letter is a former student of the Yehudiah secondary school.²²³ She graduated in the summer of 1939. Her name is Hanka Wermus. She was very [. . .] weak. An only daughter.

The shtetl of Sosnowica is destined for the liquidation of 330.²²⁴ The mother came to Warsaw with her son. Hanka stayed behind in the home of the village head.^{y225}

ARG I 1015 (Ring. I/574).

Description: original, handwritten, pencil (traced with ink in the Archive [?]), 150×195 mm, Polish, Yiddish, damage and missing fragments, 4 sheets, 8 pages.

223 A private high school for girls in Warsaw, with an extensive programme of Hebrew language and literature, Jewish religion, and Jewish history.

224 The figure 330 (perhaps the number of Jews living there at that time) appears to have been added by another hand.

225 ^yNote in Yiddish. It was probably written by Abraham Lewin (1893–1943), pre-war teacher of the Yehudiah Girls' High School in Warsaw (along with Emanuel Ringelblum), member of Oyneg Shabes, author of the diary kept between March 1942 and January 1943, see *Diaries from the Warsaw Ghetto* (forthcoming).

Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish: "A letter from the village Sosnowica near Parczew. Author Hanka Wermus, January 1942. Submitted by Abraham Lewin, member of Oyneg Shabes."

HRUBIESZÓW COUNTY

32

After 15 June 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account הרוביעשאון "און די איבעריקע שטעטלעך בשעת דער <<אָקציע>>" [Hrubieszów and other small towns during the Aktion], recorded by Eliahu Gutkowski. Included are notes on deportation of Jews of Rejowiec and on the ghetto in Częstochowa in early May [1942]

[cardboard cover] Hrubieszów and other small towns during the Aktion.

7 June [1]942 [notebook cover] Hrubieszów²²⁶

[1] On Sunday 7 June, at 6 in the morning, I arrived in Hrubieszów together with Ch.²²⁷ It is about 2 km from the train station to the centre of town. We walked from the station to the town on foot. On the way, we met a bustling crowd of non-Jews, men and women, with solemnity written all over their faces. They passed us in silence. Looking at them, I felt a pang inside, as if I read on their faces some terrible secret.

Things soon started to become clear to us. From a distance, we saw a large group of Jews walking from the town towards the train station. They drew closer to us. I was shattered. Walking in rows, four to a row, were 2,000 Jews: men, women, and youngsters. Very few children. I saw barely 2 or 3 children in arms. All their faces expressed deep seriousness, and deep silence reigned in the rows. Their eyes were looking without seeing, as if fixed on something no longer of this world. Their sight was directed inwards and not towards the

226 Title on the cardboard cover in Polish and Yiddish; date only in the Polish version. Covers have no page numbers; titles are handwritten, probably by various persons.

227 According to Ruta Sakowska, the authors of this account are Chava Folman (Ch.) and Fruma Płotnicka (F.).

outside world. Their faces wore an expression of deep resignation, [2] a kind of indifference towards their own fate, which they could not fight anyway, a stupor. I was seized by horror when I gradually began to realise what I was looking at and what awaited these martyrs condemned to slaughter. I searched for some kind of human expression among the faces that would show they were still capable of reacting, but apart from an expression of terrible despair (and this only by a few), I saw nothing. For me it was simply incomprehensible to see this large body of Jews escorted by 4 or 5 Polish policemen, 4 or 5 gendarmes, and Jewish policemen. As I later learned, the Germans had warned the Jewish policemen that an escape from the transport could cost them their [own] heads. The Jews had almost no luggage with them. The macabre march passed by, and about five minutes later the second part of the procession arrived. Peasant carts came carrying the old, the sick, and the women, 8 to 12 persons on each cart. [3] Whereas the pedestrian procession had been silent, with no shouting, voices could be heard from the carts – exclamations, albeit stifled, and quiet moans: “O dear God! Help! Woe is me! My children!” The voices were restrained. It turned out that there was a strict order not to shout. Sighs escaped from deep inside, fearfully and through clenched teeth.

I spoke to some Christian women and asked them what was going on. They replied that this was one of the Jewish transports. The deportation of the Jews – the *Aktion* as it was called – had already begun on the previous Tuesday, 2 June.²²⁸ That was when the transport had departed. Some 9 to 10 thousand Jews from the whole area – townships and villages – had been concentrated by the Germans in Hrubieszów. *Ale ja ich wcale nie żałuję*,²²⁹ the Christian woman continued. When one of the Christians said that he knew that Poles had hidden Jews in their homes during the *Aktion*, another retorted: *Jabym pierwszy takiego s-s-a zabił, któryby się odważył schować Żyda!*²³⁰ Meanwhile, I got the feeling that Ch. and I were an object of interest to a secret agent. The whole area is swarming with these creatures among the Polish population. They rummage and search [4] among the Poles for people who display

228 The first deportation of Jews from Hrubieszów to the Sobibór death camp took place on 2 and 7–9 June 1942.

229 (Polish, in Latin characters) But I don't feel sorry for them at all.

230 (Polish, in Latin characters) I'd be the first to kill the son-of-a-bitch who dared to hide a Jew!

a bit of human feeling towards the unfortunate Jews. Above all, every new face in the area tends to attract the attention of these “informers”.

We stopped questioning the Christians and got to town around 8 a.m. We saw at once that the *Aktion* was in full swing. Mainly Polish police, assisted by Jewish policemen, went from house to house. Only occasionally were they accompanied by a gendarme. Both the Polish and the Jewish police showed unusual zeal in carrying out the searches and looking for hidden Jews. The Poles broke down walls, tore up floorboards, and found individual Jews hiding here and there. The search had been going on since the previous night. When the Germans caught such [hidden] Jews, they shot them right away, murdering 40 Jews on the spot. There had also been some victims on the morning of Tuesday, 2 June, at the beginning of the *Aktion*.

Following the Jewish *Aktion* on Tuesday (2 [June]), and the first transport of Jews “in an unknown direction”, there had been a pause of several days, until the Sunday (7 June). Apparently [5] the Germans had used the pause to concentrate Jews from the surrounding townships and villages in Hrubieszów.

Many Jews were caught while we watched what was happening in the market square. The Jews who were caught were savagely beaten on their heads and faces, and all over their bodies. For example, I saw 2 Jews dragged from their hiding places, cruelly beaten and pushed into the square by Polish policemen into a sort of enclosure that seemed to have been prepared in advance for the many Jews still to be caught hiding in their holes.

Since for safety reasons we could no longer hang around the square, we decided to go into the church. Inside, we went through the whole performance, at the same time listening to what the Christians were saying among themselves about the Jews. Most of the Christians spoke about the most terrible things happening to the Jews with *Schadenfreude* in their eyes and not a trace of compassion or pity. Devout old Christian ladies gave their opinion of the way the “yids” were being persecuted by the Germans, saying: *Z nami tak nie zrobią! Za nami stoi cały świat, ale za Żydkami – nikt!*²³¹

[6] Around 9 to 9:30 the Germans assembled a second transport in the market square, mostly young Jews. Here again, we saw no attempt to defy, whatsoever. People went like sheep to the slaughter. We started looking for

231 (Polish, in Latin characters) They won't do that to us! The whole world stands behind us. And behind the Yids – no one!

people we knew, our comrades. Two weeks earlier, I had visited them under different circumstances. At that time, Jews were still living relatively peacefully, going about their business and living their lives. Everywhere, there had been people with their big everyday problems and troubles, not to mention their little pleasures. And now. . . How horrible! I entered the flat of a comrade, Aharon Frimer.²³² The door was wide open, the beds unmade. The people living there had apparently left just as they were: All the clothes hung untouched in the wardrobe, and the underwear was neatly stored. But there was a deathly silence everywhere. I left the house broken-hearted. There was no one in the street to ask, no one at all. Empty. In general, it is scary to talk to anyone. People are spying on Christians who venture to speak to a Jew. I went to find a Jew, a member of the *Judenrat*. I spoke to him as a Christian girl. Eyes full of fear, he tried to get rid of me as soon as possible. "For God's sake! Don't talk to me! We are both in great danger!" But I kept asking him [7] how this or that Jewish friend was doing. He informed me briefly that there was a first *Aktion*, and that the second *Aktion* was now taking place. [He told me:] The Germans are furious with the Jews, who are making their work difficult by hiding in various holes and have to be dragged out by force. The Jews are being concentrated on the platform by the railway line, where they will also be segregated. The members of the *Judenrat* and the employees of aid institutions will probably stay here. Everyone else will be deported. In reply to my question "where to?" he waved his hand resignedly.

One more thing about the transports of deported Jews which I saw that Sunday: 7 or 8 *Wehrmacht* trucks carrying fully armed soldiers drove off with the first transport, but I don't think the escort had anything to do with the Jews because the second transport (the carts) set off with no German escort at all.

My friend Frimer's flat was not the only one standing wide open; other Jewish flats were also left unlocked, but no looting occurred on Sunday. It seems there was an explicit prohibition against robbing the abandoned flats, and the Poles' fear of the Germans was [8] great.

Further concentration of the Jews in the market square took place on Sunday afternoon, after which they were sent in groups to the railway station. By the evening almost the whole Jewish population had been rounded

232 Perhaps a relative of Chaim Frymer, member of the Akiba youth movement.

up at the station. In the course of the *Aktion*, 200 Jews were shot in the town. In the square by the railway station, the Germans (SS-men and gendarmes) carried out a “segregation” of the Jews. Children – separately; elderly, sick and women – separately; healthy men (approximately 1,500 men) – separately. The children were loaded into sealed carriages and sent away. Since there were not yet any carriages for the others, they remained in the square under guard by German, Polish, and Jewish police. According to what a local Jew told me, a temporary camp was to be set up for the selected healthy men for a period of three weeks. They would stay in that camp until they received proper J-cards. For the time being they would be given temporary cards. Of the selected 1,500, only about 800 were needed by the Germans and [therefore] would stay alive.²³³ There were two hypotheses as to where they would be put: The first was that they would be confined [9] in a labour camp; the second that they would be given only 2 streets in Hrubieszów in which to live. The inmates were warned by the Germans that any Jew found outside the camp would be shot on the spot. If anyone needed to go out, he should hold his J-card up to show that he was a useful Jew.

We stayed overnight in a Polish hotel in Hrubieszów. The strict control of new arrivals was indicated by the fact that around 9 p.m. Polish policemen arrived with our check-in forms and started inspecting our documents. (We had checked in around 7 p.m.!)

On Monday morning, we left for Grabowiec, which is 11 km from the Miączyn²³⁴ railway station.

Zamość – Miączyn – Koniuchy – Konopne – Werbkowice – Hrubieszów
 ◆ ----- ◆
 Grabowiec²³⁵

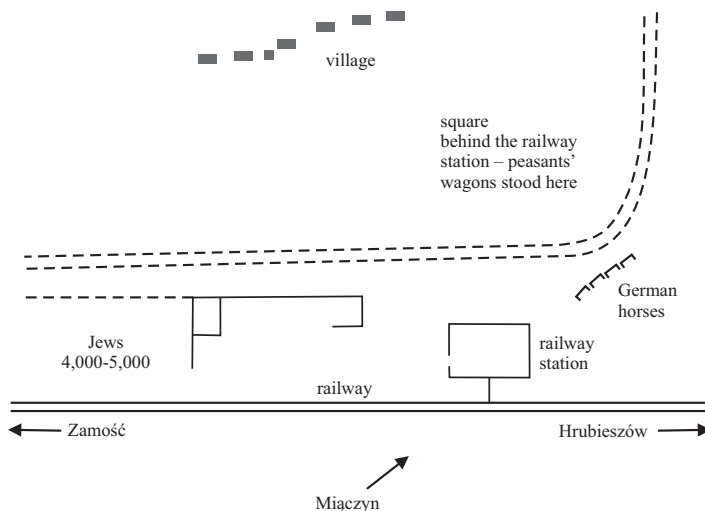
We arrived in Miączyn at about 10 a.m. We had planned to walk from there to Grabowiec, where our comrades from Werbkowice were concentrated

233 On 19 August 1942 there were 2,638 Jews living in Hrubieszów.

234 Miączyn (Hrubieszów County). The railway station is south of the railway line, the village – north of the line.

235 Probably the route travelled by the author. Place names are in Latin characters.

(the Werbkowice kibbutz works for the Germans on an estate).²³⁶ But we saved ourselves the 11 km march to Grabowiec because, as soon as the train reached [10] Miączyn, we saw through the carriage window the same scene as on the platform in Hrubieszów.



We went into the station and watched through a window the cruelties inflicted on the Jews in the square in front of the station. Opposite us, a long wire fence ran parallel to the railway line, and the large space between the railway line and the fence was packed full of Jews – men, women, and children – about 5,000 people. They were Jews from Grabowiec and from many other [11] small towns and settlements. As the Christians informed us, all these Jews had been brought here to the square in the course of the previous day and this morning. They had come with all their belongings, with big packs of food, teapots, even bedclothes. Commotion, clamour, and great anxiety reigned in the square. Five (!) SS men, one man from the Gestapo and a representative of the labour office (in civilian clothes) were moving among

236 In mid-1941, *Hehalutz-Dror* established an underground kibbutz in Werbkowice near Hrubieszów, intended as the seed of a partisan base. Among its founders was Henocho Gutman (1919–1943), born in Łódź, fighter in the Warsaw ghetto self-defence in 18–22 January, commander of one of the five Dror units in the uprising started on 19 April 1943; he died on 2 May. See also *Letters on the Shoah* (forthcoming).

the Jews. All the Hitlerites were well-fed, healthy young men. One of them in particular stood out, an SS man who looked like a real executioner: big-built, tall, broad-shouldered, with a huge pair of paws. He ran through the crowd with his sleeves rolled up and a big whip in his hand and, wherever he appeared, you could hear wailing and screaming and see the bloody faces of Jews. His whip worked non-stop. He flailed away with it, hitting heads indiscriminately, and wherever a big clamour arose he simply shot to kill. His comrades did likewise, so that the square resounded continuously with shots, screams, and more shots. I saw no expression on the faces of the executioners, except the [12] preoccupied concentration of people hard at work. Sweaty, dull faces. In this way, dozens of Jews were killed in the space of some 3 hours. I was able to speak to a Jew who had escaped from the hell in the square and was now standing on the other side of the fence. With a mad look in his quivering eyes, he told me – taking me for a Christian – where the mass of Jews came from. They were Jews from Werbkowice, villages and German labour sites. Two days before, they had been ordered to assemble quickly and to go to Grabowiec with their entire families. The Jews thought it was about registration. They had taken a lot of things with them, loaded on the peasant carts. Now he was standing there in terror, because his dear ones were in the square.

The bodies of the murdered Jews were buried on the spot. For this purpose, the executioners had selected several healthy Jewish youths, who had to accompany each executioner and, immediately after an execution was carried out, [they had to] carry the corpse to the grave. On the edge of the square, a large pit had been dug, and the murdered Jews were flung into it. If one of the Jewish youths [13] failed to carry out his task quickly and diligently enough, the Hitlerite beat him half to death. And so the bodies of the martyrs were collected quickly. The Jews had to fetch shovels from the nearby village to dig the martyrs' graves.

In the meantime, a representative of the German labour sites arrived in the square in Miączyn to release his Jewish workers from this deadly dance. The manager of the Werbkowice estate (a German), for whom the comrades from our Werbkowice kibbutz worked, also arrived. The comrades from the kibbutz were called out from a list approved beforehand by the labour office and, when they were all assembled, the SS men released them. They had to return to Werbkowice immediately on the same peasant carts on which the Jews had arrived in Miączyn at dawn. The manager had no patience to wait

until all the formalities had been completed, so he told the Jews who had been released that they should all stick together, because as long as they had not received their “life cards,”²³⁷ their lives were in danger. Meanwhile, we saw the murderers shoot and kill a woman and seriously wound a man.

At about 3 p.m. it started raining, but that did not stop [14] the murderers from continuing to segregate the crowd of Jews. Then 400 to 500 peasant carts with Jews arrived from afar. The carts had buckets, so the Christians said that this transport came from somewhere far away. The Jews were from Grabowiec and other places (2,000 from Grabowiec itself, 1,500 from other places but now concentrated in Grabowiec, and a further 3,000 from elsewhere). It should be noted here that the Jewish transport had travelled without any escort at all! The Jews, [even] knowing that they were being sent to their death, had not run away! After these Jews had been unloaded at the railway station, those who had been released (approximately 700 to 800 young people) were taken away on the same carts, escorted by Polish and German police. All those released were broken people. Each of them had lost someone close or their whole family.

A train with 10 carriages arrived at the ramp. They began loading the Jews into the carriages. They were no longer allowed to take any luggage with them. All their packages were piled up in one heap. Since the train could not take all the selected Jews due to lack of space, they were left on the platform all night in the open air. In the evening, [15] peasants from Miączyn arrived at the station and asked the stationmaster to return the shovels borrowed from them that morning. Grinning broadly, he cynically explained that he could not do so because “they will be needed for work tomorrow.” Talking among themselves, the peasants said the Jews had been sent to certain death: *Szykuje się nowy Bełżec – Sobibór*.²³⁸ (The place is located on the branch line from Chełm to Bug Włodawski,²³⁹ 36 km from Chełm, where there are dense forests.)

I asked the peasant women where I could get a bite to eat. They replied that we would certainly not get anything in the village, because a big feast

237 Another name for J-cards.

238 (Polish, in Latin characters) They are preparing a new Bełżec at Sobibór. See footnotes XXX and XXX.

239 Bug Włodawski (Włodawa County), the name of a railway station in Włodawa during the war. In September 1939, the Włodawa station was in Soviet-held territory, so the Germans built another station near Orchówek. Sobibór is about 10 km south of Włodawa.

for the German hangmen was being prepared there, but perhaps one of the peasants would treat us to a bowl of soup out of the goodness of his heart. We stayed longer at the station to see what would happen later. After some of the Jews had been sent away, the Germans ordered their luggage to be burned. The stationmaster sent someone to buy two litres of kerosene, but got very angry: *Szkoda pieniędzy! Jest to uszczerbek dla kasy!*²⁴⁰

At 9 o'clock in the evening, we left for Werbkowice. At 10 o'clock, [16] we were already in Werbkowice and met our friends who had been released. Their joy was indescribable. They told me that the manager, a *Reichsdeutscher*, had told them he could not have imagined his countrymen to be such murderers. He had also told them that he had received an explicit order that the Jewish workers were not to be given a full ration of bread or full pay. That should be left for the Polish workers. The pay of the Jewish workers is now as follows: 3 zlotys a day for a young woman and 4 for a young man, which works out at half a kilo of bread a day. I found our comrades left with no belongings whatsoever, but their joy at having had their lives spared was immeasurable. They are also waiting for proper J-cards. In Werbkowice, I also met a few remaining Jews from Grabowiec. One more thing: While the 5 Germans were committing their murders in the square in Miączyn, two German "ladies" stood right by the square watching the atrocities of their soldier boyfriends with great interest and satisfaction. The Germans ordered many Jews to strip naked, and when they did so it was seen that each of them, [17] before leaving home, had put on 2 or 3 pairs of trousers, 6 or 7 shirts, and so on. The scene provoked great laughter from those "refined" ladies.

Rejowiec (from a short visit)

On Saturday, 6 June, I arrived at the Rejowiec railway station at about 11 a.m. We (I was travelling to Hrubieszów with F.) had to wait a while for a train, so I decided to take a walk into the shtetl, which is about 4 km from the station.

I reached the shtetl around 12 o'clock. The terrible silence reigning in the streets and the market square struck fear into me.²⁴¹ Everywhere was empty and deserted; not a soul to be seen in the market square. The houses were

240 (Polish, in Latin characters) Waste of money! To the detriment to the account!

241 The deportation of the Jews from Rejowiec took place before 16 April 1942. Around 400 Jews were sent to a labour camp in Krychów and over 2,000 to the Sobibór death camp.

boarded up and the shops closed. A few shops on the market square had a sign saying *zajęte*²⁴² – occupied, by Poles, of course. Most of the Jewish houses still stood empty, but here and there you could see curtains and flowerpots in the windows, a sign that Poles had already moved in. The market square is quite big, and in the whole square there were only 6 shops open. [18] I walked on and, in one of the cross streets, I saw little Jewish children playing. On the other side of the market square, I saw Jews from the Czech lands.²⁴³ The Czech Jews are living in the Jewish houses, but they were not allowed to occupy the front rooms, only the rear parts of the houses.

I talked to a Polish woman, a uneducated one, who, in reply to my question “what happened here?” told me the story of the demise of the Jewish community in the shtetl. “It happened 2 weeks ago. The Germans drove all the Jews out to the train; only 200 local Jews are left in town.”²⁴⁴ As for the Czech Jews, she said they are very rich and keep themselves tidy.

The mood among the Polish population is very depressed. Not because of the slaughter of the Jews, God forbid, but because the Germans recently seized 40 young Poles in the street and sent them to an unknown destination. Also, trade and incomes have dropped sharply.

[19] Częstochowa (a note)²⁴⁵
(beginning of May)

In general, the economic situation of the Jews in Częstochowa is satisfactory. People earn well, do good business, mostly sewing clothes and in paper haberdashery. This branch is well established and yields satisfactory income, similar, for example, to brush-making in Warsaw. Additionally, people do much illegal business with the Germans. The *Judenrat* works very well, to the benefit of the rich. For example, the *Judenrat* proposed to the Jewish Workers Council

242 (Polish, in Latin characters) occupied.

243 In April and May 1942, 6,722 Jews from Slovakia and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were brought to Rejowiec, where there was a transit ghetto, one of several, to which Jews from outside the General Government were sent prior to deportation to death camps; see Robert Kuwałek, *Getta tranzytowe w dystryktie lubelskim*, in: *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 146.

244 No selection was carried out during the deportation from Rejowiec. The 200 Polish Jews referred to survived in hiding; *ibidem*, p. 151.

245 Most probably, this note belongs to Doc. 67, also elaborated by Gutkowski.

(led by *Hehalutz*) that it organise a group of Jewish workers with the task of being constantly ready for any work the Germans might demand. The *Judenrat* aim was to avoid round-ups of Jews in the streets, so that the sons of the Jewish rich could stroll peacefully in the streets of the ghetto and along the fine avenue in their white trousers, enjoying themselves with the girls in make-up from new elite[?]. The *Judenrat* offered such [20] “fire-brigade” workers 6 zlotys a day. The Workers’ Council rejected the proposal.

There is a *gemilut chesed* society in the ghetto which provides loans and a hospital. Many Jewish workers work in munition factories²⁴⁶ (the Germans treat them decently, just like the Polish workers) and stone quarries (certain quarry products are needed for the production of gunpowder). The workers there get 2 soups, 6 zlotys a day, and half a kilogram of bread a day. Recently, they are also said to be getting a monthly food ration, known as a *konsum*²⁴⁷ or *payok*.²⁴⁸ Generally, the Jewish workers seem to have some strength, even venturing to go on strike. The head of the Workers’ Council is a certain Lubling. People in Częstochowa say the local *Judenrat* is one of the most honest. This may well be true, because – as those in the know add – the local members of the *Judenrat* are able to do good business outside the framework of their community functions, so for the time being they are not using their authority for personal benefit. There are also jobs for Jewish women in gardening; they get up to 5 zlotys a day and work 6 hours.

[21] It is not so cramped in the Jewish ghetto in Częstochowa, although the ghetto has recently been reduced in size.²⁴⁹ A great contribution to the fresh air budget is made by the main avenue, where young people go every day for a walk and on “dates” (!)

Generally, people live in great isolation in the ghetto: each for himself and by himself, with little concern for their surroundings. Thus, for example,

246 There were four arms factories in Częstochowa: “Pelcery”, “Warta”, “Częstochowianka” and “Raków” – run by the German firm HASAG (Hugo Schneider Aktiengesellschaft), in which both Poles and Jews were employed. Following the suppression of the ghetto uprising in Częstochowa in June 1943, work camps were set up in those factories; see Felicja Karay, *Żydowskie obozy pracy w czasie akcji Reinhardt*, in: *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 256.

247 (Polish) Store or a canteen for workers of an institution; here probably a customary name for a ration card.

248 (Russian) food ration, for example in the army or in labour camps.

249 It happened in April 1942, see Doc. 66.

no one cares about the refugees living in the “asylums” (refugee shelters). People say the *gmina* has given the Germans to understand that these refugees should be taken out of town. Where to? Well, “in an unknown direction”.

ARG I 769 (Ring. I/811)

Description: duplicates: handwritten (LEG*, notebook, ink, 153×195 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, and typewritten (3 copies, 203×138, 208×296 mm, damage and fragments missing), Yiddish (with Polish version of the title on the cardboard cover), 39 sheets, 39 pages. On the notebook cover, a note by Hersch Wasser in Yiddish: “16 pages. June 1942”.

Edition based on handwritten duplicate, 21 sheets, 21 pages.

HRUBIESZÓW

33

23 October 1940, Hrubieszów, the *Judenrat* of Hrubieszów. Identity card No. 1662 issued to *Jehuda Glicensztejn* from Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

The *Judenrat*
of the town of Hrubieszów

Ausweis No. 1662²⁵⁰

He/she *Jehuda Glicensztejn* in order to [of the] *Jud[enrat]* in Grodzisk is entitled to walk on Wehrmachtstrasse, Ostlandstrasse, Kasernenstrasse, Narutowiczstrasse, Górnastrasse, and Kilinskiegostrasse.

Valid until 23 October 1940.

Hrubieszów, 23 October 1940

250 *Jehuda Glicensztejn*, resettled from the Poznań voivodship to the General Government, was a member of the *Judenrat* and candidate for a member of the ŻSS branch in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, see Docs. 141–144; AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1080, p. 3. This name appears in Docs. 33, 141–144 in various spelling, it was unified as above.

The Judenrat
of the town of Hrubieszów
/-/ illegible signature

ARG I 767 (Ring. I/1132)

Description: original, print, handwritten name, affiliation, dates and signature, pencil, stamp, German, 153×113 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. The document was stored in a binder.

34

After 26 June 1942, Hrubieszów, author unknown. אָ בריוו פֿון הרוביעשאָוו “אָקציע” וועגן די [A letter from Hrubieszów on the days of Aktion]. Account in a form of a letter dated 26 June 1942 to an unknown addressee in the Warsaw ghetto [?] about events preceding and course of the Aktion in Hrubieszów (31 May–9 June 1942), Belz (3 June 1942), Dubienka (2 June 1942), and Grabowiec (12 June 1942).

[1] A letter from Hrubieszów on the days of Aktion

{1}²⁵¹

Hrubieszów, 26 June [19]42

After the terrible disaster that happened to us, after a short break had gone by, and “a return” to “normal”, we will renew and strengthen the contacts which have weakened and tightened up the contact.

We will convey to you with this a detailed description of the *Aktion* that occurred in the town. The information is trustworthy and drawn from a reliable source.

30.V.²⁵² In the afternoon, the district officer²⁵³ summoned the secretary of the *Judenrat* and handed him four [officially] signed letters. The Jewish police

251 Numbers of original pages, noted by the copyist.

252 The Roman numbers for months are left here in order to keep the graphic of the text close to the original.

253 The document uses both the Hebrew “district officer” and “district head,” as well as the German *Landrat* to refer to the same person. Whenever the word *Landrat* appears, it remains as is. The *Landrat* was Otto Busse (1896–1968).

were to immediately convey them to four towns in the district: Grabowiec, Dubienka, Belz, Uchanie – to the *Judenräte* there. The matter was urgent. As special envoys of the district government, the police are permitted to use transportation. It [the letters] was given to them as a letter of safe conduct.²⁵⁴ When news of this spread through the city, panic and confusion broke out. The silence on the part of the bribed *Landratura*²⁵⁵ officials, the secrecy of their behaviour, the medieval stench that emanated from the entire matter gave no rest, disturbed the peace. On the streets, one saw groups of Jews whispering among themselves; fear, terror, hung in the air. Everything was electric. In the evening, with the return of the police, the content of the letters was revealed. And here it is: The district officer turns to the Jewish councils²⁵⁶ to carry out a new registration of the Jewish population from 1–7/VI in order to correct the situation with regards to work conditions. To accomplish this, the Jews resident in villages must come to the towns or to the district (capital) city. And during the period noted above, it is forbidden to leave the district. This and nothing more. In the meantime, the *shtadlanim*²⁵⁷ (the members of the *Judenrat*) run from officer to officer and from official to official to uncover some bit of information [hidden] behind the curtain, but their efforts yield nothing. They ordered them to come tomorrow morning to receive the letter intended for Hrubieszów.

- 31.V. Receipt of the letter. Its content is as those others. he *Judenrat* goes about conducting the registration.
1. VI. The city is despondent. People are speculating that the registration is a ruse, they are expecting a catastrophe, they feel as if the sword of Damocles hangs over their heads. In the evening. A phone call from the *Landratura* to the *Judenrat* [asking] if it is ready to make available 2,200 individuals at the [railway] station by 6 in the morning. This number is provisional, *a conto*.²⁵⁸

254 The term used in the Hebrew original is a literal translation of the Polish term *list żelazny* (iron letter), used in Polish law as the direct equivalent of the Latin *salvus conductus*.

255 (German) district office.

256 The Hebrew is literally “Jewish councils.” Whenever the original reads *Judenrat*, it remains as is.

257 The Hebrew term denotes those in the community who served as go-betweens with the authorities in pre- and early modern Jewish communities. The gloss in parentheses is from the author or the copyist.

258 (Italian) on account.

They are awaiting an answer in ten minutes. If not, then they themselves will carry it out. An emergency meeting of the *Judenrat*. It was decided to accept the proposal. The *Landratura* notes that it is forbidden to take licensed craftsmen, members of the *Judenrat* and its officials together with their families. The rumour takes wing. The city is buzzing like a beehive, but those who hide are few. The naïve ones think that the transport will take them to Russian Volhynia to work the land, after all that is what the *Landratura* officials said. . . The Jewish police spread out in the streets and announce in each and every house that everyone must be prepared at 2 in the morning with baggage weighing [no more than] 15 kilo and five days' food. The operation begins at 3. They assigned to it the Jewish police who were under the command of the German SD (*Sonderdienst*) garrison.²⁵⁹ The squads spread out across the town. The SD shot in the air and shouted: "Out of the houses." In a moment, the streets filled with throngs. There was no need to search, to rummage around. At the sounds of the shots, the Jews came out with their packs and suitcases. They went like a flock to the slaughter. They led them to the train station. Moans and screams filled the air. They already felt the disaster, but it led to no action. A few people fled. Two of those who fled were killed and one was wounded. The district head, the *Landratura* officials, and a few Polish police were at the train station. The SD loaded the Jews into the railroad cars. Freight cars with a small opening. They stuffed about 60 people into each car, bolted them shut and sealed them. The last car was for passengers – there sat armed Germans, to keep order and to prevent escape. At the train station, only those with licences who had been swept up in the flow were released. Other workers, even those employed in German workplaces, were captured and imprisoned. 2,700 persons were captured. And the surplus (yes, there was a surplus, so conscientious were the Jewish police. . .) were sent back to their homes. In the morning, official notices were posted in the city forbidding entry, under penalty of death, to the emptied Jewish houses – to prevent looting.

{2}

2[?]. VI. In the evening. A transport from Dubienka. In the town [?] two *Landratura* officials and the border police gathered the Jews. All the Jews reported to the

259 The Hebrew is unclear. Probably Gutkowski has inserted a [?] in the margin beside this sentence.

square. Only a few hid. There, forty people, craftsmen, were released. And the rest were taken in wagons to Hrubieszów. They were accompanied on the journey by these same two officials and two mounted border police. In our town Hrub,²⁶⁰ the Jewish police and the SD received them, and escorted them to the *Wygon*²⁶¹ (a square in the penal camp behind the town).

- 3.VI. In the morning they left the camp for the train station. En route, 14 people were shot. At 11:00 the transport left – about 2000 people. At the train station about 100 people were released – craftsmen and family members of the *Judenrat*. When the district head was informed about the murder of the 14 by the SD, he rebuked them a bit because he had promised the *Judenrat* that there would be no incidents of death in the city. And he threw them out. (What cynicism. . .)
- 3.VI. In the evening. The transport from Bełz. About 1,500 arrived. At the head of the procession, Revisionists from the Dłużniów workplace singing Hebrew songs.²⁶² For the operation they appointed two officials. En route to Hrubieszów they chose 40 young people from among those who were walking to keep order. They were promised they would be released – the promise was kept. The Belzers remained in the *Wygon* until VI.7. During this time, the district head and the director of the labour exchange released: family members of the *Judenrat*, craftsmen, and agricultural workers. Those released, as well as those released from Dubienka, received residency cards (*karta pobytu*²⁶³ – *a kvitl tsum lebn*²⁶⁴ – on further consideration – *a kvitl tsum shoykhet*²⁶⁵). The children were registered on the cards of their parents. It went badly for the babies. Not only victims of theft all departed on the way to work the land: Russian Volhynia.

260 Thus in the original – part of the town's name.

261 (Polish) common pasture, traditional name of an area east of Hrubieszów; site of a forced labour camp for Jews in 1942–1943.

262 A group of approximately 30 Betar members from Warsaw was working on the Dłużniów estate (Hrubieszów County) from the summer of 1941. The estate was managed by Max Glazerman, a Jew from Lwów. In June 1942, this group managed to escape deportation. Most of them returned to the Warsaw ghetto.

263 (Polish) residence permit.

264 (Yiddish) ticket to live.

265 (Yiddish) ticket to slaughter.

- 3.VI. In the morning in Hrubieszów. After the round-up, the authorities announced that 800 people would remain in the town: craftsmen, workers, a portion of the *Judenrat* and its officials, family members. And they would receive residency cards. In the town there is great confusion. Despair. Helplessness. But the *Judenrat* continues to function. In the evening, thanks to the large bribe that they had given to raise (it), the number of those who will remain in the future rose to 1,500 people. A small concession. [. . .] thanks to them it will be able to hide about another thousand Jews who, after the rage passes, will be able to manage in some way. This was the first time that they conducted negotiations with the district head himself (more correctly, giving²⁶⁶) they gave: fabric[?] to the clothing and [. . .] stones and diamonds. Municipal workplaces, as well as agricultural ones, are providing the *Landratura* with lists of their workers for approval in order to obtain the cards. Not every workplace is a good one, so they run with frightened urgency to the German workplaces or those of the municipality. For a lot of money, the rich worm their way into the municipal brick works, as this is the most secure workplace. In the town, there is a great deal of running to and fro as in a colony of ants. The offices are not functioning. The doors of the *Judenrat* and the labour exchange are open, the officials are absent – chaos. In town, they wander and walk about like before some sort of celebration, everywhere there is stress, whispering, secret consultations – and in the end no-one knows what tomorrow will bring and what its source [will be].
- 6.VI. At noon, in the *Judenrat*, with the participation of a German Commission, they made a list of the *Judenratniks*,²⁶⁷ the officials, and the police as well as their families. Because most of the policemen are bachelors, they have started making fictional marriages (like, although the comparison is absurd, at the time of the great emigration [to Palestine]). At 2 [o'clock] at the hospital, they are making a list of its workers, and at 7 [o'clock] of the nursing aides. In town, they are expecting a round up either tonight or early in the morning. At 8 in the evening, the Commission comes to the *Judenrat*. It spends about an hour there. After it leaves, there is a meeting of the police for the purpose of receiving orders about carrying out the operation. They create,

266 In Hebrew, to negotiate is to “give and take”.

267 (Yiddish) members of the *Judenrat*.

as per the commission's recommendation, 40 *gaffirs*²⁶⁸ to assist in the operation. At 10 [o'clock] an initial meeting of *gaffirs*. An organizational meeting. The *gaffirs* don orange bands with the three stamps of the *Judenrat* and a number on their arms. Immediately after the meeting the police and the *gaffirs* spread out through the town and announce that everyone must be ready at 2:30 in the morning. Anyone who does not come out to the square, and hides – after he is found – for the Gendarmerie will search – will be shot. Those registered in the *Judenrat* and in the hospital gathered each at their institution.

{3}

- [2] At 1:30 [a.m.] a meeting of the police. The secretary of the *Judenrat*, who is *de facto*²⁶⁹ the head of the *Judenrat*, spoke.²⁷⁰ He spoke briefly. He turned to the *gaffirs*: On you falls the responsibility for the town and you must save the town. He spoke diplomatically and was careful not to use clear language. It was up to the *gaffirs* to understand what he meant (i.e. to do a good job rounding up principally outsiders, etc.). At 2:30, 15 Polish police with rifles came to assist. The SD did not participate this time, because the district head forbade them from participating in the operation on account of the killing of the 14 people from Dubienka. The operation was carried out by the Jewish police. The Polish police behaved properly and well. Ten squads went out. The rest remained at the *Judenrat*. According to the special note of the secretary of the *Judenrat*, all the Jews needed to be on the *Wygon* at 5 in the morning. Those at the *Judenrat* and the hospital were held hostage for the operation. In the event of [those being rounded up] not appearing, they would load them [the hostages] onto the train cars. Many Jews hid, and the police did not search, or better yet, did not search diligently. A few officials from the *Landratura* circulated in the town and looked [. . .]. By chance, one of them happened upon a house with 9 Gypsies. On the advice of a member of the SP (*Sicherheitspolizei*)²⁷¹ who was accompanying him, they too were taken to [join]

268 The *gaffirs* were a special police force drawn from the local population in British Palestine to assist with keeping the peace.

269 (Latin, in Latin characters) in fact.

270 Joel Rabinowicz, a lawyer. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/359, p. 5.

271 (German) Security police; the term (abbr. Sipó) included the Gestapo and *Kriminalpolizei* (Kripo).

the “procession.” Jews and Gypsies, they’re all the same. . . Early in the morning, a few Germans rode around the town, wandered in the streets, took pictures and even filmed. They photographed how they are collected, how they run, how they scamper. They photographed from balconies, in order to see everything precisely. At 5:30, a vast exodus from the *Wygon* to the train station. One official from the *Landratura* remains behind in the town and nails shut the Jewish houses. Members of the SD who until now were observers volunteer to help him and opportunistically uncover hiding places and find Jews. They expose those who hid out until 11 [o’clock] on 7.VI and brought them to the train station. At the train station were the district head, officials from the *Landratura*, and Jewish and Polish police.

7.VI. At 8 in the morning, the district head assembled the Jews and transferred [them]²⁷² “as a shepherd reviewing his flock”²⁷³ to [. . .]. He looked at the age and appearance of the person. Most of the young men survived.²⁷⁴ Also, those who worked at the military camp and the brick works. Those who worked at the military camp had spent the previous night at the camp on the advice of the soldiers and at their invitation. In the morning, under the command of the supervising officer they left for the train station in long columns. The officers interceded on their behalf with the *Landrat* and they were released. Those who were released handed over their identity booklets to the Labour Exchange officials and left for the *Wygon*. Because a Jewish youngster was carrying the box with the identity booklets (*Meldekarten*), the Jewish police threw in identity booklets of some who were absent at the moment. Afterward, they brought them out of their hiding places and “escorted” them to the *Wygon*, and it was as if they too had been released by the *Landrat*. Many survived in this way. Afterward, by [paying] money, they were able to deliver their identity booklets to the director of the Labour Exchange. At 2 in the afternoon the train cars arrived. Together with the Belzers, they also loaded in Hrubieszowers – altogether about two thousand people. The *Judenrat* distributed bread to

272 The text appears to be a correction on the part of the copyist.

273 The phrase in quotation marks is a reference to the *Unetaneh tokef*, the liturgical poem recited on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. The quote is the lead-in and immediately precedes the passage which says that God will determine “who will live and who will die, . . . who by fire and who by water, who by the sword and who by wild beast.”

274 The implication is that they were saved from selection. The author uses this word several times to mean this.

each and every poor soul²⁷⁵ and at 4 [o'clock] it departed.²⁷⁶ The picture was tragic. Screams and moans. Entire families were taken, or were separated. Here a father was taken, there²⁷⁷ the children. Few families remained whole. The Poles, and especially the "criminals" and the *shkotsim* (yes! *shkotsim!*)²⁷⁸ informed, and thanks to them they extracted many Jews from their hiding places. They also helped in the operation, and with their own hands dragged out or swept up Jews from attics and basements. From the government, only one person wandered around the town, and he was a member of the SP referred to above. He was a driver, engineer, and the town executioner.²⁷⁹ His name, Johan[n] Joseph[?].²⁸⁰ Those captured or discovered after the transport had departed were arrested. It was known that they would be executed. Only a few fled while they were being brought to jail. The Jewish police took their identity booklets from them and sent them to the *Wygon*, [to be] among those who had been released.

{4}

8. [VI.] The men who had been released and some of the women were taken to work near the *Kabel*²⁸¹ behind the town. In the meanwhile, the driver did his thing, and together with another member of the SP extracted those who had hidden [themselves]. And arrested [them]. At 12:00, the executions began. The driver tightly bound the hands of the prisoners with thick iron wire, stripped them of all possessions that they had with them, stripped them of their clothing – if it was nice, expropriated the money, and, bound one to the other in rows of five, they departed for the cem[etery] arrayed in a long column. There the condemned prostrated themselves with their faces to the ground in a long row of 60 people. The hangman killed with a shot to the skull. All day, until

275 The literal meaning of the Hebrew word *oteh* used here is "mourner".

276 The text here has a single letter, a *zayin* written large. It probably stands for the Hebrew word *zaz* (moved), which is used elsewhere in the document in similar contexts.

277 The word "there" is repeated. It is a copying error.

278 The word *shkotsim* literally means "abominable things". The author repeats it here to stress that the literal meaning is intended.

279 The author refers to him as "the driver" in subsequent sections, or as "the executioner".

280 The Hebrew spelling of the second (family?) name indicates that the first letter was pronounced "dzh", like an English "j", and the "s" was pronounced "zh".

281 (Polish) cable. Apparently, a factory manufacturing cable, not identified.

approximately 6 [o'clock] the executions were carried out, until the *Landrat's* order came forbidding the killing. Women and children were brought to the cemetery by wagon, lest the trip be too difficult for them. The killed lay like [. . .]. About 250 people were killed. The members of the *Judenrat* and the hospital buried them as the driver demanded. On the way from the jail to the cemetery, five minutes before they were killed, only one of our young people fled. (About him and likewise about the family in the next letter.) Those who were caught after 6 [o'clock] were simply arrested but not shot. There were cases in which captured Jews, without any pressure or "coercion," turned in their friends in hiding to the Germans. Jealousy and envy made them act irrationally. (In the evening, after 7, they distributed the residence cards at the *Wygon*. The cards were coloured red (like at the time of Nicholas, a *royter bilet*²⁸² . . .) On the top flies a Star of David, and its contents: the Jew . . . from . . . (occupation) and if no occupation then (a worker) is urgently needed for work in the district. Signed: District Head. Dated 12/V.

This early date says: We asked for it [to happen]. It appears that as early as then, they prepared what they prepared.

- 9.VI. According to a notice of the *Judenrat*, the young people can report to the *Wygon*, as well as the rest of the those in hiding, excluding the injured and the elderly, and there they will receive residence cards. At 7:30 about 500 people were there. The men and some of the women left to work on the *Kabel*. Those who came after the departure for work remained at the *Wygon*. Here, the *Landratura* had prepared a surprise for us. At 10 [o'clock], the Commission arrived and separated the men and the women, and the selection began. They chose about 30 women and loaded them on a truck. The truck drove to Miączyn, a train station between Hrubieszów and Zamość, where there is a concentration point for "the emigres,"²⁸³ and from there it is not known where they are taken. After a while, the truck returned and took a second helping of 30, this time including children and men. The Commission distributed a few residence cards which had been prepared in accord with the list of workers which had been delivered during the first days of May by the Labour Exchange to the *Landratura*. Those of the workers who had been

282 (Yiddish) a red ticket. In Tsarist Russia such a ticket was given to those released from the standing army to the reserves.

283 In Hebrew, *olim*, the term designating those emigrating to Palestine.

authorized at that time were among the 800 who were supposed to remain in the town, and now received the cards. At 2 [o'clock], the *Landrat*, the director of the Labour Exchange, and the officials came. (Previously the *Landrat* had said that one more train car would depart and with that the project would be at an end), and this time again they loaded about 30 people. After the truck had departed, the *Landrat* spoke to the assembled. He said this is the last of the transports, that the matter would not arise again, all would be required to work, those without a trade especially in agricultural workplaces, all would receive cards, and because of the fact that some hid and they [. . .] to appear at the proper moment, the town would pay 50,000 zlotys. Then they began to distribute cards. They made a list and delivered it to the *Landratura*. And there, on the basis of that list, they made out the cards. Every evening, in the presence of two *Judenratniks*²⁸⁴ and one official from the *Landratura* they distributed the cards, until on the day of 12/VI – the ordering of the cards was completed.²⁸⁵ According to the official count of the *Judenrat*, there are now 2,281 Jews in the town. The number of men does not even come to a thousand. The elderly, and the children were not included in the count. In the town, an open Jewish neighbourhood has been created. On 8/VI, 200 people left Grabowiec for Miączyn. There, 800 were released. From Uchanie 2,300 left and 300 were released. (There are 1,200 “emigres” from Grabowiec and 2,000 from Uchanie.)

The end.

ARG I 773 (Ring. I/812)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (LEG*), pencil, Hebrew, 220×230, 215×350 mm, damage and losses of text, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

Edition based on both duplicates, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

284 See footnote 267.

285 A play on the last paragraph of the Passover Haggadah, which begins “the order of the Passover [meal] has been completed according to its regulations.”

After 30 June 1942, Warsaw ghetto, F. D[ychterman]. Testimony “Hrubieszów – spichlerz Polski” [Hrubieszów – Poland’s breadbasket]. Living conditions of the Jewish population: trade, prices, the Judenrat (including a list of its members), relations with the Germans, forced labour, mortality; course of Aktionen in the vicinity of Hrubieszów and in the town itself on 1 and 6 June 1942.

[1] Hrubieszów – Poland’s breadbasket²⁸⁶

My husband, F. D., left the Warsaw ghetto, of course illegally, in mid-August 1941. In Hrubieszów, he managed to obtain a legal pass for me, [our] ten-month-old baby, and mother. On 3 September, we went by train to my husband’s home town, Hrubieszów, the reason for our departure being the horrible financial situation we were in.

There was no ghetto in Hrubieszów. There were just streets inhabited almost exclusively by Jews, mixed streets, and streets from which Jews were officially banned. For example, Szewska and Wodna Streets were the heart of Jewish Hrubieszów, Lubelska Street was partly inhabited by Jews, and Staszica Street and the side with Geiser’s shop were forbidden for Jews; on the other side is the *Judenrat*, the entrance to which was at first on Staszica Street, while later a makeshift entrance was bored from the back alley (it was already in April, that is, during the period preceding *Aktion*). Koszarowa and Kilińskiego streets were forbidden for Jews, too.

According to the information obtained from the *Judenrat*, the Jewish population of Hrubieszów was approximately 6,300 people in total, including 3,300 locals and 3,000 refugees from Warsaw, Kalisz, Łódź, and Grodzisk Mazowiecki.²⁸⁷

Trade. Not only the Jewish population, but also the Poles and Ukrainians, were strictly forbidden to trade food products. It is almost impossible to buy flour, groats, or sugar in any of the shops. There is not even one Jewish shop. As for the Ukrainian and Polish ones, there are very few

²⁸⁶ Ironic title, referring to popular image of the town.

²⁸⁷ According to T. Brustin-Berenstein, “*Martyrologia*,” table 5, there were 5,816 Jews in January 1942.

of them too, and [they sell] mostly products such as matches, stock cubes, and baking powder. Vegetables are sold on the market square with a few Christian stands. Throughout the entire period of my stay, food products were sold and bought in the following way: People went onto the road or to the trains and bought all the food products brought by Ukrainian peasant women: eggs, butter, lard, fat, etc. The better-off were able to cope in that way, but most of the Jews had to use the services of middlemen, or *mark-geyers*,²⁸⁸ who bought produce and took it to top secret *kremlechs*²⁸⁹ – small shops – private flats where that food was sold. Exposed “merchants” were sent to penal concentration camps, to the “Wygon” camp in Hrubieszów,²⁹⁰ some for half a year, some for a year. The quota allocated to Jews by means of food ration cards consisted of 2.5 kilos of bread and occasionally 200 grams of sugar per person (for a month). Moreover, children up to the age of 10 received a quarter²⁹¹ of milk for 20 groszes every other day. The *Judenrat* issued red and white food cards, the former for the poor and the latter for the rest. Holders of the red ones paid 60 groszes for 1 kilo of card bread (the regular price was 1 zloty), and sometimes they got it free of charge. At Easter, each received 20 zlotys of holiday benefit, and occasionally also firewood. The rest, as I have said, had to satisfy themselves with a monthly ration of 2.5 kilos of bread per person.

Prices of certain food products were as follows:

	butter	lard	2-kilos bread	wheaten flour	sugar
September 1941	22	25	4.50	7	13
January 1942	35	38	8	10	20
April	50	55	11	12	28
May	100	80	26	19	45

It needs to be said that the prices of food products were steadily rising, reaching their culminating point in May when the deliveries from the countryside ceased completely as a result of the anti-partisan campaign, when

288 (Yiddish) peddlers.

289 (Yiddish) booths.

290 See footnote 261.

291 Approximately 250 grams.

Hrubieszów was cordoned off by the gendarmerie and tightly surrounded with hand machine guns and as a result of exportation of food products to the starving regions of the Eastern Małopolska.²⁹²

The middlemen between the countryside and the town were Jews. This should be no [2] surprise. The German system of ruthless exploitation of the countryside allows no free trade whatsoever. Peasants, mostly Ukrainian, have to deliver more and more levies, that is, specified amounts of produce and cattle at official prices, and they are left with just enough to keep their farms going. The attitude of both Polish and Ukrainian peasants toward the occupation authorities is simply hostile. Fearing “undercover agents” and Gestapo functionaries, peasants do not want to even hear about selling their produce to people without armbands, that is, non-Jews. They do trust Jews. And this is why Jews act as middlemen between the country and the town. Peasants buy all the products they need from Jews, such as machines, textiles, shoes, etc. And this is also the source of the fierce hatred of the town’s population, both Ukrainian and Polish, toward the Jews. It seems to me that the matter of competition is of the essence here. The Ukrainian and Polish population of the town simply sees the Jews as their competitors, who take away their means of livelihood.

The attitude of the *Judenrat* toward the German authorities was correct, of course, in return for sufficient amount of real tea, coffee, and cocoa, high-top boots, fur coats, gold, and other “gifts.” I know nothing about the Polish intelligentsia, but I had some contact with the local Ukrainian one. I used to visit the Waszczuks, both teachers, and a Ukrainian Orthodox priest, whose surname I do not know. The Waszczuks deeply sympathised with Jews. The main tenor of what they said about them was that “after all, Jews are people too.” Their attitude toward the Germans was hostile. Even though they were hostile toward the Soviet system, they yearned for the Soviets to win, because, as they explained, first of all, they were Germany’s enemies, and secondly, we “would manage to get along with them.” I could sense that they felt a close bond with the USSR. The same could be said about the Orthodox priest. He manifested his positive attitude toward Jews in charging them next to nothing for the bread people brought to him for consecration. Aside

292 Here and below, the handwritten inserts are underlined by the editors. Małopolska (literally, Little Poland) is a historical name for a territory around Kraków.

from smuggling, craftsmanship was another source of the Jews' livelihood. Cobblers, tailors, and shoemakers were doing just fine. They were paid not with money but with produce. Most of the time they worked for peasants. My brother-in-law received ten kilos of wheaten flour for altering a coat and 2 kilos of lard and 1 kilo of fat for making a pair of shoes (the cost of labour).

The above shows that craftsmen²⁹³ were faring just fine. Headed by a German, Akerman,²⁹⁴ the local *Arbeitsamt* sent Jewish labourers to work details. Basically, everybody had to work. Initially, the work orders were for two days a week and then (I am talking about the final period) even for a whole week. The Jews worked at: 1) the barracks as permanent and off-and-on labourers; 2) snow shovelling; 3) the railway – loading and unloading coal, petrol, and straw. The attitude toward the Jewish labourers depended in each case on the soldier supervisors, and the fluctuations were substantial. There were periods when the Jewish labourers were treated in a simply cruel way. But that was not what scared Jews away from forced labour. There was another, more important reason why Jews did not go to work eagerly and took up more risky activities. The thing was that the authorities paid them 52 groszes for an hour of labour. With the food prices and [...] as they were, it was impossible to provide not only for one's family, but even for oneself. As a result, craftsmen were the only ones who did not smuggle. Jewish labourers were often sent to "*Proboyem*"²⁹⁵ (a Ukrainian co-operative) or to the Road Administration. The Jews were placed under curfew between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. Non-Jews could be out until 10 p.m., and until 8 p.m. during the anti-partisan campaign.

Ignorance, obtuseness, lack of any cultural entertainment whatsoever, lack of Jewish schools (one Polish school and two Ukrainian ones) – this is the image of Jewish Hrubieszów. There was a newspaper, *Głos Lubelski*,²⁹⁶ circulating

293 (Author's explanation) Other crafts aside from the enumerated ones are no longer lucrative; carpenters have no work. The same can be said about many other occupations.

294 In the first copy, the name is crossed out and replaced with: Stieber. Johann Ackermann was the director of the Hrubieszów *Treuhand*. See "Życie i Zagłada w Hrubieszowie w oczach młodej warszawianki," ed. Adam Kopciowski, Dariusz Libionka, *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 3 (2007): 230. Stieber was not identified.

295 (Ukrainian) forcing one's way.

296 (Polish) *Lublin Voice*, in fact *New Lublin Voice*. German sponsored propaganda daily published 1939–1944.

the town, but most of the time the people did not discuss politics. The Jews were focused on one thing only – food. You saw few neatly dressed Jews.

[3] An important source of Jewish “income” was the sale of any clothes they had, the rest of their goods and valuables, and partial collection of debts from the local peasants. The phenomenon of death by starvation was widespread among Jews in that once blessed part of Poland. In 1941, the mortality was approximately 500 Jews. The epidemic of typhus fever took a heavy toll.

There were quite many illegal *cheders* and a few clandestine classes taught by tutors.

The *Judenrat* had 12 members:

1) Chairman	Szmul	Brand	Zionist
2) Secretary	Attorney Joel	Rabinowicz	” ”
3) Council Member	Fiszel	Zylbersztajn	” ”
4) ”	Ajzyk	Finger	” ”
5) ”	Szmul	Zajd	Bund
6) ”	Hersz	Zylber	Agudat Israel
7) ”	Mojsze	Sztecher	
8) ”	Jakub	Perec	
9) ”	Mojsze	Frymer	Bund
10) ”	Srul	Szpiller	Folkist
11) ”	Ezriel	Finkielsztajn	Agudat Israel
12) ”	Jukiel	Brand ²⁹⁷	

At first, the Lublin massacre²⁹⁸ did not negatively affect Jews of Hrubieszów. In late March, an announcement was posted at the *Judenrat* to remind [Jews] that they were banned from certain streets and forbidden

297 Jakub (Julek) Brandt (?–1942 or 1943), before the war an activist of the Betar organisation in Chorzów, during the war a secretary of the *Judenrat* in Hrubieszów, initiated the transfer of Betar members from Warsaw to work on farms in the Hrubieszów County, as in Dłużniów. In late 1942, commander of the labour camp on Jatkowa Street in Hrubieszów. See Dariusz Libionka, Laurence Weinbaum, *Bohaterowie, hochsztaplerzy, opisowacze. Wokół Żydowskiego Związku Wojskowego* (Warszawa, 2011), pp. 291–292, 322.

298 The first *Aktion* in Lublin took place during 17–31 March 1942, see Doc. 19.

to walk in groups of three, stand, stop, or stroll on streets other than Szewska and Wodna. The tension was intensifying. Albeit deeply worried, the local population did not consider leaving the town, simply because they had nowhere to go and saw no real help from anywhere. Besides, just like everywhere else, nobody thought that that great tragedy would befall their own town. In March, April, and May a few hundred people, refugees, legally left Hrubieszów. In April and May there were individual murders as punishment for various “crimes” such as not wearing an armband, walking in the town outside curfew, failure to register, etc.

In mid-August the Germans conducted a campaign to resettle Jews from the Hrubieszów county villages to Hrubieszów. The Jews had until 30 April to wrap up all their affairs. The campaign affected a few hundred (200) villages such as Kopyłów, Kobło, Moniatycze, Wołajowice, Białopole, and Czortowice. Some rural Jews found a way out by getting hired as farmhands by the local farmers, thus avoiding the order to move in exchange for turning their property over to the farmers. The Germans aimed at liquidating the rural *Judenräte*, but at the beginning it seemed that the authorities would tolerate Jews as farmhands. Unfortunately, the reality turned out completely different. Every so often the *pyziaks* (*Sonderdienst* functionaries)²⁹⁹ killed ploughing Jewish labourers and forced the peasants to bury the corpses in their cottages or they escorted the Jews behind barns, where they shot them on the spot. That practice clearly runs counter to the circular letter issued in March which forbade Jews to work for non-Jews with the exception of farming. I should also add that at the same time all Jews from Horodło on the Bug River were resettled to Uchanie³⁰⁰ (approximately 800 souls). The Jews did everything to avoid the *Aktion* in Hrubieszów, first of all by establishing as many work details as possible in order to show that there were many working Jews. The people also consoled themselves with the fact that the *Judenrat* had managed to avoid a spectre of catastrophe once before. It was immediately after the *Aktion* in Zamość (11 April), when it succeeded in bribing the *Vernichtungstruppe*³⁰¹ members who arrived in Hrubieszów at that time.

299 They were called *pyziaks* for the jackets they wore (from Russian *pidzhak*).

300 Horodło, Uchanie (Hrubieszów County). The author consistently writes “Uchanie.”

301 (German) liquidation squad.

The tension subsided to a certain extent when 600 men and women found employment at the construction of the cable between Werbkowice and Uchanie (a part of the Berlin–Kiev cable, whose construction was undertaken by a German company). It was in late May.

[4] On Saturday, 30 May of this year, it became known that the *Judenrat* received five sealed letters for the following towns: Hrubieszów, Dubienka, Grabowiec, Uchanie, and Bełz. The letters were said to have come from Kraków, from the central authorities, and they purportedly regarded the “resettlement campaigns” in the aforementioned towns. We learned indirectly that those ordinances sent by post introduced, for instance, a ban on the Jews’ leaving their place of residence during 1–7 June. Panic broke out in the town. That was the day when the last group of Jews, mostly mothers with children, left Hrubieszów legally. Everybody was talking about a registration of those able to work and resettlement. Where to and how, nobody knew. The scared, helpless, and disoriented mass listened to the most fantastic speculations and rumours. Even distant Besarabia as the destination of the deportation eased the people’s racked nerves to some extent. The *Judenrat* frantically began a campaign to issue employment certificates. It was commonly assumed that they would be enough to guarantee permission to remain in the town. The only worrisome fact was that the *pyziaks* were walking from one cottage to another on Saturday, urging Poles and Ukrainians to volunteer for laying the cable between Werbkowice and Uchanie, where 600 Jews had worked. Something terrible was in the air, but it still could not be defined.

The next day, Sunday, 31 May, was perhaps the most horrible as far as the atmosphere is concerned. Everybody began a frantic bustle. They were packing bundles. The women were baking bread. Nobody was cooking. A crowd gathered outside the *Judenrat* building. Everybody wanted to know what was up. The people consoled themselves that the danger would perhaps be avoided at the last moment. Aimless running to and fro, without aim or sense. Some of the people were checking the hideouts they had built. (They were constructed during the period between mid-April and the *Aktion*, anywhere it was possible. For example, I know about bricking up secret passages, and underground “dungeons”. Living in the attic at Staszica Street 5, we made a hideout by carving out a plank in the attic’s floor to lie over the ceiling, or more precisely in the space between the attic’s floor and the ceiling of the flat underneath). There were groups of men and women everywhere. The people

were nervously talking about the *Aktion*, but nobody knew the meaning of that horrible word. It is weird that certain vague words assume such a macabre meaning in the Hitlerite reality. A massacre of the civilian population, without precedent in human history, was conducted under cover of certain admissible acts (in the Hitlerite reality, of course). Everybody was worried. Actually, I cannot find a better word for that psychical condition. It seems to me that nobody was entirely sane. Nobody was able to reflect on the situation that transpired, really feel it. Everybody's mental capacity had been "chloroformed". Bundles and packs everywhere. Some people were on the verge of madness, terrible, great fear emanating from their eyes. Everybody was saying, "y We need mercy, we need help. We need to wail on the graves of our parents for them to plead our cause."³⁰²

After dinner the tension temporarily subsided. Chairman Brand supposedly said, "y The ice has broken."^y Somebody saw *Judenrat* members leaving the town and going somewhere. The people thought that they were trying to do something, intervene, help, or offer a bribe at the last minute. I would also like to add that I heard (but I cannot guarantee that that news was true), that chairman Brand initially refused to deliver a quota of Jews and supposedly said, "y We will all go to the square. We are all equal."^y It was a truly human impulse. Another thing is that I am unsure if it was logical.

That day after dinner, I accidentally found myself on Piłsudskiego Square, on the Polish side. A Pole brought news that the "resettlement" had supposedly been postponed by a whole week at the price of 4 kilos of gold and made a stinging remark about Jews – that only they have gold. When I returned to Szewska Street at 5 [o'clock], I found the situation totally changed. I saw small groups of wailing and sobbing women, who were pulling out their hair. The families were bidding their farewell. The people were apologising, asking for forgiveness. A Day of Judgment³⁰³ indeed. The living were already being mourned. The tension and fear intensified, the closer it was to curfew. The mothers were tightly cuddling their children. The men were standing in solemn concentration. The people were doing things rather mechanically.

Beginning with 6 in the evening, the functionaries of the Order Service began to walk from one Jewish home to another, ordering everybody to be

302 y-y Yiddish in Polish transliteration in Warsaw dialect throughout this document.

303 i.e. *Yom Kippur*.

ready at 2 [o'clock] at night and have 15 kilos of baggage and food for a week. That day, the Jews were out [5] also after 7 [p.m.]. All lights were on. Nobody went to bed. I was overcome by boundless sadness and grief over the bygone happiness and freedom, which we had all been waiting for. Our neighbours came over to our flat. We sat there until 3 at night, when we heard, *Raus*, "get out," coming from the street, accompanied by some overall shouting. Our brother-in-law, Josel Feld, a baker from Warsaw, knocked on our door. Terrible fear in his eyes, he cried, "Keep your door open. They'll shoot everybody if they find your door locked."

We decided that if they ordered us, we would go. (Though it is only today that I can see how completely nonsensical our decision was. Was it at all possible for me to go on a journey with an 18-month-old baby, a 15-kilo bundle, and food? Even if it had not been one in the German "interpretation"?) At 3:30, a Jewish policeman came to us upstairs and ordered us to go out. We stood up, took our bundles, woke up the baby, and went downstairs. On Szewska Street, we saw a long line of the Hrubieszów poor, arranged in fours. It was getting dusky. The piercing cold was getting to us. The *pyziaks* were raging like mad dogs in all directions (the *Sonderdienst*, made up of *Volksdeutsche*, was infamous in the entire county for its cruelty). We did not see anyone dead yet. At 4 [o'clock] we marched into the market square. The Jews from Wodna [street] and other streets were already there. Unlike in the transit centres on Szewska or Wodna streets, where you could hear wailing and moaning of women and sobbing of children, that gathering point at the market square was oddly, incredibly silent. That silence overwhelmed and intimidated us more than the Jews' sobbing and the *pyziaks*' shouting. The Jewish Order Service and the Sanitary Service were arranged on the sides and there were Germans bustling about the square. The crowd of people seemed like a resigned mass reconciled with its fate. A comparison with a flock of sheep going to the slaughter is the most apt, despite its banality. One could hear: "Give me the parcel. Hold it for me." Szyfra Waldman with her 7 children (the oldest is 17) kept checking if the children were [still] by her side, "Children, do not go anywhere." Froim "Czuisz"³⁰⁴ Feler came to us the other day with Lejzor Mangel, because he had heard about our hideout. Yet he concluded that even though it would be useful to him, he could not bring himself to hide

304 Nickname probably derived from Ukrainian "you see?" which he often repeated.

because he had to look after his wife and two little children, the younger of whom was 7 months. He was sitting on a bundle now, holding his baby in his arms. His wife was standing next to him with their elder son. I saw in his face that he could likely have saved himself, but his sense of duty was driving him into a total unknown. All escape attempts ended in death. The *pyziaks* were shooting dumdum bullets.³⁰⁵ There were also Polish policemen on the square. The Germans counted everybody present, threatening that 20 would be killed for each one missing.

I managed to avoid death with my baby and husband at the last moment by pretending to fainted. I learned that the *Landrat*³⁰⁶ demanded a quota of 2,500 people and approximately 3,000 came. That fact enabled members of the *Judenrat* to extract holders of patents (certificates) from the rows. We, that is, the sick, were taken to a hospital, where they admitted only a woman who was 9 months pregnant. We were turned down (aside from the pregnant lady, the passengers of the droshky were I and another “fainting” woman with four children) and told that the *Aktion* was already over. We went to my husband’s brother, Berysz Dychterman (my other brother-in-law, Josel Feld, was severely beaten up during his escape attempt). Berysz D. was in a state of nervous shock. He had been on the square too, even though he had a craftsman’s ID. Mr Joel Rabinowicz had rescued him, which was what caused that shock. He kept crying:

- “y– They’re shooting!
- I’ve found my brother and sister.
- It’s not your child.”

He was in shock for several hours. The first *Aktion* took a toll of 2,500 victims. On Monday, 1 June, a transport from Dubienka arrived in Hrubieszów, 3,000 “resettled”, victims. (As I was told, holders of craftsmen’s IDs were the only ones that remained in Dubienka without families, a total of 100 Jews.) The destination of the transport was unknown. 15 Jews from Dubienka were executed at the train station in Hrubieszów. On Tuesday, 2 June, a “transport” of victims from Bełż arrived, a total of 3,500 people. 500 of those people from Bełż were released in Hrubieszów and issued red residence cards.

305 Bullets without casing which cause extensive injury after penetrating the flesh. Their use during warfare was banned pursuant to the 1899 Hague Convention.

306 County governor Otto Busse. See Doc. 34.

[6] Throughout the week after the first *Aktion*, Jews were selling everything they had. The Polish traders took advantage of the situation, buying Jewish possessions at next to nothing. Everybody wanted to have some cash, as it was generally believed that one needed money at all times. Nobody doubted that it was not over yet and that more suffering was in the future. Everybody is trying to get productive, of course, in order to save their lives. Various operators are making a fortune on their neighbours' suffering.

Vox populi.³⁰⁷ We will not go to the square again. We would rather die than relive the nightmare of the first *Aktion*. There was a swelling wave of piety.

On Saturday, 6 June, Jukiel Brand announced that all Jews had to come to the square for residence cards. That day the German commission, which included the *Landrat*, registered members of the *Judenrat*, Order Service, hospital personnel, and 6 paramedics. That day many members of the Order Service married local girls. (The aim was to save those Jewish women; the marriages were fictitious.)³⁰⁸

That day it became apparent that something was up. In the evening, after 7 [o'clock] we hid in our hideout in the attic with my husband's sister-in-law and two neighbours (we had left our baby in the hospital). We put two pillows and eiderdowns in the hideout. There was barely enough space to lie on our backs. Spiders, centipedes and other bugs were crawling on us. We had to endure the constant lack of space, air, and light. Bread and water were our only food. Around 10 [o'clock] in the evening, we heard the Order Service calling on the people to come to the square on Sunday, announcing that, "yThe *Judenrat* shall not take responsibility for any victims" [among the Jews who are hiding]. At 5 [o'clock] in the morning we heard, *Raus*. At 6 [o'clock] the *pyziaks* conducted the first search. They concluded that *Hier sind keine Juden*.³⁰⁹ We observed what was happening in the street, looking through the cracks in the walls (wooden buildings). Polish and Ukrainian youths walked from one Jewish house to another, helping to find hidden Jews. They were looting too. ("Franek, look at this cool bag. Stasiek, what a great hat.")

307 (Latin) voice of the people

308 At the beginning, families, wives and children, of members of the *Judenrat* and the Order Service were exempted from the resettlement.

309 (German) There are no Jews here.

The ghetto was deserted. We did not see even one Jew. The doors to Jewish homes were ajar. There were some people on the square. The stands were open. We saw a wagon with a heap of bedding (probably Jewish) roll in the direction of the market square. The looters were busy. After midday, we saw German soldiers going with girls to see the deserted post-Jewish quarter. On Monday, there was a thunderstorm at 2 [o'clock]. We were lying in water. We saw the following scene through the cracks: an elderly Jew, Matys Blas, walking along Szewska Street during the thunderstorm. (It was during the period of the second *Aktion*, when every Jew who was encountered or discovered in a hide-out was killed.) He walked slowly, paying no attention to either the rain or thunder. He pried open a window of his house and calmly got inside, a bundle on his back. After some time, he went out the window, in no hurry, and slowly walked away. Seeing him, during the thunderstorm on the empty street in the deserted town, had a tremendous effect on us.

On Monday evening, we saw the first Jews holding red residence cards in their hands. On Tuesday morning, we learned that the day before the Germans conducted a horrible massacre in Hrubieszów. Approximately 500 men, women, and children (180 children) were gathered on the local cemetery, divided into three groups, and all killed. A Gestapo chauffeur became infamous. (I do not know his surname. People say that for lack of something to do, that is, shooting Jews, he shot at little birds.) The issuing of the residence cards is one big Jewish tragedy. Whole families were separated. For instance, only three children (Szulim, aged 20, Barbara, aged 21, and Frajda, aged 16) survived from shoemaker Matys Kirsznier's family, which consisted of the parents and seven children. The rest were sent to death. The commission consisted of *Landrat* Akerman, the Jewish property *treuhänder*, and Meyer (or *major*).³¹⁰

We did not bring ourselves to go to the square, because we were told that they executed everybody who failed to report voluntarily. In the evening, my husband and I left Hrubieszów and went to Warsaw posing as Poles. The main topic of the conversations in the carriage was the Hrubieszów massacre. Nobody knew the exact number of the victims. Some claimed that 800 Jews

310 A reference to Wilhelm Mayer, director of the police station in the Hrubieszów County. *Życie i zagłada w Hrubieszowie...*, p. 239. The author seemed not sure how to spell the name, hence the version *Major* (in Polish pronounced *Mayor*), similar to Mayer, and not capitalised obviously by mistake.

had been deported, others 1,500. The opinions of Polish female smugglers (urban element) were characteristic: "They (Jews) should be poisoned when still little." "I'd poison them right after birth." "Their blood is so foul." I heard only such opinions. It seems to me that they were afraid. (It is common knowledge that there are plenty of various spies in the area).

[7] In Werkbrowice we waited for a long-distance train from 4 to 11.30 p.m. We underwent an unpleasant identity check there. It was truly a miracle that we managed to free ourselves from the hands of the controllers: a gendarme, *pyziak*, and Polish policeman. I proved my identity with some savings book and declared that I wanted to go to Warsaw to buy clothes for my fiancé, Franek. Having changed in Rejowiec,³¹¹ we stopped for several minutes at one of the small stations. We saw a train consisting of about a dozen freight cars, standing parallel to ours, and filled with Jews. A little Jewish boy, aged about four, stuck out his tiny hand through a crack in the door, begging, "Give me a piece of bread." I saw tiny faces of the Jewish children pressed against the small freight cars' windows.

After various adventures we arrived in Warsaw on Thursday, 11 June. A Polish policeman recognized us [as Jews] on Zbawiciela Square and escorted us to a station on Poznańska Street, where after long negotiations with participation of the police superintendent himself, we struck a deal that we would be escorted to the ghetto for 2,000 zlotys.³¹² My husband had to first get into the Jewish district and obtain that enormous sum, while I sat in the jail as a hostage until 6 [o'clock]. I was escorted to the ghetto through the gate on Leszno and Żelazna streets only after he paid the said sum to a special messenger, a Polish policeman, by the building of the central jail of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

On Friday, 19 June, a Polish woman we knew brought my baby. She informed me that a 1,000 Jewish souls remained in Hrubieszów and that a Jewish district was to be established there. There are also rumours that only 600 Jews will be allowed to stay (which means that there will be another *Aktion*).

311 Rejowiec (Chełm County).

312 The ghetto area was considerably reduced in October-December 1941. On 15 October 1941 the Governor-General, Hans Frank, issued an ordinance introducing capital punishment for Jews who left designated residential districts without permission and for people who sheltered them.

Haggard and emaciated, without money and most basic items of clothing, we are looking for help. What now, miserable Jewish wanderer?

Warsaw, 30 June 1942.

ARG I 770 (Ring. I/814)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), typewritten, with Hersh Wasser's handwritten additions in Polish only on the first copy; Polish, Yiddish (in Polish transliteration in Latin characters, in Warsaw dialect); 207×292 mm, substantial damage and missing fragments, 21 sheets, 21 pages. Wasser's note on p. 1 of the second copy (ink): "13 standard pages." Attached is his note in Polish and Yiddish: "Hrubieszów. Compiled by H. Wasser. Written in June 1942."

Edition based on the first and second copies of the duplicate, 7 sheets, 7 pages.

36

10 July 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Dovid Mandelbojm. Testimony "הרוביעשאו" [Hrubieszów]. *The flight of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to the Lublin District; situation of Jews in Hrubieszów; partisan terror; first Aktion (2–10 June 1942).*

[1] Hrubieszów

One year ago, when the ghetto in Warsaw was becoming smaller and tighter,³¹³ [persecutions] by contrast bigger and fiercer, a large section of the Jewish population was gripped by the psychosis of running away from Warsaw and going to the province, where the food was significantly cheaper and there were no high walls. People were afraid of the dangers that were linked with illegally leaving the walls [of] the Warsaw ghetto, they did not refrain from selling the last household items in order to have the necessary money and to leave the city where death by starvation was predicted.

The majority of these "emigrants" consisted of exiles and refugees, who could not bear the Warsaw air and could not find a place for themselves here.

313 See footnote 312.

Nothing kept them in this place where they were forced to live and they travelled mostly to the Lublin region, where the food was significantly cheaper than anywhere else and one could subsist there.

Among the masses of “emigrants” was also a certain Dovid Mandelbojm, driven out of Praga, a Jew in his sixties, who had stayed in Warsaw with his wife and two daughters, without the means to live and with no prospects to survive this difficult time. After a prolonged correspondence with his son, Motl, who had already been living in Hrubieszów for 15 years, he finally succeeded last year in joining his son, for Rosh Hashanah.

Throughout this time news kept reaching Warsaw of horrifying persecutions, mass-murders and expulsions of Jewish inhabitants in the Lublin area. Many of the “emigrants” who went there in order to save their lives, found cruel death there. Some individuals managed to return to Warsaw. Among these special few was also Dovid Mandelbojm, who passed on to me some details of what happened in Hrubieszów.³¹⁴

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Last year on the first day of the month of Elul³¹⁵ off I went to my son in Hrubieszów. Once I arrived to the place after various obstacles, I breathed freely. Over seven thousand Jews who were there, lived more peacefully and better than in Warsaw. First of all, the food was indeed much cheaper than in Warsaw, and hunger, which in Warsaw was such a vexed problem, did not exist there at all. This in itself was of great [. .] and worth, but also with respect to other things, Hrubieszów was much better than in Warsaw. Local Jews traded and wandered about, did business and some of them even became rich. [2] The co-existence with the small Polish population was very good and, for their part, loyal. Business was also conducted with the Germans.

Understandably, it was also not paradise there. First of all, one had to withstand trouble from the local Ukrainians, who were fawning over the German [authority] and pleaded “co-operating” with them. These hooligans were engaged in provocations and denunciations of the worst type. They often bothered and created great problems for the Jewish population. It was even

314 Introduction written by the person recording the testimony.

315 In 1941, the first day of the month of Elul fell on 24 August.

worse with the *pyziaks*³¹⁶ or *junaks* as they are called here, who also consisted of Ukrainians and *Volksdeutsche*. They held the actual authority in the town. They hit, shot for no reason and often confiscated Jewish property, following denunciations by the Ukrainians.

Nevertheless, one could somehow live. My son, just like others, conducted various businesses and had a good income. I stayed at home as his dependant and helped with the business from home together with my daughter-in-law.

From January on, the situation in Hrubieszów changed fundamentally. It started with the decree concerning furs and from there on it went continuously downhill. As soon as the decree about handing in furs was announced, a series of searches in Jewish homes began. One could still buy one's way out from the Polish police. It was worse with the *pyziaks*. They did not take bribes, but instead they simply robbed, and gave merciless beatings. There were cases when small children were shot in the street for wearing a small fur collar. The peaceful life of Jewish inhabitants in Hrubieszów was disturbed and with each day less certain.

It was even worse during Passover, when the food started getting much more expensive in the entire area. The German authorities requisitioned from the peasants in the surrounding villages whatever they had and sent it off en masse in the direction of Lvov. At the same time, another trouble befell the peasant population: troop landings. Persistent rumours were spreading in the entire area [3] that Soviet troops were prowling the [. . .] forests [. . .] not leaving the occupants in peace. The Ukrainians saw it as an opportunity to denounce the Poles, pointing at this or that peasant as someone who had helped the Bolsheviks.

In the village of Tynaczyn[?],³¹⁷ for example, there was a concrete case when 6 armed partisans came to a peasant at night and told him to give them food and to take them to another village. The peasant went out ostensibly to harness the horses and disappeared. When the 6 partisans realised that the peasant [. . .] too long, they immediately went to another peasant and kept their eye on him until he harnessed the horses and they left. The following morning, the gendarmerie arrived and set the peasant's house on fire with everyone inside.

316 See Doc. 37.

317 Possibly Czerniczyn, a village south of Hrubieszów.

Similar cases occurred very often. They caused the peasants to fear coming into the town. At the same time, going to villages became life-threatening for Jews. Once a gendarme stopped a well-known dealer of farm products, Avromele, on his way from the village. Avromele showed him his pass. The gendarme looked at it, carefully [. . .] tore it to pieces, and shot Avromele.

All this created an oppressive feeling of fear and insecurity in town, and this, naturally, also had an impact on life in general.

On 12 April, a gendarme and a Polish policeman entered our home, finding me standing and selling a few soles. The gendarme [jumped] on me straight away and started beating me and shouting at me that I should give away the merchandise I had at home. After a search, 3 boards of soles, several kilograms of tallow and half a kilogram of candles were found. In response to my remark that the candles were for private use, the gendarme replied that a Jew could lie in the dark. . . The merchandise was taken away and I was ordered to come to the police station with my daughter-in-law.

Arriving at the station, they first called my daughter-in-law and greeted her with several blows. However, since she maintained that she knew [. . .] nothing, she was released and I was called in, laid down on a chair, two policemen [4] held my head and legs, and the gendarme began beating me terribly with a stick until I fell unconscious. They revived me and resumed the beating, and repeated this several times, until the gendarme ordered the writing of a report and let me go.

They had to carry me home. After two weeks in bed, I received 4 months of forced labour in the camp and my daughter-in-law 3 months. Arriving at the camp with broken bones I was absolutely unable to work. The camp commander called a doctor for me, who sent me to hospital, where I lay for several weeks until the senior medical staff confirmed that I was not suitable for manual labour. Only then did the *Landrat* release me from the camp. My daughter-in-law had been released three weeks earlier, after my son had been shot, on 12 May, while walking down Narutowicza Street, on the side of the street, on which Jews were not allowed to walk. I learned about this tragedy only later, when I was released from the camp.

In the meantime, some other events took place that contributed to the overall tension. On 26 April, the “skulls” ³¹⁸ came from Chełm. The first

318 Troops of SS Totenkopf, see footnote 112.

thing they did [. . .] shot 7 Jews in the town square, including the brothers Bergman, shoemakers who supposedly had been in touch with the Bolsheviks. The Judenrat succeeded in getting rid of them with a bit of money and leather brief cases.

Three *pyziaks* came at night to Benzion Lekekbeker and ordered the family to get dressed. The host attempted to give them 1,500 zlotys, which they did not want to take, and instead they dragged him in an unknown direction with his wife and daughter. Three days later, peasants who were passing by spotted three dead bodies behind the [cemetery?], which indeed turned out to be Lekekbeker and his family. The maid, who was the only witness recognised one of the *pyziaks*. He was arrested, but was freed again soon thereafter.

[5] On Saturday, 30 May, the *Judenrat* in Hrub[ieszów] [received] from the local governor 4 sealed letters with an order to pass them through the Jewish mil[itia] unopened [to] the *Judenräte* in Dubienka, Grabowiec, Uchanie, and Bełż. The tension was great. Everyone was curious to know what was contained in these letters. On the same evening the messenger returned from Uchanie and announced that, from 1 to 7 June, all Jews from the Hrubieszów area must return to their homes and not leave until further orders.

On Monday at 2 a.m.,³¹⁹ the first *Aktion* began and lasted until 8 o'clock in the morning. 2,500 adults and 800 children were assembled. Each person was allowed to take with him 15 kilos of luggage per head. However, while they were approaching the specially prepared boxcars, they were stripped of everything, thrown into the boxcars, sealed, and sent off in an unknown direction.

This caused understandable turmoil among the population. No one knew on whom fate would fall next and no one could flee, because leaving their [place of residence] was punished by a death sentence for the entire family.

On Sunday 7 June, herding people like calves to the slaughter began once again, and it lasted until Tuesday daytime. During this time the *pyziaks* assembled approximately 300 men, led them to the Jewish cemetery and shot all of them. As well, some 2,000 Jews were assembled, young and old, and [sent away] to the same place as a week earlier. Everything happened in such an atmosphere of chaos that one absolutely did not know in which world one was.

319 In fact, on Tuesday 2 June.

On Tuesday at noon, the *Landrat* summoned the remaining Jews to the square and gave them a reproachful speech, in which he demonstrated that the persecutions were a result of the fact that the Jews did not obey orders, and for that they must pay 50,000 zlotys.

The requested sum was paid and it grew calm. The town looked like the aftermath of a massive fire. The approximately [6] 1,500 remaining Jews lived in pure fear; feeling [that it was] unfinished.

On 14 June, the remaining Jews were also requested to [. . .] to *Landrat*. I do not know what happened to them, because in the meantime I managed [to leave] Hrubieszów and to flee with a fake pass.

—

It seems that the 1,500 Jews from Hrubieszów did remain where they were, because the same Dovid Mandelbojm is attempting to return to Hrubieszów.³²⁰

10 July 1942

ARG I 768 (Ring. I/810)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (Sz.*), ink, Yiddish, 140×223 mm, much minor damage and fragments missing, 6 sheets, 6 pages.

37

17 July 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “*Wiadomości o wydarzeniach w Hrubieszowskiem*” [Information on the events in the Hrubieszów County]. The course of the Aktion from 1 to 10 June 1942.

[1] Information on the events in the Hrubieszów County

I am talking to a 19-year-old boy. Deported from Włocławek, he arrived in Warsaw at the beginning of the war. He and his family lived here under difficult conditions. In May 1940, thanks to the help from a friend working in the Hrubieszów *Judenrat*, he left to do farm work and he found employment

320 Last sentence added by the person recording the testimony.

on the Dłużniów estate located 50 km from Hrubieszów. The owner of the estate was a Jew. He employed Poles, Ukrainians, and 30 Jews. The Jewish workers were satisfied with their jobs because the board was good. The contacts with the Poles and Ukrainians were rather satisfactory, with disputes and brawls very rare.

On 1 June 1942 anxiety spread over the Hrubieszów County, which had approximately 10,000 Jewish inhabitants. All the Jews were ordered to come to Hrubieszów with their families [2] and possessions. Two gathering points were set. The people living in the vicinity of Hrubieszów were to go directly to Hrubieszów. The other gathering point was Bełż, where the Jews from that area were gathered only to be then transported to Hrubieszów. The Jews working on that estate were told to go to Bełż for a few days of registration. There they learned that they would be escorted to Hrubieszów. Approximately 2,000 Jews gathered in Bełż, from where they walked to Hrubieszów located more than 50 km from Bełż. They were escorted by two gendarmes, the Polish police, and the Jewish military police made up of farm labourers. The camp for the gathered Jews had been established outside of Hrubieszów. They stayed there for several days. 10,000 people gathered there with their possessions and food supplies. Some (the majority) of them stayed in the open during those couple of days, [3] and only a small group was placed in the barracks. The Hrubieszów community delivered food to the camp every day. The people were convinced that they would be deported into the interior of Russia.

The *Judenrat* in Hrubieszów intervened with the authorities to obtain release of a certain number of Jews. Purportedly, the Jews who had *Meldekarten* (all agricultural labourers and artisans with their families) were allowed to return home as a result of that intervention. The result was that over 3,500 Jews were released from the camp, while the remaining 6,000 were escorted to trains and sent in an unknown direction. There has been no trace of them whatsoever.³²¹ That entire *Aktion* lasted a week and on 10 June there were only 3,500 Jews in the Hrubieszów county instead of 10,000. The artisans returned to their work and the agricultural labourers returned to the estates. It became peaceful again, but only seemingly. Some say that the Germans will not touch the remaining [4] Jews, but most people have a gut feeling that their fate will be the same as that of those earlier Jews. This anxiety induces many

321 They were murdered in the Sobibór death camp.

of the agricultural labourers to leave their posts and return home. The boy I was talking to did just that. Unwilling to remain in the endangered territory, he obtained a pass and left for Warsaw.

17 July 1942.

ARG I 774 (Ring. I/815)

Description: original, handwritten (E*), ink, Polish, 150×194 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

38

[10 June 1942 ?], [Hrubieszów area?], author unknown. Fragment of a letter to an unknown person.

[1] [. . .] [2] Bronia goes [. . .] but in our [. . .] at 4 [o'clock] [. . .] everybody [. . .] [3] farewell[?] [. . .]. Thank God it all passed. [. . .] with Hela [. . .] because from Hrubie[yszów] [. . .] would leave [. . .] for [. . .] everybody [. . .] who stayed here [. . .] food ration cards [. . .] come to us to Hrubieszów [. . .] our families, our beloved 3 brothers [. . .] don't write there. [. . .] it happened here in Hrubieszów [. . .] when I have time [. . .] letter and experiences [4] [. . .] for all.

Dear Bronia! 31 [. . .] 42. On Saturday [. . .] immediately [. . .] will write a letter [. . .]

Old story, Bronia [. . .] I am healthy and continue working in the kitchen.

Dear [. . .] pass on [. . .] 10/6 [. . .] [5] [. . .] our director [. . .] an ordinance after the *Aktionen*, that all Jews with marks had to leave our town and our director told us [. . .] not to wear [. . .] Mayer [. . .] to the canteen and will [. . .] in the evening all Jews had to gather in one place [. . .] and there we were separated, men, women, children, old people, [. . .] awake till 4 in the morning [. . .] killed [. . .] you will send [. . .]

Now my dear I describe the life [. . .] year [. . .] despair [. . .] Jews [. . .] I decide [. . .] leave Hrubieszów [. . .] to travel [. . .] again [. . .] [8] it will be 8 in the morning [. . .] I don't have anymore [. . .] because there [. . .] 7 days [. . .] for you [. . .] it became *Juden[rein]*. And our [. . .] went to [. . .] our Lasecki[?] although [. . .] [6] everybody again [. . .] just I didn't sleep[?] it was [. . .] work

details [. . .] our director went to Lublin to *Ar[beits]amt* [. . .] permission [. . .] to work for me before [. . .] will fire me [. . .] renting a flat [. . .] other [. . .] this pass, so the village head [. . .] the pass, so together [. . .] answer [. . .] to release us and we had to stay [. . .] now [. . .] for a day [. . .] he came [. . .]

ARG I 853 (Ring. I/598/2)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 160×149, 201×141, 94×80 mm, many damaged and missing fragments, some fragments legible, 3 sheets, 6 pages. In the upper right corner on p. 4, it looks like a date, 10 June.

DUBIENKA

39

1 September [1941?], Dubienka, author unknown. Letter to an unknown addressee in the Warsaw ghetto. Request to hand parcels over to Mrs Lipszyc, Tłomackie Street 2, flat 16.

[1] Dubienka,³²² 1 September

My Dears! It's already a while since we received the card. Thank God we hear about your well-being. And how is Blumke? Is she already completely well? Unfortunately, things are not the best with me. My family life is not functioning. Gitele lives separately and I am at Mother's. From Łódź we received a card. Thank God that they write that they are well. [. . .] In this quiet time they can send some money to Shmuel. What is happening with you? How is it going with earnings and what do they write to you from Łódź? I am interested in everything.

Now, I have a favour to ask of you, as I sent several parcels to your address. Until now, my former partner, Moryc Garncarz, took the parcels. Unfortunately, I could not bear the pressure of money, [and] I had to break with him, ask him not to tell anyone about this. [2] I ask of you that you give

322 Name of the town in Latin characters.

the parcels to Mrs Lipszyc, who lives at Tłomackie 2/16, for which I thank you greatly.

Now, please, write to me which products you need for yourself, which I will immediately send you; and above all, perhaps, you would like products for business transactions. In that case, I am prepared to do business. Send over a few addresses [and] a few hundred zlotys, and we can establish a partnership. In any case, I await your prompt reply. I wish you all the best with everything. With regards, your friend,

[. . .]³²³

ARG I 728 (Ring. I/581/1)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 145×205 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

40

After 22 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “דוביענקע” [Dubienka]. The situation in the ghetto, forced to accommodate 800 women and children exiled from Mielec on 16 March 1942.

[1] Dubienka

According to reliable news from 22 March 1942, in the town of Dubienka, near Hrubieszów, 800 Jews arrived who had been driven out – women and children – from Mielec, near Kraków.³²⁴

The expulsion took place on the 16 March, this year. The Jews were divided into several groups. The sick, the disabled, and a large number of men were shot. The young people were sent to forced labour camps; the women and children were sent here in sealed boxcars.

The expulsion lasted 30 minutes. In the course of half an hour, everyone had to leave their homes.

323 Signature illegible, probably in Latin characters.

324 On 17 March 1942, 843 Jews from Mielec were brought to Dubienka. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/372, p. 7.

In the town, frightening scenes are being played out. The costliness grows from minute to minute. [2] The local *kehillah* is unable to help all the unfortunates.

The Jews from the towns, who survived by sending parcels to Warsaw and earned their livelihood from this, are at risk of remaining without a livelihood, because the costliness has greatly affected the local residents!

On account of the various rumours that are circulating in the town, Jews live in fear.

March 1942

ARG I 726 (Ring. I/803).

Description: duplicate (a) (handwritten: RR*, ink, 148×210 mm), duplicate (b) (3 copies, handwritten: U*, pencil, 143×192 mm), Yiddish, 7 sheets, 8 pages.

Edition based on the duplicate (a), 1 sheet, 2 pages.

SKRYHICZYN

41. *January 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “סקריהיטשין” [Skryhiczyn]. The fate of the community of Jewish farmers from the village: the pogrom after the entry of Germans in 1939, execution of all the men of the Halperin family; expulsion on 22 November 1941.*

[1] Skryhiczyn

“This day upset us all. All the Jews were ordered to leave Skryhiczyn within 30 minutes. You can easily imagine the situation of these unfortunate people.

One was not allowed to take anything except for household items. The land was also taken from all the Jews of Skryhiczyn.

Who knows what kind of events are still before us.”

Thus writes a local woman, who witnessed the expulsion that took place on 22 November 1941.³²⁵

325 Some of the Skryhiczyn Jews were deported to Hrubieszów in November 1941 and detained there in the labour camp.

This village near Dubienka in the Lublin district, in the Hrubieszów county, on the Bug River [2] belongs to the few villages of pre-war Poland, in which Jews occupied themselves with agriculture.³²⁶

Jewish farmers owned well-organised farms here and cultivated hundreds of *morgens*³²⁷ of land with their own hands and a hired work force.

Here one could often see how the wind played with the beards of the Jewish farmers who walked behind the plough or sowed the fields. Barefoot, healthy Jewish girls and boys, who used to cut the grain in the fields and the damp green meadows, with scythes and sickles on cold dawns and on burning hot days.

With the arrival of the occupier, commissioners were appointed for the bigger Jewish land owners; for the smaller, set quotas of produce were taken.

[3] The mixed peasant population – Ukrainians, Poles and Jews – lived with good neighbourly relations.

Following the entry of the Germans, a pogrom took place.³²⁸

There were victims and many Jewish belongings were stolen.

Of those, who suffered most, the Halperin family is known to me, in which almost all the men were shot. Also, the old manor was robbed.

The Jewish sawmill was transferred over to the commissioner's administration.

Time, however, did its own [thing]: Jews continued with the agricultural work, trade, and somehow managed to live. The Jews even received *przepustki* for 24 hours [4] to cultivate the fields on the bank of the Bug.

Understandably one paid a high price for all of this. The village lived through a lot following the outbreak of the war with the Bolsheviks.³²⁹ The assault, fortunately, did not cause any particular damage.

326 The Skryhiczyn estate was bought by Mordkhe Kalman Rottenberg in 1871. In 1926, the land was divided between 26 heirs. Halperin, Horowicz, Kaminer, and Szydłowski, listed further in the document, were Rottenberg's successors. See Irena Kowalska, Ida Merżan, *Rottenbergowie nad Buga* (Warszawa, 1989), pp. 13, 21, 32–34.

327 1 morgen (obsolete land measure) = 0,56 hectares = 1,4 acre.

328 During the first days of the war, the local Ukrainians broke into the mansion in Skryhiczyn and murdered Chaim Halperin, his son-in-law, and his four-year-old grandson. See the interview with Anna Lanota at www.centropa.org.

329 The war with the USSR broke out on 22 June 1941.

The latest arbitrary decree has ruined families of Jewish farmers, who had lived there for generations, and several families of bigger landowners, such as:

Rottenberg – approximately 150 *morgens* of land and forest

Halperin – " 80 "

Horowicz – " 50 "

Kaminer – " 50 "

Szydłowski – " 50 "

and others. At the moment there is no further news.

January 1942

ARG I 1006 (Ring I/913)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (RR*), ink, Yiddish, 150×194 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Published in *To Live With Honor and Die With Honor!*, pp. 209–210.

KRASNYSTAW COUNTY

IZBICA LUBELSKA

42

After April 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony "Izbica Lubelska." The Aktion on 24 March 1942.

[1] Izbica Lubelska

There were about 5,000 people in the town, including the resettled from Koło (1,500 people).³³⁰ The Czech Jews were brought in around 18 March.³³¹ There

330 In 1941, in Izbica Lubelska, there were about 6,700 Jews, including 2,000 Jews from Łódź, Koło, Konin, Głowno, and other localities in the Lublin region. See R. Kuwałek, *Getta tranzytowe*, in: *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 140.

331 In Izbica Lubelska was one of the transit ghettos in the Lublin District. During March–June 1942 over 7,000 Jews were brought there in 19 transports from Germany, Austria (Vienna), the Czech Republic (Theresienstadt), and Slovakia. In October and November 1942 all were murdered in Bełżec and Sobibór. *Ibidem*, pp. 143–144, 158–159.

were rumours that some of the permanent inhabitants would be resettled to accommodate the newcomers. Several days passed entirely peacefully and the people calmed down.

Suddenly, on 24 March in the evening the town was illuminated and surrounded with Ukrainians. Panic broke out. The Community told everybody to gather on the market square with small bundles and food supplies for resettlement. A lot of people went into hiding. 3,500 people were gathered and sent away in sealed boxcars in an unknown direction.³³²

All the labourers employed in German companies received temporary permissions to stay. The *Aktion* resumed on April 8. The people were taken in a chaotic way. The Czechs are to be punished with death for the sheltering of Polish Jews. 60 people fell victim of that ordinance.

The Czechs were ordered to submit all the things they had brought (suits and other valuable things can be bought dirt-cheap). Aside from the Czech Jews, there are 1,000 people left, but those unsure are still in hiding [2] or fleeing.

ARG I 777 (Ring. I/949)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (GG*), ink, Polish, 100×149 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

43

After 1 October 1941, Izbica Lubelska, Freyde and Khaye Szejerson. Letter to aunt and uncle (names unknown). Difficult situation of the family (father's illness, brother in a forced labour camp; a request for help and intervention from Yitskhok Giterman and Mordkhe Goldfarb.

[1]³³³ Dear Aunt and respected Uncle,

We have received your hundred zlotys for which we thank you very much. We didn't reply to you immediately because from the *Yom Kippur* onwards,

332 The first deportation of 2,200 Jews from Izbica Lubelska to Bełżec took place on 24 March 1942. *Ibidem*, p. 150.

333 Editors' pagination.

since Yisroel was taken into a camp,³³⁴ we are suffering terribly. May the blessed Lord help so that we may see our only brother in good health at home. He does hard labour and stands in water without shoes and in ragged clothes in such cold weather. How happy we will be if we see him return home from there in good health. How bitter my life is when I see him with my own eyes standing at his terrible work. We could not free him from there because we did not have anything with which to do so. I was happy when I brought him food every day and managed to get a job in a village near the camp, and I dug potatoes and could give him some food, whereas now I can no longer even do that for him because there is no work in the village and I can't take food to him from home because I don't have any and we're left without shoes and I can't go there without shoes as I did the entire summer because it's already very cold here and terribly muddy, and it's a distance of 24 kilometres there and back.

[2] At present we're living under terrible conditions, in a word, we're starving. When 2 kilos of bread costs 14 zlotys, we can only look at it. And we are distraught that we can't take any food to Yisroel even though he endures hunger and pain there. It's a miracle how we are getting through these days. We are starving and suffering terribly. We have written to our uncle in Otwock³³⁵ several times, but unfortunately received no reply. One letter was returned to us and we no longer know his address. We are unfortunate people, exposed to hunger and privation and, living in a place like this, our lives are at risk daily. It is a great miracle that we are still alive. We have twice recited *gamel*.³³⁶ At present, we are living in a shop which is dangerous for my respected father and mother. It's a storefront shop in the market. We immediately asked to be given a small place somewhere else, but there was none available and it's a danger for a Hasid to live in a shop here because it's only for the Jews that life is dangerous in every respect and we are suffering very much. We beg for mercy, to be saved.

We are starving and are in terrible misery. It's worse for us now because of our beloved parents, who look very unwell. My respected father is sick and

334 Probably one of several camps on the Wieprz River. See *Forced Labour Camps* (forthcoming).

335 Otwock (Warsaw County)

336 The blessing recited in a synagogue after escaping great danger, not later than three days after the event.

we have no money to buy a prescription for him. Dear mother is unrecognisable; she has a kidney condition and cannot tolerate the cold, and we don't even have money to make a little kitchen out of bricks in the shop. It is already cold today. We sleep on the floor, but for our parents we have little beds, our own ones from Lublin, which I brought along.³³⁷ We have no stove, but we get good soup from the [soup] kitchen. It's even worse when sometimes, for various reasons the soup is not made. In this shtetl, a poor man is more likely to die than to live. Today, there is no firewood in the kitchen, so we will go hungry. In the winter, if we don't have a stove, we shall freeze. We have lived in misery for 8 months and thought that perhaps our fate would improve, but unfortunately we have adversity from all sides.

We turn to you and implore you for help. I'm asking you on behalf of our beloved parents, who are so weak. Perhaps it's possible to get in touch with our cousin Giterman so that he could help us in our need.³³⁸ We implore you, save us and don't let us die. Perhaps it's possible through an aid committee. We simply ask kind people to help my beloved father as he is ill and I must have a prescription for him. I also believe that through an aid committee it would be possible to receive some shoes and old clothes because at present we cannot go into the street and we find ourselves in a situation where we sit around hungry and stare death in the face. We feel so bad when dear father asks us to give him food and we don't have any. Dear mother suffers terribly: she does not ask for anything, but she weeps all day long and prays to the blessed Lord that her only son and 20-year-old breadwinner should come home healthy.

I beg you, my dear ones, forgive me for writing to you. Whom do I have to turn to? We are solitary stones here and my life is all despair and darkness. As I am the oldest at home, I must do the writing. Last week I walked to Krasnystaw and searched for ways to free Yisroel, but unfortunately I did not succeed. [3] I implore, my dear Uncle, perhaps Mr Goldfarb could accomplish

337 The author and her family probably were among 9,200 Jews deported from Lublin in March 1941. See Doc. 18.

338 Yitskhok Giterman (1889–1943), a scion of two great Hasidic dynasties, the Twerskis and the Szejersons, director of the AJDC in Poland from 1921. In the Warsaw ghetto, the ŻSS and YIKOR activist, *Oyneg Shabes* member; after the establishment of the ŻOB engaged in collection of funds for arms.

something for us.³³⁹ We ask, dear Uncle, perhaps it's possible to get shoes for Yisroel and warm clothing from an aid committee. A year ago, various donations of clothes were sent to Lublin for poor people like ourselves. I conclude my writing with a hope that dear Uncle will reply to us and help us. I remain your ever well-wishing

Freyde

Dear Sister and Brother-in-law, be well. You should not be surprised, my dear ones, that Freyde is writing to you on our behalf. The blessed Lord knows the truth that I can barely stand on my feet, and how awful I feel that my only son is in a camp and is suffering so terribly. May the blessed Lord help me so that I see him soon at home in good health. I implore you, my dear ones, have mercy and help me in my need. My husband is ill and I don't have even a slice of bread at home. We're starving and I have no food to send to my only son. My children are left without shoes and can't go out into the street. Our lot is to expire from hunger and cold. I implore you, perhaps there are kind people who would help me in my need. I implore you, help me because each day is a year for me while we are starving. If it goes on any longer, the help may be too late. Here we are solitary stones and I have no one to turn to. I wrote to Hershl, but he doesn't reply to me. My lot is to expire from hunger and cold. Beloved Sister, I am very surprised that you aren't writing to me. It would console me. You cannot imagine how lonely I am. have no one to pour my heart out to. Write to me, my dearest, whether you have had letters from your respected son and how you are feeling health-wise. I conclude my letter with a hope that all good comes to you.

Your sist[er] Khaye Szejerson

ARG II 345 b (Ring. II/182)

Description: original, handwritten (two different handwritings), ink, Yiddish, 128×210 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

339 Mordkhe Goldfarb (1895–?), inspector of the Union of Jewish Cooperatives in Poland (*Związek Żydowskich Spółdzielni w Polsce*) from 1926. During the war, the AJDC inspector in the Lublin District. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/18, p. 1.

22 February 1942, Izbica Lubelska, Freyde Sznejerson. Letter to a cousin [Yitskhok Giterman?] in the Warsaw ghetto; a request for intervention by the Judenrat in Staszów with regard to a job.

[1] Izbica³⁴⁰, 22 February [19]42

Highly esteemed Cousin,

Putting pen to paper and remembering the great misfortune that has befallen us, my blood curdles in my veins at the thought that we have been orphaned and that the best and most beautiful that we had in our lives has been torn away from us. The grief is great; I am unable to express it with my pen, yet the pain is even greater when we remember that if we were not resettled and living in dreadful conditions, his gentle soul would have been kept alive. We just cannot come to terms with the great loss that has befallen us. Our pious father was supposed to go to hospital and be observed by the best doctors, he was very weak and eating poorly, so he developed additional complicated health conditions, above all, because his heart was weak. It is painful that this pious man passed away in a foreign place. It is self-evident that in Lublin he would surely have received the appropriate last honours, which he certainly deserved, having lived there for 56 years. It appears that such is our fate because our great-grandfather,³⁴¹ the rabbi of blessed memory, also died in war-time away from home in Hadyach.³⁴²

At the moment our situation is very sad when we see what consequences this kind of life brings. Mother is ill; it has been 5 weeks since she has been unable to leave her bed, and we don't have the slightest possibility to attend to her as a sick person. We are in a bad way, because we are in a place where one can't earn anything. There is no work and going to the village to earn something there is strictly forbidden. In a word, it's hell. So, the question arises: How does one survive? Until now, whatever we had we sold; at the moment

340 Name of the town in Latin characters.

341 Shneur Zalman of Liadi (1734 [1745]–1813), a *tzaddik*, founder of the *Chabad* Lubavich Hasidic movement. The name of the author of the letter, Sznejerson, derives from his name.

342 Hadyach (Hadziacz), Poltava region, Ukraine.

this cannot help us because we have nothing else left to sell. We are very grateful to our respected Cousin for his support throughout the entire time and also for the last 200 zlotys sent on 5 January. We will never forget these acts of kindness. In this bitter time, we are compelled to ask him to remember us in the future because we do want to work, but unfortunately there is no way to make a living. Our aspiration is to overcome these bitter times and we hope that in normal times we will be able to exist from our own work.

[2] Now we have a big request for our respected Cousin, although it is very hard for me to trouble our highly esteemed Cousin, but I'm forced to do so because of our isolation, and because I have no one who could help us. Knowing what an influential authority our highly esteemed Cousin is, we implore [you] to intervene with the Staszów *Judenrat* to give a job to my sister's daughter. She's an intelligent girl and she writes to us that such a position is available there, and at least thereby she would be of help to her parents at a time when my sister and brother-in-law have been homeless there for 14 months. They lived with us in Lublin. And now their situation is very critical. My brother-in-law is dangerously ill and he hasn't left his bed for 6 months, and our unfortunate sister is suffering and cannot do anything to save her husband. We implore our respected Cousin to do us this favour because it is a matter of life and death. We give thanks in advance and hope to serve him when the opportunity arises. I conclude my letter with the hope that all will always go well for my respected Cousin, with eternal good wishes I remain

Freyde Szejerson

Note: my brother-in-law's address is: Elisha Tenenworcel, Przejazdowa Street 2, Staszów.

ARG II 345 a (Ring. II/182)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 122×202 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

45

April 1942, Izbica Lubelska, author unknown. Letter to [Mrs?] Konińska in Warsaw, Ogrodowa Street 5, flat 30.

[1] from Izbica Lubelska³⁴³

[. . .] Konińska

Warsaw, Ogrodowa Street 5, flat 30³⁴⁴

[2] [. . .] I don't understand [. . .] today [. . .] understand how such a rich man [. . .] that we have hard feelings [. . .] that he is not doing anything. The 16 of us are living in one room. The epidemic of typhus is raging. As for Bronia, I know nothing. For the whole time I have had [. . .].

ARG I 778 (Ring. I/599/109)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard; post stamps (Gorzów near Krasnystaw) and the seal of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, ink, Polish, 95×104 mm, substantial damages and many missing fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

TUROBIN

46

After February 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account “טוראָבין” [Turobin]. Situation of the Jewish population during the German occupation: influx of refugees from Łódź, Koło, Kleczew, Konin, Janów Lubelski; levy.

[1] Turobin, a shtetl near Żółkiewka, Krasnystaw county

Turobin is a small shtetl with some 500 resident Jewish families who have lived here since before the war and earned their living from commerce and skilled trades.

343 Line in a different handwriting.

344 The Oyneg Shabes member Natan Koniński (1902–1942) lived at Ogrodowa Street 5. He was a copyist, also author of a long testimony on expulsion of the Jews from his native Kalisz. See *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich* (forthcoming).

The local Polish peasant population, numbering about 250 families, took no part in the campaign which the *Endecja*³⁴⁵ conducted here to remove commerce from Jewish hands. On the contrary, they lived on the best personal and commercial terms with their Jewish neighbours. The “holy” work of seizing the well-established Jewish economic positions was carried out by Poles newly arrived from the Poznań region or individuals who came here and are relatives of the local Polish population.

If this shtetl is being recorded now, when large Jewish communities and settlements are being destroyed, it is not because the Jews here have undergone and endured any greater suffering and torments than in other towns and shtetls, but because the small-town luminaries are committing horrific deeds in which details in no way lag behind the brutality of the Germans. They are pursuing the very same rapacious policy of robbery, with the thievish plan of pocketing as much as possible for themselves at the expense of the thousands of unhappy, tormented, persecuted, and impoverished Jews.

Here in Turobin, the way of life of the local Jews perhaps changed little with the outbreak of the war. Instead of commerce, there is now smuggling. If the former workshops are absent, the Jews – with no other choice – have gone off to perform agricultural labour for the surrounding peasants and landed estates and are leading a hard life. While it is true that people are toiling away from sunrise to sunset, they are not short of a potato and a piece of bread.

However, the “big shots” have once again mounted the wretched Jewish mare³⁴⁶ and are stealing and plundering the poor at every opportunity.

The shtetl has suffered little from military operations.

By miracle or happy chance, no Germans are to be seen by the light of day. SS and Gestapo people are infrequent guests here.

However, a couple of former *kehillah* wheeler-dealers and influence peddlers have resurfaced and are turning the wheels of the *kehillah*.

At the head of the *kehillah* council are two well-known common thieves famous for the murky dealings they were already engaging in before the war: the “honourable gentlemen” Blajfeder and Yankl Rozenfeld.

345 (Polish) short form for *Narodowa Demokracja* (National Democracy), Polish nationalist and strongly anti-Semitic movement established in 1886.

346 Most probably a reference to Mendele Moykher Sforim’s novel *Di klyatshe* (A Mare), where the animal symbolizes the Jewish people in general, and here the community.

To their good fortune, as soon as the Germans entered the town, some 1,250 to 1,400 refugees arrived. In a rush, owing to haste and the cheapness of food, Jews came here from Łódź, Koło, Kleszczew, Konin, Janów Lubelski, Frampol, and other places. The first group of refugees from Łódź were tricked and swindled by the Łódź *kehillah*, headed by Rumkowski.³⁴⁷ Those unfortunates were persuaded that people would be driven out of Łódź and that it would therefore be better to flee as soon as possible.³⁴⁸ Some were frightened by being told that they would be the first to be driven from the city and would be sent to forced labour camps. So, they took the one-time grants of 50 zlotys a head from the Łódź *kehillah* council and the 15 to 20 kilos of luggage that they were allowed to take with them – and set off to wherever their eyes took them and settled in the shtetl of Turobin. The Łódź *kehillah* later raised the one-time grant to 100 zlotys to encourage the poor to leave Łódź and so rid itself of the burden of supporting “paupers”.

And so the Jewish population of Turobin greatly increased. The aforementioned community activists then set about their “aid work” and started to provide for the poor. They called for help from the Joint in Warsaw, and the funds started to flow. Between 10,000 and 15,000 zlotys flowed to the *kehillah* council each month. Since food was very cheap there, the sum sent for aid purposes was substantial. The two above-mentioned partners had found a good source of income.

But a second source of income soon appeared.

Our two heroes sent a delegation to Warsaw asking for clothes. Of course, when the people in Warsaw heard of the state of the refugees who had arrived there, that they were walking around “naked and barefoot”, they dispatched clothes and shoes. The above-mentioned individuals kept no record of the distribution of clothes. A large number of receipts went missing. Various disputes among the local synagogue administrators, profiteers and receivers of stolen goods exposed the ugliest things imaginable. They sold the clothes that

347 Mordecai Chaim Rumkowski (1897–1944), before the war a merchant, social activist, director of the orphanage in Helenówek near Łódź, member of the Łódź Jewish community board. During the war, chairman of the *Judenrat* in the Łódź ghetto, dictator of the ghetto. Perished in Auschwitz.

348 On 30 October 1939, Himmler issued a decree on the expulsion of Poles and Jews from the Polish territories annexed to the Reich. In the following months, thousands of Jews arrived in the General Government.

arrived among themselves, and the money from the shirts and garments that were needed to [2] clothe the poorest, the ragged, and those who no longer had a shirt on their body, down to the last pair of trousers, was spent and squandered on making merry.

That is how the Jewish lowlifes squandered community money and lived it up at the expense of the poor.

Meanwhile, in July 1940 a typhus epidemic spread through town. The *Kreishauptmann*³⁴⁹ then ordered the Jews to establish a hospital for infectious diseases in order to combat the epidemic. He demanded that the hospital be equipped with 50 beds. After long negotiations, he was persuaded that 40 beds would suffice.

Here, too, the *kehillah* council lost no time in sending a bill for 20,000 zlotys for costs to Warsaw. For this purpose, the swindlers received 10,000 zlotys from Warsaw. In the meantime, the typhus spread still more, and the *Kreishauptmann* issued a draconian order that in any house where a case of typhus occurred, the whole family, together with the sick person, were to be quarantined. Intolerable conditions were then imposed, both on the patients and on the family members who remained with them. Only the air vent remained open, not walled up, and through it food and medicines were passed in and out, and bodily functions were performed.

At the time when the typhus epidemic started to rage, a decree was issued to the Polish population that it should isolate itself from the Jewish inhabitants.

No ghetto was established in Turobin. The matter was settled at the beginning of 1941 by a levy of between 6,000 and 8,000 zlotys. At the time of writing, we have no precise information regarding the levy.

The Gestapo and SS people come here only for brief visits. On each occasion, they are paid off.

The Jewish population of Turobin has not been seized for forced labour, for two reasons. Firstly, during the typhus epidemic, the newly created Jewish settlement started to disintegrate. Jews fled to other places in the Lublin area. And secondly, it was explained to the Germans that the number of people who

349 At that time, it was Hartmut Gerstenhauer (1903–?). In 1940, he was transferred to Lublin district, and from February 1941 served as an administrative official in the Reich. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 474.

could be taken from here to forced labour camps was so small that it would not be worth the trouble. Beyond these “motives”, there was added a certain large sum of money – and the German officials responsible did indeed come to the conclusion that the Jews were right.

On the other hand, the *kehillah* sent workers to do agricultural work. A certain portion of the Jewish population enrolled and went off to this work.

The remainder of the Jews took extensively to smuggling. Goods were smuggled to Warsaw. Using various *przepustki*, flour, butter, and all sorts of [other] good things were transported to Warsaw and the best of deals were made with them.

Those, however, who were unfit for any work – and lacked the war-time profits and readiness to take risks necessary for smuggling – died of hunger.

We have recorded a series of events from the small shtetl of Turobin during the great world catastrophe of the Second World War, because it will have to occupy a prominent place in the “Chronicle of Poland”.

February 1942

ARG I 1030 (Ring. I/924)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), typewritten, Yiddish, 208×295 mm, minor damage and fragments missing (first copy), 6 sheets, 6 pages. On p. 1 (first copy), Hersh Wasser's handwritten note in Yiddish (ink): “farb-vintsik,” perhaps a reference to Israel Winnik.³⁵⁰

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

350 Israel Winnik (Winik) (1899–1942), teacher, journalist of *Folks-Tsaytung*, Bund member and Oyneg Shabes associate, recorded and wrote testimonies, was active in ŻSS, especially in refugees' centres.

LUBLIN COUNTY

BYCHAWA

47

27 July 1941, Bychawa, August Świerkutt, appointed head of the local commune. Order to the Judenrat in Bychawa to collect volumes of the Talmud.

Bychawa, 27 July 1941

I hereby order that until 5 p.m. all the Talmud books are brought in front of the Commune Office. Unless this order is carried out, the *Judenrat* will be put in gaol.

The appointed head of the Bychawa commune
/-/ August Świerkutt

ARG I 705 (Ring. I/271)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 200×115 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish (ink): "108 – 1942/1 January."

After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “Bychawa”, recorded by Daniel Fligelman.³⁵¹ The persecution of the Jews by August Świerkutt, a Volksdeutscher, appointed head of the Bychawa commune.

[1] Bychawa

Bychawa is a small town in the Lublin county[. . .]. Of its 4,000 inhabitants, approximately 40–50 per cent are Jewish.³⁵² There is an open Jewish district [. . .] but the Jews can leave it only with special passes.

The Jews were not issued [. . .] trade [. . .] they began to legally [. . .] sending [?] food ration cards to [. . .] neither do they receive any [. . .].

The *Judenrat* operates extremely efficiently and [. . .] in the field of social welfare. The activists Messrs Himmelfarb and Nysenbaum³⁵³ [. . .] are outstanding in this field. [. . .] wanderers, many of whom pass through Bychawa. They receive money for further [wandering?]. The local paupers receive [. . .] and bread per person.

Two persons are the menace of the town. The former [. . .] is the head of the village commune who usurps the position of the mayor, a *Volksdeutscher* August Świerkutt.³⁵⁴ Here are a few examples of his shameful activity.

At first it needs to be stressed that he is a typical sadist. [. . .] man, and seriously so. Whenever he appeared on the Jewish street it immediately became deserted as everybody hid in their homes.

He was exceptionally ingenious when it came to extorting money from the Jews. [. . .] that he showed the *Judenrat* various [. . .] e.g. last [?] the charge for the freshly taken [?] [. . .] – after all it is nothing particularly unusual today –

351 Daniel Fligelman (1920–1942), student from Aleksandrów Kujawski, one of the Oyneg Shabes associates. He wrote, recorded, and probably also copied testimonies in Polish. His works are recognizable for their exquisite style, use of foreign languages, and references to belles-lettres.

352 According to Berenstein, the number of the Jews in Bychawa in March 1941 was 2,600. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Martyrologia,” table 8.

353 Szmul Nissenbaum (1899–?), teacher, member of the *Judenrat* in Bychawa and of the Lublin County Welfare Committee (KOP). See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/646, pp. 2, 17–18.

354 In the original, the spelling is “Świerkutt” or “Świergutt”. The former is used in this volume. See Doc. 47.

but [. . .] regulations were passed forbidding Jews [. . .] a Jew with a special permission, which costs 6,000[?] zlotys to obtain.

[2] [. . .] Once, he demanded all the Torah scrolls and Hebrew prayer books to be delivered to [. . .] commune office. Świerkutt was perfectly aware who he was dealing with. He knew very well that the Bychawa Jews would think it less of a sin to give the Germans money instead of the sacred books. So, when the community delegation came to ask for that ordinance to be revoked, he demanded the exorbitant sum of about a dozen thousand zlotys. After intense negotiations meanness gave in to stupidity and the sum of 9,000 zlotys was agreed to. 3,000 zlotys was paid in cash, while the rest was to be paid in several instalments.

Once “Mr Mayor” was in a conflict with a certain Pole. Acting with vengeance, the Poles accused him of blackmailing the Jews. He pointed out several *Judenrat* members as witnesses. By an ill twist of fate, that denunciation produced an effect. A special commission arrived from Lublin and indicted Świerkutt. But the “mayor” managed to clear himself of the charges and... he began to take revenge on the Jews. Once, he called one of the *Judenrat* members (I do not know the surname), who had given the most incriminating, though absolutely true, testimony against him. He ordered the man to lie down and open his mouth. He then defecated into his mouth and beat him to unconsciousness. Miserable, the man fell severely ill after returning home, or should I say after he was carried back home. He arose only after several weeks. That incident resulted in a series of complaints and interventions, which only further embittered the “mayor” and incited him to continue tormenting the Jews.

Similarly to Hitler, Goering, Himmler, and other men of power, Świerkutt maintained a *Standarte*,³⁵⁵ that is the Fire Brigade (!), whose members were Polish. In early October of last year, the brigade received a motor pump [3] and decided to test it. To that end, one evening the pump was brought into the Jewish district. The fire fighters began to systematically flood one flat after another, damaging furniture and clothes. They amused themselves like that for over an hour and, when it finally became boring, they took the pump and left. The only fire fighter to remain was the most zealous one that broke the panes in somebody’s home. The Jewish Order Service must have had good

355 A clear reference to the SS regiments, called *die Standarten SS*.

reasons to oppose continuation of that activity, because in the end it did protest against it. The fire fighter behaved aggressively, which led to a fight, as a result of which he [. . .] was roughed up and lost the symbol of his position, the cap. Consequently, he could do nothing else but flee and complain to Świerkutt.

Less than half an hour later, a large group of fire fighters marched into the Jewish district in line of battle under the command of the “mayor”. Armed with poles and axes, upon signal they began to smash windows and closed shutters. Before long there was not a single Jewish pane in the whole town. There were no victims because the terrified Jews panicked and hid in the attics and cellars. The furious fire fighters could not find anybody. They managed to capture only a Jewish policeman on duty. Luckily, the man managed to free himself from the would-be murderers’ hands and thus to save his life.

After that pogrom, Świerkutt was arrested. He has not been released to this day. One of the *Judenrat* chairmen, barber Grynsztajn, was arrested. He was a trusted man of the “mayor”, with whom he had been on friendly terms. The two of them had made some shady deals together.

The anti-Semitism of the “mayor” did not stop him from raping a number of Jewish girls.

The other tormentor of Bychawa was a certain Moyshe [4] Suchota (I was unable to determine whether it was his surname or nickname). A boy about 16 years old, he is an official informer of the gendarmerie. He does nothing to hide this fact. It has developed into the situation that everybody pays him off to avoid trouble. But it helps little as, from time to time, Suchota brings in the gendarmes anyway and actively participates in searches. Butchers are the ones who suffer the most as ritual slaughter is very much hampered.³⁵⁶ [It is interesting] that the father of the young denunciator does not try to conceal his son’s misdeeds. On the contrary, he is proud of his son’s shameful activity and the attitude [. . .] gendarmerie [. . .].³⁵⁷

ARG I 706 (Ring. I/951)

Description: original, handwritten (FLIG*), ink, Polish, 222×351 mm, minor damages and missing fragments, some fragments illegible, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

356 Ritual slaughter of animals was forbidden as per the ordinance of 26 October 1939.

357 The remaining part of the testimony has not survived.

PUŁAWY COUNTY

KOŃSKOWOLA

49. *After 12 July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “Końskowola k[óło] Puław” [Końskowola near Puławy]. A survey³⁵⁸ regarding the situation of the Jewish population in the town completed by a Jewish policeman from Warsaw staying in the labour camp in Końskowola.*

[1] Końskowola near Puławy

Special days: The announcement of the duty to render forced labour (October 1940).

Religious life: There is only one synagogue. The holidays are observed as usual with the *Kommandantur*’s consent. It often happens that the curfew is postponed so that the Jews can freely return home (for example, last Easter)³⁵⁹ or when there is a wedding. There is a rabbi here.

[The attitude of the] Poles toward the Jews: Very satisfactory. The Poles and Jews maintain trade contacts with each other. The peasants “come to Moyshele for tobacco and all other products they cannot buy in the co-op.” The intelligentsia maintains good relations and the local Polish authorities are in contact with the *Judenrat*.

Their³⁶⁰ noble and shameful behaviour: Neither particularly noble nor base acts have been observed during this entire time.

The penal camps in which there are Jews from this town: In Lublin and Puławy, for [ritual] slaughter, baking of white bread, not wearing the armband.

358 There are three questionnaires for research on Jewish populations in small towns, see *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, Docs. 16, 17 and 18. The above document does not closely follow any of them.

359 The Passover holiday.

360 Throughout this text, “their” and “them” refers to the Germans.

[2] Converts: There are none here.

How many Jews have been resettled? None.

The young: A large percentage of the young work for them, particularly young girls. The others go to villages to peasants in order to trade.

[Children]: Devoid of any care, go to them for bread.

[Brothels] for them: None.

[. . .]: There have been no military or troops.

[Public life]: There is none. They work all day long and the curfew starts at 7 p.m.

[Who] escaped so far, in which direction and how many? Nobody.

How many Jews remain in the town today? Around 150 families (around 750 people).

Jewish labour: The craftsmen cater to local needs. Most of the Jews work for them, who treat them well. There are no shops. Trade goes on in secret. There had been only two rich men here. They soon fled, while their families remained.

Interesting events: Round-ups for Poles (men and women), aimed at sending them to Prussia for forced labour. After the outbreak [3] of the war with Russia, the Jews must pull the cannons through the town. One of them beat the Jews to unconsciousness, but it was an isolated incident.

The situation of victims, the ghetto, yellow patches, beards: A few victims. There is no ghetto. There is a Star of David on each Jewish home. Each Jew wears an armband with the Star of David. The Jews have beards and wear, as before, Hasidic outfits.

Levies: None.

Persecutions: None.

[. . .] of the Community: Documents, activity. The community has autonomy. The scope of its duties: the issue of forced labour camps and of aid to the poor. Many paupers go to the local *Arbeitslager*³⁶¹ for soup. The Germans do not disregard the community, because it facilitates their work when they need people.

361 (German) Labour camp. During 1940–1942 in Końskowola, there was a road construction labour camp, employing approximately 400 Jewish prisoners. *Obozy pracy*, p. 145.

Profiles of the new “activists”: There were two of them (one had been a shoemaker before the war and the other a locksmith), who worked in the Department of Labour of the Community. They had their own ones, they often saved the lives of Jews through bribery. They were making good money from that.

Their policy towards the poor: Lack of interest.

[4] Obligatory labour: The Department of Labour was notified about increased demand. Most often the Jews were sent to Puławy or they worked temporarily on the spot (6–7 days per month).

Camps, round-ups to labour, buyouts: Many Jews work voluntarily for them. Round-ups to labour are infrequent here. Those unable to go to work needed to buy themselves out, only the sick did that.

[What happened to a synagogue? Synagogue, cemetery, *mikvah*, documents, rabbinical books, sacred objects, Torah scrolls, rabbi – no changes.

[Social work of the] Community: There were none.

[Refugees in the town, where from,] aid from abroad: Refugees from Warsaw, there has been no aid from abroad.

Working women: Many women work here for them. They have lots of freedom. The work is light and they treat the women well (pretty or not, all women above the age of 15 work).

The economic condition: There is only the tile factory, which is in Polish hands, like all the open trade; while [5] almost all craftsmen are Jewish.

Smuggling: Food is smuggled from the nearby villages to [in turn] sell it to others, who send it to Warsaw, Dęblin, and Radom. Manufactured goods are smuggled from Warsaw.

The nouveau riche: There are none here.

Their attitude toward the Jews in accordance to the [social] strata: There is little stratification and this is why it is difficult to see any differences.

[The Community’s sources of profit:] Community derives profit from fees and short-term campaigns. The community does not have many expenses as the Jews tend to help one another here.

[Jewish] informers: The *musers*³⁶² were the two Jews employed in the community (a shoemaker and a locksmith). Now they are in a penal camp after they were denounced by the Jews whom they had denounced first.

362 (Yiddish) informers.

Jewish police: There is no local police. In the *Arbeitslager* (a POW camp)³⁶³ there is the Jewish police from Warsaw, but it has no authority over the local population. The attitude of the Jewish policemen toward [6] the Jewish population and of the population toward the policemen is very sympathetic. The residents often invite the policemen over, for example, on Saturday for *cholent*.

Solidarity among the Jews: Great, they help one another.

General remarks: Before the war the town and the nearby town were leftist. There were more 1 May³⁶⁴ than 3 May³⁶⁵ banners and this is the reason for the good relationship between the Jews and the Poles.

The information was provided by a Jewish policeman, who has been staying in the *Arbeitslager* for many months.

July 12, 1941

ARG I 805 (Ring. I/835)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (JG*), pencil, Polish, 148×210 mm, damages and missing fragments, 12 sheets, 12 pages. Letter “c” in the margins.

Hersh Wasser’s note in Yiddish on p. 1 (ink): “Lebensold.”³⁶⁶

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, with some missing fragments supplemented on the basis of the second copy and *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, Doc. 18.

363 It was an organised group (*Kommando*) of POW workers, established in October 1940. The POWs worked reloading at the railway station and performed farm work. See *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945. Informator encyklopedyczny*, ed. Czesław Pili-chowski (Warszawa, 1979), p. 241.

364 International Labour Day, established in 1890.

365 Polish Constitution Day, commemorating the constitution of 1791.

366 One of the least known Oyneg Shabes associates; see ARG I 288 (Ring. I/1092).

50

25 February 1941, Opole [Lubelskie], Samuel Stieber, deportee from Vienna. Letter to Józef Landau in the Warsaw ghetto; request for help.

[1] *Judenrat* in Opole
on behalf of Samuel Stieber in Opole³⁶⁷
Puławy County, General Government, Lublin
[. . .]³⁶⁸

Józef Landau³⁶⁹
Warszawa
Śliska Street 54, flat 26

[2] Opole, 25 February 1941

Dear Mr Landau,
I am very [. . .] with your siblings [. . .] Tenenbaum. It has been ten days [. . .]
My sick wife [. . .] from Vienna to Opole [. . .] 1,000 Viennese.³⁷⁰ Each received
70 zlotys and must live on it. I am 65 years old [. . .] sick. Your [. . .] told me that

367 Chairman of the Centre of Jewish Councils of Elders of Eastern Upper Silesia in his letter of 4 August 1941 wrote to AJDC in Krakow on behalf of Samuel Stieber. The Stiebers were resettled from Vienna to Opole where they were placed in wooden barracks. Stieber's wife had been paralysed for years. They applied to be transferred somewhere else. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/43, p. 6.

368 Under the sender's address are six lines of illegible text.

369 Perhaps a reference to Aleksander Landau's brother, who owned a carpenter's workshop, and then an OBW workshop at Gęsia Street 30 in the Warsaw ghetto. A. Landau cooperated with Oyneg Shabes and he probably gave Samuel Stieber's letter to the Ghetto Archive. Both Landau brothers perished in Auschwitz. See B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, pp. 825.

370 Two transports of Vienna Jews were brought to Opole Lubelskie on 15 and 26 February 1941. See R. Kuwałek, *Getta tranzytowe*, in: *Akcja Reinhardt*, p. 140.

[if] I turn to you, you will help us. [. . .] you very much [. . .] in addition to that we have lost our children. [. . .] very grateful.

ARG I 943 a (Ring. I/587).

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, post stamp (Opole), ink, German, 144×102 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, illegible fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages. The postcard was kept in a binder.

RADZYŃ COUNTY

51

After 23 November 1941, Warsaw Ghetto, V.B.Y. Testimony ד״א לאַגע פֿון “דיא אידישע בעפֿעלקערונג אין ראָדזינער קרייז” [Situation of the Jewish population in the Radzyń County]. Arrest of the Judenrat, expulsions to a labour camp near Łuków, executions, restrictions on movement in the town, ban on buying from peasants, capital punishment for sheltering Jews, death sentence for 25 peasants for failure to deliver consignments, tortures.

[1] The situation of the Jewish population in the Radzyń County Jewish decrees, or as differently stated, anti-Jewish decrees. On 15 July [1941], forced labour camps. The *Judenrat* and the rabbi are arrested for not providing any of the 600 men for forced labour camps near Łuków.³⁷¹

[D]minin³⁷² the same day, at 2 o'clock [at night], the entire town is surrounded with gendarmerie and the police, *Schutzpolizei*, and men aged 14–60 are pulled out of their beds, their number reaching 600, from whom the labour office together with the *Judenrat* have, for a specific fee, freed the “better people”, that is the richer ones, and the toiling mass had to leave behind, with God’s mercy, their wives and children with nothing to live on, and go to the forced labour camps to work for no pay.

On 1 August, there appeared a second decree that Jews may leave their homes no earlier than 8 a.m., and are not allowed to be on the street [any] later

371 “Łuków” written in different handwriting between the lines.

372 Dminin (Radzyń Podlaski County)

than 7 p.m. [The] third decree [for] Jews forbade them to walk on the following streets: Warszawska, Piłsudskiego, and on the street where Mr *Landrat* lives. For transgressing the decrees, there is threat of the harshest punishments. [The] fourth decree: The market is relocated outside the town. Jews are not allowed to come to the market. And in general, Jews are forbidden to buy products directly from the peasants. All of these decrees are preparations for a ghetto. The fifth decree already foresees a death sentence for every Jew, who, leaves town and his place of residence without a permit from the *Landrat*. And this is the greatest stroke of death for 80 per cent of the poorer townspeople [2] who were sustained in the village by working at various handicraft jobs and from trade. And in fact, several days following the appearance of the decree, 11 people were shot for leaving Międzyrzec for the village, and this elicited a huge panic amongst the majority of the Jewish population, which lived in the village.

It is characteristic that the decree of 1 November, which calls for a death sentence for Jews who leave for the village, states that every Christian who takes a Jew into his home will also be shot.³⁷³ Despite this, every Christian in the village gladly receives every Jew who risks his life and comes to the village, regardless of the major danger that he risks.

Obligatory reporting

On 11 November there appeared a decree that every Jew from 14 to 60 years of age must report every day at 9 a.m. to the labour bureau to stamp his work identity card. Otherwise, when one misses two days and does not report, his flat will be requisitioned [?], and one risks being sent off to the camp at Oświęcim.³⁷⁴ The entire family also loses its food ration cards.

The question of the peasants' levy

The levy includes every product that the peasant owns on his entire plot [of land]. The levy is not measured individually according to hectares, but rather for entire villages. There are cases where on account of the large levies, peasants must give away much [3] more than they own. And their levies may not be paid in instalments, as in 1940, but the entire 100 per cent is to be given

373 See footnote 312.

374 The Auschwitz concentration camp.

in a very short time. For many peasants for whom it clearly is [an] impossible thing, collective punishments are announced. In November, German penal expeditions came and destroyed flats in entire villages with axes and iron bars, knocking out windowpanes and afterwards whipping the peasants. Therefore, the peasants, out of fear, hid themselves in the woods. In May, when the amount [of the levy] was surely too small, on 23 November a court martial took place for 25 peasants who were accused of sabotaging the supplying of the levy. They were sentenced to death that same day, by shooting. The sentence, obviously, was carried out immediately, and the report of the court martial stated that the peasants were shot for not delivering the levy entirely or in part and [that] all malevolent peasants await the same fate.

On the issue of Russian prisoners. In the whole Lublin area, there are several thousand Russian prisoners roaming about who fled from the POW camps. The peasant population takes in the prisoners with the greatest joy, gives them food and drink and sleep. It is noteworthy that there are many cases when the peasants give away their clothes to the prisoners so that they may change [their clothing]. In Podlasie,³⁷⁵ they say “the Soviets are already here,” because for every [4] German soldier, hundreds of Soviet prisoners move about, and this is certainly thanks to the warm relationship of the peasants towards the Russian prisoners and the bitter hatred towards the German occupier. The peasant population, though so long fed with Judeobolshevism³⁷⁶ and with Goebbels propaganda against the Soviets, is certainly sympathetically inclined towards the Soviets, and believe in their victory against the hated German occupier, and is ready to receive every Russian prisoner at home, knowing that there is the threat of being shot.

On 15 October, our comrade and Councillor from Nasielsk, Chaim Haberman,³⁷⁷ was shot for helping the Russian prisoners. Honour to his memory. He left behind a wife and two children without a livelihood.

375 The historical region of Poland, east and north-east of Mazovia; its most important town is Białystok.

376 Anti-Semitic stereotype, deriving from the conspiracy theory of history, stating that Jews were responsible for creating and spreading the communist ideology as a tool of taking power throughout the world.

377 Chaim Haberman (Huberman?) (?–1941), member of the Committee for Aid for Jews (*Komitet Pomocy Żydom*), resettled from Nasielsk to Łuków. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/475, pp. 3–4.

[5] Spanish inquisition methods of the Łuków gendarmerie and *Schutzpolizei*. Aside from the monetary penalties, they turn to shrewd inquisition penalties.

Penalty 1) The gendarmerie has a dog called Moritz, and when they tell Moritz [to] bite the Jewish criminal, the dog jumps on a Jew and tears out pieces of his flesh.

2) Dragging a Jewish "criminal" to a deep [body of] water and pushing him there.

3) The chief of the gendarmerie sits down on his bicycle, orders a Jew to run forward, and, with revolver in hand, threatens to shoot the Jew if he does not run quickly enough to catch up with the bicycle. The spectacle ends when the Jewish victim faints, covered in sweat.

4) They order to place one's hands upon a hot oven, as red as fire; or to stand so close to the oven, until one's clothes catch fire.

There were cases of Jews being whipped to death.

ARG I 984 (Ring. I/794)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 105×295 mm, 5 sheets, 5 pages.

378 The Hebrew letters *vav*, *bet*, *yod*. The following page is written by the same person.

52

After November 1942, Warsaw Ghetto, the sister and brother Finkelsztajn. Testimony “חורבן לוקוֹו” [Destruction of Łuków], recorded by Hersh Wasser. Aktionen in the Łuków ghetto (5 October–November 1942), escape of the Finkelsztajn siblings from a transport to Treblinka, the brother’s survival of an execution; behaviour of the Polish population towards escaping Jews.

[1] The destruction of Łuków

The informants, Finkelsztajn, [. . .] years old, and his sister, Finkelsztajn, ... years old,³⁷⁹ recount as follows.

On 5 October 1942 (the beginning of the destruction of Łuków), the town of Łuków had about 10,000 Jews, among them up to 2,000 exiles from Slovakia.³⁸⁰ In the beginning, there was no ghetto. The Jews lived together with the Poles. The first shake-up took place approximately 6 weeks before the actual catastrophe. At the time, the verdict could be revoked, but with it peace and composure completely disappeared. At the prospect of the annihilation, work and income were no longer appealing, particularly when news about Treblinka started to come in little by little.³⁸¹ Initially, Treblinka did not mean annihilation, but deportation. It was thought that the place was on the other side of the Bug River. Gradually, the real goal of the Treblinka slaughterhouse became crystal clear to everyone, especially following the accounts of eye witnesses, who had miraculously escaped from the Gestapo. Jews often regard Gestapo, SS, and SD as identical notions. Gestapo men are those who wear a skull sign on their uniform. The [Gestapo] post in Radzyń promised protection and care, ordered the establishment of a ghetto, by the way rather

379 The given names of the authors and the age of the woman are replaced by suspension points throughout the text.

380 According to ŻSS and AJDC files, in July 1942 Łuków had 9,950 Jewish residents, including 2,031 Slovakian Jews who were brought on 8 May 1942. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Martyrologia,” table 10.

381 See the Introduction.

laxly guarded, and instructed the *Judenrat*, in case of an unwelcome visit by armed Germans or Ukrainians, immediately to telephone in order to protect Jews from anything evil.

Apart from that, the *Judenrat* introduced the rule of general labour duty for Jews. Before the first shake-up, which ended well, about 75 per cent of Jewish men were employed both at the railway and as manual labourers at “Reckman” railway firm and “Ditz” poultry firm. Later, undoubtedly 80 per cent of the entire Jewish population went to work, men and women, from 12-year-old boys and girls to old people. Working for a subsistence wage, Jews bought themselves the right to a bare physical existence. The officials made transparent, unambiguous indications that they were content with the situation and that no harm would come to the Jews. [2] Every day in the early morning hours, virtually entire kith and kin would leave the ghetto and after work return to the narrow walls of their confines. A slave existence for a helpless, defenceless mass. In the building of the *Judenrat*, a vigil was kept day and night. As if from a watch tower, they looked out for the enemy.

On Saturday, 3 October 1942, in the evening hours, a rumour spread across the town that about 60 freight cars were standing at the ready on the railway. Soon the news was confirmed and aroused great distress. People comforted themselves that no operation would take place on Sunday and by Monday the terrible danger would perhaps once again be removed from the community. But mortal fear entered every heart. Jews hurriedly built hide-outs for themselves. Everyone realised that the only rescue from the merciless murderer was to bury oneself deep into the ground and remain hidden until the deadly storm passes by. Running away to the nearby villages was, practically speaking, not considered. On the one hand, there were draconian laws that threatened death to all Poles who would hide Jews and, on the other hand, if not hatred, [there was] at least disdain for the misfortune of the Jews.³⁸² A certain incident from a few weeks earlier was still fresh in the memory of the Jewish population. On a certain day, some Poles came to the Jewish quarter with an intention to rob and, had it not been for the intervention of the Germans, it would have resulted in a pogrom. Consequently, several tens of Poles were sent to a penal camp in Majdanek near Lublin.³⁸³

382 See footnote 312.

383 See footnote 129.

The Germans didn't want to hand over the privilege of robbing Jewish property to anyone else.

The feeling of hopelessness tore into the senses and nerves of the Łuków Jews with all its might. On Monday, 5 October, it clearly appeared that all the Jews were in dire straits. The ghetto was densely surrounded by gendarmerie units, *Schupo*,³⁸⁴ Ukrainians, SD,³⁸⁵ and Polish police. It should be mentioned, by the way, that the extermination squads had already been in town since Sunday afternoon. In general, the Jewish ghetto police did not participate in the *Aktion*. The Germans who did were armed from head to toe. Some of them were seen with hand grenades. [3] As mentioned, many people hid wherever there was a crack. The younger men and women who were employed at workplaces outside the ghetto nonetheless went to work with a heavy heart. The guards did not let them out, assembling them on a square not far from the railway. From 10 a.m. the selection began. Women, children, and old people all went to their death. The same is to be said of the Slovakian exiles. Of the male labour teams, only 10 per cent remained. At about 4 [o'clock] in the afternoon the destruction was completed.... The victim toll of the first day reached 5,000 souls (five thousand). They all went to Treblinka. This fact was confirmed by a number of young men and women who jumped off the boxcars.

On Thursday, 8 October, the Germans, through the mediation of the *Judenrat*, announced to the remaining population, some still in the hide-outs and some in the open, that everyone was required to report to the *Judenrat*, where they would be assigned work in the existing *placówki*. Around 2,000 men and women turned up. In the afternoon, the assembly place was surrounded by Germans and Ukrainians, and all the Jews were taken to boxcars and onwards to Treblinka. On that day also the ...-year-old ... Finkelsztajn [the sister] was taken, who succeeded in jumping off the moving train in the middle of the night. Absolutely unaccustomed to the darkness, entirely unfamiliar with the terrain, she walked wherever her eyes carried her. In the pitch darkness, she walked through meadows, fields, woods, trudging through the mud, without a goal. Her massively strained nerves carried her. Upon arriving in the first village, she passed herself off as a Christian girl who had run

384 Abbreviation for *Schutzpolizei* (German: protective police) – police formation in towns with over 5,000 residents.

385 Possibly a reference to the *Sonderdienst*.

away from the German “catchers” to work in Prussia. Only thanks to her good Aryan looks did she manage not to raise any suspicions. On the following morning, a peasant took her back to Łuków in a cart, without even realising that he was rescuing a Jewish girl.

After the second *Aktion*, six more followed, always the same; with deceit and ruthlessness, cruelty and murderousness the Jews were sent to death. It was not only the quality, but the quantity that carried weight; it did not make the slightest difference to the murderers who the victims were, although legally [4] it was permitted to murder women, children and old people. On Saturday 8 November,³⁸⁶ I and hundreds of other Jewish labourers were taken from the waterworks. The raid (*Aktion*) took place at 4 a.m. so that it would not occur to anyone to escape. Loaded into a boxcar. Destination, Treblinka. The young people in our boxcar broke open the door and jumped, one by one. Although much is told about jumping off boxcars, very little is known about the mortal danger and thousands of difficulties that go together with jumping. Behind a hundred lucky ones who managed to jump without getting hurt, there are thousands of injured, killed, with cracked skulls, broken arms and legs, for whom there were no longer any hospitals, any medical attention, only all-redeeming death. No fewer dangers lurked for the lucky ones who jumped safely.³⁸⁷

Finkelsztajn jumped, obviously on the move, near village Krynki. He lost consciousness for a moment, quickly recovered, and, with the impetus of a hunted animal, set off running along the railway tracks. A gang of about 40 local peasants, aged between 20 and 40, with sticks and iron bars in their hands, seized every one of the escapees, beat them to death and robbed them of their clothes and money. Bloodied and beaten, about 250 Jews were gathered together – the informant was stripped of his boots and jacket. The Christians also combed through the nearby woods: their aim was robbery. Later they telephoned Łuków for the *Bahnpolizei*, who arrived immediately. All the seized Jews were encircled by the Christians and the railway police and driven to Łuków. Those who had been beaten the most were shot on the spot. In Łuków, they were

386 Author's error: 8 November 1942 was a Sunday.

387 Here ends Finkelsztajn's first-person account. The subsequent part is written in the third person by an *Oyneg Shabes* member on the basis of information Finkelsztajn provided.

all put in the security prison. Until Tuesday 11 November,³⁸⁸ groups of people were continuously removed and shot in the prison yard. [5] As... Finkelsztajn was informed by the locals who had been seized in Łuków, hundreds of Jews had been captured there and shot at the local cemetery. All were indifferent to death: The strain of jumping had completely exhausted everyone.

On Tuesday, 11 November 1942, all those who still remained among the captured, numbering 200 men, were taken to the Jewish cemetery. There, hundreds of Jewish men, women, and children lay in heaps, still unburied. The cemetery was surrounded by the gendarmerie, and the whole group was divided into groups of 20 people. At the order of the *Wachtmeister*, the first 20 Jews lay down on the ground, having first undressed down to their under-shirts. The *Schupo* (policemen) positioned themselves one beside each victim. The victims lay with their faces to the ground, covering their eyes with their hands. Each *Schupo* stood between the legs of the living victim, pressed the rifle to the victim's head and then, at the signal of the *Wachtmeister*: "Aufpassen" "Fertig"³⁸⁹ – bang – fired. The informant [the brother] was in the second group. He undressed, lay down and just waited for death. Indifferent to everything, he only wished for it to be over as soon as possible. He does not know how, but the shot only singed his head. He continued to lie there. After him, there were 8 more groups. Following the entire execution, the *Schupo* double-checked that all the victims were dead. The informant was shot again in the arm and neck. After the executioners left, many Poles came running in order to steal clothes and shoes. Finkelsztajn got up, pulled on someone's trousers and shoes and dragged himself to a Christian he knew. Two weeks later he arrived in Warsaw at his brother's (Muranowska Street 36), where his two sisters were already staying.

ARG II 352 (Ring. II/306).

Description: duplicate, handwritten (H.W.*), pencil, Yiddish, ink, 220×290 mm, 5 sheets, 5 pages.

Published in: *To Live With Honor and Die With Honor! Selected Documents*, pp. 210–213.

388 11 November 1942 was a Wednesday. The error also a few lines below.

389 (German) Attention. Done.

ZAMOŚĆ COUNTY

ZAMOŚĆ

53

After 6 June 1942, Warsaw Ghetto, Fiszelzon. Testimony “שטשזאָנצן” [Zamość], recorded by Hersch Wasser. Situation of the Zamość Jews and two Aktionen on 11 April and 27 May 1942.

[1] Zamość

– I cannot be happy anymore and [I] doubt, whether I will be able to recover again after the horrors I lived through – begins my informant Fiszelzon, Nalewki 41, flat 49, who has just arrived from Zamość. A man of over 40 [and] a father of 5 children, religiously inclined.

– And [if not for] the feeling of responsibility for my very sick wife and the 5 poor innocent swallows, I would put an end to my empty and hopeless life, despite my religious attitude and my deep belief and faith. I have come to the Warsaw coffin and I still cannot come to terms with the thought that the Jews work, produce, laugh, joke, and can see the near end.³⁹⁰ On the one hand, I am glad that life goes on here, that it goes its own way, but on the other hand it is appallingly wrong that people do not sprinkle ashes on their heads: We are all mourners (tears come to his eyes and his voice breaks).

– You ask me why I went to Zamość.

His wife helps him out:

– Because the Jew is an eternal wanderer [2] who cannot stay peacefully in one place.

– No! – the husband interrupts her. The appallingly high prices, which reached over 20 zlotys for a kilo of bread [compelled] me to leave Warsaw. In May 1941 I sent away my wife with the children, and on 15 June 1941 I was also already in Zamość. I had [. . .] chosen Zamość because that is where I come from, and where all my relatives lived. Before the war, Zamość numbered

390 Meaning unclear; it could be the end of the exile.

4,500 Jews. In the first week of the war, masses fled to Russia,³⁹¹ but refugees and exiles came from Włocławek, Łódź, and other places, so the number of Jews reached 7,500 people.³⁹²

Several days after my arrival, the first “resettlement” (evacuation) of about 500 Jews took place, mostly of the elderly and people living off charity; but not necessarily those, because [...] people, who had simply wanted to settle in smaller towns, came along. The campaign was [led by] the *Judenrat* – generally the campaign can be considered a success: The Jews were resettled in the adjacent small settlements, such as Grabowiec, Łaszczów, Komarów, Tyszowce. [3] The everyday hustle did not allow for grieving over the fate of the deported [especially] as the people knew where they were, and received good news from them.

As a person from Warsaw, you are probably interested to know how these people earned their livelihood: A small portion traded, namely supplied the village with sweets, flypaper, soap, concealed, pardon me, in the bras, several pairs of silken socks, and all good things were brought into town. Until the April tragedy, the prices were significantly lower than here. However, 95 per cent of Jews, men, women and children worked for the Germans. They were not embarrassed, but actually really worked, some in the Izbica camp (the camp in its first stage consisted exclusively of young people from Izbica, hence the name; it is an aerodrome), some in drainage work:³⁹³ Men, women and children worked with shovels, pickaxes and hammers.

The attitude of the military authority (*Wehrmacht*) to the Jewish workers had been, all the time, even after the tragic expulsions, more than correct. People were often on familiar terms with them. Thus, for instance, my

391 Before the outbreak of war, Zamość had 12,531 Jewish inhabitants, who made up 43.3 per cent of the city’s population. In September 1939, between 7,000 and 8,000 fled to the territory occupied by the USSR. See Adam Kopciowski, *Zagłada Żydów w Zamościu* (Lublin, 2005), pp. 14, 209.

392 On 17 December 1939, over 500 Jews deported from Włocławek were brought to Zamość. In late December, there was an influx of 175 Jews from Koło and over 100 from Łódź. By late 1940, there were 2,500 refugees in the city. *Ibidem*, pp. 42–43.

393 In Zamość, there were three forced labour camps for Jews, engaged in railway construction, airfield construction, and water management (*Wasserwirtschaft*), where the prisoners worked on regulation of the Łabuńka River. Those camps also employed Jews from outside Zamość. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 41–42, 156.

boy (the 16-year-old) [4] could address a German officer with the familiar form of “you.” You are surprised, but it was completely natural there. Believe me, all the catastrophes are solely the work of the Gestapo, before which the soldiers also tremble. After many conversations with Germans of different ranks and ages, I came to the conclusion that the army hates the Gestapo and SS. Here is a small example: My boy came with the military car from work to the Jewish district. In Zamość, there is no ghetto as in Warsaw, the Jewish quarter is not fenced, and Jews live together with Christians; in addition there are some streets where only Aryans live. A gendarme stopped him. You should have seen how the soldier was trembling when he had to explain why he had given the Jews a ride, even though what he had done was absolutely legal, as it had conformed to an explicit order and an appropriate ordinance. Briefly speaking, the Jews of Zamość all had appropriate permits, identification papers, photos, and everything needed. There were Jewish workers who used to pray well on arrival at the field, and even recited the entire Book of Psalms, and more than once [5] young people had a good time playing “zole”³⁹⁴ (a card game).

The *Judenrat* in Zamość (23 members plus the chairman) with Attorney Garfinkel³⁹⁵ (I think from Warsaw, a very honest and fair man) as chairman, did not know of any tricks or schemes – he was, on the whole, honest: Whatever the authority (Gestapo and *Landrat*) commanded, was holy, and no one said anything against it. Indeed, the Germans could not complain about their *Judenrat*. All the authorities in the town, including Gestapo, *Landrat*, and even the gendarmes amounted to as many as 35 people. At the beginning of 1942, during the winter, orders of all sorts started pouring out, like hail, with the purpose to lock up the Jews in Zamość and to distinctly separate them from the peasants. Even one metre outside the town meant a death sentence. Many tens of Jews died this way.

394 A card game from Latvia.

395 Mieczysław (Mendl) Garfinkel (1898–1990), attorney, owner of a land estate and brewery. In the 1920s, chairman of the of the Jewish Community board, during the war chairman of the *Judenrat* and the ŻSS branch in Zamość. After the destruction of the Zamość Jews, he went into hiding in Warsaw. After the war, changed his surname to Garwin, emigrated from Poland around 1948, finally settled in Rhodesia. He described the occupation period in a memoir written in 1946 and given to the ŻIH archives (AŻIH, Holocaust memoirs, 302/122). See A. Kopciowski, *Zagłada Żydów w Zamościu*, p. 65.

A dread fell upon the Jews, but one still could not see the danger, although one could almost touch it. What happened in Lublin really scared us all.³⁹⁶ We [6] could not allow ourselves – stubborn voices kept digging into our minds and hearts, and everyone thought only how to escape. I, as a person from Warsaw, wanted to go back to Warsaw.³⁹⁷ People started trying to arrange travel permits. 40 people still managed to run away, but at the beginning of April the Gestapo stopped granting passes. We [. . .] were all trapped. The word “expulsion” was on everyone’s lips, but was a human being really capable of understanding its actual meaning? People comforted themselves 1) that Zamość, as a town of almost exclusively working people, would be left in peace for the needs of the *Wehrmacht*;³⁹⁸ 2) that since one *przesiedlenie*³⁹⁹ (July 1941) had already taken place, this would be enough; 3) that [. . .], following the last year’s pattern, it [any expulsion] would be carried out by the Jewish community. And the crowd kept going to their daily work, albeit in a depressed mood, and thus [. . .] soothed their nerves – and moreover, I will tell you: *Wysiedlenie* is like a funeral. When a funeral passes by [7], God forbid, everyone thinks to himself that it is not his concern. The same happened to us – everyone soothed himself with something else, but no one wanted to think even for a moment that this concerned him.

On Saturday, 2 days after Passover, 11 April 1942, 11 a.m., a Gestapo emissary came to the *Judenrat* and commanded Mr Garfinkel to appear immediately at the *Landrat*. People felt that something bad was going on; especially as the gendarmerie checkpoints had blocked the Jewish streets.

The chairman was admitted at 1 o’clock (at 12 o’clock the Germans had their midday meal). On his way in, he noticed that the Gestapo, previously in civilian clothes, were now in military uniforms. He asked a German acquaintance from the *Landrat* why he had been summoned, but the other answered cynically: “Are you such a fool that you do not know? It is about the resettlement.”

396 See Doc. 19.

397 See footnotes 13 and 312; travel to another town required permission and a travel pass.

398 In October 1940, the water-management and airfield-construction camps came under the management of the *Bauleitung der Luftwaffe* (*Luftwaffe* Construction Administration). See A. Kopciowski, *Zagłada Żydów w Zamościu*, pp. 141–142.

399 (Polish) resettlement.

He was officially ordered to appear at the *Landrat* once again, this time with the entire Council. [8] The news about the “resettlement” spread in a flash among the Jewish population. Indescribable panic seized everyone. People were preparing for the worst. In the meantime, the chairman worked out a list of 1,500 Jews, selected by the Community for resettlement: predominantly aliens and poor people. At 3 o’clock sharp, the entire staff of the *Judenrat* appeared in a big room at the *Landrat*. The *Landrat* told the terrified Jews that within 45 minutes the *Judenrat* must supply 2,000 Jews for resettlement (the Gestapo-man added another 500, that is 2,500 souls); and if they would not appear at the indicated time at the market place, the authority would carry it out on its own. When asked if the Jews could hold a brief meeting, the *Landrat* screamed: “You just need to carry out our orders, and not to babble!” (Authentic words.)

How did the *Judenrat* approach the task of gathering people? Every person took several houses and told the Jews that everyone, except those who work, must appear at the assembly place. However, there [9] were zealots among the members of the *Judenrat* who told everyone without exception to go to the square, where they would already segregate the workers, families, etc. Moreover, the Germans (I mean here only the local authority) “promised” the Jews, that they would come in to some houses and shoot everyone without exception, as simple as that, also the children in cradles and helpless old people. Within a few minutes, a few dozen Jews were shot. The crowd, which already had been “ready to go” started rushing to the square. In no time, the square swarmed with the “people.” Some 3,000 people gathered there; those who came later were already sent away by the Germans: “*Weg nach Hause!*”⁴⁰⁰ All the assembled people formed a [. . .] that, after not a long wait, started moving toward the train. People were going to the side track, which [. . .] was located opposite the Izbica camp. On the way to the train approximately 400 children and old people were shot. During the loading onto the freight cars 153 persons were killed, and were (according to Jewish workers, who worked in the Izbica camp) thrown [10] into the cars together with the living ones. Two carriages went along with the masses of Jews (after the train had departed), onto which Jewish children and old people that had been shot on the way had been loaded. Surely you are curious to know where the deported Jews were taken? The train left at 6 a.m. on the following day. Special emissaries

400 (German) Go home!

established that from the Zawada station, where tracks to Lublin and Lvov join, the train departed in the direction of Lvov, and after the station Bełżec all the information about the victims was disrupted. I can tell you one more thing: One cannot believe in the worst, but common sense confirms through the sequence of reliable information that at least 200,000 Jews have already been killed in Bełżec.⁴⁰¹ And as people say, [the procedure] in going to Bełżec is as follows: When a train arrives at Bełżec, it is taken over by a German crew. The train then departs along a side track into the forest, where barracks are set up. The victims are told to strip naked. To wrap their belongings up in a bundle with a note with name and surname note pinned to it. [11] They are to be bathed, and as people report, a locomotive arrives, from which pipes are pulled to the cells. What takes place is most likely gassing. After the gassing (some say that people are killed with the use of electricity), they all are burnt.⁴⁰²

The town has never lived through such destruction before. It is difficult for me to describe all the details to you, but I can tell you one thing: No one returned to business or work. A dreadful despair fell upon all. Those, who had always maintained that freedom was not far away, completely lost heart. The border between life and death had been erased. Or perhaps the people were silenced after this powerful blow?!

The authority ordered the *Judenrat* to gather all the belongings of the “resettled” in one camp for an inventory check. They come there every day [and] order them to deliver these or other things. [...] they ordered them to be distributed among the poor [...] population.

Immediately after the slaughter, several thousand Czech Jews arrived in Zamość,⁴⁰³ ([. . .] place was prepared for them). [12] In the meantime I managed to return to Warsaw together with my family.

It is worth mentioning that, at all military posts, the soldiers expressed their biggest outrage [. . .] committed crimes. The Jews [can] not write letters

401 See footnote XXX.

402 The description of the killing process in Bełżec was probably confused by information from Chełmno/ Kulmhof and the use of special trucks in which people were killed by exhaust gases. In Bełżec, there were several gas chambers. Bodies were then buried in old anti-tank ditches. The exhumed bodies were burned after December 1942.

403 At the turn of April/May 1942, 2,000 Czech Jews from Theresienstadt and 800 German Jews from Westphalia were brought to Zamość. See A. Kopciowski, *Zagłada Żydów w Zamościu*, pp. 58–59.

now (the Gestapo destroyed letters from Jews and to Jews) from time to time a local Christian comes to me bringing a letter in Yiddish from my friends.

On Wednesday, 27 [May] 1942,⁴⁰⁴ the second “resettlement” took place [. . .] that comprised 2,000 Czech Jews and about 500 gathered from the surrounding settlements: Grabowiec, Łaszczów, Komarów, and Tyszowce. The second group, 2,500 people, were also taken to Bełżec, from a [letter?] which I have just received one can see that there [. . .] new “resettlements.” The “factory” in Bełżec [. . .] operative.

No, [. . .] no freedom. The Germans are powerful and even more powerful is the Gestapo.

Warsaw, 6 June 1942

ARG I 1059 (Ring. I/946)

Description: original, handwritten (H.W.*), notebook, ink, Yiddish, 153×197 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 6 sheets, 12 pages. The document was kept in a binder.

TYSZOWCE

54

[After 25 May 1942], *Warsaw Ghetto, Rotring. Testimony* “טישאָוויצע” [Tyszowce], recorded by Yekhiel Górný. *The fate of the Jewish population since the beginning of the war; the fire in September 1939, persecutions, forced labour, the Judenrat, resettlement on 25 May 1942 to various localities.*

[1] Tyszowce

The small town was burnt by the Poles after the outbreak of the war in 1939. The Russians[?] were there for three weeks.

404 The second Aktion in Zamość took place on 24–27 May 1942. On 27 May (Monday), three transports left the city, taking a total of more than 1,500 people to the death camp in Sobibór. See *ibidem*, pp. 164–165.

On Monday, 25 May 1942, all Jews were sent from Tyszowce to the surrounding villages that belong to the Tyszowce commune (Perespa, Łaszców, Czermino[?], Podbór, Wojciechówka).⁴⁰⁵ At that time, the authorities made the Zamość *kehillah* responsible for them. In the whole area, there were 1,800 Jewish individuals.

Mr Rotring, who relates the following facts, was a permanent Warsaw resident, living in the village of Podbór at the time of the war; he received an order from the *Kreishauptmann* through the mediation of the *Judenrat* in Tyszowce that on 15 May, 1942, he had to leave the village with his family (a wife and two children).

Mr R. relates several loose facts, which took place in that area during his time there.

On Passover 1942, the authorities ordered that Jews were forbidden to bake bread for themselves and therefore no Jew could have more than 2 kilos of flour, all ovens in Jewish homes had to be taken apart, also that no Jew was allowed to have fat. Whoever had more than 2 kilos of flour must give it away; failure to do so carried the threat of death. The order created a situation in which the price of bread rose from 3.50 to 13 zlotys.

All Jews worked at the river (draining the water).⁴⁰⁶ Once, three men were shot when the *Judenrat* delivered three men instead of the required 4 men.

In the area, there are a large number of Russian “airdrops,”⁴⁰⁷ which carry out large-scale agitation among the peasants and the call to sabotage.

[2] A fact [. . .] [when] the “airdrops” find out that a [. . .] has covered one of them, they immediately carry out an act of retaliation (sometimes on the same day); they even go as far as blowing up houses with hand grenades.

According to reports, several men from the Tyszowce *Judenrat* were shot during the expulsion.

405 Villages in the Zamość County.

406 In Tyszowce, there was a water management (*Wasserwirtschaft*) camp. See footnote 100.

407 Soviet soldiers sent on parachutes to the territories occupied by Germans, with the task to organise the partisan movement subordinated to the Central Partisan Staff of the Red Army

The members of the Tyszowce *Judenrat*: chairman Cukier;⁴⁰⁸ sec[retary] Fiszlejber (a refugee from Germany);⁴⁰⁹ Y. Kleks, Winter; L. Elenboym.

Only three men, who received special permits, had admission rights to the Jewish cemetery, which is located out of town.

Beginning of winter 1942. Although there was no closed ghetto, the Jews were forbidden to move freely from village to village. For walking to the village Wojciechówka, 7 men were shot.

In January, 1942, a young man from Warsaw (lived in Dzielna Street) was arrested for walking in Wojciechówka and put in the village prison. At about 6 p.m., he broke a window pane and escaped. The gendarmerie found out where he lived; they went there, took two elderly Jews, and shot them at the cemetery.

Summer 1941. The water commandant⁴¹⁰ Klause took a woman, stripped her naked, sat her up on barb[ed] [w]ire, and this was how she [3] had to travel for 1/2 km from Tysz[owce] to Perespa.

The Jews lived well among the peasants, traded with them until the months of August, September, October 1941, when the peasants started to go to Lwów and other places in Galicia and smuggled food, bringing clothes from there. There, hatred for Jews was planted in the minds of the peasants by telling them that the Jews had disarmed the Polish military and police in a brutal manner. (In Brześć, adds Mr R., Jews did in fact disarm the police and the military, but not in a brutal manner.)

The peasants, unwilling to give away grain confiscated by the authorities, hid it with the Jews.

ARG I 1031(Ring. I/1061), ARG I 414 (Ring. I/29)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (U*), pencil, Yiddish, 110×228 mm, minor damages and missing fragments, 2 sheets, 3 pages. The last page [3] was previously included in ARG I 414, by mistake.

408 Zyla Cukier (1898–1942), merchant, during the war the chairman of the *Judenrat* and the ŻSS Branch in Tyszowce. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1148, p. 9; 211/1152, p. 50.

409 Markus Fiszlejber, member of the *Judenrat* and the ŻSS branch in Tyszowce. Following Cukier's death, he became the chairman of the *Judenrat*. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1152, p. 50.

410 Perhaps a reference to the commander of the water management camp.

Part III

Radom District

After 22 June 1941, Warsaw Ghetto, AJDC Inspector Engineer A[ron Artur] Reinberg's⁴¹¹ report on his inspection trip to Radom, Kielce, and Jędrzejów, 15–22 June 1941.⁴¹²

[1] Report on the inspection trip to Radom, Kielce, and Jędrzejów,
15–22 June 1941

Radom District

The objective of this inspection trip was to learn about the overall course of the welfare campaign in the Radom District, the specific conditions of that campaign, and the general living conditions in three typical

⁴¹¹ Aron Artur Reinberg (1887–1943), engineer from Warsaw. During 1938–1939, director of a Committee to Aid Refugees from Germany. In early 1940 became an inspector of the AJDC Central Office in Warsaw, from where he was transferred to Kraków in April. After the *Grossaktion*, in hiding with his wife Judyta in a village near Radzymin. They were both murdered in 1943. Their daughter Alicja Reinberg, born in 1920, survived in Warsaw outside the ghetto. See AŻIH: AJDC, 210/18, p. 2; AJDC post-war, 350/1207, p. 244; CKŻP Records and Statistics, 303/V/425/R2060.

⁴¹² The original of this document is in the AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/865, pp. 53–57. The Ringelblum Archive includes its duplicate: the first part (pp. 1–3) in ARG I 976 and the second part (pp. 4–5) in ARG I 795; see also the description below the document.

localities, that is, Radom as a larger centre, Kielce as a medium size centre, and Jędrzejów.

Radom

I stayed in Radom from 15 to 18 June this year. There are two welfare institutions: the KOM and the KOP.⁴¹³ Operating in the county, the latter has not assumed its final organisational form, since the list of its members remains incomplete and unapproved. Anyhow, this post has plenty of materials regarding the whole Radom District and is well informed about the whole issue connected with the welfare campaign. I was particularly positively struck by its good grasp of the personnel conditions, which is indispensable to forming both Welfare Committees and their branches.

However, on the basis of the information received from Messrs Wiener⁴¹⁴ and Falk,⁴¹⁵ I have concluded that the organisation of the KOPs in the Radom District should proceed in cooperation with the Radom post, as this shall prevent a number of inadvertences as far as the personnel is concerned.

Of course, the issue of contacts between the Welfare Committees and the *Judenräte* appears to be of the utmost importance. As the latter have carried out welfare campaigns so far, if only for technical reasons, they cannot be completely eliminated during the initial period of the KOPs' activity. The *Judenrat* members who have conducted the welfare campaigns should be incorporated into the KOPs. Thus, the process of the institutions subordinate to *Judenräte* coming under the KOPs' wings shall proceed without any special problems or detriment to those in their care. It should be noted that the money for the posts' operation originates to a large extent from Jewish Councils or through the agency of and due to efforts made by *Judenräte* members.

413 In the General Government, the ŻSS established a network of County Welfare Committees (*Komitet Opiekuńczy Powiatowy*, KOP) seated in county towns. Subordinate to them were the Municipal Welfare Committees (*Komitet Opiekuńczy Miejski*, KOM), established in larger towns, and branch offices.

414 Perhaps Józef Winer, co-worker of the Supreme Council of Elders of the Radom District (*Naczelna Rada Starszych Dystryktu Radomskiego*). See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/160, p. 2.

415 Izrael (Ignacy) Falk (1904–?), AJDC inspector for the Radom District since 1 January 1940. Between May and September 1939, inspector of the Union Collection Head Office (*Związkowa Centrala Inkasowa*). After the war, worked in the CKŻP in Łódź and Warsaw. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/18, p. 1; CKŻP Records and Statistics, 303/V/425/Fbn673.

Mr Wiener showed me the intended composition of the Radom KOP in the persons of Dr Fastman,⁴¹⁶ Mrs Hurwicz⁴¹⁷ (Radom), Dr Dymant⁴¹⁸ (Szydłowiec), Dr Bułka⁴¹⁹ (Białobrzegi), and Mr Halputer (Kozienice).⁴²⁰ In its previous composition, approved by Dr Wielikowski,⁴²¹ where all of the candidates were from the KOP's county, the Committee would be unable to operate. According to Mr Wiener, there is no doubt as to the approval of the above composition. There are also plans to integrate the activity of the KOM and the KOP, but this solution would not meet practical requirements, and, most importantly, that body would set up pretensions to take care of social assistance matters in

416 Ludwik (Lipa) Fastman (1897–?), physician, member of the Radom City Council before the war. During the war, in the Jewish Hospital (*Szpital Starozakonnych*), member of the Supreme Council of Elders of the Radom District, Radom KOM member, and Radom KOP member since March 1941. Auschwitz prisoner. After the war, lived in Wałbrzych. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/581, p. 99; 210/583, p. 32; ŻSS, 211/852, p. 2; Ludwik Fastman's testimony for the Jewish Committee at Bergen-Belsen of 30 August 1948, CKŻP Social Court, 313/21, pp. 11–13; CKŻP Records and Statistics, 303/V/425/Fbn892. See Sebastian Piątkowski, *Dni życia, dni śmierci. Ludność żydowska w Radomiu w latach 1918–1950* (Warszawa, 2006), pp. 201, 206.

417 Felicja Hurwicz, teacher, co-worker of the Radom KOM, later Radom KOP chairperson. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/124, p. 35; 211/852, p. 17; *ibidem*, pp. 201, 206.

418 Lejb Josek Dymant (1901–1943), physician of the Contagious Diseases Hospital in Szydłowiec, director of a surgery for the poor, chairman of the Department of Health of the *Judenrat*, later ŻSS Branch chairman, and Radom KOP member. In hiding outside the ghetto in Radom. Denounced, he committed suicide in prison. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1004, pp. 6, 9. Letter from the Jewish Committee at Bergen-Belsen to the CKŻP of 9 August 1948, CKŻP Social Court, 313/21, pp. 2–3.

419 Rafał Bułka, physician, chairman of the ŻSS Branch in Białobrzegi, and Radom KOP member. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/213, p. 30.

420 Zygmunt Halputer (ca. 1893–?), trader and pharmacist by profession, activist of the *Folkspartay*, and Kozienice Councillor during the interwar period. During the war, a member of the Kozienice *Judenrat* and Radom KOP. See Marcin Urynowicz, *Żydzi w samorządzie miasta Kozienice w okresie międzywojennym 1919–1939* (Warszawa, 2003), p. 161; USHMM, Kozienice, 2003.406.1, p. 18; AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/854, p. 2.

421 Gustaw (Gamzej) Wielikowski (1889–1943), attorney, ŻSS Presidium member, since June 1941 director of the Department of Social Welfare of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, Warsaw ŻKOM member, since the summer of 1942 deputy chairman of the Warsaw *Judenrat*. Executed on 23 April 1943 at Umschlagplatz in Warsaw. See B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, p. 170; Ruta Sakowska, *Ludzie z dzielnic zamkniętej. Z dziejów Żydów w Warszawie w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej październik 1939 – marzec 1943*, 2nd edition (Warszawa, 1993), pp. 82–83, 213.

the entire District even though it does not have members from other districts. My attention was drawn particularly to the fact that the role of the Advisor,⁴²² who had acted as a distributive organ, [2] has been now reduced to zero, which in the informants' opinion cannot be maintained in the long run. This state of affairs should be corrected.

The resettled

The deportees and refugees have assimilated and, as far as their needs and opportunities are concerned, they are now on a par with the poorest portion of the permanent residents. For this reason, they should be treated in the same way as the local indigent population. The only difference is that the deportees still have a tendency to change their place of residence. The number of refugees in the Radom District who arrived during the first year of the war is estimated at 75,000. These people constitute approximately 50 per cent of those who use or require social assistance. In certain localities, this percentage is even higher. The 1941 deportees are mostly people from the territories incorporated into the *Reich*, that is, from Płock and Vienna. In the Radom District there are approximately 8,100 deportees from Płock and the Płock district and approximately 2,000 from Vienna.

Groups of the resettled from Płock:

In the Kielce county				approximately 3,500 people
(Bodzentyn, Bliżyn, Słupia Nowa, Suchedniów, Zaleszyce, Skarżysko Kamienna)				
<u>In the Tomaszów [Mazowiecki] county</u>	"	"	1,200	" "
(Drzewica, Gielniów, Białaczów, Przysucha, Paradyż, Żarnów)				
<u>Częstochowa</u>	"	"	1,000	" "
<u>Starachowice</u>	"	"	300	" "
<u>In the Radomsko county</u>	"	"	350	" "
(Żarki)				
<u>In the Busko[-Zdrój] county</u>	"	"	1,000	" "

422 The ŻSS appointed one advisor to the office of the head of each District of the General Government. He supervised the KOPs and maintained contact with the German authorities. The ŻSS advisor at the Office of the Radom District Head was Józef Diament, and at the same time also the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Elders of the Radom District.

Chmielnik, Nowy Korczyn, Pacanów, Wiślica				
<u>In the Końskie county in Końskie</u>	"	"	50	" "
<u>In Piotrków</u>	"	"	150	" "
<u>Deportees from Vienna</u>				
In Kielce	"	"	1,000	" "
<u>In the Opatów county</u>	"	"	1,000	" "
(Bogoria, Iwaniska, Klimontów, Pokrzywnica, Kunów, Łagów, Ożarów, Waśniów).				

The issue of aiding the resettled from Płock is extremely important and urgent. A substantial percentage of them are members of the intelligentsia. In addition, in many cases they constitute a majority of the residents of a given locality, and without external aid it is impossible to meet even their most basic needs. Established in individual localities, mixed Aid Committees operate practically independently of the *Judenräte*, but there is a noticeable lack of "delegations" and in many localities the branches, even though they do exist, do not operate [3] or operate ineffectively. This last phenomenon is said to be caused by the not always appropriate selection of branch members. There is a need to consider how to make the branches more effective or about whether the welfare campaigns should perhaps be entrusted for the time being to the *Judenräte*.

The situation of the Viennese is somewhat analogous to that of the resettled from Płock, the only difference being that some of the former (approximately 25 per cent) receive parcels from abroad. Using the local assistance and the parcels (clothes) they receive, they are able to keep a tolerable standard, but the vast majority of the Viennese, entirely at the mercy of the local welfare organisations, is in a rather difficult position. I had a chance to investigate this issue more closely in Kielce and I shall discuss it in the section regarding that city.

On the margin of [my analysis of] the operation of the branches, I wish to stress that the struggle between the branch and the *Judenrat* in Skarżysko-Kamienna⁴²³ has had a detrimental influence on the course of the aid

423 That struggle was in regard to the appointment to positions in the ŻSS branch in Skarżysko-Kamienna. The *Judenrat* wished to appoint its members to the branch, and it schemed

campaign. My informants think that the branch composition should be consulted with the Advisors, who could offer valuable and useful information due to their closer ties with the local area.

While discussing the source of funding of the welfare efforts, I noticed the following phenomenon. The authorities (*Referat B.u.F.*)⁴²⁴ allocate substantial sums of money to the welfare campaigns on condition that the products for the soup kitchens are bought at maximal prices.⁴²⁵ In most cases the assigned sums cannot be utilised because market prices are much higher than the maximal ones. A question arises as to how solve this problem. The Radom KOM has just received 11,500 zlotys with a similar reservation.

The Radom Advisor has become obliged to present the budget of all soup kitchens in the District and a question arose as to the budget's construction. As for the number of the wards or the number of the meals for them, I suggested that he should put the number of wards at 60 per cent of the total number of Jews. I did that because the budget needed to be presented as soon as possible, and it would be unadvisable to base it exclusively on the number of meals currently distributed, as it is insufficient and does not reflect all aspects of the issue. A significant difficulty in the drawing up of the budget is posed by the choice of the manner of estimation of the demand in zlotys. Basing this estimation on market prices would produce astronomical figures and put the self-help organisations in danger of suspicion of illegal food trading. On the other hand, basing the budget on maximal prices and even possible obtainment of adequate funding would bring no effect due to the existing conditions. It is extremely important to instruct the Radom post as soon as possible on how to resolve the above issue. It seems that the Authorities now have a tendency to support soup kitchens as much as possible and that very favourable results could be expected should the issue be appropriately dealt with.

against individuals who were not associated with it, for instance, against Jankiel Bryks. See letter from the Kielce KOP to the ŻSS Presidium regarding J. Bryks of 17 April 1941, AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/964, p. 2.

424 *Referat [Freie Wohlfahrt der Abteilung Innere Verwaltung] Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge* [German, Welfare Desk of the Population and Welfare Department] in the government of the General Government that controlled the AJDC's operation.

425 That is, at the official food stamp prices. It was impossible to buy enough food through official channels. Therefore, the food was bought on the black market, where the prices were several times higher.

On the margin of the main issue, I must stress that during my inspections of the welfare institutions in Radom (soup kitchens and the orphanage) I noticed that the food was very unwholesome, particularly due to the lack of potatoes, the insufficient quantity of flour products, and the almost complete lack of fats. (A meal contains 0.5–1gram margarine). Even in an institution such as the orphanage in Radom, where the food is much better than in the care institutions [such as] the open soup kitchen of the day-care centre for children, the lack of fats and vitamins in the children's diet causes scurvy. A significant obstacle in the improvement of the diet in that institution is the ritual character in all institutions without exception. The presumably assigned ham and bacon were substituted with flour⁴²⁶ [1] and in the opinion of the locals that substitution was beneficial, yet I think that flour cannot make up for the lack of fat. Let me present a daily menu at the day-care centre in Radom, Wałowa Street 28, as a characteristic example:

Food for 250 children:

The first meal: approx. 12 kilos of groats and other flour products	0.048 kilo		
		per person ⁴²⁷	
" ½ " fat	0.002	"	" "
" 2 " salt	0.008	"	" "
The second meal: " 20 kilos of beetroots	0.080	"	" "
" 2 " sugar	0.008	"	" "
" 1/100 kilo of saccharine			
The third meal: " dish made of the beetroots for the beetroot soup for mid-day meal	0.09		
kilo per person and 17 kilos of bread			

It should be stressed that the meals served by both the Radom and Kielce soup kitchens have one advantage: They also include a slice of bread. It is usually not purchased but obtained by way of reducing the bread assignment for the Jewish population (2 decagrams per person).

426 This is the end of document ARG I 976 and the beginning of ARG I 795.

427 In the document from the ŻSS files, the numerical data are handwritten, while in ARG copy they are typewritten.

Sanitary conditions

Many localities in the Radom District, particularly in the Kielce region, were already hotbeds of typhus before the war. Now, the Kielce region continues to be the main typhoid fever hotbed. Back in 1940, the Jewish quarter of Kielce was closed for several months due to an epidemic, and in 1941, after the establishment of the special Jewish quarter, the ghetto was also closely isolated for several weeks.⁴²⁸ The anti-epidemic campaign is in progress. The hospital in Kielce, which serves more localities, deserves particular attention. But this institution, supervised and funded by the Kielce *Judenrat*, cannot charge for patients from other localities. It has to resort to an intervention of Mr Diamant, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Elders.⁴²⁹ The above suggests that the hospitals should not be put under JSS management, as it would render execution of payments impossible.

Ostrowiec is another major typhus hotbed. It is advisable to establish hospitals in the individual localities, particularly as transport of the sick causes the diseases to spread. The general causes for the spread of the typhus epidemic are well known. The epidemic cannot be contained without major financial measures, drugs, and soap.

A factor significantly contributing to the spread of epidemics is the excessive number of people living in individual rooms. This phenomenon intensified greatly with the establishment of Jewish districts, which are usually located in quarters of cities (Radom, Kielce) without a sewerage system or running water.

Quartering

As a supplement to the previous paragraph of this report, I need to mention the lack of premises for the care institutions. The premises they have been

428 The ghetto in Kielce was established as per an ordinance of county governor Hans Drechsel of 31 March 1941.

429 Samuel Józef Diamant (1894–1942) was a bookkeeper and later ran an iron foundry. In September 1939, he became a member and soon thereafter chairman of the Jewish Self-Help Committee, which represented Radom Jews at a grassroots level, and was later transformed by the Germans into the Radom *Judenrat*. In late 1939, it was further transformed into the Supreme Council of the Elders of the Radom District with Diamant as its chairman until the end of its operation. He was also welfare advisor to the Radom District head appointed by the ŻSS. On 28 June 1942, he was arrested with several members of the *Judenrat* on the charge of breaking the war economy regulations. Several weeks later he was deported to Auschwitz, where he died. See S. Piątkowski, *Dni życia*, pp. 189–190.

assigned are so inadequate that they contribute to the spread of diseases. One example is the day-care centre in Radom at Wałowa Street 28, which takes care of 250 children in two shifts. The premises consist of a room with three windows, 9 by 4.5 metres, without a hall, toilet, or washbasin. Two of the caretakers contracted typhus.⁴³⁰ The fact that 125 children stay in one room is the obvious cause of infections.

[2] Money collection organised by the Radom KOM

In my opinion, the campaign is not efficient enough, and therefore its results are unsatisfactory. One of the few income sources is the one-zloty fee charged for food ration cards. In my opinion, this fee for the benefit of welfare could be increased, particularly considering the very high prices of bread on the free market. This measure could of course be used very liberally: The indigent or the working poor could be exempted from it. Particular attention should be paid to the industrial circles (tannery, shoemaking), which operate in Radom and are in the hands of Jews.

I have suggested increasing the income by imposing a monthly tribute, payable and set using a progressive scale. This measure could prove successful particularly in Radom due to the substantial percentage of the population working in production and trade. Chairman Diamant has promised to support this project, with possible measures against the reluctant.

As for the sources of income, I wish to mention the 10 per cent fee added to handling charges charged by the local *Judenrat*, which gives the said fee to the KOM. Additional fees for use of *Bezugscheins*⁴³¹ are also given to welfare.

ARG I 976 (Ring. I/1220/19) and ARG I 795 (Ring. I/1220/20).

Description: duplicate, typewritten, Polish, 180×175 mm, 200×270 mm, 190×260 mm, 190×278 mm, substantial damage and missing fragments, 5 sheets, 5 pages. On top of p. 1 of the original is a handwritten note: "A. Reinberg". Edition based on a duplicate from the ARG with missing fragments supplemented with the original from AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/865, pp. 53–57.

430 The Radom ŻSS KOM supervised three day-care centres for children at Wałowa Street 28 and at Dolna Street 20; the address of the third is not known. The KOM day-care centres employed day-care workers Helena Finkler, Rachela Lote, Rywka Lewkowicz, Freda Goldsztajn, and Estera Lastman. *Ibidem*, p. 202.

431 (German) coupons, assignments.

15 July 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimonies regarding the fate of the Jewish population in Skarżysko-Kamienna, Chmielnik Kielecki,⁴³² and Janów Podlaski; persecutions, executions, situation in the ghettos, relations with the Poles, and events preceding the Aktionen.

[1] Skarżysko-Kamienna.⁴³³ In Skarżysko there is a large armaments factory operating for German military purposes.⁴³⁴ In April and May [1942], the Germans deported all Polish workers employed in the factory to the *Reich* and replaced them with Jews from towns large and small in the Skarżysko, Kielce, Radom, and Busko counties.⁴³⁵ The total of some 3,800 people was brought to the factory.⁴³⁶ In general, the Jews were captured in the streets and removed from their homes and deported immediately, without a chance to bid farewell to their families or to take any belongings. Only the community in Staszów voluntarily provided 150 workers, whom it also equipped and provided with food supplies. The workers were placed in a large camp consisting of several dozen large barracks situated along railway tracks and surrounded with barbed wire. The management of the camp is Jewish,⁴³⁷ while the duty of guarding the camp was given to the Ukrainian factory police (*Werkschutz*). The Jewish workers toil away at the production of missiles, cannons, and bombs. For this

432 Today: Chmielnik (Busko County).

433 Skarżysko-Kamienna (Kielce County).

434 The factory belonged to the HASAG concern.

435 The HASAG factory started operating in November 1939 and it employed mainly Poles. In April 1942, 2,000 Poles were deported to forced labour in Germany and replaced with Jews. See Krzysztof Gibaszewski, *HASAG. Historia obozu pracy przymusowej zakładów w Skarżysku-Kamiennej* (Skarżysko-Kamienna, 2011), pp. 7, 15.

436 There were 3,383 prisoners in the camp on 12 September 1942 and 8,350 in November 1942. See *ibidem*, p. 20.

437 In the camp, a Jewish administration and Jewish police was established by the Germans. Each of the three *Werks* had a commandant and a police chief. *Werk A* was commanded by Zalcman and then by Elias Albird; *Werk B* by Jakub Miligram, then by "Jeremia" Jarmelow, and finally by Zygmunt Nirenberg; *Werk C* by Fela Markowicz, then by Henek Eisenberg. The Jewish commandants were remembered by the survivors as people who ruthlessly took advantage of their privileged position at the expense of other prisoners. See *ibidem*, pp. 25, 33, 42–43.

work they receive only food in the form of 200 grams of bread, two bowls of soup, and one litre of coffee per day. A group of 20[?] Jewish metal workers[?] from Częstochowa is working on special conditions, as they received special training and currently assemble locomotives. They live separately outside the camp, enjoy freedom of movement (also after curfew), and earn up to 50 zlotys per day. The wages of ordinary camp labourers might also be higher, but they [disappear?] into the pockets of the Jewish management. The heads from the *Judenrat* also enjoy freedom of movement on the spot and embitter the whole population by living [. . .] exquisitely in restaurants, and being careless with their money. The harsh housing and sanitary conditions and the poor nourishment have led to high mortality and, consequently, frequent escapes from the camp. Up to 400 people in total have already fled. As a result, the discipline in the camp has recently been made much stricter. The camp is now tightly isolated, and several escape attempts ended in the runaways being shot. The camp has been recently enlarged. The number of people detained in it is expected to rise to 5,000.

[2] Chmielnik Kielecki. The chairman of the *Judenrat*,⁴³⁸ known for his close relations with the Germans, was executed on 18 June 1942 in Chmielnik Kielecki. The execution was carried out by the same SS-men with whom he purposely [. . .] drank and appeared in public. Since then, the originally very good relations with the Germans have worsened significantly. The German gendarmerie accuses the Jews of... having denounced them and for that reason spreads absolute terror. Captured smuggling or outside of the town borders, Jews are executed on the spot. There have already been at least 15 victims since 18 June. What is more, the management of the Jędrzejów commuter train, so far used by many Jews without armbands, has recently tightened controls significantly.⁴³⁹ A special inspector has been appointed who walks through all the carriages when the train is in motion and checks the IDs of all those who seem suspicious. Initially, the Jews who were captured were only beaten,

438 Abram Langwald, a trader. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/301.

439 Although the Jews were forbidden to travel by train beginning on 26 January 1940, the text suggests that up to a certain point in time the management of the local railway turned a blind eye to Jews' illegal travelling.

fined, or imprisoned, but now a summary death penalty has been introduced.⁴⁴⁰ There have already been several victims.

The vast majority of the male population is employed in quarries. The work is very hard. Their earnings, 3 zlotys per day, are paid to the *Judenrat*, who usually keep the money for themselves.

The Council has recently imposed a one-time levy on the population [. . .] 10,000 zlotys, divided at their own discretion between the wealthiest residents. The disobedient were arrested and held [?] in custody until the payment was made. When there were only three detainees left in custody, [. . .] sent an anonymous [letter] to the *Oberjude*⁴⁴¹ of the whole Busko County (position[?] [. . .] in the Radom District), demanding an intervention to release them; otherwise, he would share the fate of the executed chairman of the *Judenrat* in Chmielnik Kielecki. The *Oberjude* transferred that case to the section for Jewish affairs at the office of the Busko County *Kreishauptmann*. A German clerk immediately went with the above-mentioned *Oberjude* to Chmielnik Kielecki, where he gathered the Jewish population and delivered a good-natured sermon on how people should not hate and denounce one another and how the Jews should not complain about their few victims because many more Germans die at the front line, and no one complains about it, etc. He finished with a piece of advice that the Jews should sell everything they have and save money because as long as they have money, they do not have to fear for their lives.

[3] Janów Podlaski.⁴⁴² There is a Jewish quarter in the town, but it is open. As a matter of fact, the Jews are forbidden to cross its border, but that ordinance is not obeyed. Only those captured on suburban roads leading to the village are indeed subject to the death penalty. The economic situation of the Jews is difficult. They support themselves mainly by trading with the Christian population, but they cannot obtain any new merchandise. This is why those who have some stashed merchandise live in affluence, while

440 It was on 15 October 1941, see footnote 312. Six days later, Eberhard Schöngarth, Security Police Commander in the General Government, ordered that Jews who resisted arrest or attempted escape be summarily executed. See J.A. Młynarczyk, "Akcja Reinhard" w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943, in: *Prowincja noc*, pp. 51–52.

441 (German) literally, superior Jew; perhaps S.J. Diamant, see footnotes 422, 429.

442 Janów Podlaski (Biała Podlaska County).

others are selling everything off and starving. Craftsmen support themselves on commissions from Poles. Only carpenters and shoemakers work for the Germans. 8 km from the town there is a settlement called Wygoda,⁴⁴³ where several dozen Jewish labourers of both sexes work on an enormous farm owned by Germans. Initially, they earned 3 kilos of potatoes, a litre of milk and 3 zlotys per day. Later, however, the remuneration was completely stopped, and today they work there only to have a work assignment.⁴⁴⁴ There are no German troops in the town at all. The gendarmerie occasionally arrives from Biała [Podlaska] for an inspection. But there is a German border guard station near the town. The border guards do not maintain any [. . .] relations with the Jewish population, but the *Judenrat* pays them a levy [. . .] in the form of vodka, food, clothing, and whatever else they demand. For example, once at their request, the *Judenrat* sent them two roast geese, a litre of vodka and a pair of elegant officers' boots. In general, the relations between the Jewish and the non-Jewish population are relatively good. The Poles cannot do without the Jews and the Jews without the Poles. There is quite strong anti-Semitism among the local Polish population, whereas the [Byelo]russian population, which is quite large in the area, treats the Jews with kindness and sympathy.

In late April, there was an accident in Janów that long disturbed the peace in the town. There was only one rations bakery⁴⁴⁵ in Janów, whose owner was Polish. The Jewish bakers were on very good terms with him and they did a lot of business together. But the Jewish bakers were not satisfied with that. They went to Biała Podlaska and, using a bribe, they took the rations bakery away from the above-mentioned Pole. He was very embittered by that and, in order to take his revenge, he denounced [4] the Jewish bakers to the Gestapo in Biała Podlaska claiming that, under cover of rations, they had wheat flour delivered for private purposes. Gestapo functionaries immediately came to Janów and took three bakers and two sons of one of them to Biała [Podlaska], where they spent 6 weeks on some work detail. After 6 weeks, the functionaries returned to Janów and took the arrested bakers' wives. All of them were executed.

Since then, Gestapo functionaries came to Janów regularly, each time taking bigger or smaller sums of money under various pretences. They

443 Wygoda (Biała Podlaska County).

444 Those working on German granges were exempt from enlistment to labour camps.

445 A bakery that officially distributed bread for ration cards.

received help from Andrzejczuk, a Polish policeman from Janów who knew the local relations like the back of his hand. He gave them a list of 20 communists. In early June, the Germans took away 10 people from that list. All of them were executed. Around 10 June, on Monday, *Judenrat* members returned from Biała with news that the entire Jewish population was to be resettled from Janów two days later. On the same day, a *Volksdeutscher* named Dening was to take 100 Jews from Janów to a labour camp near Międzyrzec.⁴⁴⁶ At the news of the resettlement, around 200 young men and 10 women voluntarily joined the party [. . .] went to the camp. Mad panic broke out in the town. People were packing their things, ready to flee. On the next day, Tuesday, the people began to flee in large numbers from Janów to Łosice, Międzyrzec⁴⁴⁷ and nearby villages. Policeman Andrzejczuk informed Gestapo functionaries about that, and the latter came and immediately shot dead three resettled people from Lubartów⁴⁴⁸ who were just about to leave Janów. Several dozen other people were shot dead on the roads, but the exact number of the victims remains unknown. Meanwhile, the fearfully anticipated Wednesday came and nothing happened. The Jewish population started slowly coming back to town, and everything returned to its original state.⁴⁴⁹

Similar accidents happened in the nearby town of Konstantynów,⁴⁵⁰ with the difference being that during the Jews' absence, the Polish population looted all their property to such an extent that there was simply nothing to return to.

Warsaw, 15 July 1942⁴⁵¹

ARG I 1003 (Ring. I/1220/18)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (SB*), ink, Polish, 197×215 mm, minor damages and missing fragments, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

446 During 1940–1942, there was a labour camp for Jews near Międzyrzec with approximately 100 prisoners who worked on airport construction. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 147.

447 Łosice (Siedlce County), Międzyrzec (Radzyń Podlaski County).

448 Lubartów (Lublin County).

449 The Jewish population from Janów Podlaski was deported during 23–24 October 1942 to Biała Podlaska and then to Międzyrzec, from where they were deported to the death camp in Treblinka. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Martyrologia," tables 2 and 10.

450 Konstantynów (Biała Podlaska County).

451 Place and date in different handwriting.

December 1940–February 1941, Radom, the Supreme Council of Elders of the Jewish Population of the Radom District. Identity card of Samuel Bresław,⁴⁵² issued on 11 December 1940 in Radom.

Supreme Council of Elders of the Jewish Population
of the Radom District
Department of Health

File No. I/7113	Identity Card No.....
	Bresław Samuel
residing in Radom [at]	Bernardyńska Street 14
is vaccinated against typhus	vaccinated
is free from lice	Free from lice, 9 December 1940

	Radom, 11 December 1940
Supreme Council of Elders	Attending physician
of the Jewish Population	/-/
of the Radom District	N. Szenderowicz M.D. ⁴⁵³
Department of Health	

This certificate is valid for 1 month only

⁴⁵² Samuel (Shmuel) Bresław (1920–1942), activist of *Hashomer Hatzair* before the war and in the Warsaw ghetto. Editor of the organisation underground press and bulletins with news from radio broadcast; ran the organisation in the Radom District for some time; cooperated with Oyneg Shabes; analysed the attitudes and situation of young people in the ghetto; member of ŻOB. Shot dead on the ghetto street on 3 September 1942.

⁴⁵³ Naum Szenderowicz (1894–1947), physician, guardian at the Jewish Orphanage in Radom for many years, head of the Jewish Chamber of Health, member of the Supreme Council of Elders of the Jewish Population of the Radom District. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/39, p. 3; AJDC, 210/583, p. 32; CKŻP, Records and Statistics, 303/V/425/Sz3896. Files of a case against Naum Szenderowicz, AŻIH, CKŻP Social Court, 313/121. *Dni życia*, p. 189.

[2] Free from lice
Radom, 13 January 1941
Handed out 16 January 1941
/-/ Szenderowicz M.D.

Free from lice
Radom, 21 February 1941
Handed out 24 February 1941
/-/ Szenderowicz M.D.

ARG I 975 (Ring. I/1157).

Description: original, printed form, handwritten file number, Bresław's name and address, ink, stamps, German, Polish, 95×135 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

58

After December 1940, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account גזירות "רַאדָאָם" [Persecutions in Radom]. Deportation of approximately 2,000 Jews from Radom on 2–4. December 1940 to towns in the Busko-Zdrój and Opatów Counties; profile of the Ożarów Judenrat.

[1] Persecutions in Radom

Radom is one of the five district cities of the General Government. It numbers up to 28,000 Jews and 12,000 Germans, officials and their families. With regard to relations between Germans and Jews, two distinct types must be considered: purely external relations and actual personal relations. The former are determined by party decrees requiring the application of zoological anti-semitism to the Jews, to which a German, as a disciplined patriot, submits. But their personal relations are formed behind closed doors and lowered curtains. The Germans mainly lodge with Jews in their homes, both with the intelligentsia and with Hasids. They come from all strata, even including a general and an aristocrat. At first, the intention was to evict the Jews and give their homes to the arriving German officials, but thanks to very energetic opposition, the order was not carried out. The Germans coming here are not anti-Semitic. Bringing all kinds of good things home, often for nothing and always with the best intention, is an everyday occurrence. And should it be necessary to intervene to save a Jewish friend, it is done even with self-sacrifice.

It is absolutely essential to mention these moving instances of humane behaviour – intervention to prevent the removal of a Jew designated for resettlement.

The official German decision provided for the expulsion of 10,000 people from Radom, in groups. On 2, 3, and 4 December 1940, 2,000 people had to leave the city.⁴⁵⁴ A special commission of social groups [was established], headed by Dr. Szucer, the former Radom *starosta*, an honest but ruthless man. The commission took care to ensure that the evacuation was carried out under tolerable conditions. First of all, those designated to leave the city were informed three days in advance. Each person could take with 25 kilos of baggage, and the *kehillah* took the rest under its care. Aside from this, the commission also ensured that there would be special trains to take the exiles to the designated place by the shortest route. Who had to leave Radom? (1) Refugees who had settled in the city; (2) persons receiving social welfare assistance; (3) undesirable criminal elements; (4) persons who had not fulfilled their work battalion obligations.

The first two categories were designated rightly or wrongly by the commission. There were cases where orphans and elderly people were expelled, but no one could be accused of dishonest dealing. The other two categories, on the other hand, leave a bad taste. The third category was drawn up by the Polish police. Obviously, those who had money for bribes were not put on the lists, whereas people who had been sentenced only to administrative fines were often included. The fourth category was imposed by the “operators” from the work battalion (led by Gajger⁴⁵⁵), and once again the parasites created a source of income on the backs of the exhausted Jews [2] from payment for exemptions.

While the lists for the first two categories were well prepared and everyone knew their exact time of departure, the other lists were drawn up hastily

454 On 1 December 1940, the German authorities ordered the resettlement of 2,000 Jews from Radom to various localities in the counties of Busko-Zdrój and Opatów. A *Judenrat* commission drew up the list of deportees on the basis of the card index of persons on social welfare assistance from the ŻSS. For that reason, many Jews stopped claiming welfare assistance. The Germans promised the designated deportees financial aid and a comfortable journey. Finally, 2,000 Jews left Radom on 3–5 December.

455 Joachim Gajger, police captain, commander of the Jewish Police in Radom. Arrested on 28 April 1942 and sent to a concentration camp. This happened to other police officers, including Wajner and Lipa Wajchnadler. See S. Piątkowski, *Dni życia*, p. 199

and everything was arbitrary. Truly disgusting things were done. The exiles went to small towns in the counties of Opatów and Busko-Zdrój: Łagów, Ożarów, Zawichost, Koprzywnica, Klimontów, Połaniec, Staszów, Stopnica, Chmielnik, Wiślica, Nowy Korczyn, Szydłów, Kurozwęki, Pacanów.

All the towns were informed in advance how many refugees they would have to take in: all of them have very poor housing and living conditions. A whole series of towns already had refugees from both Łódź and Aleksandrów, as well as from the Włocławek area. At first, all the exiles were installed in prayer houses and in any existing welfare buildings. The exiles were received very warmly, but the possibilities of the *Judenrat* authorities are very limited.

The security conditions for the Jews are quite bearable in all the towns. Small military units are stationed everywhere. All of them are crooked. Relations with the Germans are not bad. It is only the “guests” from the larger towns, the gendarmes, who rob, but the local authority doesn’t bother anyone. The *Judenräte* in the small towns are demoralized and corrupt. Everywhere, nothing but bribery. [. . .] per cent of the people who hang around the *kehillah* are derelicts. There are also people with solid characters, but without moral behaviour.

Life in the small towns is cheaper than in the cities, but there are practically no ways of earning money. In the summer, people become runners, i.e. they run to the villages, buy some food, and earn something by selling it. People do this even though, in the Kielce area for example, Jews are not allowed to travel on wagons owned by Christians. There is almost no Jewish craftsmanship, because no markets are being held now, and the peasant, a little richer, goes directly to the big city. Aside from this, Polish artisans, refugees who have established themselves in the small towns, are skilled craftsmen and attract clients, including Poles. A very small number of people have made a fortune, but by highly illegal means. It can be stated without exaggeration that 40 per cent of the Jews in the Radom region are receiving welfare payments. People live from force of habit. There is no Jewish social life. People don’t talk politics or read newspapers. The [religious] faith deepened. Political differences have been obliterated in the face of the dreadful catastrophe.

The Ożarów *kehillah* could serve as a model for the *Judenrat*. A small, gloomy shtetl somewhere on the fringes has become a clean and tidy town. In addition to 3,000 local Jewish residents, Ożarów has 1,200 refugees from

Włocławek, Łódź, and the surrounding area. And recently, also 130 exiles from Radom. The leadership has been taken over by idealistic young proletarian Zionists, who have done a really good job of organising all activity. The chairman is 22 years old.⁴⁵⁶ His assistants are no older. All of them show great daring and know the art of outmanoeuvring the Germans. Although they too have to engage in bribery, it is never for selfish purposes, and they always have the good of the community in mind. With respect to social welfare, they have achieved a great deal. The organisation is on a high level. A soup kitchen has been set up which distributes 600 lunches a day (soup with bread, twice a week with meat). The midday meals are free. Recently a charge of 15 groszes was introduced. Free breakfasts and suppers are provided for the poorest people.

The sanitary situation is very good, thanks to the tireless work of the sanitation teams. They have introduced *Impfungen*⁴⁵⁷ [. . .].

ARG I 977 b (Ring. I/897)

Description: duplicate (2 copies.), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 4 sheets, 4 pages. In the margins, the Hebrew letter “ה” (ink). The document was kept in a binder.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

59

After 28 February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “הַדָּתָר” [Radom]. Situation of the Jewish population during the occupation; the Judenrat’s activity; comparison between the conditions of life of Radom and Warsaw Jews.

[1] Radom

From Warsaw to Radom is somewhat more than 100 kilometres. From the Warsaw ghetto to the Radom Jewish community is a colossal distance.

456 Leyb Halpern, a bookkeeper by profession, became chairman in January 1941. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/755, p. 3.

457 (German) vaccinations.

The difference in the situation is so pronounced that one might think that not only are the Jews from both places dissimilar, but also the Germans are not the same.

Already, this outward picture demonstrates the difference: You go across the streets of Radom and look at a mixture of strolling Germans, Poles, and Jews. The broad footpaths of the main street are full of queues of people from all three categories. One pushes the other. The Jew walks along, as usual, somewhat absorbed in his thoughts, and it does not occur to him at all to tug at his hat or to move away from the uniformed German.⁴⁵⁸ Further, you see a lot of trucks in which even SS people ride, and Jews walk by entirely indifferent, not demonstrating the slightest fear of being “caught”!

It is clear that such a picture appears strange for someone who just yesterday, several times without breathing, jumped storeys along Karmelicka Street during a “car trip”...⁴⁵⁹

And when someone tells you further that the Jewish public lives relatively well, that the Jewish youth is enjoying itself, that in a Jewish café, daily, during an afternoon hour, several thousand pastries are snatched up, and that the turnover of sales of the “bakers” reaches into the high thousands of zlotys. If someone tells you this, you quickly search for the reasons and wherein lies the secret of this difference. A short glance into the work of the *Judenrat* soon provides a partial answer to this question. The revenues are significant, and in proportion to the revenues of the Warsaw Jewish community – immensely large. Radom Jews give a lot of money for the good of the community. There are various forms of taxes, and specifically in larger sums, which are gladly brought in by the Jews of Radom. Also, this picture has a strange effect on someone who only yesterday saw how a wealthy Warsaw [Jew] was dragged from bed to work for not paying the two zlotys contribution.

The Jews of Radom pay. They believe: It costs, but it is worth it. . . They know that the community leaders need to have large sums, and the Radom community leaders believe that one needs to know how to speak to them. . .

458 Warsaw Jews were obliged to doff their headwear to Germans.

459 On Karmelicka Street in the Warsaw ghetto, the pedestrians were often assaulted and beaten by German policemen passing by in cars. See B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, p. 114.

And so, they “came to the conclusion” in this manner, that nearly all industrial enterprises in the town are active, and many Jewish workers are employed. In a large number of German departments, Jews are employed as manual workers; at the public works one also sees a large number of Jews. It turns out, in keeping with a Radom expression, that every German has a Jew; as a result, such a Jew also has the German, and the result is: livelihood. . .

In praise of the community leaders, it must be noted that they have [2] engaged the majority of the Jewish intelligentsia with paid positions, and until now, nobody has been removed. To the credit of the community leaders, which consist incidentally of intelligent Jews, merchants, accountants, who worry in good time about the future, the fact is that there also exists an effective mediation. In Jewish Radom, there has until now not been any serious obstacle; and if something unpleasant happens occasionally, they truly succeed in rectifying [this] in good time.

Also, in the realm of social welfare, Jewish Radom need not be ashamed. There exist several kitchens for the needy among the townsfolk and the outsiders. They distribute products and, most significantly, the wealthier circles do not withhold any money for charity. There has even arisen a kind of donations auction, a wealthy Jewish woman paid as much as 10,000 zlotys for the title of “*prezesowa*”⁴⁶⁰ of the orphans’ kitchen”. . . There is also no lack of curiosities. Thus, for example, there is a shortage of consumers in the kitchens. This comes from the fact that some time ago 3,000 poor Jews were expelled from Radom to the estates of *melech evyon*.⁴⁶¹ But just try and engage with tried and tested wandering paupers. Two whole months have not yet passed, and the entire gang is back in Radom (without passes, without permits. . .); now these so-called “re-emigrants” find themselves in Radom “incognito,” and are afraid to appeal for aid.

This is how it looks in Jewish Radom today, in February 1941. Prior to my departure from the town, a friend of mine told me that the authorities are preparing to put up walls. . .

460 (Polish) chairman’s wife. The intended meaning, however, was rather “chairwoman.”

461 (Hebrew) King Pauper. The expression “King Pauper’s estates” was popularly applied by the rest of Polish Jewry to the area of eastern Galicia and the Ukraine, owing to its rampant poverty. The Jews referred to here were deported to the Busko and Opatów counties. See footnote XXX.

The word ghetto hovered before my eyes. . .

28 February 1941

ARG I 977 a (Ring. I/897)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, minor damages and fragments missing, 4 sheets, 4 pages. In the margins the Hebrew letter “ה.” On p. 1, sign “+” in red pencil. The document was kept in a binder.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

60

After April 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Yankl Henik. Testimony “וואָס הערט זיך” [What’s new], recorded by Nekhemia Tytelman. Situation of the Jewish population in the Radom ghetto; arrests, deportations to Auschwitz.

[1] What’s new

Yankl Henik had a visit in the middle of the night... He had paid 500 [zlotys] for an identity card to come to Warsaw to his family, “without rights to return to Radom”. He is a cobbler by profession, he believes he will get work, but he is afraid to register himself under his own name... He recounts (arrived yesterday):

As is known, Radom is divided into two ghettos: a larger and more populated one on Wałowa Street and the smaller one, from Skaryszewska Street.⁴⁶² From one ghetto to the other is 1 ½ km. The ghettos are closed, but not enclosed. The exits are guarded by Jewish policemen. In order to go from one

462 Wałowa Street was the centre of the large ghetto, whose borders were marked by the streets: Reja, Mireckiego, Mleczna (also the Mleczna River), Piotrkówka, Przechodnia, Pereca, Narutowicza, Bernardyńska, Wałowa, Rwańska, Szwarlikowska. Both ghettos were closed on 12 April 1941. The small ghetto was in the town district Glinice, its borders marked by the streets Słowackiego, Żłota, Biała, Wyścigowa, Kwiatkowskiego, Strzelecka, Staroopatowska and Fabryczna. Skaryszewska Street was not included. See S. Piątkowski, *Dni życia*, p. 179.

ghetto to the other, one must have a *przepustka*, which is easily obtained. Until approximately more than two months ago, it was bearable. But since the massacres started in the middle of the night and [also] various acts of terrorism, it is unbearable there.

[The f]irst night massacre resulted in more than 30 shot and over 60 arrested and sent to Oświęcim. The second already resulted in 50 shot and over 80 arrested. Thus the third and the fourth (true, much fewer), but after a greater respite, now almost every second evening, [there is] a massacre of several people.⁴⁶³ Who is being chased, with whom it has to do – just as in Warsaw: different way of shooting, [but] also like there (in front of houses in the street).⁴⁶⁴

Those deported to Oświęcim [. . .] afterwards received telegrams that [. . .] died, and a week later, their clothes and documents were received, as well as small items. And then, the following thing transpired: The names of the supposed dead are sewn into the clothes or slipped into the documents [. . .] that they live. [2] [. . .] it is characteristic [. . .] a certain prisoner to Oświęcim. A search was made again and they looked for him, and the gendarmes wanted to arrest his wife and daughter. Only when she produced the telegram that her husband had died in Oświęcim did they leave.

Since the arrests and shootings, the individual terror increased from the gendarmes and from the Jewish police and informers alike. About 20 young people joined the Jewish police (under the order from the SD), who had previously been employed by them in heavy labour. This group terrorises the population, just like the police themselves. It is enough for one Jewish policeman to let in a woman with a basket of vegetables or baked goods from one ghetto into the other (naturally, bought on the way), and he is immediately informed on by another one.

463 Other accounts confirm the rising terror in the Radom ghetto in February and April 1942. Several dozen people were shot. On 29 January and 29 April 1942, two big transports were sent to Auschwitz, including many Jewish prisoners. In April, underground activists of left-wing parties were shot in several ghettos in the Radom district. See *ibidem*, pp. 184–186.

464 Clearly a reference to the murder of 52 persons in the Warsaw ghetto during the night of 17/18 April 1942. Among those shot were activists of underground organisations, as well as smugglers and informers. See ARG II 299 (Ring. II/158) and ARG I 584 (Ring. I/293); B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, pp. 694–697.

“I had tears in the [. . .],” recounts my informant, “[. . .], baked goods and vegetables [. . .] ghetto in such abundance, as you have! Is it like Eretz Israel for you! For us, it is immediately a death sentence or Oświęcim. The Jews are not allowed to have any sort of cart, horse, bicycle or other means of transportation; since the shootings, peasants have not been coming as they are in great fear. And the Poles, who have had no fewer shootings and arrests, are also [. . .] afraid of coming into the ghetto.

We have still great[er] [. . .] than you in Warsaw. A kilo of potatoes co[sts] 5.50, bread 12 zlotys.⁴⁶⁵ Other things are virtually not to be found.

The [. . .] gendarmerie does not keep order for us, [. . .] rely on Jewish police, but they go about in the ghetto riding [. . .]⁴⁶⁶

ARG I 978 (Ring. I/236)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (Ł*), ink, pencil, Yiddish, 108×355 mm, damage and fragments missing, last part missing, 1 sheet, 2 pages. On p. 1, Hersh Wasser’s note in Yiddish: “4 pages” (ink).

61

After April 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony נאָטצן “רעדאָם [Notes. Radom]. Notes on the members of the Judenrat and the Ordnungsdienst.

[1] Notes. Radom

With the occupation of Radom by the Germans, Jewish life in Radom took on a different appearance than in the pre-war years.

Here, as in all the other communities, big and small, of the pre-war Polish Republic, where Jews and Poles have lived together for generations, the

465 In April 1942, the free-market price of potatoes in the Warsaw ghetto was between 4.50 and 5.20 zlotys per 1 kilo, and a loaf of rye bread cost from 12 to 15 zlotys. See Tatiana Berenstein, “Ceny produktów żywnościowych w Warszawie i w getcie warszawskim w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej,” BŻIH, 2 (70) (1969), table 5.

466 The rest of the text is missing.

occupiers first and foremost began their systematic task of creating an artificial wall between Jews and Poles and paralysing all national and political life of the Polish and Jewish population, and as a result of the war calamity, the economic collapse occurred anyway. The metallurgical factories passed into German hands. Smuggling and war trade completely altered the economic face of the town.

In Jewish life, a *Judenrat* was established in place [2] of the former *kehillah*. At its head were Messrs Diamant as chairman, Attorney Avrom Salbe,⁴⁶⁷ and Dr Szenderowicz. At the head of the Jewish police were such individuals as Gajger, Wajner and Wajchendler.

Attorney Salbe came here from Warsaw, where he had been a member of the Warsaw *Judenrat* shortly after the invasion of the Germans. He also was one of the 12 Councillors (Jews and Poles), whom the German authorities made responsible for every political action during the occupation of Warsaw, and spent time with all the others under house arrest in the building of the Warsaw town hall. His conduct in the *Judenrat* is appropriate. Initially he attempted to make life easier [3] for the Jewish community and received no honorarium for his efforts. In the end, when the *kehillah* apparatus expanded and laid down new agendas, people in various circles started to murmur about his person. Relying on the information of the narrator, it is difficult to establish how much basis this has.

Chairman Diamant is a former travelling salesman of haberdashery goods, a simple ignoramus without any personal merits, a great coward, he receives 800 zlotys in salary monthly, performs the function of an “advisor to the head of the Radom District...” A man of such a low cultural level, as the importance and personal merits already outlined, give a sufficient guarantee of carrying out his social mission...

[4] Dr. Szenderowicz, known in town as a dermatologist before the war, is definitely unpopular. In the time of the war, on the contrary, he became popular, and here is the reason: First of all, he is the chief doctor and the head of the “Health Office” in the *Judenrat*. He understood how to organise the office in such a way that would yield him and his associates the biggest profits. He is

467 Avrom Salbe (?–1942), attorney from Warsaw, industrialist, social activist, chairman of *Gemilat Khesed* in Radom, member of the Radom *Judenrat* and chairman of the KOM. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/124, p. 36; 211/853, p. 4; AJDC, 210/581, p. 10.

cosy with the Germans. He has a very close relationship with the police chief Struck; he prevails upon him by telephone and thus sorts out all his affairs and dealings... He landed the honour of proposing and “inventing” the local Radom Jewish “delousing facility”, which is [5] more hateful than the filthiest “bathing facility” and can yield such profits that turn out approximately 30,000 zlotys monthly for his share alone. The Jewish population was tormented with the “delousing certificates” for months. Every Jewish citizen had to have such a “delousing certificate”, the monthly fee amounted to 3.50 zlotys. The select few enjoyed a discount; such people paid 1.50 zlotys a month. The “business” was extraordinarily well-organised. The German, Polish, and Jewish police checked precisely whether every passer-by was in possession of such a “certificate”. To obtain such a “certificate”, one did not necessarily have to go to the “bath”. One could get it from special fixers for a specific fee. For “breaking” Dr. Szenderowicz’s law, [6] if caught in the street or during house searches, one paid 10 zlotys penalty. The “delousing certificates” in Radom are similar to the curse of *parówki* in Warsaw.

Sorting out an issue with Dr. Szenderowicz is not easy. He is nervous, shouts and wails, thrashes about, is wild or simply insane.

The “Labour Office” and the Jewish police “team” are in no better hands and circumstances than the “Health Office”. These offices are headed by Gajger, Wajner and Wajchendler.

Before the war, Gajger organised the night watchmen in Radom. This is a man with average organisational abilities. All traders and shopkeepers who wanted to be sure that they suffered no burglaries had only one way out, [7] to be “insured” by him.... Around *lipiec*⁴⁶⁸ 1941, he became the commander of the Jewish police and, as it was rumoured, also a “report provider” for the German authorities. During the years of 1940–1941, he headed the “Labour Office” and earned hefty sums by taking, capturing, and freeing Jews from “forced labour camps”. Jews from Radom and the surrounding areas were sent at the time to the famous “forced labour camp” in Bełżec.⁴⁶⁹ His two aides, Wajner and Wajchendler, and the notorious *khapers* also assisted in all these dark dealings. The Jewish police did good business there.

468 (Polish) July.

469 The labour camp in Bełżec, see footnote XXX. Jews from the Radom district were sent there in August and September 1940. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 117–118.

It is worth mentioning the “farce”, which played out at the gates of the two Jewish communities, in the towns of Szydłowiec and Radom, during one of the hunts for Jews [8] in the aforementioned towns.

The German authorities ordered that Jews be presented for digging potatoes in various surrounding estates (this was probably a pretext for making money, according to a mutual Jewish-German trick), and the Jewish “catchers” and “fixers” went off to bring Jews. During that time, Radom came to an agreement with the appropriate authorities and for an appropriate sum, decided to revoke the edict in Radom, but probably on the advice of Gajger and his gang, decided to grab Jews in Szydłowiec and send them for forced labour. 25 Germans with 100 Jewish policemen travelled to Szydłowiec with great pomp to catch and bring Jews for “forced labour”. They travelled on German military trucks. As it turned out, one can find such [9] clever Jews and good German money-grabbers, who love their “fellow Jews” no less than the Radom inhabitants [love] their “fellow Jews”, and those Germans said that they would not allow Jews in Szydłowiec to be caught... Of course, this did not happen out of great love for the Szydłowiec Jews by the Germans, but because the Szydłowiec Jews had found out in time about the “catching” that was coming at them from Radom, so they pre-empted this and freed their own Jews for “kosher cash”, whereby the local fixers of all sorts, along with the Germans and the Jewish policemen, again profited.

In Radom, there are two ghettos, in which the 20,000 Jews who are found there are dispersed. One Jewish ghetto with approximately 7,000 Jews is situated in Glinice, a suburb, 3 km away from the second Jewish ghetto in Radom, where the rest of the Jews are to be found.⁴⁷⁰ The Jewish residents of one ghetto can enter the other ghetto only on the basis of “entry passes” during special hours. It goes without saying that Gajger and his gang participated in the sale of “passes” and earned money.

The Jewish residential quarter in Radom was introduced by the Germans in the months of June and July of 1941. The closing of the Jewish ghetto happened about two months later. An interesting fact is that when there was a threat of the Germans also appropriating the house at Narutowicza Street 26, Gajger’s gang under its own jurisdiction, started to requisition the houses at Nos. 3 and 5 in Pereca Street, for private purposes. [11] When

470 For the borders of the Radom ghetto see footnote XXX.

a clamour around this matter ensued, the gang brought a German commission, a well-paid one... and managed to have the house included in the Jewish ghetto. This happened in the month of November 1941. Such public dirty dealings and intrigues were openly carried out by the previously mentioned gang.

According to the news which has now emerged during the time of the writing of these notes, the degenerate Gajger should already have been arrested and shot by the Gestapo men. This is supposed to have happened because of a conflict between the *Schutzpolizei* and the Gestapo men on account of business relations and mutual dealings between the *Schutzpolizei* and the above.

In Radom, Jews in general do not live badly. This is said about those Jews, who do [12] business with one another, the Poles and the Germans, in the present time. The biggest trade is in leather. People trade and sell from hand to hand. One buys from the Germans anything that is available. There was a time when the Germans smuggled silk fabric out of Germany. Apart from that, joint smuggling is going on between the Germans, Poles, and Jews.

There is a large number of refugees in Radom. Some have come from around Radom, and many Jews have also come here from Warsaw. Of late, one sees scenes in Radom, which are not far removed from Warsaw: the poor collapse in the streets from hunger and cold.

The narrator reports some other matters, which still need to be accurately investigated and added. These are facts about a certain Mr [13] Lesleu (or Leslau),⁴⁷¹ who heads the "Provisions Department", and also governor Lasch,⁴⁷² who was in Radom for a longer time, later transferred to Lvov, and in the end sent to the eastern front.

April 1942

471 Possibly Moyshe Leslau, the *Judenrat* treasurer. See AŽIH, AJDC, 210/583, p. 32.

472 Karl Lasch (1906–1942), economist and lawyer. From 1940 to July 1941, governor of the GG Radom District; from August 1941 governor of the Galicia District. Arrested on charges of embezzlement and breaking customs laws. His trial was discontinued under pressure from Hitler. Shot in prison in June 1942. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, pp. 57–58.

P.S._The Jewish police in Radom love adorning themselves. Their uniform: Leather jackets to the knee, long high boots with wide backs created the “magnificent” uniform dress of the Jewish policeman. Apart from the said uniform, Gajger wore a hat with 3 embroidered silver “stars”. His aides, Wajner and Wajchandler, and his last deputy Sytner,⁴⁷³ each wore two brass “stars”. Gajger was supposed to have bragged that the Germans absolutely demanded that he wears 4 – four stars on the hat, but he declined the honour out of modesty...

April 1942

ARG I 979 (Ring. I/900)

Description: original or duplicate, (a) handwritten (RR*), ink, 155×200 mm; (b) handwritten (U*), pencil, 145×218 mm, Yiddish, 18 sheets, 23 pages.

Edition based on the original or duplicate (a), 7 sheets, 13 pages.

CZĘSTOCHOWA

62

30 September 1941, Częstochowa, Stadthauptmann, Dr Wendler. Announcement on punishment for evasion of forced labour.

Announcement

Notice is hereby given to the Jewish population that the following Jews:

Juda Smolarczyk,	residing at	Stary Rynek Street 30
Mendel Zaks,	”	Targowa Street 14
and Jakub Brat,	”	Nadrzeczna Street 36 ⁴⁷⁴

473 Leon Sytner, lawyer, refugee from Kalisz or Piotrków, head of the Legal Department of the Radom *Judenrat*. After Gajger’s arrest, he became commander of the *Ordnungsdienst*. See S. Piątkowski, *Dni życia*, pp. 193, 199.

474 Juda Smolarczyk was a baker by profession. Jakub Brat produced china. Both their names appear on the list of those summoned to forced labour on 22 April 1941. See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/7, pp. 124, 141.

under Article 7 of the second executive provision of 12 December 1939 to the ordinance of 26 October 1939 on the introduction of compulsory forced labour for the Jewish population in the General Government have each been sentenced by the Special Court in Częstochowa to one-year incarceration in a penitentiary for evasion of forced labour.

All those summoned to forced labour by the Labour Office (*Arbeitsamt*) or the Council of Elders, acting with the Office's authorisation, must unconditionally obey the order. No one is allowed to evade work to which they have been assigned.

Criminal proceedings shall commence with regard to each instance of work evasion. Evasion of forced labour is subject to a 10-year incarceration in a penitentiary. Moreover, it might also result in confiscation of one's entire property.

Der Stadthauptmann

/-/ Dr Wendler⁴⁷⁵

Częstochowa, 30 September 1941.

ARG I 714 (Ring. I/784)

Description: original, printed, German, Polish, 675×480 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

475 Richard Wendler (1898–1972), Doctor of Laws, member of NSDAP and SS since 1928, *Oberbürgermeister* of the town of Hof in Bavaria during 1933–1939, *Stadthauptmann* of Częstochowa from December 1939 to February 1942, governor of the Krakow District of GG from February 1942 to May 1943 and until July 1944, of the Lublin District of GG. After the war, practiced as a lawyer based in Munich. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 510.

1941[?], *Warsaw ghetto, Judenrat in Częstochowa. Report of the Department of Trade and Craft and the Patent and Tax sections for 1940.*⁴⁷⁶

[1]⁴⁷⁷ Patent Section⁴⁷⁸

The number of forms⁴⁷⁹ filled out from January to June 1940 was 2,270. In the following months it gradually decreased to 10 forms in October, while it significantly increased in November to 507 forms and in December to 1,060. This is probably a result of the campaign aimed at preparation for buying out of patents for 1941. The total number of forms filled out in 1940 amounts to 3,962.

The number of industrial activity and tax cards⁴⁸⁰ purchased was smaller. During the initial period, from January to June, 2,114 cards were purchased, while the number of cards purchased throughout the year was 2,232, with

476 This document is an excerpt from *II Rocznik Statystyczny Rady Starszych w Częstochowie za rok 1940* [Second Statistical Yearbook of the Council of Elders in Częstochowa for 1940] (later referred to as “Second Yearbook”) prepared by Engineer Feliks Galewski in the Statistical Section of the Administration Department of *Judenrat*. The yearbook contains detailed reports on the operation of each department of the *Judenrat*. A copy of the yearbook is available in AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1–3. It was sent on 8 May 1942 to the Municipal Board in Częstochowa as a gift from the Chairman of the *Judenrat*, Lejb Kopiński. Most of the text is an exact copy or summary of selected fragments of “Second Yearbook”, but the fragment about the Social Welfare Fund and the levy, as well as several sentences from the fragment about the Forced Labour Department, are not included in the copy sent to the Municipal Board. There presumably existed a different, original, and extended or uncensored copy of “Second Yearbook”, from which the text was copied for *Oyneg Shabes*. For the same reason, the date remains uncertain.

477 The document is not paginated. The edition follows the contents order from “Second Yearbook.”

478 See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1, pp. 78–79, 81, 85–86.

479 In December 1939, the German authorities ordered registration of companies. In order to register a company, one had to fill in a patent form, which was later opined by an expert and a member of the *Judenrat*. The opinion and the declaration were sent to the Municipal Board, which issued a company registration card. See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1, p. 78.

480 In April 1940, the Municipal Board exchanged company registration cards for “industrial activity and trade cards” for a doubled fee. See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1, p. 78.

1,101 for trade (49.3 per cent), 265 for industrial enterprise (11.9 per cent), and 866 for craft (38.8 per cent).

The duties of the Patent Section included receiving applications (345), including 307 free of charge; there were 654 interventions with the Municipal Board with regard to the industry and tax cards, including 431 free of charge. Throughout the year, there were 354 interventions with different authorities regarding various matters, for example, stall vendors, closed shops, traders aggrieved due to requisitions of merchandise, trade hours, shop inspections, etc., of which 85 per cent were free of charge.

The fee for registration cards amounted to 20, 25, 30, 120, 250 zlotys,⁴⁸¹ and after their replacement with industrial activity and tax cards, the fees were 40, 50, 60, 240, 500 and 600 zlotys. Except for regular fees, the department charged additional fees depending on the financial situation of the applicant.

The sums obtained in that way were divided in the ratio of 4:4:2 between the Social Welfare, the Jewish Hospital and the Aid to Refugees,⁴⁸² and handling fees were charged when the registration cards were replaced with the industrial activity and tax ones. Less wealthy applicants paid the amount due in instalments. [2] Throughout the year, the Patent Section provided 7,100 pieces of legal advice, with the largest number of 3,000 pieces of advice offered in December.

List of purchased registration cards and industrial activity and tax cards:⁴⁸³

Pharmacies	4
Insurance agents	4
Ink – production	1
Libraries	5
Lingerie making	42
Bronzing workshop	1

481 In the full copy of “Second Yearbook”, the sum is 200 instead of 250 zlotys.

482 Care for refugees was entirely a responsibility of the Committee to Help the Resettled and Refugees, which searched for quarters (“asylums”) and furnished them. See AŻIH, *Judenrat in Częstochowa*, 213/3, p. 406.

483 Names of businesses are in alphabetical order in Polish.

Sheet-metal work	21
Barrels – production and sale	1
Cap making	14
Boot leather stitching	39
Brickyards and china production	8
Celluloid products – production	16
Dental instruments	2
Printing houses	12
Wood – sale	11
Electro-technicians	9
Freight forwarders and transport of goods	5
Philately	1
Paints and chemicals	31
Photography	7
Hairdressing	53
Furs – sale	3
Dye works	2
Accessories – sale	167
Engraving	3
Rubber heelpiece – production	1
Corset making	9
Newspapers – sale	2
Rubber waste	1
Cigarette rolling paper – production	1
Embroidery	3
Water and sewerage installations	2
Bookbinding	4
Jewellery	2
Eateries	8
Cosmetics – production and sale	8
Books – sale	3
Ties – production	1
Duvets	2
Florists	2
Tailors	184
Cafés and teashops	5

Furriery	9
Ready-to-wear clothing – sale and production	61
Hat making	22
Travelling salesmen	1
Blacksmiths	1
Coppersmith workshops	1
Wicks – production	1
Frame slats	7
Lithographic workshops	3
Mirrors – production	7
Baths	1
Manufacture and jute ⁴⁸⁴ – sale	131
[3] Minerals	3
House painting	3
Furniture – sale	1
Machines – sale	1
Manicure	1
Dishes and vessels – sale	16
Thread winding	19
Scissors – sharpening	2
Footwear – sale	24
Oleographs – sale	1
Monuments – production	4
Representation	3
Agency	2
Belts and braces – production	2
Paper industry	41
Umbrellas – production	6
Feathers – purchase and sale	5
Laundries	2
Bakeries	55
Rag slippers	10
Beer houses	6
Floor and shoe polish	5

484 Jute here means fabric made of jute fibre. Used for making sacks.

Furnished rooms	3
Rope making	3
Boiled oil – production	2
Butchery and meat processing	79
Bicycle parts	28
Saddlery	2
Horn products	5
Shoemaking	68
Carpentry	22
Chests – production	7
Groceries and colonial products	332
Leathers, shoemaking tools	34
Brush making and basketry	22
Glaziers	3
Warehouses	31
Chamotte ⁴⁸⁵ and baking products	3
Lock smithing	23
Spars ⁴⁸⁶ and minerals grinding and sale	2
Tricot clothing – production	31
Leather purses	4
Upholstery	6
Turnery	7
Tapes, shoelaces	3
Dental technicians	9
Haircloth – production	2
Suitcases	4
Lime	1
Wine, vodka, honey	11
Sacks – sale	3
Soda water – production	2
Wagon scales	1
Cotton wool – production	2
Coal – sale	26

485 A ceramic material made of ground and fired clay.

486 A generic term for highly cleavable minerals.

Prams	2
Stove fitting	1
Goldsmiths	5
Watch making and sale	31
Iron, metals	55
Toys – production, sale	16
Iron, metal, and building materials and pins	47

Tax Section⁴⁸⁷

The Tax Section offered all kinds of advice on tax matters, drew up appeals and all other documents to tax authorities, and intervened in tax offices on behalf of aggrieved taxpayers. Its advice was offered free of charge. The total number of instances of legal advice amounted to 5,650 throughout the year. The number of inquirers was the lowest in October (300), while in December it increased tenfold (3,000 instances of legal advice).

The Department of Trade and Craft drew up altogether 1,169 documents (including 127 free of charge). The greatest number of documents, that is 56.3 per cent, was addressed to tax authorities and the lowest to customs authorities, namely 0.3 per cent. The Department had the heaviest workload in December: 179 documents.

Cashier's office (1)⁴⁸⁸

The total yearly takings amounted to 194,312.35 zlotys, of which 173,098.35 fell to the first six months. The lowest monthly takings were in October: 1,602.25 zlotys. Registration cards yielded 75,711 zlotys (38.0 per cent) and industrial activity and tax cards – 59,368.50 zlotys (30.7 per cent). A detailed division of takings is provided in table No. 22 and graphs No. 39 and 40.

The Department itself did not spend any money; all takings were transferred to the central cashier's office of the Council of Elders.

Takings (2)

Tax and other matters	4,159.95	2.2 %
Registration cards	75,711	38.8 %
Industrial activity and tax cards	59,368.50	30.7 %

487 See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1, pp. 88–89, 97.

488 Numbers (1) and (2) were added by the copyist. In the original, the description (2) is located at the top of the page and the table (1) is at the bottom (Table No. 22, Takings).

Fiscal applications	4,716.25	2.4 %
Handling fees for industrial activity cards	6,011	3.1 %
For Social Welfare	21,859.50	11.2 %
For the Jewish Hospital	13,982.50	7.1 %
For the Social Committee	555	0.3 %
Price lists	1,235.50	0.7 %
Interventions	1,895.50	1 %
Signs	1,186.75	0.6 %
Registration of entrepreneurs	2,461.90	1.3 %
Winter aid campaign and assistance	1,169	0.6 %
Total	194,312.35	100 %

ARG I 715 a (Ring I/183)

Description: duplicate (handwritten, F*, ink) and typewritten (2 copies in fragments), Polish, 215×283 mm, damages and missing fragments, 6 sheets, 8 pages.

A duplicate of another text on p. [3] of the manuscript, see Doc. 64. The typewritten duplicate does not contain the final fragment of the manuscript from p. [3]. Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish on p. 1 of the second copy of the typewritten duplicate: "2[?] standard pages."

Edition based on the manuscript, 2 sheets, 3 pages, with the missing fragments supplemented on the basis of the text of the copy from AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1, sheets 78–79, 81, 85–86, 88–90.

1941, Warsaw ghetto, Judenrat in Częstochowa. Report on the operation of the Department of Registration and Statistics (fragment from Częstochowa population statistics), the Department of Forced Labour, and the Welfare Fund for 1940.⁴⁸⁹

[17⁴⁹⁰] [Department of Registration and Statistics. Population Records Section]⁴⁹¹

Jewish population of Częstochowa in 1940:

at the beginning of March approx. 28,173 people (for food provision purposes);⁴⁹²

in mid-April 27,626 (for property declarations);⁴⁹³

according to the detailed census of 29–31 July, the population was 32,028 people;⁴⁹⁴

in late 1940 – 32,725 (municipality 33,693);⁴⁹⁵

Population structure: 25,836 permanent inhabitants, 6,257⁴⁹⁶ temporary, 362 unregistered; 15,469 men (7,955 single, 370 widowers) and 17,256 women (8,461 single, 1,529 widows); 20 baptised (rough estimate).

The Jewish population increased from 28,714 (1 January 1940) to 33,695 (31 December 1940), that is by 4,981. As the number of those registered

489 Continuation of Doc. 63.

490 Scanned facsimile page numbers.

491 The *Oyneg Shabes* copyist did not accurately rewrite the fragment regarding the registration and only made an extract. See AŻIH, *Judenrat in Częstochowa*, 213/2, pp. 127, 130, 132–135, 137–139, 141–142, 145, 148, 152–154, 165, 168. The title does not appear in the copy.

492 Registered for food ration cards.

493 In mid-April 1940, the authorities ordered registration of Jewish property. One was obliged to submit a form regarding one's property and a declaration on the number of family members with their IDs. See AŻIH, *Judenrat in Częstochowa*, 213/2, p. 127.

494 The registration was organised by the *Judenrat*.

495 After the July registration, a card index of Jewish inhabitants of Częstochowa was made in the Population Records Section of the *Judenrat*. It was regularly updated on the basis of information from the Municipal Board regarding registration of inhabitants. The figure 32,725 is the number of people listed in the card index at the end of the year. The figure 33,693 is the number provided by the Municipal Board. See AŻIH, *Judenrat in Częstochowa*, 213/2, p. 134.

496 In the original, 6,527 by copyist's mistake.

temporarily increased by 2,022 (to 6,907), it appears that approximately 3,000 residents of Częstochowa returned to their home towns.

Percentage of Jews in the total population of Częstochowa: 1 July 1940 – 21.8; December – 22.9.

Births:

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Boys	24	26	18	20	21	7	10	10	10	9	10	5	170
Girls	32	16	28	17	17	8	9	17	9	6	14	8	181
Total	56	42	46	37	38	15	19	27	19	15	24	13	351

Thus, the average population growth in 1940 is 11.3 per cent. During 1936–1938 the Jewish population growth was 18.9 per cent.

Deaths: During the reporting period there were 503 deaths: 260 men and 243 women. The percentage of deaths is 16.1 for every 1,000 people; during 1936–1938, the percentage for Jews was 10.4, and for the entire population of Częstochowa 11.9. (The number representing the Jewish population is 31,204, that is a mean of January and December). The population growth is negative and it is $11.3 - 16.1 = -4.8$ per cent. It is 17.7 per cent for men and 14.7 per cent for women. [15][16] Deaths:

Age month sex	0–1			1–4			5–9			10–14		
	M ⁴⁹⁷	W ⁴⁹⁸	T ⁴⁹⁹	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
January				3		3						
February		1	1	2	1	3						
March	2	1	3		1	1						

497 Men.

498 Women.

499 Total.

April	4		4		1	1	1					
May	4	3	7	1			1	1				
June	2		2		1	1	1		1			
July	2	4	6	1			1		1	1		
August		[2]	2		1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2
September	[1]	[3]	[4]							1		1
October							1		1			
November		1	1				2		2			
December	2	1	3				1		1			
Total	17	16	33	7	4[s]	11[s]	7[s]	2	9[s]	[2]	[1]	3
%	6.53	6.56	6.57	2.69	1.69	2.19	2.69	0.82	1.79	[0.77]	[0.41]	0.59

Age month sex	15-19			20-24			25-34			35-[44]		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
January		1	1				2	1	3	2		2
February	1		1		1	1		1	1		4	4
March				1		1	1	2	3	3	1	4
April		2	2		2	2	2	1	3	3	3	6
May	2		2	2	1	3		3	3	1	3	4
June	1		1				1	1	2		2	2
July	2		2	1		1	1		1		1	1
August	1		1		1						1	1
September	1		1					1	1	1	1	2
October					1	1		3	3		1	1
November							2		2	1	2	3
December		2	2				2	1	3		2	2
Total	8	5	13	4	6	10	11	14	25	11	21	32
%	3.08	2.06	2.58	1.54	2.47	1.99	4.23	5.75	4.98	4.23	8.65	6.36

Age month sex	45-54			55-64			65-74			75-80		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
January	2	3	5	6	5	11	7	7	14	1	4	5
February	1	2	3	6	5	11	6	6	12	2	3	5
March	4	4	8	[3]	1	4	8	8	16	3	4	7
April	3	1	4	[8]	5	13	8	4	12	3	6	9
May	1	1	2	[7]	1	8	8	4	12	2	4	6
June		2	2	[4]	5	9	6	4	10	3	2	5
July		[1]	[1]		2	2	4	5	9	1	2	3
August	[1]	[1]	[2]	[3]	2	5	3	5	8	2	4	6
September	[2]	[1]	[3]	[5]	1	6	7	4	11	1	2	3
October	[3]	[2]	[5]	[2]	[3]	5	11	[2]	13	2	3	5
November	3	[1]	[4]	[1]	[3]	[4]	6	3	9		1	1
December	1	2	[3]	[5]	[4]	9	5	4	9	2	3	5
Total	21	21	[42]	[50]	[37]	[87]	79	56	135	22	38	60
%	8.07	8.65	[8.35]	[19.25]	[15.23]	[17.3]	30.4	23.05	26.85	8.45	15.65	11.9

Age month sex	81 – [more?]			Total		
	M	W	T	M	W	T
January	2	3	5	25	24	49
February	2	4	6	20	28	48
March	2	3	5	27	25	52
April	1	1	2	33	26	59
May	2	1	3	31	21	52
June		1	1	18	18	[36]
July	3	3	6	15	19	34
August	2	3	5	13	[21]	[34]
September	1	1	2	20	[14]	[34]
October	3		3	22	[15]	[37]
November	2	2	4	17	13	30

December	1		1	19	19	38
Total	21	22	43	260	243	503
%	8.07	9.05	8.55	100	100	100

[17] Marriages: their number was not evenly distributed in the individual months. In the first half of the year, there were 98 weddings; their number then increased reaching the first maximum of 63 weddings in August and the second one in December (169). (There were rumours that weddings would be permitted only until 31 December and that then there would be a 2-year break). The total number of weddings in 1940 was 504. 16.1 per cent for every thousand people; before the war the percentage for Jews was 6.4 and for Jews in Częstochowa 7.8.

15.3 per cent women and 11 per cent men were illiterate.

Jewish population structure in terms of age and sex:

Age	Total	%	Women	Men	Women for 100 men
0-4	1,762	5.42	845	917	92.2
5-9	2,440	7.46	1,200	1,240	97
10-14	2,847	8.72	1,373	1,474	93
15-19	3,269	9.99	1,663	1,606	103.5
20-29	5,599	17.2	3,102	2,497	24.5
30-39	6,184	18.9	3,275	2,909	112.5
40-49	4,255	13	2,376	1,879	126
50-59	3,199	9.8	1,701	1,498	113.5
60-69	2,006	6.12	1,057	949	111.5
70-	1,183	3.61	678	505	134.2
total	32,744	100%	17,270	15,474	111.5

Occupations: (13,974 men) professionally active:

craftsmen 4,765 (34.38 per cent)

workers 3,295 (23.4 per cent)

industrialists and merchants 2,621 (18.75 [per cent]) merchants and traders
1,959 (14 [per cent])

no occupation	1,531	(10.85 [per cent])
clerks	1,088	(7.8 [per cent])
freelance professions	527	(4.12 [per cent]) (208 teachers, 56 physicians, 50 dental technicians, 48 engineers, 43 attorneys, 48 artists, 2 journalists)
farmers	67	(16 gardeners) 0.58 [per cent]
musicians		0.24 [per cent] ⁵⁰⁰
tailors 1,894 (39.1[per cent]), 416 cobblers, 268 shoemakers, 250 locksmiths, 28 [. . .], 49 carpenters, 219 bakers, 202 butchers.		

Refugees:

[14] Refugees in 1940 (who came to Częstochowa)

[month]	[I]	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	[total]
[Number]	[303]	610	522	234	225	90	325	526	223	102	53	39	3,252

age	< 14	14–20	21–25	26–40	41–65	66–68	total	women	men
[number]	676	431	251	910	830	154	3,252	1,791	1,461
[%]	20.79	13.25	7.72	27.98	25.52	4.74	100 %	55 %	45 %

Where they arrived from and where they were from:

town/city		Łódź	Krakow	Radomsko	Warsaw	Działoszyn
arrived from	[number]	1,116	771	283	106	91
	[%]	[34.2]	23.7	8.65	3.25	[2.75]

⁵⁰⁰ In case of musicians, only the percentage is given. In case of farmers, according to the complete copy of “Second Yearbook”, it was 0.48 per cent. Taking the latter into account, the total would be 100.02%, so there is a minor error in some of the given numbers. The last line of the list probably refers to craftsmen, but the sum is 3,326; as for free-lancers, the sum of the listed professionals is 455; these data are incomplete.

were	[number]	1,453	254	257	43	115
from	[%]	44.68	7.4	7.92	1.32	3.53

town/city		Wieluń	Kalisz	Pabianice	Zduńska Wola	Przedbórz
arrived	[number]	71	45	41	37	33
from	[%]	[2.19]	[1.38]	1.26	1.14	1.02
were	[number]	118	161	50	35	35
from	[%]	[3.63]	[4.95]	[1.53]	1.07	1.07

town/city		Lublin	Sosnowiec	Katowice	Będzin	Kielce
arrived	[number]	27	24	21	16	14
from	[%]	0.83	0.73	0.64	0.49	0.43
were	[number]	2	30	65	26	–
from	[%]	0.06	0.92	1.99	0.8	–

town/city		Krzepice	Gdynia	other	total
arrived	[number]	13	5	538	3,252
from	[%]	0.4	0.15	16.5	100%
were	[number]	12	5	591	3,252
from	[%]	0.37	0.15	18.17	100%

[11] Department of Forced Labour⁵⁰¹

The Secretariat is in charge of correspondence, sending out work orders, and maintaining a correspondence archive. It manages a group of eight permanent messengers who deliver mail and summons, also for other Departments

501 This fragment is copied accurately, however, for security reasons, all names appearing in the original are removed. They are: Director of the Department of Forced Labour, Maurycy Kopiński; Deputy Director, Engineer Józef Goldman; Secretariat Director, Jakub Benclowicz; Work Orders Division, Józef Goldman; Records Division, Wolf Krzepicki; Complaints Division, Jakub Tempel and Dawid Szwarc; Investigations Division, Kałma Wygnański; Statistics Division, Hilel Chimowicz; Labour Camps Division, Bernard

of the Council of the Elders. At the Secretariat, there is also a Liquidation Desk of the Section for Labour Camps Food Provision.

The Work Orders Division is in charge of summons to work. It also keeps a card-index of work orders.

The Records Division: It records daily wages for work performed, and also calculates and liquidates them.

The Complaints Division: It receives complaints from those summoned and sends complaints for investigation. It also refers the sick for medical examination.

The Investigations Division: It determines the addresses of the people summoned when their summons are returned. It also investigates the financial situation of individuals. All departments of the Council of the Elders make use of these investigations.

The Statistics Division: This division keeps statistics of the Department of Labour.

Labour Camps Division: It manages the labourers working for the *Wasserwirtschaft*, distributes bread and food ration cards, and is in charge of placement and exchange of labourers.

The Section for Labour Camps Food Provision allocates bread and dinner rations to labourers working locally and at *Wasserwirtschaft*.

The Labour Command allocates individuals to paid and unpaid work details. It allocates paid work.

Information: It provides information to petitioners and directs them to suitable divisions or sections. It also keeps a register on those referred to doctors' commissions and the category they were classified in.

Calculations: It calculates remuneration for local paid labourers. It keeps a pay-outs register and auxiliary registers.

Cashier's counter: It pays out remuneration to labourers employed locally and benefits to the Department clerks.

Criminal Section: In 1940, incorporated into the Department of Forced Labour.

Gottlieb; Section for Labour Camps Food Provision, Icek Szyja Nirenberg and Hirsz Kac; Labour Command, Lajzor Frydenberg; Information, Pola Horowicz and Henryk Sztajnic; Calculations, Rywen Wajnberg; Cashiers, Chaim Dykierman, Tobiasz Fisz, and Frajda Fiszpan. There are also the personal data of all rank and file employees of the divisions. AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/3, pp. 292–305, 307, 315–320.

Work performed

With respect to the location and type of the work performed by the Department of Forced Labour it can be divided into:

- 1) Local works performed by men and women
- 2) Local and non-local labour camps

The Department of Forced Labour was always notified about the required number of labourers, whom it directed to the specified work details.

During the first four months of 1940, the *Arbeitsamt* demanded only labourers to perform local works, and that demand was satisfied to 100 per cent.

May marked the beginning of labour camps with a demand at 37,500 work days. In October, the demand reached its maximum of 61,588 workdays. In November it decreased to 48,948 and in December to 32,066.

The total yearly demand for the labour camp was 357,452 workdays and it was met to 80 per cent. The local works required 279,150 workdays, with that demand satisfied to 86.5 per cent.

A separate column regards women, with their demand at 14,913 workdays. The demand for women's workdays was met to 100.5 per cent.

The total demand for labourers' workdays in 1940 was 652,015, while the number of workdays of labour actually performed was 543,505.5, which amounts to 83 per cent. The maximum total demand was in June (81,784 workdays) and the minimum in January (15,766).

[12] Local labour camps

In late April 1940, the Water Management Board (*Wasserwirtschaft*) began to regulate the Warta and Kucelinka Rivers. Those works required 100 labourers. The Department of Registration and Statistics, which in March and April 1940 conducted a registration of Jews under paragraph 3 of the second executive orders of the Governor-General's ordinance of 26 October 1939 regarding forced labour required of the Jewish population (*Journal of Ordinances of the Governor General*, p. 246), summoned a 1,000 Jews born between 1914 and 1921 for examination with the exception of all those who were classified in categories C (unfit for work, declared ill by the Medical Commission), B2 or B1 (reduced or limited ability to work).

The examination was held in the building of the Municipal Credit Society at Ślaska Street 8 during 22–23 April 1940, where the Water Management

Board has its office. The examination was attended by the city governor⁵⁰² and the chairman of the Council of the Elders.⁵⁰³ Ten clerks and one director were selected to work at the registration and examination, and following they constituted the Labour Camp Office. All those classified as healthy were summoned to work on 7 May 1940.

Initially, the Labour Camp Office was accommodated in the premises of the Department of Registration and Statistics, but later it received its own office at *Aleja 6*.⁵⁰⁴ The labourers were divided into five companies, each consisting of 200 people and assigned two paramedics from among those summoned. Every company had its own assembly point from where it set out to its work details located from two to six kilometres away. The Water Management Board assigned five policemen to watch the labourers, initially from *Verkehrspolizei*,⁵⁰⁵ then from the Polish police.

The Water Management Board did not pay any remuneration to the labourers, and neither did the Department of Forced labour, but later the latter paid 10 zlotys per week to labourers from the “paid” group. Many of those summoned to work were indigent and the obligation to work in that form was a heavy burden to them, so a special Complaints Commission was established to adjudicate with regard to exemption of sole supporters of families, the sick, etc.

[5] Local labour camps (continued)

Those qualified for exemption were presented by the camp management appropriately and, as a result, everyone was exempted from that work.

Wishing to aid the water management labourers, two soup kitchens for them were opened at that time, at Katedralna Street 10 and 13, where all the labourers were issued free dinner rations, at that time relatively satiating.

Aside from the dinner rations, the labourers began to receive 300 grams of bread per day.

502 Perhaps city governor (*Stadthauptmann*) Richard Wendler.

503 Lejb Kopiński. From 1941, he was also the chairman of the Municipal Care Committee in Częstochowa. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/317, *passim*.

504 Probably *Aleja Najświętszej Marii Panny* (Polish, Saint Virgin Mary Avenue), the main street of Częstochowa.

505 (German) traffic police.

In order to properly organise provision of food to the labourers, a Section for Labour Camps Food Provision was organised within the framework of the Department of Forced Labour.

In late June 1940, endeavours began to release all those summoned and ended successfully as the whole group was released on 15 July 1940.

The next batches received remuneration from the Water Management Board, initially minimum 10 up to 16 zlotys per week (piecework).

The Department paid additional 24 zlotys per week to their total earnings. The Water Management Board established a special Jewish office (11 clerks) to calculate the Jewish labourers' earnings. With the normalisation of the earnings, the Water Management Board began to receive applications from volunteers. As a result, compulsory work orders became unnecessary as the number of volunteers significantly exceeded that work detail's demand for workforce. In November 1940, the number of labourers employed at the engineering works reached 1,600.

In June 1940, the Water Management Board commenced engineering works in Przyrów.⁵⁰⁶ It demanded 500 Jewish labourers, but it managed to reduce that number to 300. The establishment of the labour camp in Przyrów provided the Water Management Board, to which the Labour Camp Management was also incorporated in the meantime, with a new issue. Being one organisational whole, dealing with all labour, both on local work details and those operated in labour camps, the management of the Department of Forced Labour began to organise a camp in Przyrów. The possibilities of accommodation, food provision, etc. were investigated there. The first group of 300 labourers was sent with a Jewish physician and two paramedics. The newcomers received typhus vaccines there. The labourers were accommodated in private Jewish homes and also partly in a school in Zarębice.⁵⁰⁷ The Water Management Board appointed a Jewish clerk responsible for food provision to ensure proper nourishment. The labourers received: bread and coffee for breakfast, a midday meal with meat, and bread and coffee for supper. For some time, they were also given a warm supper. [This was] Irrespective of the bread rations from the Water Management Board. The Department initially issued 300 grams and then even as many as 600 grams of bread per day

506 Przyrów (Radomsko County).

507 Zarębice (Radomsko County).

to each labourer. Once a week (on Saturdays), a group of labourers went to Częstochowa for a one-day furlough. The cost of the labourers' journey from Złoty Potok⁵⁰⁸ to Częstochowa was covered by the Department. The first batch spent two months in Przysów. After two months, some of the labourers stayed as volunteers, while the missing number of labourers (up to 300) was delivered by the Department in the form of forced labour orders. The work in Przysów continued until the end of November 1940. It was most intensive in November (33,164 workdays) and the least in May (17,084 workdays).

Non-local camps

In early August, the Department received an order to deliver 1,000 labourers for road and earth works in the Lublin District in two groups, 500 people each. The first group was to leave on 16 August 1940, but the labourers had to come to the assembly point (post-industrial premises of the Kon and Oderfeld Lithography) on 15 August 1940 at 9 a.m. It should be mentioned that, in consultation with the Department of Labour of the Office of the Radom District head, the *Arbeitsamt* asserted that the work would be paid (*Lohnarbeit*).⁵⁰⁹

The Department immediately commenced work with full awareness of the situation and the responsibility, which that order laid on the Jewish community in Częstochowa. A decision was made to send only single men not burdened with family responsibilities [and?] healthy individuals (category A), aged 18–30. By 15 August 1940, the Department managed to gather 450 labourers, who received clothes (trousers and a jacket), underwear, shoes, and soap before departure. Furthermore, every individual was given a loaf of bread (two kilos).

The second group of 460 labourers summoned in the same way and on the same terms departed on 22 August 1940. One of the transports from Częstochowa reached the vicinity of Hrubieszów (Wereszyn-Marysin-Mircze),⁵¹⁰ while the other one reached Cieszanów near Bełżec.⁵¹¹ A Parental Committee

508 Potok Złoty (Piotrków Trybunalski County).

509 (German) paid work.

510 In Wereszyn, Marysin and Mircze (Hrubieszów County) there were labour camps of the Road Construction Group, established in June 1940. Their prisoners built the Mircze-Uhrynów section of a road in the border zone in the Hrubieszów County. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 62–63.

511 Camp in Cieszanów (Zamość County), see *Forced Labour Camps* (forthcoming) Docs. . . .

was established in the city to cooperate with the Council of the Elders for the purpose of taking care of the labourers working in the labour camps. The Council of the Elders directed two members of the Presidium to the said work places. Moreover, on the spot there were always two representatives of the Committee present to look after the labourers. Bread deliveries were organised for the Częstochowa residents. Every resident received 0.5 kilo of bread purchased at the expense of the Council of the Elders. Irrespective of that, endeavours were made to make it possible to send to the camp food parcels [14] (it was organised by the Street Traffic Control).⁵¹² Nearly two months passed with such difficult working conditions. The Department of Forced labour spared no efforts to release the Częstochowa residents and as a result the entire group of Częstochowa residents was to return home in mid-October 1940.

On the way back, three railway cars with the Częstochowa residents were detached from the transport and sent to another labour camp in the vicinity of Hrubieszów.

As soon as it was noticed, a physician and a permanent delegate of the Council were sent there, first and foremost, to provide sanitarian assistance and organise bread distribution. Irrespective of that, all possible efforts were made here for release of those labourers.

In the new place, Oszczów,⁵¹³ the working conditions were far worse than previously in Cieszanów: The labourers were laying a clinker road in the mud. Making matters worse, exhausted from two months' work, the labourers were too weak to continue.

Under these conditions, a member of the Presidium and a labour camp director⁵¹⁴ were delegated to Hrubieszów to release the Częstochowa residents.

512 (Polish) *Inspekcja Ruchu Ulicznego*, functioned as the police (before the establishment of Jewish police in the Częstochowa ghetto), meaning that it not only controlled street traffic but also investigated petty crime, escorted the resisting to the assembly points for forced labourers, and enforced payments for the benefit of the *Judenrat*. See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/1, pp. 42–43.

513 In Oszczów (Hrubieszów County) was one of the labour camps where Jewish prisoners worked on the Chełm–Hrubieszów–Mircze–Sokal road construction. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 67.

514 Probably Bernard Gottlieb, director of the Labour Camps Division of the Department of Forced Labour of the *Judenrat*.

As a result of those endeavours, increasingly large groups of the released camp labourers began to return home; the last group of Częstochowa residents (29 people) returned in mid-December 1940.

“[. . .] working conditions, [. . .] not all camp labourers endured [. . .] returned to the city.”⁵¹⁵

[12] Social Welfare Fund, Social Welfare Campaign for Food Provision⁵¹⁶

The sum was 199,975 zlotys for 253 payers. The payers were divided into 30 categories (from 50 to 3,000 zlotys). The largest categories were XI (1,000 zlotys): 49 people; XVII (600 zlotys), 39 people; and XV (700 zlotys), 38 people.

The greatest taxation in the amount of 49,100 zlotys was imposed on category XI, and that category also paid the largest sum to the Fund, 47,610 zlotys.

[13] Social Welfare Fund

819 people were taxed for the benefit of the Social Welfare Fund in the total sum of 571,450 zlotys. The estimated sum proved too large and, as a result of numerous complaints, it was reduced to 342,348.6. The payers were divided into 26 categories with the amounts of money ranging from 100 to 15,000 zlotys. The greatest number of payers was in category 24⁵¹⁷ with 200 zlotys (143 people), followed by category 26,⁵¹⁸ that is [. . .]10 with 500 zlotys (131 people). The smallest number of people (29) were in category I. The largest total sum taken was in category XIV – [9?]5,550 and 36,235 [. . .]. The lion’s share of the specified sum, 130,956.6 zlotys, is uncollectible, as it mostly [. . .] administrated by *Treuhänders*and, therefore, an enforcement officer cannot do anything in such a situation.

Category	number	[. . .]	amount		settled		collected	to be enforced
			[. . .]	[. . .]	[total?]	[. . .]		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I	[. . .]	[. . .]	15 t ⁵¹⁹	7 t	7 t	[. . .]	7 t	–

⁵¹⁵ “Missing from “Second Yearbook”.

⁵¹⁶ The fragment regarding the Social Welfare Fund and the tribute does not appear in “Second Yearbook.”

⁵¹⁷ In the original, by mistake: 14. See the table below.

⁵¹⁸ In the original, by mistake: 16.

⁵¹⁹ t = thousands of zlotys.

Category	number	[. . .]	amount		settled		collected	to be enforced
			[. . .]	[. . .]	[total?]	[. . .]		
II	1	12	12	12	12	–	12	–
III	1	10	10	10	–	–	–	10 ⁵²⁰
IV	4	6	24	17	2	1.5	3.5	13.5
V	7	5	35	18.5	3	6,550	9,550	8,950
VI	3	4	12	8.5	–	2.6	2.6	5.9
VII	27	3	81	50.1	18.6	14,013.4	32,613.4	[17], 486.80
VIII	3	2.5	7.5	5.3	2.5	2.1	4.6	0.7
IX	28	7	56	33,363.6	15,263.2	8,125		
X	25	1.5	37.5	21,050	10.2	5,860		
XI	2	1,335	2,670	–	1,580			
XII	1	1,330	1,330	1,330	–	0.5		
XIII	1	1.2	–	–	–	–	cancelled	
XIV	95	1	95	55,550	27.1	[?], 135		
XV	2	0.8	1.6	1.3	0.5	–		
XVI	19	0.750	14,250	8,550	3.1	0.925		
XVII	4	0.7	2.8	1.9	0.9	–		
XVIII	12	0.6	7.2	3.4	3.2	0.65		
XIX	129	0.5	64.5	33,675	15,350	4,605		
XX	29	0.4	11.6	7.3	3.2	0.4		
XXI	1	0.350	0.350	0.150	–	0.125		
XXII	[. . .]	[. . .]	27.3	17.7	8,775	2,365		
XXIII	11	0.25	2,750	1.7	1.4	0.175		
XXIV	[143]	0.2	28.6	14,420	8,040	1,740		
XXV	42 ⁵²¹	0.138	7.2	[?] 410	2,250	0.395		
XXVI	[131]	0.1	13.1	[. . .]	3,795	0.495		
total	819	–	571,450	342,348.6				
				108	43,348.5	613,382		

520 In the rows, the illegible figures were calculated on the basis of the legible ones. The figures in column 6 added to those in column 7 are equal to column 8. Figures from columns 8 and 9 are equal to column 5.

521 It should probably be 52.

Tribute

Taxation was imposed on 302 people in the amount of 308,950 zlotys in 21 categories from 100 to 7,500 zlotys.

Due to the large number of complaints the estimated sum was reduced to 208,933.87 zlotys.

The largest number of payers was in categories IX (1,000 zlotys) with 100 people and XIV (21,500 zlotys) with 101 people. The heaviest taxation was imposed on category IX, initially 100,000 zlotys, then reduced to 65,710 zlotys. The above category also paid in the largest sum, 27,110 zlotys. The total sum paid was [. . .], 3 per cent), whereas the rest, that is 101,662.5 zlotys, is [. . .] balance due [. . .] according to [. . .] being enforced.

ARG I 715 b (Ring. I/183; I/245; I/1220/90)

Description:

Ring. I/183, duplicate, handwritten (F*), ink, Polish, 205×285 mm, many minor damages and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page (on p. [4] of the manuscript of Ring. I/183a);

Ring. I/245, duplicate, handwritten (F*), ink, Polish, 202×280 mm, many minor damages and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page;

Ring. I/1220/90, duplicate, handwritten (two styles of handwriting: F* and unidentified [?]), ink, Polish, 146×214 mm, many minor damages and missing fragments, 3 sheets, 6 pages. P. 1 is from Ring. I/245, p. 2 from Ring. I/183. Hersh Wasser's note on Ring. I/1220/90, p. 1 (ink): "6 standard pages" and to Ring. I/245 is attached his note in Yiddish: "Submitted by Mr J. Winkler."⁵²²

Edition based on the handwritten duplicates, 5 sheets, 8 pages, missing fragments supplemented with the *II Rocznik Statystyczny Rady Starszych w Częstochowie*, AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/2, pp. 127, 130, 132–135, 137–139, 141–142, 145, 148, 152–154, 165, 168 and 213/3, pp. 292–305, 307, 315–320.

522 Jerzy Winkler (?–1942), studied economy at the Vienna University, collaborated with YIVO. In the Warsaw ghetto, he worked in the department of statistics of the *Judenrat*; at the same time he closely cooperated with Oyneg Shabes, including research on the ghetto economy.

December 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “טשענסטאָכװ” [Częstochowa]. *Social divisions in the ghetto, activity of the Judenrat, forced labour, Ordnungsdienst, corruption among Jewish officials, refugees from Płock, round-ups, and arrests.*

[1] Częstochowa

The life of Jews in this town compared to other ghettos in various towns and shtetls was considered satisfactory until recently. Business and trade have been established. Jews trade with Poles, who come into the ghetto. Many Jews are employed in the local factories (iron foundries and similar) in place of the Poles, who were sent to Germany for forced labour.

Up until now, the Jewish residential quarter (a ghetto) has not been fenced off.⁵²³ There are no walls; the entrance and exit of the ghetto is guarded by German guards, Jewish and Polish police. The following streets are enclosed in the ghetto:

Aristocratic section:

1. *Aleja* of Saint Mary⁵²⁴ (up to the bridge),
2. Garibaldi Street,
3. Katedralna Street,
4. Market Square,
5. Przemysłowa Street,
6. Daszyńskiego Street.

The Jewish poor live in the little streets listed further on: Kozia, Senatorska, Przemysłowa, Garncarska, and others.⁵²⁵

[2] The “Kawia fields” are also within the ghetto.⁵²⁶ This is very significant for the ghetto residents for many reasons: The Jews worked the fields and gardens there during the summer and even sowed grains. This

523 The ghetto in Częstochowa was established following the decree of the *Stadthauptmann* Richard Wendler, on 9 April 1941.

524 See footnote 504.

525 The following streets marked the borders of the ghetto in Częstochowa: Kawia, Kiedrzyńska, Jaskrowska, Fabryczna (now Mielczarskiego), Narutowicza (now Krakowska) and Strażacka; on the east was the Warta River, border on the west the railways.

526 An area between the streets Kawia and Krótka. There was a creek there during the war.

was the only place where the Jews inhaled fresh air. Also, the largest scale smuggling operates from here, [and] it goes without saying, with the consent of all the agents who take the appropriate “fee” which endorses the war trade.

The *kehillah* board maintains a “good relationship” with the Germans. The *kehillah* had to create a “joy house” for the Germans. The “whorehouse” is located on the Aryan side. The honour of pleasing the Germans fell to the Polish girls from the Aryan side. As related, the plan was worked out by a Jewish architect. The construction and installation has cost the community 30,000 zlotys.

The *Arbeitsamt* in the community is led by a certain Mr Kolenbrener,⁵²⁷ who has already caused quite a few problems for the local Jewish population. This year before Rosh Hashanah and *Yom Kippur* the Germans issued a decree that Jews must report for forced labour. [3] The *kehillah* demanded that all men voluntarily report for forced labour. No one reported in response to the demand that the *kehillah* had sent out. As a result, raids and random capturing started. It was carried out by the Jewish policemen.

Anyone who had any money bought themselves out of the hands of the Jewish police.

A large number of Jewish youth and the elderly fled from nearby shtetls, such as: Olsztyn, Kiedrzyń, and Radomsko. It was at great risk to life that the group fled the town. All those who were caught were kept under arrest for several days. The work of rounding up Jews was finished on *Yom Kippur* at the Market Square. The head of the *Arbeitsamt* passing by on *Yom Kippur* in a *droshky*, cigarette in mouth, appeared before the unfortunate ones.

The Jewish police was for a certain time headed by Messrs Galster and Kacynel⁵²⁸ from Kalisz. For various reasons, while issuing *przepustki*, they were arrested and released a month later. Their arrest inspired much joy [4] for the Jewish population. The satisfaction that they were removed was great. At present, the Jewish police is headed by a Polish commissioner, who, by virtue of his indifference to Jewish affairs, is actually bearable.

527 Beniek Kalenbrener (Kolenbrener) is mentioned in Doc. 66.

528 Jerzy Galster (1918–?), medical student, officer of the sanitary brigade in the Częstochowa *Ordnungsdienst*. Moryc Kacynel, lawyer. In 1940 he was a member of a Mediatory Commission of the Częstochowa: AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/4, pp. 2, 213/44, pp. 1–10.

Those aforementioned, seized for forced labour on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, were shortly released, after being detained for a few days. As it transpired, they were released for the following reasons: The *cukrownia*⁵²⁹ in Wrocław required a larger number of Christian workers. In town, there was some disturbance in the meantime and the sugar refinery refused to take Jews for work.

In the *kehillah*, a larger number of Jewish workers are also employed, who work at different outposts. The wage is 3.60 [zlotys] daily for 7 hours of work and a certain allocation of foodstuffs, in kind. The poor go to work very eagerly.

A characteristic event occurred [5] at one of the outposts: A group was working far from town. The work itself took little time because they had been driven to the swamps for several hours. So at the location they did almost nothing and had to get overnight accommodation. The Germans, however, made a “hotel” out of a specially prepared house for the workers and asked the workers to pay from 3 to 8 zlotys for a night. It goes without saying that most workers slept in the field.

In the town, there is also a certain number of refugees from Płock and Bodzanów.⁵³⁰ They live in shelters, accommodated by the *kehillah*. They live in difficult conditions. The largest number of instances of typhus and other diseases occur among the refugees.

Following the issue of the latest decree, leaving the Jewish ghetto incurs the death penalty.⁵³¹ Large-scale arrests have been carried out. A group of porters, detained on the Aryan side, were arrested. Apart from them, a group of barbers was arrested. The hairdressers were allegedly arrested because the barber shops were considered [6] places that spread terror and other news. Both groups were sent to Oświęcim.

A group of Poles was arrested for showing compassion and distributing help (like food and cigarettes) among Russian POWs, who are found outside

529 (Polish) sugar refinery. Formerly Zuckerfabrik Schottwitz, founded in 1890. It is striking that the Polish name of the town was used here, rather than the German name Breslau.

530 In March 1941, approximately 1,000 Jews deported from the Ciechanów Governorate were sent to Częstochowa. See M. Grynberg, *Żydzi w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, pp. 102–103.

531 See footnote XXX.

the town and sometimes travel through the town.⁵³² There have been instances when the POWs, who live in special barracks, ate grass and tree bark in the summer. The Poles were sent to Oświęcim.

The Jewish cemetery is located outside the Jewish ghetto. The escorting of the dead takes place in Jewish wagons, which make their way to the cemetery. Escorting on foot is not allowed.

In the town, there is a “neutral house.” This is a special concession for the Jewish artisans who work for the Germans. The house is situated outside the ghetto, in the Saint Mary [Avenue] No. 14. The Jews of that house cannot cross to the Aryan side. Their house therefore remains an extension of the Jewish ghetto.

It must be also mentioned that the Poles were punished by their removal from one street, Kilińskiego Street, because of their attitude toward Russian POWs.

December 1941

ARG I 716 (Ring. I/797)

Description: duplicate (a) handwritten (RR*), ink, 143×185 mm, 1 page missing; duplicate (b) 2 copies, handwritten (Z*), pencil, 148 x 210 mm, Yiddish, 27 sheets, 27 pages. On p. 1 of duplicate (b), first copy, information by Hersh Wasser: “Written in December 1941. Submitted by Dina Shaya, a *halutzah*.⁵³³ 109 – 1942, 1 January, No. 15.”

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate (b), 6 sheets, 6 pages.

532 Camps for Soviet POWs operated in Częstochowa from September 1941. They were located in two places: in the barracks of the 27th infantry regiment and in the suburbs near Żłota Góra. Approximately 15,000 people perished in this camp. See *Obozy hitlerowskie*, pp. 145–146.

533 Member of *Hehalutz* movement.

April 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony. "טשענסטאכאוו. יידישע מוסרים, אונטערוועלט מענשן, אונטערטראָגער, לאַבזעס, אויסוואַרפֿן. [Częstochowa. Jewish informers, gangsters, henchmen, louts, reprobates. In the service of the occupiers. (Continued.)]

[1] Częstochowa

Jewish informers, gangsters, henchmen, louts, reprobates. In the service of the occupiers.
(continued)⁵³⁴

The Jewish ghetto in Częstochowa has remained as it was – neither walled nor fenced in. Large signs in four languages (Polish, German, Hebrew, and Yiddish) at the entrance to the ghetto inform the population that entry of Aryans is forbidden and that trespassing and leaving the ghetto by the Jews is punishable by death. The Hebrew sign reads: *Yehudim ha-ozvim et tehum ha-moshav ha-yehudi she-lo ke-dat yadunu le-mitah*.⁵³⁵

Recently various events, which bear a political character, occurred there. Many Poles from among the Polish intelligentsia and some Bundists were arrested. A gunfight between Poles and Germans took place in the second half of March near the Jasna Góra monastery.⁵³⁶ [2] Nothing more precise is known. People in the town say that, as a result, the Germans led out in an unknown direction all the residents of the two houses, from which the shots seem to have been fired.

The Jewish ghetto has been recently reduced by four houses on Katedralna Street, numbers 12, 13, 14, and 17. Hence the houses which connected the ghetto via various passageway gaps have been lost.

Jews can still move around on the Aryan side on the basis of passes, in which the directions, hours, and streets are indicated; the holder of such

⁵³⁴ Most probably, reference to Doc. 65, in the same handwriting.

⁵³⁵ (Hebrew) Jews leaving the Jewish area of residence illegally will be sentenced to death.

⁵³⁶ Beginning in the seventeenth century, the most revered centre of Roman Catholic cult in Poland.

a permit can move without restraint. An appropriate payment endorses this possibility.

[3] It is worthwhile considering more broadly the internal Jewish life, its degradation and demoralisation, brought on by the war.

The smuggling and war trade, forced labour camps, and other crooked and dirty ways of profiting have stirred up Jewish muck, and brought to the forefront the underworld individual, the street kid, bribe-takers of all sorts – from the simple informer to the aristocratic liaison between the *Judenrat* and the occupiers. And this has led to the biggest, the most disgusting and awful disaster in the general way of life and to the terrible moral decay of the Jewish population.

At the forefront of Jewish life in Częstochowa has surfaced a group of thugs, who keep the town in terror and constant fear; they make money from every Jewish misfortune, devouring and guzzling while the Jewish masses die en masse from hunger and cold.

This group, whose members' names will be noted here, [4] has linked itself with, and has sold itself to, the German occupier, whom it serves by informing and denouncing, by collaborating in various ugly businesses to the detriment of the Jewish public, and above all at the expense of thousands of lives of the poor Jewish masses.

Each of these informers is in charge of a gang of underworld youths, who together carry out the shameful work in places where they find themselves.

In the first place were: Rozenberg Getsl, Hershl Jarzábek (tailor, former member of the Needleworkers' Union) Wolberg (pub owner), Borekh Ginzburg (member of Poalei Tsiyon Right from Kłobuck) and Jerzyk Kambrot. The second position is held by Shmuel Weinryb. Further prominent places in this hateful work are held by: Shmuel Wróblewski, Moniek Pławner, Beniek Kalenbrener, brothers Heniek and Maks Gnat, Sheftl and Erlich,⁵³⁷ by the way [5] already in Oświęcim.

When considering the hierarchy of the persons mentioned above, and about the place they held in society, it presents itself as follows:

537 Of the individuals mentioned here, only one is confirmed by another document: Yitskhok Wolberg is listed as one of the Jewish policemen in Częstochowa. See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Częstochowa, 213/12, p. 62.

Getsl Rozenberg: a peasant boy from Szczekociny, came to Częstochowa during the war. He made contact with the Germans and started informing. The way in which he worked was twofold: at first he denounced, later he confiscated the merchandise and took money on the spot, sharing it with his "bosses." Afterwards he bought up the merchandise and again took off to the streets.

Then he settled down with his wife and child, visits whores frequently, remains in contact with the Polish police, leads a pseudo-"Thirteen" and was arrested two weeks ago. The downfall came as a result of his excessive [6] involvement in murky businesses and a firm belief that nothing and no one could threaten him.

Recently in partnership with the Germans, he was involved in various business ventures in Radom. He took and brought various merchandise from there and in this way made colossal business. His arrest happened by chance. He was detained on his way with the merchandise. When interrogated as to from where and to whom he was taking the merchandise, he said that he was acting on the directive of the Częstochowa Gestapo. Since he had become awkward for his "bosses," they found a way out of the not so comfortable situation – and they arrested him, removing him out of their way, and covering the traces.

Shmuel Weinryb is a member of the *Judenrat*, where he serves the function of liaising between the *Judenrat* and the Gestapo. He is a dental technician by profession, 40 years old and he had [7] a good reputation. At the beginning of the war he used to do favours for the Jews and help them in their time of distress. However, as a result of the close contact with the Germans, people in the town say that he is becoming demoralised.

Maniek Pławner – native of Radom, 30 years old, before the war worked as an electrical technician, came here wounded, during the Polish-German war.⁵³⁸ He works for the prosecutor of the *Sondergericht* as an electrical technician. Until recently he showed enough interest in various Jewish matters. He helped the Jews and did them favours. Recently he has been 'dancing' with the Germans and is asking to be paid.

Beniek Kalenbrener – 31 years old, came from Gdynia. During the influx of the refugees from Płock he worked at the train station in receiving them.

538 In September 1939.

After a time he found grace in the eyes of the Germans and became a liaison person on behalf of [8] the Germans in the *Judenrat*, at “their” direct request and with a monthly salary of 600 zlotys. As people say, his “star” has been falling recently with his bosses. Nevertheless, he maintains business relations and does business in partnership with Gutstadt, the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Radom. He works in the accommodation office and he is known in the town as a swindler of the worst kind.⁵³⁹

Heniek and Maks are two “sons” of a special kind. Both worked as orderlies for SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dette. They came here with their previous bread-giver. Heniek remains in Częstochowa the whole time, whereas Maks comes on visits. Both of them hold permanent passes, carry no “Jewish signs”, and live outside the ghetto. In the town they are considered to be dangerous types. [9] Both of them are 18–20 years old.

Wolberg – a Jewish policeman, joined the Police thanks to Major Wrzesiński. He remains in close contact with them. Gets drunk together with them and makes money.

Wróblewski Shmuel – native of Krzepice, hangs around with women, lives with lovers, worked for a year as locksmith. Gets drunk with the Germans, does business with them and has plenty of money.

In addition should also be mentioned: Epstein – a young man of 20, and Szenkiewicz[?], 25 years old, who carry out this fine work together with the above mentioned gang of informers.

At the train station before leaving Częstochowa, as the narrator relates, a new anti-Jewish poster was hung, showing a Jew covered with lice. The poster reads in Polish: *Strzeż się tyfusu, unikaj Żydów*.⁵⁴⁰

April 1942.

ARG I 717 (Ring. I/867)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (RR*), ink, Yiddish, 158×204 mm, 5 sheets, 9 pages.

539 There are no sources to confirm the author’s suggestion that Kalenbrener was a member of the Supreme Council of Elders of the Radom District. See S. Piątkowski, *Dni Życia*, p. 189.

540 (Polish, in Latin characters) Beware of typhus, avoid Jews.

After 2 July 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author(s) unknown. Accounts “טשענסטאָכאָוו” [Częstochowa], “אָסטראָווייעץ קיעל[צער]” [Ostrowiec Kiel[ECKI]]⁵⁴¹ and “דער אַרבעטלאַגער אין רעיָאָוו (ביי סקאַזשיסקאָ) [The labour camp in Rejów (near Skarżysko)].

[cover] Częstochowa. On the train. Ostrowiec.

2 July 1942

[1] 2 July [19]42

Częstochowa – on the train.

On 27 June, the registration of the Jews in Częstochowa who have relatives in *Eretz Yisrael* was completed. The registration had begun at the end of May. The *kehillah* had charged 30 zlotys for every declaration for the purpose of emigration. Approximately 5,000 Jews registered, bringing the total to about 15,000 people, approximately 33 per cent of the Jewish population in the ghetto (over 45,000).⁵⁴²

At this time, the Jewish population finds itself under the impression of being permanently “snatched” for the work camps. The Jewish police carried this out in the streets and in the flats on the basis of lists. The Jews employed by the Germans were not seized. The majority of the Jewish population (up to the age of 40) either worked or were fictitiously registered at work places. Of late there had been many rumours in the town about a gigantic resettlement of the ghetto, but it was said that it had been postponed for a certain period.⁵⁴³ Apart from this “happy” news, rumours began to circulate about reducing the size of the ghetto. Thus, the mood was one of marked tension.

[2] There was mass movement on the trains. The carriages were always overfilled with travelling Christians, men and women alike. They conducted hearty conversations amongst themselves, speaking in loud voices,

541 From 1937 on, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski.

542 According to Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH*, 3–4 (15–16) (1955), table III, prior to 22 September 1942, there were 48,000 inmates in the Częstochowa ghetto.

543 The first *Aktion* in Częstochowa took place from 22 September 1942 to 8 October 1942, see Introduction.

not discomfited themselves in the least by who might be listening. Thus, they recounted many things which were, to be sure, very important to the German secret agents, both men and women, of whom there were a sufficiently great number. (By the way, all former secret agents from the Polish secret service had to present themselves for work or punishment of death!) The Jewish question was never absent from their agenda and, for the most part, they expressed in their conversations joy and pleasure that the Germans made the Jews' lives a misery and carried out that which they had long desired before the war. They held cosy conversations about the Częstochowa Jews, saying that the German authorities wanted to expel 14,000 souls from there, but that the *kehillah* managed to have the decree rescinded by means of a large bribe, and the plan was postponed for a time. (By the way, my informant in Częstochowa had heard nothing of this.) In addition, the Christians continued to relate that the Germans had ordered the Częstochowa Jews to deliver 400 members of the Jewish intelligentsia [3] with the justification that they were needed for work outside Tarnów (specifically there!); the *kehillah* made the first move, according to the Christians, and even provided 500(!).

On 25 August, Częstochowa together with the surrounding area will become part of the *Reich*, said an enlightened Christian. This was decided after Frank's visit to Częstochowa during the previous weeks.⁵⁴⁴



Recently the Poles, especially the intelligentsia, were persecuted harshly by the Germans. There were daily arrests, deportations to Oświęcim, and dozens of Polish teachers were murdered on the spot. (They, in particular, were kept under close surveillance by the Germans, as well as priests.) A Pole had told the story on the train of a priest who had been murdered on the platform in Włoszczowa. This occurred on Monday 29 June. He was shot from behind by 2 *gestapowcy*.⁵⁴⁵ They fired five bullets into him.

In the Radom area, enormous numbers of Polish peasants and workers have recently been resettled. Many of those were sent into the *Reich* for

544 Częstochowa was not incorporated into the *Reich*. Hans Frank (1900–1946), lawyer, Nazi German functionary, Governor-General residing in Kraków. Sentenced to death in Nuremberg as a war criminal and hanged.

545 (Polish) Gestapo men.

work. In conversation, one also heard about the partisans operating in the Włoszczowa area. [4] The first news about the partisans had already circulated a year before, when the first troops were supposed to have arrived. Recently a partisan group was said to have been found hidden amongst the grain. The Polish police were alerted and an officer with two other policemen went into the field. The partisans began a shoot-out. The officer was killed and nothing happened to the two policemen. The Germans evicted a Polish landowner from his property there and installed a German. The partisans unremittingly harassed the German administrator, demanding various things from him. Thus, for example, he had to even supply them with a pig. Only the gendarmes who were brought in were able to chase out the partisans. Recently the partisans (the local ones) shot another officer.

In recent times, the Germans have been strongly combatting Polish smuggling of foodstuffs on the trains. They carry out exhaustive inspections and take away whatever they find: butter, cheese, bacon, tobacco, meat, flour and they beat [the culprits] very brutally. Earlier the gendarmes themselves did this. Now it has been [5] handed over to the Polish police who are even more brutal. With all the ruthlessness of professional *stupayka*,⁵⁴⁶ they pillage the treasures of foodstuffs collected by the Polish smugglers, men and women, and curse them to the hilt. On the subject of the brutal behaviour of the Polish police, a Polish secret agent⁵⁴⁷ took the opportunity to tell the following story: At one of the railway stations, there had been an enormous confiscation of goods from the Polish smugglers. The Polish police had gathered together a vast quantity of provisions. Among the victims was a Christian woman who wept bitter tears bemoaning her loss and cried out: *O Hitlerku kochany, gdybyś ty wiedział, co mi wyrabiają, tobyś sam ich powiesił*.⁵⁴⁸ She was overheard by a high-ranking German member of the military who ordered that her words be literally translated. When that was done, he ordered that the seized provisions be returned to the woman without delay. Since it was not possible to find her bundles, he ordered that she be given products from the general pile.

546 (Russian) policeman mindlessly executing orders.

547 Possibly a Polish informant of the author of this account.

548 (Polish, in Latin characters) Hitler, my dear, if you knew what they were doing to me, you would hang them yourself.

Searches were regularly carried out on the train twice a day, and although 99 per cent of [6] the travellers were smugglers, the smuggling did not diminish despite the enormous terror. Because of the enormous smuggling traffic, for which neither the Germans nor the Polish police could find a solution, rumours circulated that all communication with the civil population would be stopped. This had been expected to happen from the 1st [June], but meanwhile it remained as it was.

On the train, a *shikse* from the Kielce area communicated certain details about the *Shuzba Budowlana*,⁵⁴⁹ which recruits Polish youth. It was a forced-labour organisation for Poles (a similar organization existed in Poland under the name of *Junacy*). Polish men aged between 18 and 40 were recruited into the organization. The woman's brother was kidnapped by a detachment of the SB and works in a quarry not far from his birthplace. The work is very hard and the overseers don't indulge them. Living conditions are difficult. Everyone is given from 150 to 200 grams of bread a day, black coffee, and two soups, for a midday meal and supper, and one zloty in cash a day. [7] The Poles were not at all content with the substandard rations and protested. At that point, the Germans warned them that if they did not stop grumbling and return to work in earnest, they would consider it a revolt and they would be shown the consequences! The *shikse* added that if her brother had not been able to return home from time to time and to eat well (eggs, butter, bread, etc.), he would have seen his end long ago. No one knew how long their service in the S.B. would last. It could last half a year, it could last longer. It is interesting that huge placards were posted all over that district in all public places exhorting Polish youth to sign up voluntarily in the S.B. They were promised good food, good living conditions, and a good salary. The *shikse* painted an accurate picture of what was the reality.

Whenever one travels by train, one constantly sees fast trains packed with Ukrainians, men and women, who are being sent away for work in Germany. [8] They are mainly peasants and workers from the Kiev area, seized with brute force from their beds. They are transported exclusively in *towarowe*⁵⁵⁰ cars. Through the tiny barred windows, one can see dark faces,

549 (Polish, in Latin characters) Construction Service (German: *Baudienst*). The abbreviation of the Polish name, S.B. is used further on in the text.

550 (Polish) freight [cars].

noses, cheeks, eyes. Tightly-packed railway carriages full of Hungarian and Italian soldiers travel to the east. The Poles say about the Hungarians that they are *Volksdeutsche* who live in Hungary. Besides these trains, there are long trains travelling towards the front with ammunition and military supplies. On the open freight platforms stand artillery, lorries, personnel vehicles, and small tanks.

A tremendous anti-Semitic atmosphere permeates the Polish rail travellers.

The better educated Poles, probably townspeople, promote terrible anti-Semitic propaganda, especially among the peasant population, saying that the Jews in the ghettos should not be given any supplies and should be left to die from hunger. *Z Żydami już dawno koniec, gdyby nie nasi Polacy!*⁵⁵¹ They also argue that selling foodstuffs to the Jews makes the products more expensive in general, with the result that the Poles end up paying more than the Jews. [9] People say to one another that after the next harvest the Germans will take the greater part of the grain from the peasants and leave them only a minimal quantity which will certainly not be enough for even the personal needs of the Poles themselves. Therefore, each peasant should know that under no circumstances should he sell anything to a Jew, and may the Jews die of hunger. As my interlocutor stressed to me, the anti-Semitic talk was not a product of German propaganda, but rather a Polish home-grown product. In so far as anti-Semitic propaganda is concerned, there are more and more anti-Semitic songs being sung on the trains by many professional railway singers, of whom the Polish travellers are very proud and in whom they take great pleasure. If the song is embellished with a new anti-Semitic notion or nuance, then donations flow freely. Such a railway singer would begin to sing very patriotically: *Marsz, marsz, Sikorski!*⁵⁵² and *Nie rzucim ziemi,*⁵⁵³ and soon move on to anti-Semitic songs with words like the following:

551 (Polish, in Latin characters) There would have been an end to the Jews long ago, if not for our Poles!

552 (Polish, in Latin characters) "March, march, Sikorski!" A nineteenth century song of the Polish diaspora in the USA, sung by Polish soldiers in England during WWII with the words of the refrain changed from "March, march, Polonia".

553 (Polish, in Latin characters) "We will not abandon our land". These are first words of *Rota* (The Oath), a 1908 poem by Maria Konopnicka, sung to music by Feliks Nowowiejski. It was an unofficial Polish anthem, especially in the Prussian partition.

*Wpierw szła żydowska niania z dzieckiem do Ogrodu Saskiego, a teraz musi pójść pod mur ghetta... Gęsia i Smocza to ich ulice – a nam pozostawili swoje kamienice.*⁵⁵⁴ [10] And all the ditties end with the refrain, *Do Palestyny.*⁵⁵⁵ The Polish audience enjoys itself and in a good humour returns again to everyday topics of conversation.

One also sees Russian prisoners on the trains in terrible condition. No one knows where they are going.

‘Had a conversation with a Polish railway employee. He complained bitterly about his material situation. Things are very difficult because he cannot manage on his monthly earnings. His salary is still at a pre-war level. *Ale trzeba kombinować,*⁵⁵⁶ he says, and the employees make a profit on tickets and very often risk their heads doing so. For example, the cashier at the station in Opatów made a nice little living selling tickets in the following fashion: The Germans introduced a heavy limitation on the number of train tickets on all railway lines. At the Ostrowiec station, only 30 tickets per train are sold. On average, over 100 passengers await each train, so there is a huge queue at the ticket [11] window a good five hours before the arrival of the train. By law, the ticket window was to open one hour before the train arrived. In order not to sell the 30 tickets immediately, after each 4 or 5 tickets sold, the cashier takes a break for a few minutes, so that just before the train leaves, when the crowd is already highly agitated, he sells only to those who hand him a large banknote and don’t ask for change. If someone then should count out the exact amount of money, then he would say that he had no more tickets, and that’s it! Needless to say, in a provincial station, a cashier can collect several dozen zlotys in the course of a day. The aforementioned limitations were strictly adhered to on the railway lines Warsaw-Kraków and Warsaw-Terespol. The conductors were forbidden to sell tickets to passengers on the train in any case. If they do so and are caught in the act, they endanger their lives.

554 (Polish, in Latin characters) A Jewish nanny used to take her child for a walk in the Saxon Gardens, but now she has to walk to the ghetto walls . . . They have Gęsia and Smocza Streets and they have left us their apartment buildings.

555 (Polish) To Palestine!

556 (Polish, in Latin characters) But you need to fiddle things.

Ostrowiec Kiel[ecski]

The same informant ‘from Częstochowa’⁵⁵⁷ also provided certain details about current life in Ostrowiec (last week).

[. . .] Jewish life in Ostrowiec is more or less as usual. Coexistence [. . .] with the Gestapo has more or less “stabilized”. For example, a few weeks ago a wedding took place in the town, the chairman of the *Judenrat*⁵⁵⁸ gave away his only daughter, his little girl, in marriage. The preparations for the wedding lasted several weeks and the wedding itself lasted the entire week. We ate and drank the very best, and the Germans, needless to say, also partook. In addition, they received some very nice gifts from the local *Neturei Karta*.⁵⁵⁹

But when the Gestapo commanders are overcome by a moment of madness, they forget their brotherly feelings and give everyone a hard time. The two young Gestapo agents are well known to the Jewish population of the ghetto – the ghetto is not sealed: Peter, or Peter with his dog and his [13] friend Bruno. Peter does a fine business with Jews and has managed to save a pretty sum. [When] the two companions gaily stroll through the streets of the ghetto with their dog, the Jews clear out from the streets, as the dog has a habit of biting Jews. The intermediary between the *Judenrat* and these two men is a certain Funt,⁵⁶⁰ a former Hasid who has become totally non-religious, has shaved his beard and speaks German, although nasty tongues say that his German is not German at all. Whatever the case may be, he has feathered his nest. Not long ago it came about that Peter approached him and demanded he find him a Jew to shoot. Funt tried to argue with him, back and forth, but when he saw that the assassin was not prepared to renounce his desire, he suggested that he shoot a Jew from among those arrested in prison. Peter was in agreement. They went off to the prison together and Peter shot a Jew there.

557 ^c Added by the typist.

558 It was probably still Jakub Izaak Rubinstein (1891–?), a printer by profession. He was also a member of the ŻSS delegation. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/756, p. 5.

559 (Aramaic) Guardians of the town. Organisation of ultra-orthodox Jews established in 1938 in Jerusalem. Opposes the creation of the state of Israel before the coming of the Messiah. Exists to this day.

560 Probably Abram Funt, member of the *Judenrat*, then a policeman in the Order Service. See testimony of Yankel Libman, Israel Szerman, and other Ostrowiec Jews, of 23 October 1947, AŻIH, 301/2932.

After the murder, Peter pointed at Funt and said, with a cynical smile on his mug: "Here's the Jew who is guilty of his death."

[14] Recently in town there has been talk of resettlement.⁵⁶¹ People are being seized again for work.

The labour camp in Rejów (near Skarżysko)⁵⁶²

The camp in Rejów was set up by the Germans at the beginning of this summer.⁵⁶³ The camp is situated 4 km from Skarżysko, in a very pretty area in the woods right by the railway line. From the train, one can see the barracks for the workers along with the barbed-wire fence around the camp. The fence is a double one, thus making it very difficult for anyone to escape. The camp guard oversees the camp and its internal functions and is composed entirely of Ukrainians who also speak German. These are probably *Volksdeutsche* from Ukraine. (? -- Why might they not be Ukrainian nationals from Galicia or simply Ukrainians who have learned German?)⁵⁶⁴

There are approximately 20 barracks in the camp. 15,000 people live there; men and women are housed separately. The men are aged between 16 and 40, the women [15] between 16 and 30. These are all people who have been seized from the small towns in the Radom area for work in the local ammunition factories. They are led to work in groups at 7 in the morning and work until 7 at night.

The living conditions are as follows: 150 grams of bread, coffee, two soups, and 4 zlotys pay a day. They are paid 40 zlotys every 10 days. Apart from that, each *kehillah* looks after its own Jews. They send them bread, for poor Jews who receive no parcels from home, up to half a kilo of bread per person. There is no limit on food parcels. In addition, there is an agreement with a Jewish baker to sell the workers bread one zloty cheaper than the market price for a two-kilo loaf (15 zlotys instead of 16 for a two-kilo loaf. The local community

561 The first *Aktion* in Ostrowiec was on 11 and 12 October 1942. See A. Rutkowski, "Martyrologia," table XIII.

562 One of the HASAG camps in Skarżysko-Kamienna, at the Rejów estate. See HASAG, p. 4.

563 Labour camp affiliated with the plant, established in August 1942. The plant functioned from November 1939; it employed mainly Poles. In April 1942, 2,000 Poles were sent to forced labour in Germany; they were replaced by Jews. See K. Gibaszewski, *HASAG*, pp. 7, 15–16.

564 The text in parentheses is only in the typewritten duplicate.

has to pay the remaining one zloty.) *Kehillah* representatives often visit the camp and acquaint themselves with the condition of their people. The behaviour of the Ukrainians towards the Jews is quite decent. They only mete out brutal beatings for thieving and also imprison [people].

[16] In response to the question put to the camp guards as to how long the camp will exist, they answer that it will last until winter and possibly beyond.

In the camp, there are also Polish workers who are not barracked there and who go home to sleep.⁵⁶⁵ The only ones who have to remain in the camp are those who have “committed the sin” of coming late to work or who miss work days. The Poles receive the same rations, but their salary is 20 per cent higher than that of the Jews. There is also medical care provided in the camp. The doctor is a German; the orderlies are Jews. The doctor tends to the sick in the camp every day. One can go to him directly. The sick and the infirm are sent home twice a week. The relatively bearable conditions in the camps attract Jews to the work. They apply voluntarily. So, for example, volunteers are now coming from Warsaw.

In connection with seizing Jews for work, there is talk of expelling Jews from the following towns: Kłobuck, Szczekociny near Żarki⁵⁶⁶ (Będzin district, *Reich*⁵⁶⁷).

ARG I 718 (Ring. I/440)

Description: original or duplicate; handwritten (LEG*), notebook, ink, 150×195 mm, minor damage and fragments missing; text partly illegible; duplicates: “Częstochowa – on the train” and “Ostrowiec” – 2 copies, “The labour camp in Rejów” – 3 copies (typewritten, 208×295 mm, major damage and fragments missing); Yiddish, 22 sheets, 31 pages. On the reverse of p. 3 of the first copy of typewritten duplicate, notation by Hersch Wasser in Yiddish (ink): “June 1942, 8 pages.”

Edition based on the handwritten text, 8 sheets, 16 pages, supplemented by the first copy of the typewritten duplicate.

565 At the HASAG plant, Poles were not considered prisoners.

566 The distance between Szczekociny and Żarki is approximately 40 km.

567 Kłobuck belonged to Blachstädt County (the combined pre-war counties of Blachownia and Ostrów) in Opole *Regierungsbezirk*, in the territories annexed to the *Reich*. Jews were deported to Auschwitz on 22 June 1942. Szczekociny was in the Radom District of the GG, in the Jędrzejów County. Jews were deported to Treblinka on 21 September 1942. See *Obozy hitlerowskie*; A. Rutkowski, “Martyrologia,” Table VI.

JĘDRZEJÓW COUNTY

WŁOSZCZOWA

68

After 6 March 1941, Włoszczowa ghetto, Judenrat in Włoszczowa, Committee for Refugees and the Poor. Letter to Israel Falk, AJDC officer for the Radom District, with enclosed report on the Committee's activities in 1940⁵⁶⁸.

[1]⁵⁶⁹ JUDENRAT
JEWISH COUNCIL
WŁOSZCZOWA
PHONE NO. 13

Mr I. Falk

[2] JUDENRAT
JEWISH COUNCIL
WŁOSZCZOWA
No 636/41/K
Committee for Refugees and the Poor

Włoszczowa, d[ate] 6 March 1941
Phone No. 13

568 In AŻIH there is also another copy of the report. It was donated in 1951 by Tadeusz Przypkowski, who found it in the papers of his deceased father, Dr. Feliks Przypkowski, who, in turn, had received it from Dr. Henryk (Hirsch) Beer (1907–1944), member of the *Judenrat* and the Jędrzejów KOM ŻSS. He was the head of the local Jewish hospital until its liquidation in 1943, briefly went into hiding at the home of Feliks Przypkowski in Jędrzejów, and then went to Warsaw. He sent his last message to Przypkowski in 1944; he wanted to get to the other side of the front. Both copies are almost identical, with differences in the layout. Presumably, the *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa wrote two copies or versions of the report and sent one to the AJDC Office in Kraków (*Oyneg Shabes* copy), and the second to the KOM in Jędrzejów. The first one is very damaged and large pieces of text are missing, photographs are unclear and torn. For the second copy, see AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, 223/1. Fragments below marked ^c are taken from the second copy, preserved in good condition, including photographs.

569 Page [1] is the envelope.

Mr I. Falk
American Joint Distribution Committee
Kraków
Dietla Street 85

We took a liberty of sending you, in the enclosure, the description of activity in the field of social help in our town in 1940.

Sincerely,
JEWISH COUNCIL
Committee for Refugees and the Poor
/-/ [signature] /-/ [signature]

[3] [. .] to inspector I. Falk for his full understanding of [our] possibilities we would like to say from the bottom of our hearts:

“God bless you”

JEWISH COUNCIL
Committee for Refugees and the Poor
/-/[signature] /-/ [signature]

“[?] The *Judenrat* and the Committee for Refugees and the Poor in Włoszczowa
SOCIAL HELP OPERATION in 1940

Prepared by Aleksander Fargel⁵⁷⁰

In October 1939, at a moment of greatest chaos and disorganisation that swept through the Jewish community as a result of the war, and at a time of a complete disruption of all state and local government institutions, the Council of Elders (*Ältestenrat*) of the Jewish Population was established, comprised of seven persons, as a representation of the Jewish community in charge of the execution of any orders given to the Jewish population by the authorities.

The Jewish community, which in the aftermath of its dispersal lost its ability as an organised unit, suddenly faced creating its own authorities, which from that moment were to manage its life in all sectors, especially those in which thus far the only executive body had been state power. It seemed almost

570 Aleksander (Chaim) Fargel (1914–?), pre-war clerk, member of the Committee for Refugees and the Poor at the *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, then member of the local representation of the ŻSS. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/486, p. 3.

impossible to the members of the Council of Elders, and, on the other hand, to the rest of the undisciplined Jewish community which could not adapt to these new conditions. As a result, the Council of Elders faced an extremely difficult task. On the one hand, they were personally accountable before the authorities. On the other – before the community, which they were supposed to defend, protect, and at the same time educate as soon as possible and adapt to these new conditions of life. Facing enormous and ever new difficulties, the Council of Elders, later transformed into a *Judenrat* consisting of 12 members, must henceforth pave the way to^c [4⁵⁷¹] fulfil their difficult tasks.

At the outbreak of the war, Włoszczowa had 6,500 permanent residents, 2,700 of whom, i.e. 42 per cent of the entire population, were Jewish. As a result of the war and the destruction of the nearby towns, such as Szczekociny and Przedbórz,⁵⁷² as early as the first days of October 1939, a considerable number of fire victims and refugees arrived in Włoszczowa from those places, resettled by the orders of the authorities. In the meantime, a number of refugees from other Polish towns arrived and it became a priority to conduct a thorough census of the Jewish population. It was the first important task performed by the *Judenrat*. Based on our census, it turned out that the Jewish population of Włoszczowa is 3,000 souls (300 more than before the war), and the newcomers were mostly the poor and fire victims who had lost their entire property in the war. They all became a burden for the local population, relying entirely on the assistance provided by permanent residents. The war led to great impoverishment of the local population, significantly increasing the number of poor people, and the organisation of a permanent operation of social help became an imperative.

At once, a Social Welfare Department was established in the *Judenrat*, composed of several people who also immediately began providing help by conducting a money collection for that purpose, distributing food, medicine, and clothes among the poorest. This operation encountered great difficulties, for in this period a war levy was imposed on the Jewish community [14] in the amount of 80,000 zlotys. This amount was fully paid, but such a severe reduction of material resources was a significant hindrance to the *Judenrat* and, as a result, to the social welfare operation.

571 The pagination follows the ARG version of the document.

572 Szczekociny (Jędrzejów County), Przedbórz (Końskie County).

On 13 December 1939, a group of 217 Jews resettled from Poznań came to Włoszczowa. The transport consisted predominantly of the elderly, including many women.

The population of Włoszczowa welcomed the unfortunate newcomers with all sincerity. A special committee was organised to welcome the resettled, awaiting the transport at the train station. There, the resettled were given their first hot meal, and in the meantime accommodation for them was prepared, which was a very serious problem given the limited living space available. The *bet hamidrash* was turned into a gathering point, where all day long the Włoszczowa people spontaneously brought food for the newcomers. From there, individual families were directed to their assigned lodgings, which lasted for several days. The resettled came practically without any money, so once their accommodation had been secured, it became a priority to organise food for them. A soup kitchen for the refugees was set up immediately. Unfortunately, the lack of adequate funds and the increasing difficulties of the Jewish Community hindered the operation in the long run. At that time, it was decided that the situation called for a request for assistance from the American Joint Distribution Committee. Immediately, a delegation was elected, namely Mr Chaim Fargel and Mr Josef Kochen, who then went to Warsaw to obtain subsidies for social welfare. On 7 January 1940 the delegation returned, having received the first subvention in the sum of 2,500 zlotys, and bringing a substantial amount of clothing and medicine from TOZ.

[12] The social welfare operation, hitherto run in a chaotic and disorganised manner by several groups of people willing to work, had to be organised so that, once it adapted to its financial circumstances, it could to yield maximum efficiency.

To this end, on 10 January 1940, a Committee for Refugees and the Poor was established at the *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, which took over the responsibility and duty of care for the displaced and the poor.

Immediately, it was decided to expand the soup kitchen and distribute the collected clothing, and a large number of refugees were provided with beds. During this period, a wave of refugees from Łódź came to Włoszczowa. Hundreds of people arrived, and they all required extra food and medical assistance. It became necessary to establish a second soup kitchen, the construction of which commenced immediately. No allocation of food and fuel, harsh winter, and the consequent lack of deliveries obstructed the work to

the extent that at times it seemed quite impossible to carry out. In addition, a typhus epidemic broke out and the German authorities ordered the *Judenrat* to set up and equip an epidemic hospital within two days and maintain it at their own expense, threatening to impose levies on the town should the Council fail to carry out the orders. With superhuman efforts, such a hospital was opened in due time on 27 January, but there was no supply of medical utensils or medicines. Within 48 hours, a major refurbishment of the entire building intended for a hospital was carried out; in one day 25 beds were made, 25 quilts were sewn, and hundreds of pieces of bed linen and undergarments were collected. The amount of work and effort was so great and the deadline so short that, only from today's perspective, can it be properly appreciated.

In view of the progressive impoverishment of the Jewish population and the lack of adequate funds, the Committee could not fulfil [11] all its tasks, especially if one considers that the monthly budget for the period increased to 15,000 zlotys. The Committee delegation went to Warsaw again, and succeeded in obtaining support from the AJDC to the amount of 5,000 zlotys, and 1,000 zlotys from TOZ. Unfortunately, expenses were rising disproportionately to the income. The second soup kitchen operating from 21 January had to increase the number of distributed meals, and the material status of recipients made it impossible to charge them anything. The typhus epidemic spread ever more widely, particularly affecting the poorest, so the cost of their hospital treatment had to be covered entirely by the Department of Social Welfare. Despite these seemingly insurmountable difficulties, the social operation has not stopped even for a moment. In January and February, a special fuel operation was organised, which covered 250 families consisting of 735 people. 150,000 kilos of coal were distributed free of charge.

A great burden fell on the town with the new wave of resettlements. On 18 February 1940, after a two-day wait at the station, a transport arrived with 440 people resettled from Włocławek. The new arrivals were in terrible condition in every way. Penniless, exhausted to the extreme, many of them sick. Due to the lack of accommodations, they could not stay in Włoszczowa, so the new arrivals were directed to three neighbouring municipalities: Kurzelów, Kluczewsko, and Dobromierz.⁵⁷³ Only several families managed to stay in the town; the rest were accommodated with peasants. Only

573 Kurzelów, Kluczewsko, Dobromierz (Jędrzejów County).

the Kurzelów group managed to stay together, forming a concentration of 275 resettled, while the rest spread out in a dozen villages in the aforementioned municipalities, up to 20 km away from Włoszczowa.

The situation of these people was simply desperate. Staying with peasants in villages located several kilometres apart, they suffered from hunger and the minus 30 degrees frosts, and snowstorms made any communication with the town impossible. However, despite these difficulties, the day [10] after the arrival of the transport, two committees with a doctor left Włoszczowa to go on a tour of all the villages in order to inspect the lodgings, make a register of the resettled, and assess where first aid should go. On the basis of the report of the committees, it was found that the most important thing was to set up a soup kitchen in Kurzelów, provide reasonable accommodation, concentrate the rest of the displaced in one locality, and supply them with beds, because most of them had to sleep on the floor. Moreover, medication needed to be ordered and delivered immediately, because the health of the new arrivals was very bad.

With the financial assistance received from the AJDC, the operation was launched vigorously. Unfortunately, concentrating the resettled located in the municipalities of Dobromierz and Kluczewsko turned out to be impossible, despite all efforts. With the help of the authorities, the entire group assigned to Kurzelów found accommodation, despite frequent resistance from local residents. At the same time, a soup kitchen was set up in Kurzelów, and on 10 March it began distributing 300 free meals a day. Supplying three soup kitchens operating at the time was becoming more difficult because of the daily increasing cost of living and lack of adequate funds. As a result of the progressive impoverishment of the local population, income from local sources constantly decreased, while the number of people relying on welfare was growing faster and faster. Soup kitchens in Włoszczowa had to regularly increase the number of meals, but charging even 10 groszes per meal was out of the question, so bad was the financial situation of people using the kitchens. For economic reasons, as of 1 April, both kitchens in Włoszczowa were combined and since then the one kitchen distributed more than 700 meals a day. The typhus epidemic intensified, still affecting the poorest the most, the treatment cost of whom rested on the shoulders of [7] the social welfare. Due to the constantly increasing number of patients, the hospital management demanded more new equipment and such investments absorbed large sums.

Thus, in March 1940, maintenance of the hospital cost more than 4,500 zlotys, and the number of patients reached 50 people.

On 12 March, the committee started supplying refugees in villages and the municipalities of Dobromierz and Kluczewsko with dry products, sent by weekly deliveries. This entailed high costs and delivery difficulties. For the record, from 12 March until the end of 1940, refugees in the municipalities of Dobromierz and Kluczewsko received the following quantities of dry products:

3,052.30⁵⁷⁴ kilos of bread
15,600 kilos of potatoes
1721.40 kilos of rye flour
523.90 kilos of wheat flour
835.70 kilos of groats
and others.

At the same time, we succeeded (as a result of arduous efforts) in purchasing wood to make beds for the refugees, and the work was entrusted to joiners who were refugees. 75 beds were made and distributed free of charge, double and triple, thus supplying all those who had arrived from Włocławek.

On behalf of the AJDC, the Committee conducted a detailed census of all refugees as of 25 March 1940. The census was carried out in Włoszczowa and all the surrounding villages, and yielded results in the form of 1,455 registered refugees, or about 28 per cent of the total Jewish population. 75 per cent of them relied on welfare. If one adds the local poor, one would have the full picture of the enormous obligation that rests on the Committee.

Unfortunately, subsidies received from AJDC and TOZ decreased and we had to appeal to the local sources more frequently. [9] The material situation of the population, deteriorating every day, made it impossible to collect donations on a voluntary basis. In order to prevent limiting the scope of the aid operation, the local population was taxed with a constant contribution to the social welfare. Collecting this contribution often encountered great difficulties, since a significant part of the population was not and is not aware of the obligations that every Jew must now fulfil. Often, we had to resort to enforcement measures in order to maintain the entire mechanism of helping the poor. Despite the huge expenditure on the maintenance of the hospital, running soup kitchens and feeding the refugees, the Committee decided

574 In the second copy: "3052.50". See AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, 223/1, p. 13.

to organise a wide-ranging Passover operation. For this purpose, all funds were mobilised for work, which yielded admirable results. With the supply of matzo from AJDC and funds collected on site (the subsidy from AJDC to the amount of 8,000 zlotys total was received on 19 April, and so after the products had been purchased), 595 families, or 2,225 people, were provided with the following products at the cost of 8,500 zlotys:

- 2,579.5 kilos of matzo,
- 11,182 kilos of potatoes
- 1,483 kilos of beets
- 909 kilos of onions
- 5,416 eggs
- 360 kilos of salt
- 50.9 kilos of meat
- 21 kilos of soap.

The Passover operation was a complete success, if one considers that even in the kitchen utensils were provided for the majority of refugees.

The financial condition of the Committee gradually worsened, and this, in turn, reflected on the charges. Due to lack of funds, disruptions in deliveries of products for the refugees in villages located nearby were more frequent, the amount of meals distributed by the soup kitchens decreased, and rations were reduced [8]. In the light of the severity of the situations, once again we appealed to AJDC for help. Because of the subsidy, products and a substantial amount of clothing obtained by the Delegate of the Committee, the situation improved temporarily, enabling continuation of soup kitchens and the medical operation, which, due to the still prevailing typhus epidemic, absorbed large sums of money. External subsidies, however, were relatively small compared to the sums obtained from local sources. Closure of soup kitchens was becoming an increasing threat, prevented only through effort and sacrifice reaching the furthest limits.

On 10 July 1940, the Jewish community of Włoszczowa received a heavy blow in the form of the establishment of the ghetto. More than 4,000 people were forcibly moved to the area of several streets and cramped in tiny rooms by dozens. Merchants and artisans were deprived of their workshops and their only source of income, suddenly finding themselves among the same people whom they had been helping so far. The situation became catastrophic, because all cash inflows to the Committee immediately ceased.

Therefore, delivery of dry products for the refugees was discontinued, and the remaining funds were used to help the resettlement of the poor. Our appeals and cries for help from external institutions had unfortunately very little effect, because the financial situation of the Joint had deteriorated considerably. In order to maintain the soup kitchens, partial payment for meals was introduced, which caused a sharp decline in the use of kitchens. It was a visible sign of the prevailing poverty. The introduction of the payment extended the life of the kitchens only for a very short time. Debts reached the sum of 7,000 zlotys and as a result all credit lines were closed. Finally on 1 September, we were forced to close the soup kitchen in Włoszczowa.

Deportation of Jewish youth to the labour camp in Cieszanów⁵⁷⁵ led to a depression so great, especially among the families of the deported, that the assistance operation was restricted to helping those imprisoned in the labour camp. Most of the deported, among whom also refugees, found themselves in very difficult conditions without inadequate food, clothing, and footwear. We hastily organised a collection in the town and within two days nine sacks and a chest of clothes and food were sent to the camp. In addition, 15 to 20 food parcels (bread, sugar, jam, etc.) were sent by post every day. The cost of providing help to the inmates of labour camps amounted to more than 10,000 zlotys within six weeks.

This naturally affected the field operation and finally forced us to close the soup kitchen still operating in Kurzelów. It was a great blow for the refugees, but the lack of adequate funding made further maintenance of the kitchen impossible. Proceeds from local sources decreased significantly and contribution was given very reluctantly because almost the entire population was paying the costs of living of the labour camp inmates. Those workers were taking all the attention of the community and of the Committee, so the social help operation in the city became limited only to feeding refugees through distribution of dry products in a very small amount and to provide ad hoc financial support. In the face of the dramatic situation of the Committee, a delegate once went to Warsaw, in order to appeal for help to AJDC, TOZ, and other institutions. The financial situation of those institutions was no better than ours, and to make matters worse, as a result of the introduction of the ghetto in Warsaw, the attention of all the institutions was

575 See footnote XXX.

focused exclusively on providing help in Warsaw. Other than small quantities of medicine from TOZ, no help was obtained.

In the meantime, the long-awaited workers from labour camps returned [5], sadly without seven young boys who had died. With the return of the workers, a heavy burden was lifted from the Social Welfare Department. Although medical attention immediately generated very high costs, given the bad health of the newly arrived, but their return made it possible to resume the assistance operation on a local scale. No help from the outside forced us this time to obtain the funds among the local population.

The designated quota of potatoes had to be collected quickly due to the relatively late time of year and ground-frost. We immediately started providing potatoes for the refugees and the poor. This operation was not completed due to the interrupted supply of potatoes, but we managed to supply all refugees in Włoszczowa, Kurzelów, and other villages nearby and almost all the local poor, assigning 100 kilos of potatoes per head, free of charge.

In November, AJDC sent us 1,000 kilos of wheat flour and a certain quantity of Swiss donations, which were distributed among all the charges and children. All this, however, was of little help to the refugees and the poor, whose poverty was steadily worsening. Due to the threat of an outbreak of typhoid fever, in November and December 1940 vaccination was undertaken and more than 2,000 people were vaccinated free of charge. Cramped housing and lack of fuel affects the hygiene that we still struggle to maintain. The Committee issued special leaflets promoting cleanliness, and put them in shops and doors of houses; furthermore, several thousand leaflets were distributed, instructing how to prevent and treat infectious diseases.

‘Clothes were distributed among 550 people, who received more than 1,300 articles of clothing, about 400 of which were collected in the town.

The year of work of the Committee for Refugees and the Poor at the *Judenrat*, a year of hard and intensive work, was marked mostly by the generous involvement of all employees and the local population, whose contribution to the financing of all social operations was tremendous. If the aid we provided was not what we wanted to offer, if it was not sufficient in our opinion and in the opinion of those using it, it was not our fault. The obstacle was the lack of adequate funding, which stalled many a plan.

Richer with this year's experiences, in the new year we returned to work under even more severe conditions, with the same motto:

JOIN FORCES TO HELP!⁶



Building and entrance to the offices of the *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa





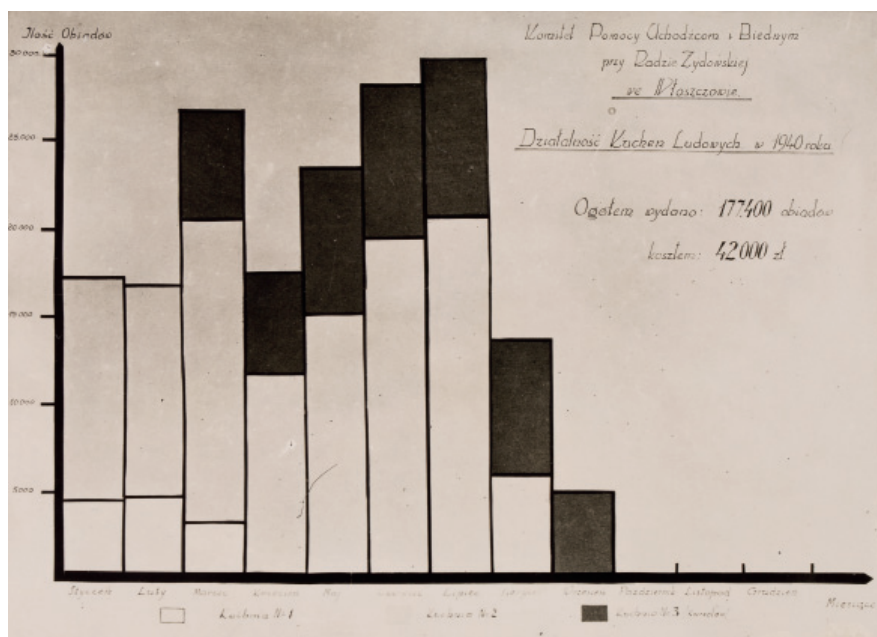
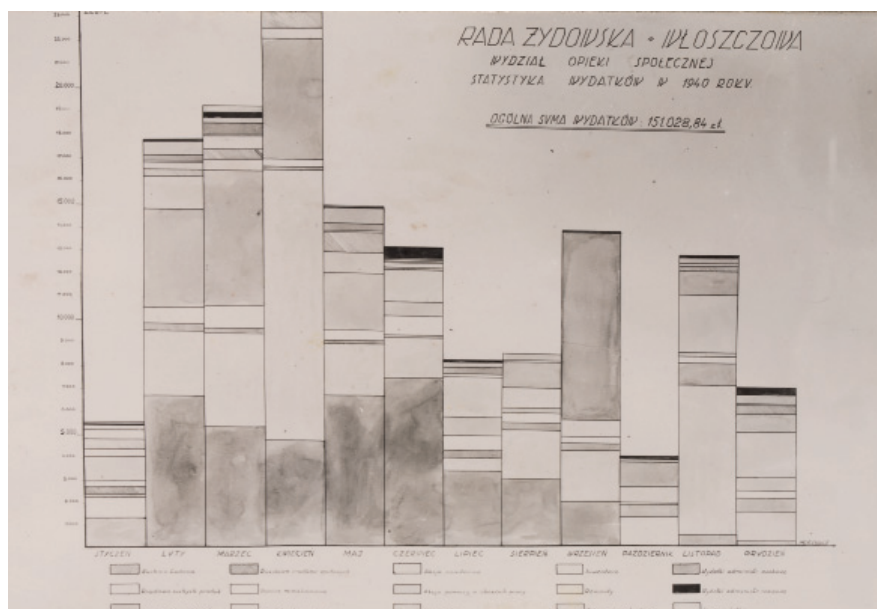
In the office of the Social Welfare Department



Soup kitchen in Włoszczowa



Equipment of the out-patient clinic



Statistics charts, left: Expenses of the Włoszczowa Judenrat in 1940; right: Committee for the Aid of Refugees and Poor of the Włoszczowa Judenrat, Activity of soup kitchens in 1940.

ARG I 1055 (Ring. I/926)

Description: original, typewritten, 5 photographs, Polish, 112×170, 190×45 mm. major damage and missing text pieces, 18 sheets, 18 pages. Attached is a note by Hersh Wasser in Polish, "Report of the Department for Social Welfare in Włoszczowa until the end of 1940, submitted to the Archive by Citizen D. Guzik."⁵⁷⁶

Edition based on the original, with missing pieces, including photographs supplemented from: AŻIH, *Judenrat* in Włoszczowa, 223/1.

KIELCE COUNTY

69

After 19 June 1941, Engineer A[ron Artur] Reinberg, delegate of AJDC.⁵⁷⁷ Minutes of the visit of the County Welfare Committee in Kielce on 18 and 19 June 1941.

[1] [. .] Eng. A. Reinberg in KIELCE
on 18 and 19 June 1941.

[. .] in order to become acquainted with the activities of the County Welfare Committee in Kielce, the chairman of the institution, Dr E. Polak,⁵⁷⁸ convened a meeting at which were present:

Chairman:	Dr E. Polak,	Kielce,
Deputy Chairman:	Pachoł Chaim,	"
Members:	Strawczyński Szymon,	"
	Gelbtuch Wilhelm,	Suchedniów,
	Briks Jankiel,	Skarżysko (absent) ⁵⁷⁹ .

576 Daniel (Dawid) Guzik (1890–1946), financial director of the AJDC branch in Warsaw before WWII. During the occupation, he cooperated with Yitzkhak Giterman in provision of aid to the Jewish population; he perished in an aviation accident in Prague.

577 See Doc. 55.

578 Eliezer Polak, physician, head of the anti-epidemic operation in the of Kielce County, chairman of the Kielce KOP. See AŻIH, *ŻSS*, 211/321, p. 11.

579 KOP members were chairmen of *ŻSS* delegations in their localities.

The meeting addressed a number of issues and provided the following explanation to the AJDC delegate:

1) There are nine delegations in the Kielce county, located in the following towns: Białogon, Bliżyn, Bodzentyn, Chęciny, Daleszyce, Łopuszno, Skarżysko, Słupia Nowa, and Suchedniów.

Number of local beneficiaries of social welfare in the county – 4,125

Number of the resettled from Płock and Płock area in the county who are beneficiaries of social welfare – 4,028

Number of Jews living in the entire county – 15,800

2) Due to the efforts of KOP, we have received from Mr *Kreishauptmann*⁵⁸⁰ 54,000 zlotys and a further 5,400 zlotys as aid for the resettled. The KOP has successfully appealed for allocation of products for the soup kitchen.

Due to the endeavours of KOP, the following have been established:

Soup kitchen in: Chęciny, Łopuszno, Białogon, and Słupia Nowa,

Infirmery in Słupia Nowa;

Steps have been undertaken to organise better health care in the county.

[2] [The attitude of] *Judenräte* to the newly created branches is not successful in all localities. It is to be expected, however, that with the development of these branches, and in particular as the branches will gain appropriate means, whether received from the authorities or from the central institutions of the Jewish Self-Help, these relations will become established [?]. The attitude of the branches of the *Judenräte* was initially characterised by indifference; the *Judenräte* agreed to delegate certain members, considering the matter to be of little significance and irrelevant. At the moment, however, when branches began to benefit from allocations in cash and products, the indifferent *Judenräte* began take an interest in having their more active members included in the branches. These councils started to express their opposition regarding the composition of branches. In some branches, chairmen are also the chairmen of the *Judenräte*, and in such cases monitoring the activities of these branches is difficult due to the lack of community discipline and the tradition of chairmen of the *Judenräte*, who have never been accountable to anyone. The only person who, according to Mr Pachol,

580 In Kielce at the time, the *Kreishauptmann* was Hans Drechsel (1904–1946). He also served as *Stadthauptmann* in Kielce and *Stadtkommissar* in Piotrków. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, pp. 467–468.

vice-chairman of KOP, could control the situation, is Mr Józef Diament, as the chairman of the Supreme Council of Elders for the Jewish Population for the District of Radom.

The chairman of the Committee explains that various subsidies and donations have been previously allocated by the Jewish Self-Help Office in Krakow, by the Advisor in Radom, by ŻKOM in Radom without notifying ŻKOP in Kielce. This situation creates confusion in the field of social welfare and in the future should be avoided; instead, we should strive to coordinate social welfare. Engineer A. Reinberg asked those present to take special care of children and orphans, and to initiate an operation for this purpose.

[3] [. . .] the impression of KOP activity: positive. The chairman of KOP, Dr Polak, works selflessly and dedicates his [. . .] [efforts to] organisational issues, but he complained that he did not have the resources to run even a modest office, which greatly hinders his work. He indicates Bodzentyn as a town, which resists any control and fails to inform KOP of subsidies received from the authorities and allocated products.

ARG I 794 (Ring. I/211/4)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, (handwritten corrections in pencil), Polish, 175×254 mm, damage and missing text fragments, 3 sheets, 3 pages.

KIELCE

70

Before 20 March 1942, Kielce, the Jewish Council of Elders, the Department of Health Care in Kielce. Delousing and health certificate No. 4728 for Szmul Kapłan.

Jewish Council of Elders
Department of Health Care
in Kielce

No. 4728

Delousing and health certificate

It is hereby certified that Kapłan Szmul [. . .] residing in [x]⁵⁸¹ Radom at [. . .] Street [. . .] pass for allowing to leave the Jewish [. . .] valid until 20 March [. . .] and free from infectious diseases [. . .]

signed by the sanitary doctor [. . .] is valid until 31 March 1942.

[. . .] 1942

Jewish Council of Elders

ARG I 793 (Ring. I/1220/12)

Description: original, printed form, handwritten name, address and dates, ink, stamp, German, 130×137 mm, major damages and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page.

71

After 18 March 1941, Warsaw ghetto, [a Dror activist]. Account of a journey from 23 February to 18 March [1941], recorded by Hersh Wasser. Situation of the Jews in Kielce, deportees from Vienna, labour camps, political activity.

[1] From 23 February to 18 March – Route: Kielce, Opatów, Ostrowiec, Częstochowa, Radomsko, Piotrków, Lublin, Zamość, Hrubieszów, Łuków, Siedlce, Kraków, Nowy Sącz

Kielce, on the evening of 23 [February] – 1,200 Jews from Vienna were settled in the town, mainly the older ones. Friendly authority in Vienna during the deportation. In Kielce, young people mobilised to help settle them in. On the basis of my observations the Jews had money. A transport of Jews from Płock was also expected.⁵⁸²

The first summons to labour camps came on Friday 24 [February]. The *Judenrat* in this case [played] only a technical role. [The summons] were received by the young people, who had been in the labour camps the

581 [x] Kielce.

582 See Doc. 55.

previous year. Friday 200, Saturday 600 people. [One had] To present oneself immediately. The labour camps are located near Kielce in stone quarries.⁵⁸³ Last year, the treatment was relatively humane – barracks. If one did not present oneself, hostages were taken. No way out; difficult mood in town, 17–18 years-old [?].

Jews in Kielce actually already in the quarter,⁵⁸⁴ not sealed and in the end not determined – 30,000 Jews.⁵⁸⁵ At the Hitler-Platz⁵⁸⁶ the Jews can live on the side of the Jewish area – but not to leave [from the] front – labyrinth – exits.

In the train compartment, a conversation that only eggs – sorting – purchase still remained in Jewish hands – specialists. A joke with the eggs – rooster – levy – for not fulfilling the levy (grain, eggs, furs) depending on [number of] hectares – sabotage – resettled – even more in Lublin district.

In Kielce, a great crowd – culturally very neglected – the representative of the *Judenrat* – Cytryn. Occupies himself with these issues. One could do something, but the initiative is lacking. After a certain time, gave permission for a school, but the premises [were] taken by the Germans, and because of that, nothing. He was in an institution for orphans, very backward, the teachers not professional, the headmistress does not agree to teach history. Only now they started to teach Yiddish and Hebrew songs – children [speak] Polish among themselves.

In Kielce and the area – strained relations between Poles and Jews – everywhere cleared of the Polish intelligentsia.⁵⁸⁷

583 There were several quarries in Kielce: Czarnów-Ślichowice, Sitkówka-Nowiny, Wietrznia, Kadzielnia. During the war, they were managed by German commissioners. Until 1942, they employed Jewish squads from the Kielce ghetto. See Krzysztof Urbański, *Leksykon dziejów ludności żydowskiej Kielc 1789–1999* (Kraków, 2000), pp. 111–113.

584 The establishment of the ghetto in Kielce was based on a decree of 1 April 1941. The big ghetto was demarcated by the streets: Orla, Piotrkowska, Starozagarnańska, Pocieszki i Radomska; the small ghetto, by Bodzentyńska Street, Św. Wojciecha Street and Św. Wojciecha Square. See K. Urbański, *Leksykon*, p. 89.

585 There were between 25,000 and 27,000 Jews in the Kielce ghetto. *Ibidem*.

586 Św. Wojciecha Square.

587 From May to July 1940, approximately 6,500 members of the Polish intelligentsia were murdered within the framework of *Aktion AB* (the *Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion*, or Extraordinary Pacification Operation).

In the Jewish ghetto many businesses, the trade is thriving – he did not see poor people in the streets. Prices are two-thirds of the Warsaw ones, nobody knows what people live on – reserves.

In Kielce, a Jew is beaten when he takes off a hat to a German: “As in the recent time [2] Jews have been greeting German soldiers, one is warned that this will be punished,” the situation is more certain.

The political activity of non-Jews [is] lively: PPS, ONR, many newspapers. Between Germans and Poles, from top down, toward workers and peasants – [relations] not bad, the greatest hatred toward the intelligentsia. Peasants become bold, who will bring in the levies on time will receive a bit of soap, a bundle of tobacco, etc.

Jews – general backwardness. In Kielce: *Hashomer Hatzair*, *Dror*. In Kielce sits a person from *Dror* and also [from] *Hashomer*. Difficult conditions, the youth not inclined for organisational work. The youth: [. . .], card games, trade, thus the days pass.

ARG I 796 (Ring. I/1177)

Description: original, handwritten (H.W.*), ink, Yiddish, 155×198 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Polish and Yiddish: “1941. Kielce. Original. Notes by a Dror delegate, recorded by H.Wasser.” The author was most probably Yitskhak Cukierman (“Antek”), see Y. Zuckerman, *A Surplus of Memory*, p. XXXX.

PIOTRKÓW TRYBUNALSKI COUNTY

PIOTRKÓW TRYBUNALSKI⁵⁸⁸

72

28 October 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, *The Board of the Jewish Community in Piotrków. Notification of the final date (31 October 1939) to move to the ghetto.*

Announcement [x]⁵⁸⁹

to the Jewish population of the town of Piotrków

The Board of the Jewish Community in Piotrków reminds that the FINAL DEADLINE FOR MOVING TO THE GHETTO IS 31 OCTOBER.⁵⁹⁰ By this time, all Jewish residents without a special deferral are obliged to move out from premises outside the ghetto.

Accordingly, the Community Board calls for absolute obedience to the above decree of MR MAYOR of Piotrków, and requests that property owners and ghetto residents not cause any problems when entering the

588 The twenty documents that follow are surely those referred to by J. Kermish: „The largest number of copies of official documents to be found in the Archives „Oneg Shabbath,” in German and Polish – dealing with the Judenrat and with the Jews of Piotrkow in the first months of the occupation (October-December, 1939), was prepared by Huberband while still in that city. It was later brought to Warsaw;” see *To Live With Honor and Die With Honor!... Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives „O.Sh.”* [„Oneg Shabbat”], ed. Joseph Kermish (Jerusalem, 1986), Introduction, p. XXVII.

Although Shimon Huberband (1909–1942), young Hasidic rabbi and self-taught historian from Piotrków, never stated it himself, it can certainly be considered his another contribution to the Archive, beside his own writings, recordings (e.g. Docs. 94 and 180) and copies he made. He moved to Warsaw on the turn of 1939 and 1940 and became one of the first and most important *OyNEG Shabes* members; was deported to Treblinka on 18 August 1942.

589 [x] Proclamation.

590 The ghetto in Piotrków was established by the order of the Town Commissioner in Piotrków of 8 October 1939. The deadline to move to the ghetto was then deferred. See Docs. 84, 85/14 and 92.

premises designated by the Board of the Jewish Community of the town of Piotrków.

Board of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

Piotrków, 28 October 1939

ARG I 958 b (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten with handwritten amendments, Polish,
218×328 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

73

29 October 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, the Jewish Community in Piotrków. Announcement concerning the obligation to make the inventory of all textile and leather goods in stock by all Jewish craftsmen and traders.

Announcement

To all Jewish manufacturers and sellers of textile goods, leather, leather goods, cobblers, etc.

The Jewish Community of Piotrków reminds all Jewish residents listed above that pursuant to the *Anordnungsblatt für Stadt und Landkreis Petrikau*,⁵⁹¹ dated 26 October 1939, No. 3, all Jewish textile and leather stores should make an inventory of goods and submit it within a week. The inventories must be submitted to police chiefs in the cities of Łódź and Warsaw, or to the competent County Governor or the Commissioner in other towns.

Piotrków, 29 October 1939

ARG I 958 c (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, Polish, 218×330 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

591 (German) Journal of regulations for the Town and County of Piotrków.

23 November 1939, *Piotrków Trybunalski, Commissioner for the Piotrków Municipal County*.⁵⁹² *Order to the Jewish Community in Piotrków to deliver 350,000 zlotys before 11 a.m. on that day.*

Copy

Piotrków Town Commissioner

Piotrków, 23 November 1939

To the Jewish Community in Piotrków

By order of the Governor-General of the occupied Polish territories, you shall provide before 11 a.m.

350 000 zlotys.

i.e. three-hundred-and-fifty thousand zlotys. If this amount is not in my possession by the designated time, coercive measures will be applied as directed by the Governor General.

in lieu of
/ – / Melles

Official seal of
the town of Piotrków

ARG I 958 a (Ring. I/369, Ring. I/97)

Description:

Ring. I/369, duplicate, typewritten, German, 1 sheet, 1 page;

Ring. I/97, duplicate, handwritten (MS*), pencil, German in Hebrew transliteration, 143×220 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page; it was stored in a binder.

592 In the German original, *Der Kommissar des Stadtkreises Petrikau*. It was Hans Drechsel. See Doc. 69.

75

26 November 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski. Announcement by the German authorities calling for the registration of children from poor families in the Jewish Community in order to feed them.

Announcement

Today and tomorrow, from 3 to 5 p.m., parents of the poorest children should in their own interest register their children aged 4 to 7 years, in order to qualify them for daily feeding.

Piotrków, 26 November 1939

ARG I 958 (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, German, Polish, 207×290 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

76

27 November 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, Jewish Community in Piotrków. Request to the local Jews to provide flat furniture for the German military in order to avoid forced requisition.

To the Jewish population of the town of Piotrków

As the German authorities made the Jewish Community responsible for providing furniture for the flats occupied by the military, we call on the Jewish population to declare at the Jewish Community furniture donated for this purpose, in order to avoid forced requisition.

Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

27 November 1939

ARG I 958 e (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, handwritten date, Polish, 205×148 mm,
1 sheet, 1 page.

77

28 November 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski. Announcement concerning payment for the unemployed working as substitutes.

Attention!
Payment for substitutes (unemployed)
every Thursday

Everyone called to work is obliged attend on the same day.
Exemption or postponement may be affected only on the basis of a medical certificate.

Piotrków, 28 November 1939

ARG I 958 f (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, German, Polish, 207×290 mm, 1 sheet,
1 page.

78

1 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, Commissioner for the Piotrków Municipal County. Ordinance imposing restrictions on the Jewish population.

Copy

Commissioner for the
Piotrków Municipal County

Piotrków, 1 December 1939

O r d i n a n c e

- I. The Jewish Community in Piotrków shall report to me by the evening of 2 December [regarding] how many residents live on particular plots of the ghetto, namely:
 1. the number of the plot residents,
 2. the total number of the residents of all plots on both sides of the street, always from one bloc to another.In all circumstances, the deadline shall be met.
- II. Starting on 2 December, 1,000 male members of the Jewish community shall report for forced labour. They shall always obtain information, one day in advance, from the architect Mr Lindner, the appointed director of the municipal construction office, about where specific forced labourers should go. Mr Lindner shall immediately pass this information to Police Chief Schwafert for the purpose of organising police supervision.
- III. The Jewish community shall immediately build a large barrack in the vacant space behind the synagogue to be ready by 10 December in order to house the homeless. The construction of another barrack must also be finished by 10 December.

That is why forced labourers shall firstly be used to build the barracks.
- IV. All Jews, including baptised Jews and those with one Jewish parent, must immediately start wearing yellow armbands marked “Jude” on their right forearm. Whoever is seen without such an armband on 3 December shall be brought before a summary court as a saboteur.
- V. All Jews are hereby forbidden to leave their houses. The time for going out is hereby set from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. within the ghetto and from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. outside the ghetto. Those seen on a street beyond those hours shall be brought before a summary court as a saboteur.

Forced labourers must be escorted in and out in close formation and under police supervision.

I shall issue passes to certain members of the Council of Elders.
- VI. Nobody whom these regulations concern has a right to compensation. Any instance of infringement shall be punished with a fine and imprisonment or at least with one or the other, as long as it is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Special Court as an act of sabotage.

Official stamp of the Commissioner
for the Piotrków Municipal County

Commissioner
/-/ Drechsel
Oberbürgermeister

ARG I 958 g (Ring. I/879)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, German, 207×293 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. The document was stored in a binder.

79

2 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, Mayor of Piotrków. Announcement of the obligation to wear the Star of David by Jews, baptised Jews, and those having one Jewish parent.

Announcement

According to the ordinance of the Mayor of the Town of Piotrków of 1 December 1939, all Jews, baptised Jews, and people having one Jewish parent are required to wear as a sign on their right forearm a white band 10 cm wide, with the following symbol:⁵⁹³ Armbands should be hemmed and will be marked at the Jewish Community, Piłsudskiego Street 27.

Piotrków, 2 December 1939

ARG I 958 ggg (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, German, Polish, 207×293 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. The document was stored in a binder.

593 Drawing of a Star of David.

4–6 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, Hans Drechsel, Commissioner for the Piotrków Municipal County. Ordinances:

- (1) Of 4 December 1939, on emigration of persons of Ukrainian descent;
 (2) Of 6 December 1939, on preparation of rooms and construction of barracks for Jewish refugees at the expense of the Jewish Community.

(1)

Commissioner for the
 Piotrków Municipal County
 No. 01/1939

Piotrków, 4 December 1939

To the Chairman of the
 Jewish Community in Piotrków
 Mr Zelmen Tennenberg⁵⁹⁴
in situ

Re: Departures

With reference to the conversations about the departures of persons who consider themselves Ukrainian, I attach a list of forms and ask those who wish to leave to complete and submit them to the Municipal Government. You may immediately order the printer to print the lacking forms.

I refer to my note in the next journal of ordinances.

/-/ Drechsel
 Oberbürgermeister

(2)

Commissioner for the
 Piotrków Municipal County
 No. III B 38/39

Piotrków, 6 December 1939

⁵⁹⁴ Zelmen (Zalma) Tennenberg (1894–?), lived and worked in Piotrków Trybunalski, before the war as a teacher at the Craft School for Jews and the Chairman of the Council of the Jewish Community. During the war, a chairman of the *Judenrat* and the Municipal Welfare Committee of the Jewish Social Self-Help (*Komitet Opiekuńczy Miejski Żydowskiej Samopomocy Społecznej*). See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/797, p. 37.

To the
Jewish Community Board

Due to the need for barracks for Jewish refugees, I temporarily order that the structures be built promptly at the expense of and by the local Jewish Community according to the following plan: 1) adaptation of the interior of the synagogue on Jerozolimska Street⁵⁹⁵ and the Jewish middle school on Pereca Street, 2) restauration of the barracks on Curie-Skłodowskiej Street, 3) construction of two barracks on the square by the synagogue at Piłsudskiego Street 25 and Witorz's estate on Litewski Square.

For this purpose, the Municipal Council's Technical Office shall offer the Jewish Community technical help and issue detailed, prompt ordinances to ensure immediate execution of my orders.

All expenses incurred so far in connection with the above ordinance of mine shall be covered by the Jewish Community.

Third parties' claims shall be immediately settled by the Jewish Community.

/-/ Drechsel
Oberbürgermeister

ARG I 958 gg (Ring. I/880, Ring. I/97)

Description:

Ring. I/880, duplicate, typewritten, German, Polish, 207×293 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

Ring. I/97, duplicate (Doc.1), handwritten (MS*), pencil, German in Hebrew transliteration, 143×220 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page; the Hebrew letter "ב" is written in red pencil on the margin. The document was stored in a binder.

A document of the same content as Doc. (2) is included in ARG I 954 (Ring. I/659).

595 The Great Synagogue, built in the years 1791–1793, remodelled after 1868. In December 1939, it was transformed into a prison with extreme conditions. After 1945, it was rebuilt to house a library.

7 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, National Socialist Social Welfare (NSV). Letter of the Special Delegate to Zelmen Tennenberg, Chairman of the Jewish Community in Piotrków, on seizure of control over Jewish social welfare organisations and volunteer workers (tailors).

Copy

National Socialist Social Welfare
Special Delegate

Special Delegate
Bu/W

Piotrków, 7 December 1939

To the
Eldest of the Jewish Community
Tennenberg
Piotrków

Re: Jewish Aid Campaign

I confirm the conversation we had and hereby inform you again that, according and subsequent to a recommendation of the *Reich* Special Plenipotentiary for the National Socialist Social Welfare at the Office of the Governor General, the Jewish Aid Campaign is under my personal control. Thus, you are to report to me about all planned and completed activities. A detailed report on the amount and type of income, as well as its expenditure, shall be filed every week. It shall be submitted in German, Polish, and Yiddish.

The entire Jewish Council of Elders shall gather for a meeting on 9 December this year at 4 p.m. A representative of the National Socialist Social Welfare at the Office of the Governor General and I shall participate in the meeting. The place of the meeting shall be immediately reported to me.

Re: Voluntary, unpaid work

The tailors that you made available to me in order to carry out voluntary work have once again failed to appear, even though I had informed you in person and in writing that the production of some items of clothing requires more time. The promised sewing machine has not been delivered yet either. I would

like to remind you that it is in your own interest that the arrangements made are carefully and punctually completed. The promised report on the activities, also not undertaken by the Jewish Aid Campaign, has not been submitted either and needs to be quickly attended to.

County Director
/-/ illegible signature

Official stamp of NSV

ARG I 958 j (Ring. I/288, Ring. I/88o)

Description:

Ring. I/88o, duplicate, typewritten, German, Polish, 207×293 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

Ring. I/288, duplicate, handwritten, (MS*), pencil, German in Hebrew transliteration, 141×222 mm 1 sheet, 1 page; the Hebrew letter “פ” written in red pencil on the margin. The document was stored in a binder. Hersh Wasser’s note in Yiddish: “For safety reasons, Hebrew letters were used. Submitted by Mordkhe Szwarchard.”⁵⁹⁶

82

7 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, the Jewish Community in Piotrków. Announcement concerning the establishment of the Emigration Committee for the local Jews.

Announcement
concerning emigration of Jews from Piotrków.

We are hereby informing the Jewish population of the town of Piotrków that the Emigration Committee has been established at the Jewish Community in Piotrków, which has set itself the task of organising and facilitating emigration of Jews from Piotrków.

⁵⁹⁶ See footnote XXX.

The Emigration Committee office is open every day, beginning Friday, 8 December 1939, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Jewish Community in Piotrków, Piłsudskiego Street 27.

Piotrków, 7 December 1939

ARG I 958 h (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, German, Polish, Yiddish, 220×310 mm,
1 sheet, 1 page.

83

1–8 December, 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, “Anordnungsblatt für Stadt und Landkreis Petrikau” [Journal of Regulations for the Town and County of Piotrków], No. 7 from 1 December and No. 8 from 8 December 1939. A weekly publication by the occupation authorities containing official decrees and announcements, in German and Polish.

[1] JOURNAL OF REGULATIONS

for the town and county of Piotrków

No. 7

Piotrków, 1 December 1939

The paper contains 12 pages.

Price of one copy is 10 pfennigs.⁵⁹⁷

Part I. General announcements

Emigration of the Jews

1 a) The Jews wishing to emigrate to Russia receive from the authorised officer of individual county offices identification and pass according to the sent template.

The Jews are allowed to take the appropriate amount of food for the journey, 25 zlotys per person, as well as clothing, utensils, blankets, etc. Any larger

597 Title of the newspaper, price, and information on the number of pages are only in German.

sums in zlotys, received from the authorities in exchange for gold or foreign currency can be taken if the holder is in possession of an appropriate document issued by the authorities. This also applies to Russian banknotes and coins. Departures may possibly be in bigger groups. If the Jews rent a vehicle, they should apply for a pass for a non-Jewish coachman, valid from-to the place of residence, and hand him such document.

Before departure from their place of residence, the Jews will be controlled by the relevant authorities. During further travel, it is prohibited.

Date of crossing the Russian border is determined at four weeks from the date of issue of the pass. An issued pass obliges the Jews to leave the area using designated roads. It must be ensured that horses are not overloaded and they have the right amount of feed to travel in both directions, and that they are returned to the place of departure. Cattle must not be taken. Lodgings vacated by the Jews will be at the disposal of the authorities. The Jews arriving from outside the district without passes, as well as Jewish traders encountered on the way, will be arrested and incorporated into the departing groups along with their means of transportation. They will receive appropriate departure passes. Jews with appropriate passes must be escorted to crossings on the Vistula River in Puławy and Dęblin,⁵⁹⁸ overnight accommodation to be organised in synagogues whenever possible. Jews coming from Łódź, from northern districts, should be directed to the north-west crossing on the Vistula River and [2] under no circumstances should they be allowed any further south. If necessary, security guards at the *Ortskommendantur* or nearby SS or police stations should be notified. Polish police force may be used for monitoring the departing. Polish mayors and municipality executive officers may be issued with appropriate orders.

1 b) In every Jewish community, a council of elders must be established, composed of eminent individuals, laymen, and rabbis. Each council of elders should have about 24 men as members (depending on the size of the community). Each council of elders is fully responsible for accurate and punctual performance of all orders. In the event of sabotage of issued orders, most severe measures will apply in any such case. The Jews of the council of elders are to be assigned to the departing groups and named in the detailed register, which should also indicate the number of men, women, and children.

598 Dęblin (Puławy County).

Local council of elders are required to carry out a proper census of the Jews by gender, occupation, and age (a) up to 16 years old, (b) from 16 to 60 years old, (c) older, which will be considered as auxiliary. The result of the census should be given to the local mayor (head of the municipality) as soon as possible to be handed further to the district authorities, who shall deliver all documentation to me. In localities where Jews spread Communist propaganda, leading to robberies and riots, all Jews should be moved in the shortest possible time to cities (population of 10,000–30,000) adjacent to that area, and install them in Jewish neighbourhoods and synagogues. It is recommended in local Jewish neighbourhoods (ghettos) to issue regulations limiting the time allowed in the streets and on public transportation to a curfew set by the authorities. Food and housing for the Jews are to be organised by the council of elders.

1 c) When carrying out the above orders (1a–1b) attention should be paid so that the occupied area does not suffer economically. First of all, priority should be given to the needs of the military. Jewish traders needed in the absence of other options to sustain food supplies for the military, government offices, and the population are to remain temporarily in the place of residence, and the aryanization of necessary economic branches should be immediately carried out. Commercial and industrial workshops, important because of the war, life, or the four-year plan,⁵⁹⁹ must, if necessary, continue to use Jewish labour forces, or such forces must be used to start work needed to maintain the state of the economy. In this case, suspended emigration of the remaining and temporarily needed [3] Jews should be carried out as soon as possible. Farms, workshops, buildings, etc. of the departing Jews, important for economic livelihood, must be given to other people (Aryans) to supervise and manage. German citizens (*Volksdeutsche*) have priority.

County governors are to collect information on Aryan workshops or those undergoing aryanization. In due time, I shall require a report with relevant suggestions from them.

Radom, 20 November 1939

General Government
for the occupied Polish territories
Head of the Radom District

599 The economic plan of the Third Reich for the years 1936–1940, with the main purpose of increased armament. Hermann Göring was responsible for its implementation.

Announcement

Below, I make public the Regulation of the Governor General for the occupied Polish territories, The Reich Minister Dr. Frank, on the 31 October of this year, on combating acts of violence in the General Government District:

Pursuant to Article 5, p. 1 of the Decree of the Führer and Chancellor of the German Reich on Administration of the occupied Polish territories dated 12 October 1939 (*Reichsgesetzbl*[att] I S. 2077, the Reich Legal Gazette I, p. 2077) I decree:

Article 1. Whoever commits an act of violence against the German *Reich* or the German supreme power exercised in the General Government shall be subject to the death penalty.

Article 2. Whoever intentionally damages the facilities of the German authorities, items used by the German authorities for work, or public utilities shall be subject to the death penalty.

Article 3. Whoever incites or encourages disobedience in relation to regulations or orders of the German authorities shall be subject to the death penalty.

Article 4. Whoever commits an act of violence against a German because of his affiliation with the German nation shall be subject to the death penalty.

Article 5. Whoever commits arson and thus damages German property shall be subject to the death penalty.

[4] Article 6. Abettor and accomplice shall be punished as perpetrator, and attempted act shall be punished as accomplished act.

Article 7. Provisions of p. 3 of the Regulation of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces on the possession of arms dated 12 September 1939 (Official Regulations for Occupied Territories in Poland, p. 8) remain unchanged.

Article 8. Whoever plots to commit an offence specified in articles 1–5, whoever is in collusion with others for this purpose, whoever offers to commit such an offence himself or accepts such offer shall be subject to the death penalty.

Article 9. Whoever, having received information of the intention to commit an offence referred to in articles 1–5, fails to notify the authority or the person threatened by the offence immediately, or at such time that the intended offence can be prevented, shall be subject to the death penalty.

Article 10. (1) Provisions of articles 1 and 2 of the Regulation of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces on the possession of arms, dated

12 September 1939 (Official Regulations for Occupied Territories in Poland, p. 8), remain unchanged.

Whoever, having received information of the illegal possession of arms by another, fails to notify the authority immediately shall be subject to the death penalty.

Senior commander of the SS (*Schutzstaffel*) and the Police is authorised to determine by a regulation the scope of impunity of a perpetrator who confesses his offence.

Article 11. (1) Passing and execution of judgment is subject to summary courts.

Executive officer of the Radom District
/-/ Dr Lasch

Amounts due to former Directors of the National Forests

Outstanding debts for timber and other processed wood products purchased from the former Directorate of National Forests and the "Paged"⁶⁰⁰ are to be paid until 10 December 1939 in the nearest Tax Office.

Debtors who are not able to cover their debts at the moment should apply to the relevant executive or commissioner of the town in the district of their residence to submit a request for deferment, and a declaration of their obligation and insolvency.

Debts that are not subject to a deferral shall be charged with interest at 10 per cent and collected.

Radom, 10 November 1939

General Government
for the occupied Polish territories
Head of the Radom District

[5] FIRST EXECUTIVE REGULATION

to Regulation of 26 October 1939 on the introduction of labour obligation for the Polish population of the General Government (Journal of Ordinances of the G.G.P. 1939, p. 6)

600 Acronym for *Polska Agencja Drzewna* (Polish Wood Agency).

October 31, 1939

Pursuant to Article 5 of the regulation on the introduction Journal of Ordinances of the G.G.P. 1939, p. 6), I hereby decree:

Article 1.

Whoever is able to work shall be subject to labour obligation.

Whoever is partially able to work should be employed only for works corresponding to their ability to work.

Article 2.

The Labour Office shall direct those subject to labour obligation to work. The Labour Office may impose on municipalities in its district an obligation to provide people obliged to work.

Conditions of employment established on the basis of allocation, as well as wages are determined by appropriate executive officer of District, or, until he is appointed, head of the office in the place of work.

Article 3.

The employment may be dissolved only with the permission of the Labour Office appropriate for the respective place of work. The transferring Labour Office may, however, restrict the work in advance or certain tasks for a certain time.

Article 4.

Person obliged to work shall submit at the request of the Labour Office all necessary evidence, as well as provide all necessary information. Labour Office may also request a personal appearance of the person obliged to work.

Person obliged to work is required to use things that are in his possession or custody, if required by the Labour Office.

Article 5.

Whoever fails to fulfil his work obligation, and especially whoever fails to report for work in spite of obligation, refuses to work, or refrains from work on purpose, is punishable by imprisonment and fines, the latter to an unlimited amount, or one of these penalties.

The same punishment shall be applied to whoever attempts to abet a person obliged to work to such punishable behaviour.

Criminal investigation shall take place only at the request of the head of the Labour Office.

[6] Head of the Labour Office, instead of filing an application for punishment for each offence, may impose a disciplinary penalty of up to 20 RM.

Article 6.

This executive regulation shall become valid on the date of announcement.

Lodsch (Łódź), 31 October 1939

Head of the Department of Labour
of the Governor General
for the occupied Polish territories
Dr Krohn

Securing and defining food supplies

Due to the food shortages in my district, I hereby decree:

1. Using bread grain, rye, or wheat as fodder is prohibited.
2. Milling grain is determined at 80 per cent for rye, and 75 per cent for wheat.
3. Export of grain (rye, wheat, barley, and oats), flour, potatoes, cattle, meat, milk, and butter from the Radom district is prohibited.
In exceptional cases this can be done only contingent on my permission.
4. Distilleries of any kind are closed until further notice.
The available supply of spirits will be confiscated. It should be measured and sealed.
5. Any existing order issued by district executive officers or town commissioners contrary to this order shall be void.
6. Further orders regarding provisioning shall be issued soon.
7. Failure to obey, or even attempt to disobey this order shall be punished by a fine up to 50,000 zlotys, or imprisonment up to five years, or the sum of both penalties.
8. The above order becomes valid as of today.

Radom, 10 November 1939

General Government
for the occupied Polish lands
Executive Officer of the Radom District

Part II. Orders of the Head of the County

Turning in radios

At a meeting on October 30, 1939, I instructed the mayors of the Piotrków district to collect all radios and radio parts from residents, with the exception

of the Germans (*Reichsdeutsche* and *Volksdeutsche*). [7] However, I found that my order has not been completely carried out. Those who have not handed in their radios must do so without delay by December 5, 1939. All radios must be delivered to the appropriate head of the municipality.

Any objections will be punished by imprisonment and a fine, or either of these penalties.

I must also stress that listening to foreign stations, non-German radio stations, is subject to the death penalty.

Piotrków, November 25, 1939

County Governor

Buss⁶⁰¹

To all mayors of the Piotrków county

Penalties for offences

The court in Piotrków on 14 and 15 November 1939 sentenced the following:

1. Mieczysław Raczkowski, labourer from Piotrków, for theft and false accusations to six years in prison.
2. Bolesław Misztela, labourer from Piotrków, for burglary to two years in prison.
3. Piotr Stasiewicz from Piotrków for burglary to six months in prison.
4. Chil Bulwa, a Jew from Piotrków, for supporting theft to one year in prison.
5. Sabina Karaczyńska, seamstress from Piotrków, for false accusations to six months in prison.
6. Jan Rusiniak, labourer from Brzeźnica,⁶⁰² for multiple theft to five years in prison.
7. Antoni Knopik, carpenter from Kozia Woda,⁶⁰³ for serious crimes while hunting and causing dangerous injury to one year and six months in prison.
8. Janek Sadorski, servant from Kozia Woda, for serious crimes while hunting and causing dangerous injury to five months in prison.
9. For crimes committed while hunting, the court sentenced the following residents of Pratkowice:⁶⁰⁴

601 Artur Buss (1904–1981) was the county governor (*Kreishauptmann*) in Piotrków Trybunalski from September 1939 to January 1945.

602 Brzeźnica (Radomsko County).

603 Kozia Woda (Radomsko County).

604 Pratkowice (Radomsko County).

- a. Józef Serwatka, labourer, to ten months in prison,
- a. Stefan Sandelewski, labourer, to one year and two months in prison,
- b. Mikołaj Urbański, farmer, to one year and two months in prison,
- c. Stanisław Kowalik, Ignacy Kowalik, Wacław Urbański, Stefan Serwatka, Czesław [8] Radzik, and Antoni Nowak, labourers, to ten months in prison each,
- d. Jan Juźwik and Bolesław Nowak to nine months in prison each,
- e. Jan Malczyk to four months and two weeks in prison.

Piotrków, 28 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

Posters

1. Placing posters on walls, houses, fences, telegraph poles, etc. is prohibited. Any existing posters should be removed.
2. Announcements of the German authorities should be posted on special boards, which are to be installed in all localities of the Piotrków County. Announcements must be made in German and Polish.
3. Mayors shall indicate in their communities, if necessary, places where boards for private advertisements may be placed. This can only be posted on poles or bulletin board. Mayors shall be in charge of these boards. Private advertisements can be posted only with the permission of the mayor.
Fees for private advertisements shall be paid to the municipality.
Private advertisements must not be placed on the notice boards.
4. On the official notice boards, the maximum price of food should always be announced.
5. Poles who illegally paste posters shall be fined up to 100 zlotys for each offence. The money shall be paid to the commune.

Piotrków, 29 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

[9] Identification marks for the Jews

All Jewish men and women from the age of six and older must wear a yellow band 10 cm wide sewn on their right arm, effective immediately.

Whoever is encountered without such armband shall be punished with prison or fine.

Ensuring identification for Jewish children is the responsibility of their parents or guardians.

Piotrków, 27 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

Concerning Polish prisoners

With the outbreak of war, Polish authorities released all prisoners. Whoever encounters a prisoner, should immediately report him at the nearest gendarmerie post.

Piotrków, 27 November 1939
Buss

County Governor

Issuing of death certificates

Burial cannot take place unless the cause of death has been determined. Death certificates may be issued only by doctors and coroners.

Fees for determining the cause of death shall be paid by the commune.

Piotrków, 27 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

To all mayors of the Piotrków County

Milling grain

Milling grain is to be performed to the amount of 80 per cent, effective immediately.

Piotrków, 27 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

[10] Securing clover seeds

Village heads of the Piotrków County are in charge of securing clover seeds. They are also responsible for preventing clover seeds from freezing.

Piotrków, 27 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

To all mayors of the Piotrków County

Outpatient clinic for treating trachoma⁶⁰⁵ and venereal diseases
On 1 December 1939, outpatient clinics for treating trachoma and venereal diseases are to be reopened. Mayors, through chairs of village councils, shall notify the public of the reopening of clinics and free treatment for these diseases. Opening days and hours will be established separately for each commune.

Piotrków, 27 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

To all mayors of the Piotrków County

Part III. Orders of the Town Commissioner

Sale of bread

Ration cards are valid until 26 November. New cards will not be issued. Sale of bread will be held from 27 November 1939 on the basis of lists of customers issued by vendors selling bread. Each household is to collect bread at the shop in which stamped sections have been kept. Since [11] the supply of grain from the countryside is still not sufficient, the ration is still 200 grams per person per day. List of customers ensures that each household receives only the assigned amount of bread.

Any attempt to obtain further quantities of bread in other shops using false information is useless and will be severely punished.

For certain reasons, I stress that two kilograms of bread costs 52 groszes. Bakers selling bread at higher prices should expect not only severe punishment, but also closure of their shops.

Persons buying at higher prices shall be punished accordingly.

Piotrków, 21 November 1939

Commissioner of the Town of Piotrków
Drechsel
Mayor

605 A chronic inflammation of the cornea and conjunctiva, a frequent cause of blindness.

Maximum prices for coffee in restaurants and cafes

Observations have shown that the maximum price designated for coffee beans is charged also for beverages whose only connection with coffee beans is black colour, and nothing else.

In order to clarify this issue, I hereby designate the following prices, effective immediately:

	German marks	Zlotys
1. Half a cup of black beans coffee with sugar	0.20	0.40
2. Half a cup of black beans coffee with sugar and cream	0.25	0.50
3. Half a cup of beans coffee with sugar or with cream and sugar	0.30	0.60
4. Half a cup of black grain coffee (chicory) with sugar	0.15	0.30
5. Half a cup of grain coffee (chicory) with cream and sugar	0.17	0.34
6. Half a cup of grain coffee (chicory) with sugar (black coffee) or cream and sugar	0.20	0.40

Piotrków, 22 November 1939

Commissioner of the Town of Piotrków
Drechsel
Mayor

[12] Announcement

1. Walking on the road is prohibited for pedestrians. Crossing the road, if necessary, should occur over the shortest distance, and thus on the right corner, and possibly only at appropriate crossing sections.
1. Pedestrians should always walk on the right side of the pavement. Walking side by side is strictly prohibited for more than two persons. Standing on the pavement, especially at the corners of streets, is not permitted.
2. Police authorities should punish disregard of these rules strictly and to the fullest extent.

Piotrków, 28 November 1939

Commissioner of the Town of Piotrków
Drechsel

Ordinance

Curfew is extended for *Volksdeutsche* who can sufficiently prove their German nationality, from 8 o'clock p.m. to 10 o'clock p.m.

At the same time *Reichsdeutsche* and *Volksdeutsche* are forbidden to enter the ghetto. I shall punish violations of this rule to the fullest extent.

In addition, I emphasize that it is not allowed to display the swastika in the ghetto.

Commissioner of the Town of Piotrków
Drechsel
Mayor

Part IV. Other announcements

Payment of food taxes

All food taxes (including slaughter tax) and monopoly fees must now be paid to the Fund of the Customs Office in Piotrków, Piłsudskiego Street 77, or to the account of the Customs Office in the Municipal Savings Bank in Radomsko, or to the Earning Companies Association Bank in Piotrków, Kościuszki Square 4.

Piotrków, 20 November 1939

Customs Commissioner
of the Piotrków County
Schmidt

[1] JOURNAL OF REGULATIONS for the town and county of Piotrków

No. 8.

Piotrków, 8 December 1939

The paper contains 8 pages

Price of one copy is 10 pfennigs

Part I. General announcements

Emigration to Ukraine

We hereby inform the public of the fact that an agreement has been signed between the German Reich and the Soviet Union under which the Ukrainians living in the occupied Polish territories who acknowledge their Ukrainian nationality and who wish to return to Ukrainian lands that now belong to the Soviet Union, are allowed to return immediately to the Russian territory.

Relevant documentation is issued by, respectively: in towns – mayors of towns, in rural areas – heads of villages. Documents for adults are also valid for all minors.

According to the above information, it is not imperative that the place of birth of an applicant is within the current Russian-Ukrainian territory, but it shall suffice declare their sense of belonging to the Ukrainian nationality. Religious differences shall not be taken into account.

Travellers who can take with them clothes, food, household equipment, and other property, shall be transported by eastern German rail free of charge to the German-Russian border.

Persons willing to leave are recommended to not to postpone the departure too long because dates of departure will be limited.

Announcement

of the regulation of the Governor General regarding the reconstruction of the judiciary in the General Government

of 26 October 1939

Pursuant to Article 5, p. 1 of the Decree of the Führer and Chancellor of the German Reich regarding Administration of the occupied Polish territories dated 12 October 1939, I hereby decree:

Article 1.

In the General Government, there is the German and Polish judiciary.

[2] Article 2.

1. The task of the German judiciary is prosecution of attacks on security and authority of the Reich and the German Nation, and the life, health and property of citizens of German nationality.
1. The citizens of German nationality are subject solely to the German judiciary.
2. The judgments of German courts will be issued on behalf of the German Nation.

Article 3.

A German judge may evaluate final judgments of a Polish court. A German judge assesses a case where judgment is appealed to the German judiciary.

Article 4.

The courts shall begin operation after the final determination of the boundaries of the General Government.

Article 5.

Provisions necessary for implementing this regulation are issued by the head of the Department of Justice of the General Government.

Warsaw, 26 October 1939

Governor General
for the occupied Polish territories
Frank

I hereby announce this regulation. Executive Officer of the Radom District
Radom, 20 November 1939.

Dr L a s c h
Governor

Announcement

Regulation of the Governor General of Education in the General
Government

As of 31 October 1939

Pursuant to article 5, p. 1 of the Decree of the *Führer* and Chancellor of the German *Reich* regarding Administration of the occupied Polish territories dated 12 October 1939 (Reichsgesetzbl[att] I S. 2077, the *Reich* Law Gazette I, p. 2077) I hereby decree:

[3] Article 1.

Children of German nationality may only attend German schools, Polish children only Polish schools.

Article 2.

In German schools, only German teachers may teach. In all places where there more than ten German children eligible for school education reside, German schools should be immediately established.

Article 3.

Polish comprehensive schools should, if they have not done so already, resume their activities.

Article 4.

Polish vocational schools should resume their activities. Using the name *Gymnasium* or *Lyceum*⁶⁰⁶ for vocational schools is prohibited.

606 These are traditional terms used in Polish for a middle school and high school, respectively.

Article 5.

Further operation and establishment of Polish private schools shall require permission. Such permission shall be granted by a district chief executive.

Article 6.

Polish higher education scientific institutions and universities shall be subject to future special regulations.

Article 7.

Executive provisions for this regulation shall be issued by the head of the Department of Education of the Governor-General.

Warschau (Warsaw), 31 October 1939

Governor-General
for the occupied Polish territories
Frank

I hereby announce this regulation.

Radom, 22 November 1939

Executive Officer of the Radom District
Dr L a s c h
Governor

REGULATION

Regarding Jewish schools

22 November 1939

Pursuant to article 5 of the First Regulation of the Governor General concerning the reconstruction of administration [4] in the occupied Polish territories dated 26 October 1939, I hereby decree:

1. Jewish schools of all types (primary schools, secondary schools, universities) shall remain closed.
1. Jewish school buildings and the property of Jewish schools shall be confiscated.
2. Competent executives of counties and commissioners of towns shall be in charge of the seizure and administration of assets.

Radom, 22 November 1939

Executive Officer of the Radom District
Dr L a s c h
Governor

Regulation
concerning protest of bills of exchange and cheques
as of 22 November 1939

Pursuant to article 5 of the First Regulation of the Governor General concerning the reconstruction of administration in the occupied Polish territories as of 26 October 1939, I hereby decree:

For bills of exchange and cheques made payable from 27 August 1939 to 27 December 1939, final payment date is extended for preparation of protest in the Radom District until 2 January 1940.

Executive Officer of the Radom District
Dr L a s c h
Governor

Part II. Orders of the Chief Executive of the County

Polish courts

Polish courts in Piotrków started their activities on 1 December 1939. They are located in the County Governor's Office building.

Piotrków, 2 December 1939

County Governor
Buss

[5] Maximum prices for coffee in restaurants and cafes

In addition to the regulation of 27 September 1939 concerning setting prices of food products of all kinds, beverages, and cleaning and lighting products, valid for the Piotrków county and the town of Piotrków, at the request of the Executive Officer of the District of Radom, I hereby set prices for rye coffee and chicory as follows.

	<i>Reichsmark</i>	Zloty
1. Half a cup of coffee, rye and black, or with chicory and sugar	0.15	0.30
2. Full cup of black rye coffee or with chicory	0.20	0.40
3. Half a cup of rye coffee, or with chicory with cream and sugar	0.17	0.34
4. Full cup of rye coffee, or with chicory with cream and sugar	0.20	0.40

Piotrków, 25 November 1939

County Governor
Buss

Part III. Orders of the Town Commissioner

“Ordering coal

The German army and authorities are hereby informed that there will be no further deliveries of coal by the *Reich* railway.

The demand for coal should be fulfilled by the local coal trade within Piotrków. It is advisable to discontinue placing further orders.⁶⁰⁷

Piotrków, 6 December 1939

Commissioner of the Town of Piotrków
Drechsler
Mayor

Ordinance

Buying meat from Christian butchers is strictly prohibited for Jewish wholesalers. Violating the order both the seller and the buyer shall be punished.

Piotrków, 2 December 1939

Commissioner of the Town of Piotrków
Drechsler
Mayor

[6] Ordinance for the Jews

I hereby announce a summary of my ordinance concerning the Jews as of 1 December 1939.

I.

II. Until 2 December, 1,000 men belonging to the Jewish community should be delivered to forced labour each day.

III. The Jewish community must immediately set up a large barrack on the open square outside the synagogue, which must be finished by 10 December to house the homeless.

IV. All Jews, including the baptised Jews, and persons whose one parent is a Jew, must wear for identification on their right forearm a white band 10 cm wide, with a blue star of David 8 cm across, 1 cm wide, effective immediately. Whoever is encountered without such armband by 3 December, shall be brought before the Summary Court as a saboteur.

607 “ Text only in German.

- V. It is forbidden for all Jews to leave their flats. They are allowed to go outside within the ghetto [s] from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and beyond the ghetto from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Whoever is encountered on the street outside the allotted time shall be brought before Summary Court as a saboteur.

- VI. Subjects to these ordinances have no right of appeal or compensation. Any objections shall be punished by imprisonment and a fine, or either of these penalties, if the Summary Court does not rule sabotage.

Piotrków, 4 December 1939

Commissioner of the town of Piotrków
Drechsler
Mayor

Part IV. Other announcements

Announcement

The local Office of Measures in Piotrków at 3 Maja Street 17 was opened on 1 December of this year, and as before, it is open to inquiries from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

We also remind of the requirement of legalisation of measuring tools that are used in public trade.

[7] Measuring tools with hallmark 37 or higher should be submitted for legitimisation in the current year.

Piotrków, 1 December 1939

Director of the Office of Measures
Rogiewicz

Announcement

Pursuant to the Regulation on Foreign Exchange for the General Government of 15 November 1939, the German mark was defined as foreign currency.

Values that are subject to donation obligation until 15 December, 1939 are as follows:

Banknotes: All *Reichsmarks*
and all *Rentenmarks*.⁶⁰⁸

608 Temporary German currency replacing marks, introduced in 1924; renamed *Reichsmark* in the same year.

Coins: 5, 2, 1, and 0.50.

Money subject to donation obligation until 15 December, 1939 is as follows:

Coins in pfennigs: Rpf. 10, 5, 2, 1.

Vouchers issued by the German Reich Credit Fund are not subject to the donation obligation at the moment.

Exchange must be made in the German Reich Credit Fund in Piotrków at Legionów Street 7,

at 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.,

and from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., on Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Piotrków, 4 December 1939

German Reich Credit Fund

Publisher: H. DRECHSLER, Mayor, "Krajowa" Printing House, Piotrków, Sienkiewicza Street 17.

ARG I 953 (Ring. I/763)

Description: original, printed, German, Polish, 237×315 mm, 10 sheets, 20 pages .

84

20 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski. Announcement of the order for all the Jews to move to the ghetto.

Announcement

According to the ordinance of the Mayor of the Town of Piotrków, all Jews living outside the ghetto must immediately leave their homes and move into the ghetto. All permits for residence outside the ghetto are null and void, effective immediately.

Piotrków, 20 December 1939

ARG I 958 i (Ring. I/340)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, German, Polish, Yiddish, 205×292 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

11.1939–04.1940, Piotrków Trybunalski, ghetto. Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków. Announcements:

- (1) 10 November 1939, concerning registration obligation of the Jewish population;
- (1a) November 1939, on prevention of the spread of typhoid;
- (2) 1 December 1939, request for 1000 Jews to report for work;
- (3) 1940, regarding obligation for all men from a given street to report for work;
- (4) 8 December 1939, regarding the establishment of the Emigration Committee;
- (5) 14 December 1939, concerning registration for the departure to the USSR;
- (6) 19 December 1939, regarding the ban to provide room for refugees;
- (7) 26 December 1939, concerning registration of emigrants to the Soviet Union and the obligation to register refugees travelling through Piotrków in the Jewish Community;
- (8) 27 December 1939, concerning distribution of bread ration cards for January 1940;
- (9) 26 December 1939, concerning registration of merchants and artisans;
- (10) 1940, the obligation to submit to a protective vaccination against typhoid;
- (11) 4 January 1940, concerning sending letters via the Office of the Jewish Community;
- (12) 9 January 1940, call to register all refugees by 12 January 1940;
- (13) 9 January 1940, concerning the obligation to register business by 16 January 1940;
- (14) 12 January 1940, call to immediately move to the ghetto for people who had been previously authorised to reside or run a workshop outside the ghetto;
- (15) 24 January, 1940, concerning the prohibition to bake white bread and sugar confectionery;

- (16) 24 January 1940, concerning the obligation to wear an armband with the "Star of David" (persons over 10 years of age);
- (17) 5 February 1940, concerning the issuance of new identity cards for those persons who are at least 15 years of age;
- (18) 6 February 1940, concerning compulsory vaccination;
- (19) 22 February 1940, concerning the prevention of epidemic;
- (20) 28 February 1940, concerning the sale of bread for cards (enclosed list of bakeries with assigned streets);
- (21) 29 February 1940, call to all men aged 16 to 60 to replace their work cards with new ones;
- (22a) 9 March 1940, call to register for forced labour;
- (23) 14 March 1940, summon to registration of all available rooms until 18 March 1940;
- (24) 18 March 1940, concerning registration of grain and fodder plants by 20 March 1940, and prohibition on trade of these products;
- (25) 21 March 1940, concerning severe consequences of failure to report for forced labour;
- (25a) 13 March 1940, concerning the obligation to register for forced labour.

(1) Announcement

Pursuant to the ordinance of the Mayor of the town of Piotrków dated 2 November 1939 (*Anordnungsblatt* No. 4, Part III, p. 6) and the order of the Security Police, registration forms should be prepared before 20 November for each family in the town of Piotrków.

Accordingly, the Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków urges all owners or administrators of properties located within the ghetto of the town of Piotrków to deliver registration books of their properties from 9 to 11 a.m. to the office of the Community (Piłsudskiego Street 27) and leave them there for a period of three days, according to the list of dates and streets specified below: Sunday, 12 November, streets: Piłsudskiego from number 1 to 67 (incl.).

Starowarszawska from number 5 to 29 (incl.).

Monday, 13 November, streets: Jerozolimska from 3 to 47 (incl.), Curie-Skłodowskiej from 4 to 28 (incl.), Oddzielna from 3 to 30 (incl.), Trybunalski Square from 1 to 11 (incl.).

Wednesday, 15 November, streets: Rwańska from 1 to 5 (incl.), Czarnieckiego Square from 2 to 10 (incl.), Niepodległości Square from 2 to 5 (incl.), Pijarska 8, Nadrowy 2, Obrytka 3, Sieradzka from 1 to 8 (incl.), Szewska from 8 to 10 (incl.), Rycerska from 5 to 16 (incl.).

Friday, 17 November, streets: plac Litewski from 6 to 13 (incl.), Litewska from 1 to 22 (incl.), Farna from 2 to 8 (incl.), Zamurowa from 4 to 15 (incl.), Zamkowa from 20 to 24 (incl.), Grodzka from 1 to 3 (incl.), Konarskiego from 2 to 4 (incl.), Łazienna Mokra from 1 to 6 (incl.), Garncarska from 1 to 25 (incl.), Leonarda from 3 to 15 (incl.), Krzywa from 10 to 12 (incl.), Wiejska from 5 to 15 (incl.), Spacerowa 4, Kręta 1, Pereca from 3 to 14 (incl.), Wspólna from 1 to 9 (incl.)

At the same time, the Council of Elders calls all heads of Jewish families residing in the town of Piotrków to report to the office of the Jewish Community according to the following list of dates and streets:

Sunday, 12 November, streets: Piłsudskiego 1, 1a, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20. Starowarszawska 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Monday, 13 November, streets: Piłsudskiego 21, 23, 25, 25a, 27, 29, 31, 33, 39, 40, 44, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 60, 61, 62, 64, 67, Starowarszawska 15, 17, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, Pereca 13.

Tuesday, 14 November, streets: Jerozolimska from 3 to 47 (incl.), Curie-Skłodowskiej from 4 to 28 (incl.), Oddzielna from 3 to 30 (incl.).

Wednesday, 15 November, streets: Trybunalski Square from 1 to 11 (incl.), Rwańska from 1 to 5 (incl.), Czarnieckiego Sq. from 2 to 10 (incl.),

Thursday, 16 November, streets: Niepodległości Square from 2 to 5 (incl.), Pijarska 2, Obryska 3, Sieradzka from 1 to 8 (incl.), Szewska from 8 to 10 (incl.)

Friday, 17 November, streets: Rycerska from 6 to 13 (incl.), Litewski Square from 6 to 13 (incl.), Litewska from 1 to 22 (incl.), farna from 2 to 8 (incl.).

Saturday, 18 November, streets: Zamurowa from 4 to 15 (incl.), Zamkowa from 20 to 24 (incl.), Kręta 1, Pereca 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 14, Wspólna from 1 to 9.

Sunday, 19 November, all Jewish families residing outside the ghetto and at Garncarska Street from 1 to 26 (incl.).

Persons reporting for registration should submit identification documents (birth certificates, identity cards, passports, military booklets, and other documents) from all registered persons.

Registration of every family is charged a fee of 50 groszes.

It is noted that in accordance with section 9 of the aforesaid regulation of the Mayor, failure to comply with this request shall be considered an act of sabotage and punished accordingly.

Piotrków, 10 November 1939 Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(1a) To the Jewish population!

Due to recent incidents of typhoid, we appeal to the public to undertake intensive preventative measures against the disease.

Typhoid fever is an epidemic disease, caused by a germ that can be transmitted by touch from infected objects (food, water, milk, clothes, underwear, and excreta [faeces, urine] of an infected person) into the digestive tract of a healthy person.

Typhoid fever is a disease of dirty hands and contaminated food products. Typhoid can be transmitted by insects (flies).

In order to prevent typhoid, one should:

1. Maintain scrupulous personal cleanliness of one's own clothing and housing, and immediate environment (lavatories).
1. Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap, especially before each meal.
2. Avoid touching dirty objects of uncertain hygiene.
3. Eliminate and prevent all kinds of parasites and insects.
4. Do not drink unboiled water of unknown origin and quality or raw milk; fruit should be washed with warm water and peeled.
5. Food products should be stored in a closed space, and in shops in special glass cases.
6. Protective vaccination should be taken as a precaution.

Vaccinations are carried out in the clinic of the Jewish Community in Piotrków, at Piłsudskiego Street 27.

Piotrków, November 1939 Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(2) Announcement

Pursuant to the ordinance of the Mayor dated 1 December of this year, the Jewish Community in Piotrków is required to provide as of tomorrow, i.e. 2 December 1939, 1,000 (one thousand) Jewish men a day to build the barracks, which should be completed by 10 December 1939.

Therefore, all Jewish men between the ages of 16 and 60, are to report at 7 a.m. at the courtyard of the Jewish Community building (Piłsudskiego Street 27), where the required number of people shall be directed to respective works.

A separate call for the above work will not be sent.

Pursuant to the aforesaid order of the Mayor, failure to comply with this order shall be deemed an act of sabotage punishable by Martial Law.

Piotrków, 1 December 1939 Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(3) Announcement

Pursuant to the ordinance of the Mayor of 1 December 1939 (Ordinance No. 8[?]), the Jewish Community in Piotrków is required to provide 1,000 (one thousand) Jewish men a day for various works.

Therefore, all Jewish men between the ages of 16 to 60, residing on the street should report tomorrow, i.e. on [date] at 7:15 a.m. to the courtyard of the building of the Jewish Community (Piłsudskiego Street 27), where they will be referred to designated work. A separate call for the above work will not be sent.

Pursuant to the aforesaid ordinance of the Mayor, failure to comply with it shall be deemed an act of sabotage punishable by Martial Law.

Piotrków,1940 Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(4) Announcement

Regarding emigration of Jews from Piotrków

We hereby inform the Jewish population of the town of Piotrków that the Emigration Committee

has been established at the Jewish Community in Piotrków, which has set itself the task of organising and facilitating emigration of Jews from Piotrków.

The Emigration Committee holds office every day, starting from Friday, 8 December 1939, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Jewish Community in Piotrków, Piłsudskiego Street 27.

Piotrków, 8 December 1939

Emigration Committee

(5) INFORMATION

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków announces that pursuant to the regulation of the authorities, a special passenger train from Piotrków, free of charge will shortly be sent to the USSR.

Jews who wish to leave on this train must register with the office of the Jewish Community in Piotrków, Piłsudskiego Street 27, during the day from 9 to 11 a.m. and from 2 to 5 p.m.

Final date for registration is 21 December.

Furthermore, according to official information, travellers will be able to bring cash, clothes, food, household equipment, and other belongings, which they will carry by rail free of charge.

Persons who wish to leave are recommended not to delay registration, as departure dates and number of places on the train will also be limited.

Piotrków, 14 December 1939

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(6) Announcement

Council of Elders at the Jewish Community in Piotrków informs all the Jews of the town of Piotrków that pursuant to the ordinance of the Mayor of the Town of Piotrków, it is strictly forbidden to provide housing for people coming from other localities, especially refugees.

Failure to comply with the abovementioned ordinance of the Mayor shall result in very severe penalties immediately imposed on people who harboured such persons, and the visitors themselves.

Piotrków, 19 December 1939

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(7) INFORMATION

Emigration Committee of the Jewish Community in Piotrków hereby informs that:

1. Registration of emigrants to the Soviet Union continues. Date of departure will be announced to the public.
1. In addition to organising the emigration to the USSR, the Emigration Committee explores the possibilities of Jewish emigration from Piotrków to other countries.
2. Refugees from other localities passing through Piotrków should in their own interest register with the Emigration Committee.

The Emigration Committee holds office every day at the Jewish Community (Piłsudskiego Street 27), at 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Piotrków, 26 December 1939

Emigration Committee
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(8) Announcement

The Jewish Community in Piotrków announces that bread ration cards for January 1940 will be distributed at the premises of the Community in the following order:

Friday, 29 December, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3 p.m.–5 p.m. Piłsudskiego Street, Czarnieckiego Square and Farna Street.

Saturday, 30 December, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3 p.m.–5 p.m. Streets: Starowarszawska, Garncarska, Zamkowa, Zamkowy Square, Zamurowa, Wspólna, Pereca, Niepodległości Square, Nadrowy, Obrytka, Szewska, Sieradzka, and Rycerska.

Sunday, 31 December, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3 p.m.–5 p.m. Other streets in the ghetto and outside the ghetto.

Bread cards will be issued only to persons listed in the Community residence register. Bread cards should be collected by the head of the family. Fee for the bread ration cards is 5 groszes.

Piotrków, 27 December 1939

(9) Announcement

The Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków calls all merchants and artisans (Jews) of the town of Piotrków, who held industrial certificates in 1939, to register by 26–28 December 1939 at the premises of the Community, Piłsudskiego Street 27.

In order to register, industrial certificates for 1939, or another document authorising trade or craft, must be submitted.

Piotrków, 26 December 1939

(10) Announcement

On1940, the Jews living in this house are obliged to report to the Jewish Community infirmary, at Piłsudskiego Street 27, at, for preventive vaccinations against typhoid.

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(11) Information

The Board of the Jewish Community in Piotrków announces that the Jewish population of the town of Piotrków may purchase stamps and postcards (at nominal prices) and send letters via the office of the *Judenrat*, at Piłsudskiego Street 27.

Piotrków, 4 January 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(12) SUMMONS!!

This is the final call of the Council of Elders of the Jewish community in Piotrków to all residents of Piotrków to immediately register, at the office of the Jewish Community (Piłsudskiego 27 Street), all newly arrived Jews living with them who have not yet been registered.

This registration must be completed by January 12. In the event of failure to comply, both home owners and tenants who harbour the unregistered immigrants shall be held accountable by the relevant authorities, as well as the

unregistered lodgers themselves. Therefore, registration is in the interest of all the aforementioned.

Piotrków, 9 January 1940

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(13) Announcement

Council of Elders of the Jewish community in Piotrków announces that all Jewish merchants, industrialists, and artisans who wish to run their business in 1940 should report to the office of the Community (Piłsudskiego Street 27) between 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3 p.m.–5 p.m., in order to fill out declaration forms to obtain registration cards, according to the street order below listed:

- 1) Wednesday, January 10, 1940: Piłsudskiego and Starowarszawska.
- 2) Thursday, January 11, 1940: Trybunalski Square, Sieradzka, Szewska, and Rycerska.
- 3) Friday, January 12, 1940: Grodzka, Farna, Czarnieckiego Square, and Niepodległości Square.
- 4) Saturday, January 13, 1940: Garncarska, Jerozolimska, Litewski, Square, and Litewska.
- 5) Sunday, January 14, 1940: All remaining streets.

It should be noted that registration cards will be issued for companies located exclusively within the ghetto.

The above-mentioned declarations must be signed by 16 January 1940.

Piotrków, 9 January 1940

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(14) SUMMONS!!!

The Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków urges all Jewish residents of Piotrków who still reside outside the ghetto to immediately vacate their former domiciles and workshops, and move to the ghetto.

This order also applies to all persons who in their time have obtained permission from the relevant authorities to temporarily or indefinitely reside outside the ghetto, and to persons who have recently applied to the authorities for permission to reside outside the ghetto and have not yet received a reply.

The Council of Elders of the Jewish Community has also been notified by the relevant authorities that no application for permission to reside outside the ghetto shall be accepted by the authorities.

At the same time, the Council of Elders of the Jewish Community warns all those who fail to comply with this Order shall be held accountable and severely punished by the authorities.

Piotrków, 12 January 1940

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(15) Announcement

In accordance with the regulation of the Executive Officer of the District of Radom of 10 January 1940, all Jewish bakers and Jewish businesses that so far have baked white bread, sugar confectionery, cakes, and similar articles are forbidden to use flour for any purpose other than to bake rye bread.

Failure to comply with this order may result in a fine of up to 10,000 zlotys and imprisonment, or one of these penalties, and the company may be closed.

The above also applies to individuals, who are prohibited from baking with wheat flour.

Piotrków, January 24, 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(16) Announcement

Pursuant to article 1 of the regulation of the Governor-General of 23 November 1939, and the order of 13 December 1939 (*Anordnungsblatt für Stadt und Landkreis Petrikau* No. 9 of 23 December 1939), all Jews in Piotrków who are 10 years of age or older are required to wear on the right sleeve of their clothes and outer garments a white strip at least 10 cm wide, with Star of David in blue, 8 cm across, with lines 1 cm wide. The armband should be firmly sewn onto the clothes.

Recently, the authorities have revealed that not all Jews in the town of Piotrków comply with this regulation. Therefore, the police have made some arrests, and the guilty will be brought before the Special Court.

The Board of the Jewish Community in Piotrków reminds the Jewish population of the obligation to strictly adhere to the above-cited regulation of the Authorities and warns that people who fail to comply with the above regulation shall be subject to severe criminal liability.

Piotrków, 24 January 1940

(17) ANNOUNCEMENT

Pursuant to the Regulation of the Director of the Civil Administration and the Commissioner of the town of Piotrków (*Anordnungsblatt für Stadt und Landkreis Petrikau* No. 2, 3 /39), any person of Jewish faith 15 years old or older, residing or staying in Piotrków, is required to submit an application to the Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków to be issued new identity card and provide the details necessary for the issue, truthful and proven with appropriate documents.

In order to submit applications and collect identity cards, report to the building of the Jewish Community in Piotrków (Piłsudskiego Street 27) in the following order:

Date	Submission of documents	Collection of documents
For persons whose last name starts with letter:		
9.2.[19]40	A	-
12.2	B	A
14.2	C	B
16.2	D	C
19.2	E	D
21.2	F	E
23.2	G	F
26.2	H	G
28.2	I, J	H
1.3	Ka to Ko	I, J
4.3	Kp to Kz	Ka to Ko
6.3	L, Ł	Kp to Kz

<u>8.3</u>	M	L, Ł
<u>11.3</u>	N	M
<u>13.3</u>	O	N
<u>15.3</u>	P	O
<u>18.3</u>	R	P
<u>20.3</u>	S	R
<u>22.3</u>	T	S
<u>26.3</u>	U, W	T
<u>28.3</u>	Z	U, W
<u>30.3</u>	–	Z

It is essential to adhere to the above dates. The application must be accompanied by personal identification documents held so far, two photographs, and a fee of two zlotys.

The existing identity cards are no longer valid and that every person over 15 years of age is required to carry an identity card and show it at the request of authorities and officials.

Piotrków, 5 February 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(18) Ordinance

In view of the existing danger of an epidemic of typhoid fever (typhus) during the early spring, I hereby order mandatory vaccination of all Jews who have not been voluntarily vaccinated during the war.

Vaccinations will be held at the Clinic of the Jewish Community in Piotrków on the basis of notices that will be posted at the gates of every house on the day before the date of vaccination. The notices will specify the date and time for each house individually.

Exempt from vaccination are: the sick, the elderly over 65 years of age, and infants up to two years of age.

Piotrków, 6 February 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(19) To the Jewish Population!

Spring is coming! It is a dangerous period in terms of the epidemic, particularly this year after the severe, prolonged winter and insufficient nutrition of the population.

To avoid the danger of infectious diseases, we should apply safeguard measures on our own:

1. Keep clean yourself, your house, bedding, linen, clothes, etc.!
2. Make sure that courtyards, stairways, and lavatories are kept clean!
3. Exterminate bugs, lice, and bedbugs!
4. Avoid contact with people who are dirty and infected with lice; do not visit dirty houses!
5. Report for free preventive vaccinations at the Jewish Community.

Take care of cleaning yourselves, without waiting for an official operation, which will soon begin; you will avoid a lot of unpleasantness, both moral and material.

Piotrków, 22 February 1940

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community
in Piotrków

(20) ANNOUNCEMENT

Concerning bread

The Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków hereby makes public that, effective on 1 March 1940, bread rations will be sold at bakeries according to the following system:

1. Each holder of bread card will receive their ration of bread in just one bakery, depending on the street and the house in which he resides.
1. Bread will be sold in bakeries only from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Whoever attempts to collect bread after the designated time shall not receive any.

Accordingly, each holder of a bread card for the month of March 1940 should register at the bakery to which he was assigned by March 1 from 7 am to 9 am, bringing with him, along with his bread card, also the family ID card.

Holders of bread cards will receive bread in the following bakeries:

No. 7	Bakery	Provides bread for residents of the following streets:
1.	Kinigiel J., Jerozolimska Street 9	Limanowskiego 1, 5, 9, 11, 13, 14, 14a, b, 19, Jerozolimska 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
2.	Weisser Sz., Jerozolimska Street 17	Jerozolimska 14, 17, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, Garncarska 13, 15, 19, 21, 24, 26.
3.	Milsztajn M., Leonarda Street 3	Leonarda 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, Curie-Skłodowskiej 4, 5, 8, 10, 24, 26, 28, Oddzielna 3, 7, 14, 22, 24, 28, 30, Garbarska 8, Starowarszawska 27, 29, Jerozolimska 28, 30, 32, Nowy Świat 31, Wspólna 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, Piłsudskiego 1, 1a, 3.
4.	Gomoliński Sz., Litewska Street 7	Piłsudskiego 5, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 and refugees.
5.	Judkiewicz I., Litewska Street 8	Litewska 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11?, 14, 17, 19, Wolborska 12, 13, 23, pl. Litewski 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 19.
6.	Kenigsztajn, Jerozolimska Street 46	Jerozolimska 33, 33/35, 37, 39, 41, 42, 46, 47, Zamurowa 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 22, Piłsudskiego 20, 21, 23.
7.	Szwarc M., Wiejska Street 5	Wiejska 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, Krzywa 10, 12, Kręta 1, Spacerowa 2, 3, 4, 5.
8.	Hamerman K., Piłsudskiego Street 9	Piłsudskiego 7, 8, 9, 10.
9.	Biberman B., Starowarszawska Street 23	Starowarszawska, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25.
10.	Fisz J., Garncarska Street 14	Starowarszawska 7, 8, 9, 11, 13.
11.	Russak M., Starowarszawska Street 14	Starowarszawska 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 14, Zamkowa 2, 15, 20, 22, 24, pl. Zamkowy 2, Pereca 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 19.
12.	Horowicz, Garncarska Street 9	Garncarska 1/3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, Nadrowy 2, Krakowskie Przedmieście 1, 6, 14, Obrytka 3.
13.	Jołowicz, Pereca Street 2	Pereca 2, 3, 4, 6, Farna 2, 5, 6, 8, Konarskiego 2, 4, Pijarska 8, Grodzka 3, Piłsudskiego 25.
14.	Goldsztajn Sz., Zamurowa Street 4	Zamurowa 4, Grodzka 2, plac Czarnieckiego 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, Piłsudskiego 25a, 27, 29/31, Rwańska 1, 5.

15.	Moszkowicz, Rycerska Street 9	Rycerska 6, 8, Piłsudskiego 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 60, 61, 62, 64, 67, 72, 74/76, 83/85, 87, 91, 1-go Maja 6, 8, 12, Toruńska 1.
16.	Ajzensztajn, Rycerska Street 12	Piłsudskiego 49, 50, Rycerska 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, Jagiellońska 3, Legionów 20, Przeskok 6a, Pierackiego 10, 12, 25, 38, 40.
17.	Fajner A., Niepodległości Square 4	Niepodległości Square 2, 4, 7, Trybunalski Square 5, 7, 8, 10, 11.
18.	Budkowski Sz., Szewska Street 8	Szewska 6, 8, 10, Sieradzka 1, 4, 5, 8, Łazienna-Mokra 1, 2/4, 2/4/6, Piłsudskiego 33, 39, 44, 48.
19.	Singer, Szewska Street 4	Szewska 3, 4, Trybunalski 4 Square.

Piotrków, 28 February 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders

(21) SUMMONS

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków calls all Jewish men aged 16 to 60 to report within the following time to the premises of the Community (Department of Labour) Piłsudskiego Street 27, to replace their current card.

The newly registered and persons without relevant documents should also report at the given time to collect work cards.

Documents will be issued from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the following order:

Sunday, March 3, 1940	Piłsudskiego, Starowarszawska Streets.
Monday, March 4, 1940	Jerozolimska, Garncarska, Limanowskiego Streets, Trybunalski Square, Czarnieckiego Square.
Tuesday, March 5, 1940	All remaining streets.

Persons who fail to comply with this order shall be considered to be evading forced labour obligation and forcibly brought to registration.

Piotrków, February 29, 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders

(22a) ANNOUNCEMENT AND SUMMONS

The Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków hereby notifies all the Jews of the town of Piotrków that pursuant to the official order of the *Judenrat* concerning registration and reporting of Jews for forced labour, and the First and Second Provisions of the Executive Regulation dated October 26, 1939 on the introduction of forced labour for the Jewish population of the General Government (*Anordnungsblatt für den Kreis Petrikau* No. 1/1948),

all Jewish men between 12 and 60 years of age shall be subject to registration without delay for the purpose of forced labour.

In connection with the above orders, all Jewish male residents of the town of Piotrków are required to register at the offices of the Jewish Community in Piotrków (Piłsudskiego Street 27) from 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3 p.m.–5 p.m., in the following order:

14	March 1940	ALL MEN BORN IN YEARS	1923, 1922, 1921
15	"	"	"
16	"	"	"
21	"	"	"
22	"	"	"
23	"	"	"
26	"	"	"
27	"	"	"
28	"	"	"
29	"	"	"
30	"	"	"
31	"	"	"

Applicants for registration should bring relevant identity cards, craft cards⁶⁰⁹, and other documentation for registration.

Baptised Jews are also subject to the registration.

The provisions of this order shall prohibit all Jews subject to the registration to change residence or lodging beyond the Municipality of the town of Piotrków, without written permission issued by locally appropriate German

609 In German, it is *Handwerkskarte*; permission to perform this kind of work.

Administrative Authority. All Jews coming to Piotrków are required to register with the Jewish Community in Piotrków within 24 hours.

Also with immediate effect, it is forbidden to all Jews subject to forced labour to sell, pawn, or do anything else with their trade tools without permission from the appropriate District Executive Officer, including machinery and appurtenances in their possession. It is also forbidden to send away or hide these tools.

In due time, registered persons shall receive card sections (for which they should pay the Community 20 groszes per section), which they are required to keep for inspection purposes; in case of minors, their parents are responsible for keeping card sections. All registered persons are required to report to an inspection meeting convened by the authorities with their registration cards and, upon request, to deliver all their tools to the assembly place.

Pursuant to article 7 of the abovementioned Second Executive Provision, punishable by severe imprisonment for up to ten years is every Jew eligible for forced labour, who:

- a) Upon a call to register in forced labour files, fails to report in person within the prescribed time limit and location,
- a) Provides inaccurate or incomplete information about his person,
- b) Fakes disability or reduced ability to work,
- c) Upon being called for forced labour, fails to bring tools in his possession, or rids himself of them earlier thus violating the prohibition,
- d) After being called for forced labour, fails to report at the assembly site, or otherwise attempts to evade forced labour.

In addition to a severe imprisonment sentence, [such a person] may be sentenced to confiscation of all property. Also, all owners and caretakers of buildings, as well as major tenants of flats in the Municipality of the town of Piotrków, are obliged to ensure that the Jews residing with them report to registration if they are subject thereto. Pursuant to article 7 (1) pt. 3.1. [?] of the Executive Regulation of 12 December 1939, failure to comply may result in severe punishment of up to ten years in prison.

Piotrków, 29 February 1940.

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(23) Announcement

Following the ordinance of the Piotrków Town Commissioner of 22 February 1940, it is ordered:

- 1) All Jewish owners or Jewish administrators of houses within the Town of Piotrków are called by 18 March 1940 at the latest, to submit a list of all residential rooms at the offices of the ACCOMMODATION SECTION of the Jewish Community at Piłsudskiego Street 27, regardless of whether they are currently occupied or not. The list should include:
 - a) Street and house number,
 - a) First and last name of the owner of the house, flat number, first and last name and occupation of the main tenant.
 - b) If the flat is not rented out, it should be indicated in box C,
 - c) Number of people in individual flats on the basis of the registration book,
 - d) Number of habitable rooms in each flat,
 - e) Type of structure of the flat (corridor system, rooms arranged in a row, etc.).
- 2) From 15 March 1940, owners and administrators of houses are obliged to submit a report at the accommodation section of the Jewish Community within three days whenever residential rooms in their building are vacated or rented.

These applications will be accepted on the appropriate forms, which will be distributed by the ACCOMMODATION SECTION of the Jewish Community with reimbursement for the cost of printing. Failure to comply with this order shall be subject to severe punishment.

Piotrków, 14 March 1940

Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(24) The Jewish Community in Piotrków
Announcement

Pursuant to the regulation of the authorities, all Jews residing in Piotrków and vicinity who are in possession of alfalfa sowing seed are obliged to provide a written report on the quantity and price of their stock to the Community offices by 20 March 1940.

After providing the above information, pending further orders, any commercial transactions involving these seeds are strictly prohibited.

The authorities will pay for delivered seeds. Failure to comply with this notice within the period specified will result in confiscation of sowing seeds, and severe penalties.

Piotrków, 18 March 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków
Z[elmen] Tennenberg

(25) Warning

Despite constant reminders not all Jews report for forced labour. Therefore, the Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Piotrków warns for the last time

Persons who do not report for forced labour of the consequences of failure to comply with this obligation.

At the same time, the Council of Elders announces again that medical certificates of sick men do not exempt [them] from the obligation to bring replacement for forced labour.

Piotrków, 21 March 1940

Chairman of the Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Piotrków

(25a) Announcement

The Jewish Community in Piotrków calls all Jews born between 1914–1923 who registered for forced labour on 14–19 March 1940, to report in person in the building of the Jewish Community in Piotrków (Piłsudskiego Street 23) to collect counterfoils.⁶¹⁰

Counterfoils for minors should be collected by their parents. Upon collecting the card section, 20 groszes should be paid to the Community as reimbursement for registration cards.

Failure to report within the prescribed time limit may result in the same penalties as failure to report for registration.

610 It refers to counterfoils (slips) of registration cards.

Dates of collection of registration cards:

Date	Persons whose last name starts with letter:
16.4.1940	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H
17.4.1940	I, J, K, L, M, N
18.4.1940	O, P, R, S, T, U, W, Y, Z

The registered are also reminded of their obligation to keep their receipt for inspection purposes.

Piotrków, 13 April 1940.

Chairman of the Council of Elders

ARG I 955 a (Ring. I/787/1, Ring. I/876, Ring. I/882)

Description:

Ring. I/787/1, original (Nos. 1, 6, 14, 15, 26, 28 in 2 copies, Nos. 1a, 2, 4, 3 in 3 copies), duplicate, printed, typewritten, handwritten, German, Polish, Yiddish, 138×118, 335×490, 473×620 mm, 46 sheets, 46 pages;
 Ring. I/876, duplicate (No. 5), handwritten (MS*), pencil, German in Hebrew transliteration, Yiddish, 210×287 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page; at the top, a Hebrew letter “פ” in red pencil. No. 22 is a Yiddish duplicate of a fragment of No. 20.
 Ring. I/882, duplicate (No. 20, without the list of bakeries), typewritten, Yiddish, 213×345 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. No. 1 bears a stamp: “Printing House M. Rozensztajn, Piotrków Trybunalski, Trybunalski Square 4”; No. 22a is printed by Horowicz in Piotrków. No. 3 is printed on the back of a page from a cash book (after 1930, Piotrków, printed, Polish). Certain documents were stored in a binder.

8 December 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski, Council of Elders of the Piotrków Jewish Community. Report on the activity from September to December 1939: kitchens, orphanage, housing committee, medical care, emigration, aid to refugees, budget, etc., including statistics.

[1] Council of Elders
of the Piotrków Jewish Community

8 December 1939

To the specially appointed trustee
of the National Socialist Social Welfare
in Piotrków

Concerning Jewish aid activity

Before the war, the town of Piotrków numbered up to 52,000 residents. Economically, Piotrków is among the poorest and most debt-ridden towns in Poland. Industry in our town is at the lowest level. The town is completely backward, economically. Not a single new industrial enterprise has been established in the town in the past 25 years. The number of unemployed in the town is normally 25 per cent of the population (some 4,000 families).

The Jews in Piotrków constitute nearly 25 per cent of the general population. Economically, the Jews are the poorest section of the population, that consists mainly of small traders and artisans who have worked and traded exclusively with the surrounding population. The Jews did not have state jobs. Among the Jewish population, there has been a large mass of pauperised elements who have been dependent on support from social welfare.

At the present moment, poverty among the Jewish population has greatly increased due to the consequences of war. (The burning of houses, homeless people from the surrounding area.) Some groups of the Jewish population, such as butchers for example (67 families), have completely lost their work.

Due to the great need, the Council of Elders of the Jewish community in Piotrków is at present facing much greater need of social welfare.

Prior to the war, the administration of the Jewish community did not provide any independent social support. The Jewish community confined itself exclusively to subsidising private philanthropic institutions concerned with

social welfare. In addition, the Jewish population benefited from the general municipal social welfare.

With the outbreak of the war, the duty of providing social welfare to the Jewish population fell solely to the Jewish community.

[2] In order to fulfil the task of social welfare for the Jewish population, the Jewish community took over and in some cases created the following institutions:

1. Kitchen to feed the poor population (for adults)
2. " " " children of school age
3. Advice centre and milk kitchen for infants
4. Orphanage
5. Out-patient clinic, dressing wounds, and injections against infectious diseases
6. Housing committee
7. Hospital service
8. Miscellaneous
9. Projects for the future

The activity of the individual institutions:

Points 1 and 2. Kitchens for adults and children

The kitchens were opened on 31 October 1939. Over the period of time, there were distributed:

For adults	10,446	midday meals
" children	<u>2,637</u>	" "
Total	13,083	midday meals

For adults the number of meal days amounts to 30, for children 10.

For the whole period the following products were used by the kitchens:

Potatoes	10,000	kilos	Sugar	9.50	kilos
Flou	44.25	"	Vinegar	2.50	litres
Peas	6.70	"	Millet	61.90	kilos
Cabbage	255.00	"	Rice	61.00	
Onions	69.50	"	Beetroot	455.00	
Fat	39.60	"	Soap	0.75	
Salt	72.50	"	Soda	0.50	

Last week, preparations were made to open a feeding centre for children of pre-school age. Due to lack of financial means the feeding centre was not opened.

Point 3. Advice centre and milk kitchen for infants

The above-mentioned institution has already existed for 15 years. With the outbreak of the war the activity was halted. In October of this year the activity was revived, but on a limited scale. Medical advice for mothers is all that is provided. In mid-November of this year the institution is taken over by the Jewish community [3] and distribution of milk for infants begins.

Up to 7 December of this year the activity of the institution is as follows: 136 children were provided for. There were 41 doctors' visits. During this period, 243 litres of milk were distributed. 43 children were fed. 3 litres of cod-liver oil were distributed for 15 children. The number of meal days came to 493. The milk kitchen is active daily from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Point 4. Orphanage

There are now 39 children in the orphanage; before the war, there were 60. Before the war, the orphanage was supported by the municipalities of Warsaw and Piotrków. Now the institution is maintained exclusively by the Jewish community. The activity of the institution is as follows:

The number of orphans in September 1939.

26 boys aged 5 to 18 years; 14 girls aged 7 to 16 years; 3 staff people.

In order to maintain the institution, in the month of September the *kehillah* spent:

1. In cash, 263.75 zlotys

2. In kind:

42 kilos wheat flour, buckwheat flour 13 kilo, 2 kilo meat, 0.50 [kilo] *ceres*,⁶¹¹ 1 kilo sugar *kostki*,⁶¹² 0.50 [kilo] sugar meal, 100 kilo rye flour, and 6 loaves of bread, each loaf 2 kilo.

The number of orphans in October:

25 boys aged 5 to 18 years; 14 girls aged 7–14; 3 staff people.

611 (Polish) tallow.

612 (Polish) cubes.

For maintenance in the month of October, the administration of the *kehillah* provided:

1. In cash, 187.60 zlotys

2. In kind:

30 kilo rye flour, 5 kilo sugar meal, 1.5 kilo salt, 6 kilo butter, 50 kilo carrots, 10 kilo parsley, 30 kilo onions, 230 kilo beetroot, 73,7 kilo⁶¹³ cabbage, 250 kilo⁶¹⁴ coal.

In the month of November, the orphans in the institution were: 24 boys; 15 girls; 3 staff people. For maintenance there was spent:

1. In cash, 228.44 zlotys

2. In kind:

10.5 kilo sugar, 4 kilo salt, 4 kilo fat, 8 kilo rice, 10 kilo buckwheat, 2.5 [bars? kilo?] soap, 1 kilo soda, 750 kilo coal, 500 kilo potatoes.⁶¹⁵

In addition, payment was made for: electric lighting 8.00 zlotys; water 15 [zlotys]; and 43 midday meals at 20 groszes for a meal; [meals] for 30 children – 258.00 [zlotys].

From 1 to 7 December 1939, there were present in the institution: 24 boys, aged [4] from 5 to 18 years; 15 girls, aged from 7 to 16 years⁶¹⁶; 3 staff people. For maintenance, the *kehillah* provided:

1. In cash, 50.00 zlotys

2. In kind:

Salt	.40	zlotys
Fat	7.00	"
Rice	3.00	"
Buckwheat	2.60	"
Coal	5.00	"
Total	77.00	zlotys ⁶¹⁷

In addition, the children received midday meals from the general kitchen.

613 In the original, 4.5 poods cabbage. 1 pood = 16.38 kilo is an obsolete Russian unit of weight.

614 In the original, 2.5 metres of coal.

615 In the original, 7.5 metres of coal, 5 metres of potatoes.

616 In the original, erroneously "61".

617 As in the original. It should be 68.00 zlotys.

Point 5. Out-patients' clinic for poor sick people

Before the war, the Jewish population benefited from the municipal out-patients' clinic. In addition, in the Jewish hospital there existed an out-patients' clinic served by medical specialists. As soon as Jews were forbidden entry to the municipal out-patients' clinic and to the hospital, the *gmina* was forced to open an out-patients' clinic of its own.⁶¹⁸ For this purpose, a part of the premises of the orphanage was taken over, disturbing the orphanage in terms of hygiene and education tasks. The activity of the out-patients' clinic during the period from 10 October to 8 December is reflected in the following figures:

Medical examinations in the out-patients' clinic	– 282
” ” ” the city	– 65
Various changes of bandages in the out-patients' clinic	– 826
” injections	– 12
Injections against infectious diseases	– 929
5.75 kilos of cod-liver oil for children were dispensed.	
Women in labour are given obstetric assistance.	
People who are not well off are given free medication.	

Point 6. Housing committee

The committee started its activity on 3 October 1939. A registration was carried out of all workshops and shops located outside the ghetto, as well as a registration of the requisition of empty flats in the ghetto. The committee ascertained that there were no empty flats at all in the ghetto. A large proportion of the houses were burnt due to the events of the war. The residents settled into the neighbouring houses. The flats in the ghetto mostly consist of small flats (of one or two rooms). The number of those looking for a flat is very large. About 70 per cent of the flats in the ghetto are not fit to live in.

A few characteristic moments: In the *bet hamidrash* at Sieradzka Street 8, a flat of 8 by 8.75 metres. Four families live there: 26 people, including 20 children. In the *bet hamidrash* at Zamurowa Street 14, a flat of 1 large room and 3 small rooms. Seven families were quartered there: 40 people. [5] Of them, three families, 18 people, were quartered in the big room (9.30 by 6.10 metres).

618 In mid-1940, a ban was introduced for Jews to provide medical care to non-Jews, and for non-Jews to provide care to Jews.

The housing committee is also engaged in providing flats for the people from Sulejów⁶¹⁹ and other neighbouring small towns whose property has been destroyed by fire.

Point 7. Hospital service

Before the war, the Jewish community had its own hospital. In the hospital, there were departments for internal, surgical, gynaecological, obstetrical and skin-venereal diseases. During the war, the hospital was taken over by the *Św. Trójcy*⁶²⁰ hospital. The Jewish sick are now sent to the *Św. Trójcy*. The *kehillah* has to pay for these patients from its funds. Before the war, the municipality paid for both the Jewish and the Polish patients. From 10 October of this year, the *kehillah* has sent 12 patients to the hospital at its own expense. Many sick people who required hospital treatment could not be sent due to a lack of financial means. 6 sick Jews from Piotrków are being treated in the hospital for the mentally ill in Warta. These patients were already expelled by the city administration before the war. The municipality paid for the patients. Now the municipality refuses to pay the costs of treatment and the debts must be paid by the *kehillah*, which has no funds for this purpose.

Point 8. Miscellaneous

Due to the war, a mass phenomenon of wandering through and also an emigration of people from their permanent places of residence has recently been noticed. Many people, often completely ruined, who need supervision and material assistance, pass through Piotrków daily. For this purpose, the *kehillah* allocates aid both for those from other towns who are passing through and for people who are leaving Piotrków.

A few days ago, the *kehillah* established an emigration committee whose task is to facilitate and organise the emigration of Jews.

In addition, the community distributes aid in kind (potatoes, coal, etc.) for the *reservistkes*⁶²¹ whose husbands are in captivity or have fallen in the war.

619 See Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland During the Holocaust*, ed. Jeffrey S. Gurock, Robert S. Hirt, New Jersey-New York 1987, pp. 20–23.

620 (Polish) Holy Trinity; the hospital was established in 1852.

621 (Yiddish) literally, female reservist; probably wives of soldiers in the reserve army.

To the very poor (the old, widows and the like) swift aid is also given in money or in kind.

Starting in September of this year, the *kehillah* bath also assists to a large degree in alleviating the bad sanitary condition of the population. [6] 3,274 people have benefited from the bath. Due to a lack of firewood, the steam bath section is relatively less active.

[Point] 9. Projects for the future

Up to the present, levies of 25,000 + 15,000 + 350,000 zlotys as well as in kind have been imposed on the local *kehillah*. The reduction in earnings and work opportunities for the Jewish population has entirely undermined the capacity to pay the community tax which had previously been paid on a regular basis.

The works initiated by the authorities, such as the construction of barracks, the rebuilding of the bath house and the like, all of which are financed by the *gmina*, very much calls into question the possibility of continuing to provide social assistance, even on the present scale. Hardship, on the other hand, is growing from day to day and social assistance must be expanded. In the immediate future it is necessary to increase the number of mid-day meals for adults to 1,200 and for children to 1,000 daily. We find that the impoverished Jewish population, which has already been without work for a considerable time, is suffering hunger. Mass lack of adequate food for the population, combined with unhygienic living conditions can give rise to various epidemics. The feeding of a sizeable number of people is therefore an absolute necessity.

For this purpose, if only conditions permit, the administration of the *kehillah* plans to expand the feeding campaign. The provisioning difficulties also interfere with expansion of the feeding campaign, such as for example the inability to purchase a considerable number of food products, coal. Suitable premises and utensils to expand the number of kitchens are also lacking. We believe, however, that in this domain we will have the assistance of the authorities.

At the same time, preparations are being made for the delousing campaign. The *kehillah* bath is being prepared for this purpose.

General remarks:

Summing up the above-mentioned report, we must emphasize the great difficulties we encounter in carrying out Jewish social welfare. The difficulties can be characterised by the following facts:

1. The economic ruin of Jewish society.
2. The most important industrial enterprises, which belonged to Jews such as: the factories of 'Wola Krzysztoporska' and chemical factory, company 'Panel', the mill 'Warszawianka', glassworks 'Feniks', spirit distillery, saw-mill and [7] mill of Goldblum, company Pacanowski and Son, company Goldfrejd and the like are in receivership and the *kehillah* does not have the least hope of exerting any influence whatsoever on the above-mentioned companies.
3. The better situated people, who used to provide a large part of the *kehillah* taxes, are now no longer in the city and it is completely unknown where these people are.
4. The war damage as well as the various requisitions have greatly diminished Jewish possessions and in some cases even caused complete ruin.
5. Some large Jewish houses have been burnt. From the remaining houses, the house owners receive no revenue.
6. The levies on the Jewish population have greatly reduced taxpayers' ability to pay *kehillah* taxes.
7. Private professionals (lawyers, engineers, etc.), as well as officials, are now completely without occupation.
8. A significant restriction of trade and artisanship, which are being planned and introduced in [Jewish] lives, threatens the danger of liquidating hundreds of Jewish businesses and jobs.
9. The revenues from ritual slaughter, which constituted a large part of the income of the Jewish community, have ceased to exist.⁶²²

From the above-mentioned facts it is clear under what difficult conditions the Piotrków *kehillah* has to conduct its aid activities on a scale such as the present demands. A great disproportion has been created between the needs and the possibilities of satisfying these needs. This task is impossible to carry out without outside assistance.

/-/ [illegible signature]

622 See footnote XXX.

ARG I 956 (Ring. I/877)

Description: original, typewritten, stamp of the Piotrków Jewish community, 205×290 mm, much minor damage and many fragments missing; duplicate, handwritten (MS*), pencil, 143×222 mm, minor damage and fragments missing; Yiddish, 11 sheets, 14 pages. On p. 1 of the original, the Hebrew letter “פ” in red pencil. In the margins of the duplicate a sign consisting of three points forming a triangle, and the letter “פ” in red pencil.

Edition based on the original, 4 sheets, 7 pages.

87

[Autumn 1939?], Piotrków Trybunalski, Police and Mayor of the town of Piotrków. Registration card form.

On the orders of the police and the Mayor of the town of Piotrków.

Street

REGISTRATION CARD

No.	First name and surname	DATE OF BIRTH						Tenant type	Profession	Where one came from	Where one moved	Remarks
		MEN			WOMEN							
		Up to 16 years old	Up to 60 y/o	60 y/o and older	Up to 16 y/o	Up to 60 y/o	60 y/o and older					

I hereby certify:

Signed

ARG I 955 c (Ring. I/787/1)

Description: original, (2 copies), printed, German, Polish, 174×245 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

[1]

The Jewish Community in Piotrków						
Bread ration card valid from 3 November – 30 November 1939						
Only 200 grams of bread can be rationed for each section per day.						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
24.11. 1939	25.11.1939	26.11. 1939	27.11. 1939	28.11. 1939	29.11. 1939	30.11. 1939
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
17.11. 1939	18.11. 1939	19.11. 1939	20.11. 1939	21.11. 1939	22.11. 1939	23.11. 1939
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10.11. 1939	11.11.1939	12.11.1939	13.11. 1939	14.11. 1939	15.11. 1939	16.11.1939
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.11.1939	4.11. 1939	5.11. 1939	6.11. 1939	7.11. 1939	8.11. 1939	9.11.1939

[2]

Bread ration cards should be submitted in shops with all sections. Seller cuts the section with the date of sale and returns the card to the buyer with remaining sections.

[3]

The Jewish Community in Piotrków							
BREAD RATION CARD valid from 1 December 1 – 31 December 1939							
Only 200 grams of bread can be rationed for each section per day.							
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
25.12.39	26.12.39	27.12.39	28.12.39	29.12.39	30.12.39	31.12.39	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
17.11.39	18.12.39	19.12.39	20.12.39	21.12.39	22.12.39	23.12.39	24.12.39
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9.12.39	10.12.39	11.12.39	12.12.39	13.12.39	14.12.39	15.12.39	16.12.39
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.12.39	2.12.39	3.12.39	4.12.39	5.12.39	6.12.39	7.12.39	8.12.39

[4]

Bread ration cards should be submitted in shops with all sections. Seller cuts the section with the date of sale and returns the card to the buyer with remaining sections.

ARG I 955 b (Ring. I/787/1)

Description: original (cards from November 1939 in 2 copies), printed, stamps of the *Judenrat*, German, Polish, 140×114, 137×107 mm, 3 sheets, 6 pages.

89

10 February 1940, Piotrków Trybunalski, *Judenrat* in Piotrków Trybunalski. Invoice dated 10 February 1940 submitted to Lieutenant Sandner. Amount due for fabrics.

Jewish Community in Piotrków

No. 233

Receipt No. 3

for Lieutenant Sandner in Piotrków

for	8 metres of silk fabric at 7 zlotys	=	56.00	zlotys
	2.60 metres of woollen fabric at 12 zlotys	=	31.20	"
	2.60 metres of fabric for a coat at 14 zlotys	=	36.40	"
	Total		123.60	zlotys

In words: one-hundred twenty-three zlotys 60/100

10 February 1940

ARG I 957 (Ring. I/878)

Description: original, typewritten, handwritten number and the date, German, 135×208 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. Annotation (pencil?) at the top of the page: "codul" [?] and "103."

90

12 March 1940, Piotrków Trybunalski, J. Krell. Receipt for a money order deposit (50 zlotys).

[1] 14 March 1942

counterfoil

Piotrków Radom District 12 March 1942

50 zł[otys] – [o] gr[oszes]

First Name, Last Name and Address of Sender

J. Krell, Piotrków Tryb., Plac Lipowy 4

124230

on 12 March [19]42

[2] o zlotys 30 groszes

PAYMENT FOR "CHILD CARE"

ARG II 356 (Ring. II/145)

Description: original, printed, handwritten name, address and the amount of money, ink, postal stamp, German, Polish, 41×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

91

After September 1939, Piotrków Trybunalski. Leaflet "Żydzi są naszym nieszczęściem" [The Jews are our misfortune].⁶²³ German propaganda materials.

[1] The Jews are our misfortune

They waged a war in the world – they took possession of the press and world markets, and they oppress all nations, among which they live like parasites.

623 The sentence taken from the essay published by Heinrich von Treitschke in 1879; it became a motto of the Nazi periodical *Der Stürmer*.

Jews still have large stocks of flour, sugar, butter, eggs, and even a lot of money!

While the Poles lack even the most basic things.

The Jews have whole freight cars of coal, materials, footwear, and leather.

And what do you have, Poles of Piotrków?

You have never been the masters of Piotrków. It has always been the Jews!

Is it to be like this forever?

No! A thousand times no!

We shall free our beautiful town from the plague.

During my travels across the country, I have observed the same phenomenon everywhere. A Jew is intrinsically inclined to crime, with all his low and vulgar instincts, for hundreds of years he has tried to feed on this land.

Thousands of Jews live now in villas and palaces, and several generations ago they came to this country as stinking beggars.

Meanwhile, the indigenous people of Poland must suffer indentured servitude for this rabble! You must realise: Jews are our misfortune!

Remember: a Jew remains a Jew, even if he is baptised a hundred times over!

Who is to blame for the war?

The Jew!

Who is to blame for great poverty?

The Jew!

Who has always sought his own benefit?

The Jew!

Who is still trying to make profit on poverty and misery?

The Jew!

Who has been proliferating here?

The Jew!

Always remember – Jews are our misfortune!

[2] Why was there no butter or eggs at the last market?

Residents of Piotrków noted with regret that last Tuesday peasants provided neither butter nor eggs.

Therefore, the German military found beyond any doubt that it was caused by the Jews of Piotrków who stood outside the city gates, far beyond the city and on the roads, where they bought all food stocks from villagers going to Piotrków before they reached the city. Of course, the Jews did not pay even the slightest attention to the regulations on maximum prices.

What do the Jews care if the non-Jewish population has something to eat or not. They only think how to fill their pantries, the criminal scum!

Do you realise, citizen of Piotrków, who your real enemy is?

The German authorities have immediately begun a vigorous operation against the greedy Jewish gluttons and apostles seeking to take control of the whole world. The German authorities have issued appropriate orders so that such criminal deeds are never repeated.

ARG I 955d (Ring. I/787/3)

Description: original, printed, German, Polish, 157×276 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

92

24 April 1942, Częstochowa, [Gołda]. Letter to Alfreda Winnik. Account of a journey from Warsaw to Piotrków Trybunalski, attempts at crossing the border to territories annexed to the Reich, arrests, and the ghetto in Piotrków.

[1] Częstochowa, 24 April 1942

Dear Fredzia,

I cannot express how happy I was to receive your letter, which was also so long and detailed, because I simply did not expect the reply to arrive so soon. Thank you for the postage stamp; you did well by sending it and you indeed deserve to be written back [. . .] sooner [. . .], but believe me, I do not even have a scrap of paper. I barely managed to obtain this one from my friend, and now I have to go to my cousin for him to tear some from his notebook because I would

really like to write a long and detailed letter to you, one you wish for and one that I would also like to write because you have deserved it and, anyway, there is a lot to write about. But I must tell you in advance that it shall not have as many pages as yours, that is, eight, nine, or ten, not for lack of contents (as you know, this is not characteristic of me), but for lack of paper, so I kindly ask you to send me the right amount of paper in your next letter. And now, not to waste paper, I shall get to the point at once, in describing my journey to you (I have now read your letter once again); I just want you to know that from what I shall write here you will not be able to get even a general idea about what I went through on the way, not only because I cannot describe everything in too much detail, but because even if I did describe everything as accurately as possible, it would be only a poor substitute for me telling you about it, and anyway, you would have to experience it to comprehend it! Do you understand? So, I think that only Mala and Szymek, even though they did not go through what I did, are able to understand the terror of the journey I had. That was an introduction, and now let us get to the point.

So already, the beginning of our journey was marked by ill fortune. When Perła and I returned home from your place, my parents were crying in vain, and I could see that father was hesitating. And you do know how [much] I was wanting to leave. The guide was supposed to come at 6 [o'clock] but came at 8, so you can understand the moments of anxious expectation. We were sure we would not leave. We left the ghetto in some mysterious way. A gate opened, and we were already outside.

We arrived at the train station without any problems. A Polish policeman stopped us at the entrance to the station. Neither a pass nor money helped; he escorted us to the police station on Aleje Jerozolimskie opposite the railway station. Can you understand how I felt when they led us into a room where a P[olish?] police superintendent was shouting something in German? We kept our armbands hidden. And then they led us along the corridor, at the end of which I saw a door with the inscription "Gaol". I was deluding myself that he was not escorting us there, but the policeman opened the door, let us in, and locked us inside. When I looked around that cage – I have no idea today how I held back then, because even now I flinch at the memory of what it looked like. But one can endure more than one expects, Fredzia. [2] After all, you have already seen in films how a cell looks. We were in a kind of small corridor with two cells in front of us behind the bars: Some women were lying on a bed in

the first one and in the other one there were two men pacing. The guide reassured us that they would soon release us, because after all they did not put us in a proper cell, and that they only [. . .], but I was devastated, and each minute seemed like a century. I kept wishing that from then on everything would go smoothly. But my prayers were not answered. Meanwhile, every couple of minutes they opened the door and let in a few prostitutes, because there had just been a round-up. So, I found myself in that bizarre company. Although they did not accost us, I thought that I would faint [because of their?] conversations and saw the policemen's brutal, contemptuous, and overfamiliar attitude towards them, because after all they knew one another well. Everything seemed unreal; it was like a dream. When I thought about my parents and what they would think if they knew where I was with Perełka, I thought that I would burst into tears. Meanwhile, hours passed, our guide knocked to the policemen and talked to them every now and then, but they refused to listen. I was sure they would never release us, and our "companions in distress" were consoling us that they would keep us there "only" for the night and then release us. So, you can understand that I was [not] cheerful and I blamed our guide in deep despair and cold fury. Meanwhile, they called him and he quietly arranged things with them, and they released us. We spent 2 or 3 hours there, but even so [. . .].

The fast train we were supposed to take was late. We were to leave at 5 o'clock in the morning, but instead of at 5 the train arrived as late as at half past one during the day. So, you surely understand that our waiting at the station at night was not pleasant. We were sleepy, and it was very cold. We spent about a dozen zlotys on rolls during the day, but we were hungry and sleepy anyway, because it was so tiring and awful to have to wait for so long. Every now and then we thought that it was our train – another whistle and that running down and up the stairs again. I was already certain that we would not leave, and the guide said he would not return to the ghetto but would stay at the station one more night. I cursed him as much as I could. When we finally and unexpectedly left at 1:30, I felt really happy. We had seats in the train, and we were very warm. At first, I was delighted with the train ride (just like before the war, I thought). I also thought how wonderful it would be to go as far as Zduńska Wola. Then I fell asleep.

We arrived at Piotrków after 7 p.m. The guide escorted us to the gate of the house where my father's cousin lives. When I came in, they were having

Friday supper, and when [3] I told them who I was, she said something like, "That's just what I need." So, you can understand how "pleased" I felt. Then he escorted us to the Rajchmans, where Mala and Szymek had lived. It turned out there that there was no room there either, because much had changed there since Mala and Szymek had left. But we spent that night there, and I was more than happy to get into bed after such a night. The next day, we learned that the guide who had left with Mala and Szymek was on his way and was supposed to return on that or the next day and then go back immediately. Mrs Rajchman decided to take care of it. So I told her that as it was a matter of 2 to 3 days, I would sleep at her place and pay her, and during the day I would go to my cousin, Mrs Herz, because it was really crowded at the Rajchmans': 5 people and a shop in one room; we did not even have [. . .], and that Mrs Rajchman, although not bad, was deeply dishonest. I learned that Szymek was among the household members who in general [. . .]. I am telling you, Fredzia, that after I had left, when my father was still in Warsaw, he received letters from friends and strangers about Szymek [. . .] everyone at the post office knew "that little boy"; even Mrs Herz and her lady neighbour said that "Szymek is a good fellow." And all my girlfriends write to me that he is so amazing: a mature and experienced man. And if only you could see the letters he writes to me and to us. I shall quote them later to you. It makes me laugh when I recall how he would shy away from my girlfriends before the war, while now he talks to them and works with them in the same workshop.

Now let us get to the point. That *goy* came on Saturday after dinner. I talked to him on Sunday evening. I had to pay them 100 zlotys more than they did, 350 zlotys; I gave the money to Mrs Rajchman. I saw that he was a decent man. We were supposed to leave on Monday after dinner, and in the morning I sent a telegram to Warsaw. During those several days, we ate dinner for one zloty in the soup kitchen, quite tasty and consisting of two courses. We received better portions because Ela Silman is a waitress there, and her mother is the manager. The dinners were arranged by [. . .]⁶²⁴

[4] We also twice received bread for free, and once for money, but cheaply, some plum jam. We started waiting at 2 o'clock on Monday as he was to come for us. I feared to leave the ghetto the most, because you can see how unlucky I was. On the day of my arrival at Piotrków, an ordinance was passed forcing

624 The page is cut off; around ten lines of text are missing.

Poles to move out of the Jewish quarter. As of 1 April, they were to be forbidden to enter (I do not know how [. . .] is there). Sign posts saying “Ghetto” were put up there too, threatening the death penalty for leaving it. Everyone gave me a good fright, also because we did not have scarves.⁶²⁵ In the end, we left neither on Monday nor on Tuesday morning. We finally left on Tuesday after dinner, after 3 o’clock. I had a scarf from the *goy*. We were without the armbands, which was a huge mistake, for I was foolishly reasoning, “What do I need the armband for? Am I walking into the lion’s den?” But even though I did not expect that something could happen to me, it would not have hurt me to be safe either way. But because Szymek and Mala had not taken theirs either, I left mine too. Leaving the ghetto, and even the town, was a “piece of cake”. After several steps, we were already outside of the town because we had taken some back roads. And [. . .] took place on the way. Fredzia, this defies words. Even without the things that did happen to me, the journey itself was hell, too. I shall never be able to describe it vividly enough; you would have to experience that yourself. So, I shall tell you about it in a nutshell: We walked from 3 o’clock to 7:30 along some winding side roads and paths, sinking knee-deep in snow and barely managing to pull our legs out. We took a shortcut across the fields, not a living soul in sight except for in villages. Perła was in better condition than I was because she kept up with the guide, while I was lagging behind all the time, sometimes seeing them as a black point in the distance. In such moments, I started running. I felt terribly hot too. It was a miracle that he carried our backpack because otherwise I would surely not have made it. It bled my heart to watch Perełka drag her legs from one rut in the snow to another. I collapsed several times. I could barely walk because my boots made it difficult for me to keep my balance and I kept sliding all the time. As soon as we left, we had lots of water – I in my boots and she in her shoes. But generally Perełka found it easier to walk in her shoes, at least she did not skid. My boots were filling up with snow. [. . .] barely [. . .].⁶²⁶

[5] [. . .] (I have obtained the paper, so this letter shall be 8 pages long and this shall be barely enough, but there is nothing else to say, because, even if I had paper, I would have to write to all of my girlfriends too). You cannot imagine what that walk was like from what I have written here. We arrived

625 The author presumably means a peasant’s disguise.

626 The page is cut off; around ten lines of text are missing.

at the cottage at 7:30. Each of us was given a cup of milk there, and we ate white bread with the plum jam we had taken. It tasted really good with the milk. Then we lay down on straw, and the peasant gave us pillows and something to cover ourselves with. But it was still freezing cold. Before that, the peasant told us that border gendarmes were there in the daytime and they captured some women smugglers. And that day they were prowling on the road to Ostrów.⁶²⁷ And we had walked the same road, straight into the lion's den. We were to leave at 12:30, but we overslept, and I accidentally woke up after 1 [a.m.].

We left before 2 [o'clock]. Again, we started wading at night through even deeper snow, which now reached to our waists, in the open. Every now and then the guide stopped, listened, and put his ear to the ground. Then came the worst thing – fear. I became utterly terrified. We were approaching a grove. And suddenly... No, Fredzia, I do not [. . .]. It happened so suddenly in one instant that I cannot comprehend it even now and it seems a bad dream. It all sounds like a film or a novel, do you think? It is something you [might] like: something extraordinary and exciting. But these emotions are too dangerous. So, all of a sudden, in a flash, shots rang out, and I saw fire aimed at us, going just above the ground, and suddenly three white figures rushed out of the grove; on all fours they looked like bears. At the same time, we heard them shout, “*Halt! Hands up! Stop!*” We threw ourselves into the snow and put our hands up. They kept shooting for several minutes, then got up, dressed in white coats and hoods, three officers with rifles. They approached us, shone their torches at us, saw what we had, and ordered us to get up. Perełka had lost her shoe in the snow, and then – just imagine! – one of them lit the snow with the torch and helped the *goy* find the shoe burrowed deep in the snow. It happened once again. Just think what I felt then! I was sure that the poor thing would have to walk without a shoe.

Then we set off for the police post. I thought that we would never reach it. It was very dark, I could barely walk, and [. . .] the guide gave me [6] the backpack. But he then took it again. [. . .] when none of them could see, he managed to whisper to me what I should say. We were walking in single file, very slowly, I up front. They were walking behind, talking and laughing, from time to time telling us which way to go. We finally reached the post. It was

627 Ostrów (Piotrków Trybunalski County, Grabica commune).

already in the *Reich*. We entered a large room (it must have been a school). It was bright and clean, and there were lots of plants, paintings, and banners, and also long tables. There were more of them too [. . .] changed and washed themselves. You know how they [. . .] young, healthy. One of them was sitting at the table and the chief commander was standing and asking questions. When we entered, they ordered us to sit down. Then they ordered me and Perełka to turn away and they carefully searched the guide. They took away all of his merchandise. Of course, they asked him who he was, where he had come from and where he was going. He obviously told them that he was walking to the country side to a friend to perform some work because he was sick and had to feed his family. Oddly enough, they believed everything. It was the same with me. They asked if I was his wife, which he denied and said that I was just someone he met on the way. They wrote down his [. . .] and released him, ordering him to go home. The commander asked all the questions in Polish but of course with a strong German accent.

Then, they turned to us. As we were walking to the post, I tore up my German certificate from Zduńska Wola, two Jewish letters to my friends, a letter from the woman manager, and a picture of Rachela. I could not decide whether to say that I was Jewish or not. I was afraid to tell them, and if I denied it, they might see that I was lying and it would be even worse. So, I prayed to God to resolve it beyond my will, beyond me, so that I would not have to decide. And that was exactly what happened. When we were still walking, I kept thinking that I would surely go to prison. I was actually 100 per cent sure of that, and I thought that it would be for 9 months. Now I cannot understand at all how I could bear that thought. I was begging God to let me see my parents again, at least once in my lifetime, nothing else. I was seriously wondering how we could inform [our] parents that we were in prison; perhaps they would have some money to bail us out. But where would they get it from? You are probably laughing as you are reading this, but I was seriously thinking all that. It was only when they asked me to approach them that I had to take my face out of the kerchief and expose it to light. Then I heard one of them tell the other, *Jüdische Gesichten!*⁶²⁸ And that commander asked me right away, empathically, “Are you Jewish?” with a devilish smile, a cruel look on his face, and a tone of deep self-content and satisfaction in his voice.

628 (German) Jewish faces!

I thought he would kill me right away. I quickly replied, *Ja*.⁶²⁹ I forgot myself and said that in German. I was glad that they recognised me and that I did not have to hesitate whether to tell them [7] or not. Let things happen as they will, I thought. When I said *ja*, he – and it was the only time – started shouting in German, ordering me to speak German because all Jews know German. But I swore that I did not know it, that I only knew *ja* and *nein*. He let it go. Then, he asked me why I did not confess in the first place, to which I replied that he did not ask me and I did not know that I had to say that. Then [I had to say] my name and surname. When I said “Golda”, the one who was writing said, “Kolda? *Schöner Name!*”⁶³⁰ But the commander said that it was not and that I was ugly or something like that.

Then I had to tell them everything: where we lived before the war, the town, the county, what my father did for a living, what I did. Where did I come from? So I told them the following story: We live in Piotrków, we do not have enough to live on. Some countrywoman came and said that she would take me to Kamocin⁶³¹ (a border village). So, I set off and took that sister of mine, who was supposed to help me. But if my parents had known that this woman would make me walk at night and take off my armband, they would have never agreed to that, and neither would I. He asked me if I knew that failure to wear an armband was punishable by prison. I did not reply and continued: I lost that woman on the way, at night, in the fields. Then I met that man, who agreed to escort me to Kamocin. But he kept asking me why we were walking by night, and I said that I had not known anything, that that woman had deceived me. [. . .] how old I was, when I was born, and our IDs. I did not have them, so [. . .] became angry. Then, he asked me if I was sick. I denied this; I did not understand at all why he was asking me that, but [. . .] the second one said to him, *Sie ist erschrocken*.⁶³² I realised that he asked me that question because of my paleness. As for Perełka, he said, *Das ist noch ein Kind*,⁶³³ when she said she was 14 years old. Then he carefully searched the backpack, picking up one thing after another and throwing them on the floor. He took

629 (German) yes.

630 (German) Kolda? Nice name!

631 Kamocin (Piotrków Trybunalski County).

632 (German) She is scared.

633 (German) She's only a child.

the money I had on me; fortunately, it was only 28 zlotys, and a small Jewish calendar *zum Andenken*.⁶³⁴ They did not perform such a detailed body search on us, because they could see we did not have much.

Then they asked where we wanted to go next. "To Piotrków, of course," I replied. But I have no idea where to go. I do not know the way because I have never been here before. They wanted to give me the receipt I had signed but then they changed their mind. They ordered me to get dressed to leave, and one of them started preparing himself too. As I did not know yet whether he would escort us to Piotrków, I asked the commander if we were going to Piotrków. He ordered me to go with that man. When I was leaving, "Goodnight," I said. He replied that one should say *Heil*. Then we left. It was still completely dark. It was twice as difficult for me to walk because I was carrying the backpack. We walked and walked, and I was still uncertain whether we were walking to Piotrków, but I was afraid to ask. Finally, I mustered the courage. The man proved [8] very kind. He replied in German that we were headed for Piotrków. He pointed in some direction to show where it was, not far, but it was still an hour's walk. [. . .] we crossed a bridge and stopped. "*Hier ist die Grenze*,"⁶³⁵ the border," he said. Then he said that this was the Reich and that on the other side it was already the General Government. The village before us was Kamocinek. We would walk straight on [. . .] along that path, walk through the village and keep walking until we would reach the road. Then we would turn right and continue walking until Piotrków. I was listening on calmly, when he suddenly said, *Also – machen Sie los*.⁶³⁶ Whaat?? I thought I would drop dead. In my hopeless naivety, I thought that he was simply explaining which way we would go. Though initially it seemed strange to me that he would escort us all the way to Piotrków. I started begging him in German – I do not know where to go, I have never been there, I do not know the way, I shall get lost, and please, come with me. But he kept saying that he could not and he explained to me patiently that I had to go straight on, neither left, nor right, [. . .] and reach the road and then turn right and go straight to the city. He was so kind that when I begged him several more times he did not become impatient, even once. Instead, he calmly explained the route to

634 (German) as a keepsake.

635 (German) Here is the border.

636 (German) So go, please.

me for the umpteenth time; he could not go with me. I was speaking German only and I started begging him to at least escort me [. . .]. He replied [. . .] that he could enter, although he knew [it?]. He explained that he had intentionally escorted me to the border, because I could have encountered another patrol in the *Reich*, which could have stopped me again, whereas now I was safe. And I told him that [. . .] I did not have the armband and that, after all we were Jewish, and I asked what I was supposed to do if they stopped us on the road. He said, *Das macht nichts* (that we were Jewish), *da haben sie keine Sorge*.⁶³⁷ And then he said that even though it was difficult to walk because of the snow, I should walk four kilometres per hour, and it was eight kilometres along the road, so I should reach Piotrków at such and such hour. I could see that I would not convince him, so I thanked him and said good night (it was already half past six in the morning). He replied very politely, "*Bitte schön. Auf Wiedersehen*,"⁶³⁸ and I left.

Oh, what I felt then when I found myself alone with Perła in the empty field; it was getting dusky; we could barely walk and we supporting each other, me with the heavy backpack on my shoulders. We started walking, step by step. At first, we thought about going into some cottage, but we were penniless, so we decided against it. I was afraid that we were not walking the right way, that he had deceived me, but I walked straight on until I finally reached the road. Day had already broken. I turned right, but then I became scared because a lot of people were walking along the road; I hid my face in the kerchief, but it did not help at all: a Polish policeman with a rubber [truncheon] in his hand passed us, looking carefully at Perła, and when he saw my backpack from behind, [9] [. . .].

He hit Perła with the rubber [truncheon] right away. "Kikes! Smugglers!" he shouted. When [. . .] explain that I have already been at a German post and [. . .] he did not [. . .] a single word and kept [shouting?], "Shut your traps! What do I care that they let you go?" And when I tried to say something, he took a swing at us. So, I went quiet. We went [. . .] to a Polish police station. I felt so helpless [. . .] and resigned. [. . .] God! What do you want from us? We have been gaoled and we were [. . .] you [. . .] and still [. . .] want to test us? I began to defy him. Why did he [. . .] and now we had to turn back. At the station,

637 (German) That does not matter. You mustn't worry.

638 (German) You are welcome. Goodbye.

the backpack was emptied again. Because of all that searching, I lost my white skirt, [. . .] jacket [. . .] to this day), but he could see that we were not smugglers. [. . .] and the other one says, "Get your rifle." But I was not afraid because [. . .] asks, "Why [. . .] when one must not leave either the ghetto or the town?" I did not know how to answer. They were talking about the fact that the gendarmerie was to come at 9 o'clock and that they would hand us over. Am I [. . .] Can you imagine what I felt then? I packed my backpack, and they told us to go into the first room. I had not spent even 5 minutes there, when the one who stopped us entered and ordered us to leave at once. A guardian angel must have been watching over us. I [. . .] asked him for the receipt, but he [hit?] me in response! So I thanked God. [. . .] already on the road! Just think about how differently we were treated at the German post from at the Polish one. At the first one, they addressed me saying *Sie*,⁶³⁹ whereas here they simply said "you" and they shouted and cursed all the time, "Kikes, you jerks, shut your trap!" By contrast, the other ones basically did not shout. Just think about it – they even looked for Perełka's shoe and they did not have to escort me to the border! What would I have done then? So, I was more afraid of the Polish police. We met them several times more on the way, but nothing happened.

When I was near Piotrków, I learnt that gendarmes were standing at the border of the town, searching people. What should I do? The backpack shall certainly catch their attention, and then they shall see that we are Jewish, and without armbands, too! I was in despair and did not know how to cope. Someone showed me a back road, and I took it, and in the end a boy escorted us for 5 zlotys through some thicket to the Rajchmans.

So, this is what my journey was like. What do you say? I guess [. . .] that was not the end of my adventures. You would not imagine how we looked when we arrived (it was 11 ['clock])! We looked like corpses! When I took the backpack off, I could not move my arm at all, my back was aching all over, not to mention my legs. Just think! From 3 o'clock afternoon on the previous day until that moment [. . .] and after such a trek, except for the several hours at the peasant's [. . .] get up, it took several hours[?]. We were limping for several days. It was Wednesday. We remained in Piotrków until the next month. I do not have words to describe those days! You can imagine how absolutely

639 (German) you – in the polite formal form.

terrible they were; I do not know myself what was worse: those days or the adventures on our way. You shall soon see why that was so.

I called my father on the same day we returned. Since the whole population of Piotrków assembles by the telephone at the post office, everyone immediately learned about what we had been through, particularly that the cousin told everyone about it. Nobody who heard about our capture on the border [. . .] understands how it was possible that they let us go [. . .] hear about returning home to [. . .] he asked if we wanted to go [10] once more. The very thought [sent shivers down my spine?] [. . .] I thought that I would go crazy. Perełka started shivering too when she heard about it. How could we repeat our journey? Not to mention the fact that our experiences had ultimately discouraged us. After such an event one does not become eager to [. . .] *Gott versucht*.⁶⁴⁰

I met a woman by the telephone, who was going back to Warsaw and could take us using her pass for 500 zlotys. I had 330 on me, and father was to pay 200. In Warsaw [. . .]. He told me that 100 would arrive there on that day, and [the other?] 100 a day later. [. . .] seem calm. I would return home. It was [. . .] to leave [. . .] but it did not happen. That woman was a [swindler?]. She promised to come at 5 o'clock in the evening and she came at 6. I was [. . .] fear that she would deceive us because [. . .] and it seemed to me that she wished to go to Częstochowa. [. . .] cousin began to persuade me to go to Częstochowa. [. . .] I dreamt of one thing only – to be [. . .] regardless of the cost, to be able to go to bed and rest in my mother's care. I was picturing how wonderful it would be to stretch out on the daybed: Everyone would gather around us in the small room, and mother would serve me (an old egoist, am I not?). That woman indeed said that travelling to Warsaw was no longer in her interest, but she would go there especially with us because she had given us her word. Eventually, it was decided that we would leave on Friday early in the morning or in the afternoon. So, I slept at my cousin's that night. I talked to father on the phone once again that day. Perełka did too. Our voices sounded so tearful that father kept begging us to calm down. The telephonist had already learned about our experiences too and she knew that we were sisters of "that little boy". She sympathised with us a lot.

Of course, we did not leave on Friday morning. (In the meantime, we received a postcard from Zduńska Wola from which we learned that they

640 (German) God tries people.

were awaiting us in Zelów.⁶⁴¹ I became furious because, you know, when I was already on my way, I wanted to arrive safely, but now, after such a thing...). The woman came at 12; we were definitely leaving at 6, without a doubt; she was to pick us up at 5. We waited until 5:30, but she did not come. I cried in despair, certain that I would never return home again and cursing that woman because if it had not been for her, father would have already sent someone for us. I was going to lose the money, too. So, I went to the telephone. As I was ordering a call, Perła [rushed in?] screaming that the woman had come. I ran back to my cousin, and she then took those 290 zlotys away from me and gave her [. . .] days, for who gives money in advance? But my cousin simply snatched the money away from me. The woman left and returned for us right away but, in the meantime, I finally got to the telephone and learned from the telephonist that father had called and told her to tell us not to leave, because he and mother were coming. We were to set out together on Saturday evening. He would call on Saturday evening. I was thunderstruck. But I quickly [. . .]. It is all the same to me as long as they come. I would set out with them. So, I [. . .] to Perła. We were [. . .] even to the Gawlickis[?]. We suspected that [our] parents[?] received a letter from Zduńska Wola in which Szymek wrote that we should all come, that father could get a job in the committee, and that we would rebuild our [. . .] cousin simply threw us out. She told us to go to [. . .] this whole [. . .] she did not care [. . .] [11] women; she would obviously have to collect it. I told her a few home truths, but today I regret not telling her more, that lout, who simply ordered us to leave. But I was too shocked at that behaviour. So, I spent that night at the Rajchmans'. But [. . .] began there [. . .] cannot put up strangers and [. . .], etc. Admittedly, she later apologised to us and said she was indignant only at Mrs Herz's behaviour because in fact she already [. . .] can, but I could not bear listening to all those allusions any more. I was still at Mrs Herz's place.

On Saturday, I obtained the money. It turned out that [. . .] woman gave back 200 zlotys, told her off [. . .] said that she had to give it back. (We still owe 20 zlotys.) Then she said [. . .] came later than [. . .] gave it up. Of course, I thanked her [. . .] we ate in a restaurant: they served large portions of excellent *cholent*, just like before the war. Finally, Saturday evening came (formally I had nowhere to go because staying at Mrs Rajchman's was becoming

641 Zelów (Łask County).

increasingly unbearable) and told father on the phone that “Mrs Herz threw us out.” I have the satisfaction that everyone at the post office heard that, [. . .] we have nowhere to stay, that they should come already because I would not bear it any longer. Father said that he would speed up his departure and try to arrive on Thursday morning. We were to set out with mother. He told us to go to a Jerozolimski, a friend from Zduńska Wola. Fortunately, I met that Mrs Jerozolimska at the soup kitchen. She gave us a very warm welcome, but unfortunately there was no place for us to sleep there, so we arranged to sleep at some woman’s [house].

At first, when I heard that my father and mother were to arrive on Thursday or Friday, I thought that I would die. It seemed like a century. On Sunday, before evening, I moved from Mrs Rajchman’s to our friends from Zduńska Wola. That was when those waiting days began. During the day, I thought I would go crazy. I sat on a chair, looking through the window all day long. How [. . .] wonder that I did not go crazy. Those people were living in extreme poverty, and it was dirty there too. There was only dinner in the kitchen at noon. At 7 in the evening I would go to Mrs Helman[?] to sleep; I was already content. But to describe that woman and her shady lodgings would require a separate chapter. She was from Pabianice, lived with a small girl and a servant, and managed an inn. Just between you and me, it was a very shady dive. But strangely enough, this was where I felt best. Admittedly, when I heard the servant (a very decent girl) talk to a regular customer on the first evening about “her stealing from her guests,” I felt dizzy, but they quickly told me not to be afraid because [she did not have?] anything against [. . .] I even preserved [. . .] a memory of that woman because, just imagine, only later – for the first time since we had left home!!! – we were able to wash ourselves, and we did scrub ourselves thoroughly from head to toe, and I also washed some clothes. I felt better. I was to pay her but [. . .] Lying in bed, I heard her say, “Look at the delicate faces of these girls [. . .] that they are not smugglers,” because she knew what we had been through. Generally speaking, I felt a kind of respect for her behaviour, as if towards something superior.

On the same day [. . .] (it was Tuesday evening on *Purim*) we made ourselves [. . .] supper: potatoes with milk. I bought 1½ kilograms of potatoes for [. . .] [12] [. . .] potatoes. [. . .] Jews who passed as *goyim* [. . .] (you would never tell they were Jews [. . .]). Just imagine my happiness when I learned [. . .] was going on Tuesday night to Warsaw; he lived at Pawia Street 2. I wrote a letter

of 16 pages. That letter is a kind of a 'historical' document. What I [. . .] wrote, "Have mercy, come already, or else I shall go crazy [. . .] we shall perish, we have no place to live!" etc., that kind of thing [. . .] imagine that after [. . .] that letter, the atmosphere became cheerful. I also wrote to them [. . .] they have [. . .] come; I have to be with them [. . .] trade [. . .] leave for Warsaw [. . .] completely. Then I wrote a letter [. . .] what was going on [. . .]. That is exactly what I forgot to describe to you, [. . .] the reason why I thought that [. . .] the provinces. Piotrków is the breeding ground for the worst gossip. My cousin[?] [. . .] with people who talked to those who arrived from Żelów [. . .] terrible things. Do I want to flee to [. . .] I was so jittery because wherever I went, I heard only that one thing: what happens [. . .].

On Tuesday [. . .] I sent a telegram to Zduńska Wola. I received a reply after dinner on the same day which said that it was calm in Żelów. Another thing is that 10 people were hanged in Zduńska Wola on that day, which you might not know about.⁶⁴² [. . .] continue too. Today, in Zduńska Wola, two-time [. . .] per day; it is calm, but the prices are inflated.

But let us get to the point. I received a letter from my parents from the same man on Thursday morning. Half an hour later, my father and mother suddenly appeared. Imagine my happiness! They wrote in that letter that they would come on Thursday morning or on Friday, but I thought that it would be Friday, because I knew that that man had come on that train. From that moment on, I was changed[?]. I learned from my parents about our terrible situation, that we have lost everything, that we have sold absolutely everything, that for many reasons we cannot stay in Warsaw any longer and that our uncle has taken everything from us in Zduńska Wola. My brother and aunt wrote that our only hope was to come, but everyone in Warsaw advised my father against going to Zduńska Wola, and he would not hear about it either. So I, Perła, and mother were to set off, and father was to go to Częstochowa, because after all he did have somewhere to stay there. But when he told about our journey to our various friends, everyone looked at him as if he were crazy and, to cap it all, I brought[?] a message from that *goy* that we could not

642 On Purim, the German authorities in Zduńska Wola demanded that the *Judenrat* designate ten Jews to be publicly hanged. The execution was carried out. Similar events took place in Brzeziny and Łęczyca. See *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich* (forthcoming).

leave yet, that we had to wait until the nights became dark, and besides they had captured a lot of people that day. My father said [. . .] and that was the final decision. In Piotrków, we no longer had [. . .] to do because [. . .] we had nowhere to spend those several hours ([. . .] in which we stopped did not [. . .] say anything, I only suffered [. . .] I do not know why he [. . .] happens to us). So, I immediately went to Częstochowa with mother on Thursday evening, and father came with Perełka on Friday after dinner. We rented a room with a kitchen on the very same day [. . .] terrible here! We did not move in until several days later. Then there was [. . .] for us to go to Zduńska Wola again, that time legally. I [. . .] stay with father. But our plan was ruined because from now on there are no longer [. . .]

[. . .] end my letter. Do you still have your headaches? After all, I wrote [. . .] I did not answer all the questions. I shall finish [. . .] whether we are alive, [. . .] and how it is here. I shall answer all of your questions. But you must admit that this is quite a letter. Anyway, I have described the journey to you in detail. You are the only person I have written to about it. I regret leaving Warsaw only on account of the flat, which we had and you, of course. Kind regards to you, your parents, and Jakub. (Write back to me soon if you wish to receive further messages.)

ARG I 719 (Ring. I/497)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 150×120, 140×203, 150×198 mm, barely legible, 6 sheets, 12 pages. Attached is an envelope with handwritten address (ink): "To Miss Alfreda Winnik, Warsaw, Nowolipki Street 24, flat 2[. . .]," stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw (4 May 1942), 149×119 mm, Polish, 1 sheet, 1 page. Attached is Hersch Wasser's note in Polish: "1941(?). Original. Part of the letter describing experiences after leaving Piotrków to smuggle. Anonymous letter written by a woman."

Edition based on the original with the use of a post-war typewritten duplicate in AŻIH.

RADOM COUNTY

GARBATKA

93

After 31 December 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “גרופן פֿון דער פראָווינץ” [Greetings from the provinces], recorded by Abraham Lewin. Situation of the Jewish population in Garbatka near Radom from the outbreak of war in 1939. Relations with Poles, typhus epidemics, establishment of the ghetto in December 1941, the change in Polish-Jewish relations in mid-1941, anti-Semitic incidents.

[1] 31 December 1941

Greetings from the provinces

A Jewish woman returned yesterday following a 5-month stay in Garbatka near Radom and she gives an account of the lives of the local Jewish and Christian population as follows:

The Jewish population in Garbatka consists mostly of craftsmen and unskilled workers. Until the end of this month, that is, December 1941, Jews survived from labour and trade in the village. They did not know of hunger in that region. The poorest Jew would bake *challahs* and biscuits, and cooked fish for each Sabbath. Every day for midday meal one ate meat, often even a piece of chicken. No Jewish store or stall was open during the entire time of the occupation; that is, from September 1939. On market days, Jews stood there with their merchandise. The Germans, who were stationed there until the outbreak of the German-Russian war,⁶⁴³ did not do anything bad to the local Jews. They lived quite well with Jews. A lot of Jews lived from [trading with] the Germans. For baking a cake, they gave a sugar cube, flour, fuel, and wood. For making a pair of shoes or boots from their leather, they paid for the work with material (leather) for several pairs of shoes. For coffee, they gave wood at low prices: 10 zlotys a metre.⁶⁴⁴

643 22 June 1941.

644 One cubic metre of wood is approximately 650 kilos on average. The weight depends on the kind of wood.

The local Polish population also lived quite peacefully with the Jews. Following the ceasefire, the Germans intended to drive all of the Jews out of there. They demanded only several hundred signatures from Poles. After several weeks, they had collected 100 signatures. The expulsion date drew near. The local priest, who prior to the war was known as an enemy of the Jews, still needed to sign. The anti-Semitic priest, however, did not want to provide his signature. He is indeed a Jew-hater, but he refused to provide his signature to the Germans. Thus, the edict was nullified.

The help of the local Jews and Christians for the expelled refugees, who passed through Garbatka en masse, was very significant. Jewish refugees stayed with Christians, ate at their homes, [2] in many cases, were also clothed [by them]. The Jewish community organised a kitchen, from which the wandering refugees exclusively benefited. For breakfast, they distributed bread and jam and half a litre of coffee; for midday meal, one litre of soup; for dinner, again bread and coffee. Refugees from Góra Kalwaria, Piaseczno, and Grójec settled in Garbatka. They became fairly well settled and felt like long-time residents.

For winter, every Jew provided himself with reserve provisions. For example, a common Jew, who before the war could barely survive the day, prepared for winter: 1,000 kilos of potatoes, 2–3 metres of wood, 10 kilos of fat, a sack of flour, buckwheat, 400–500 kilos of coal,⁶⁴⁵ 2 barrels of cabbage, peas, and so on.

In August of last summer, typhus began to rage in Garbatka, both among Jews and among Christians. The mortality was minimal: 2 per cent. Several *Endeks* took advantage of this and began inciting propaganda that the refugees had spread the typhus. They must therefore be removed. The libel was brought to the German so-called *Haus-Kommandant*,⁶⁴⁶ M. N. Krawczyk, a *Volksdeutscher* from Poznań, who immediately ordered that all foreign Jews who had voluntarily settled in Garbatka, that is, not as refugees, must immediately leave the resort town (Garbatka is a resort town for [rehabilitation of] the lungs). The group of anti-Semites, at the head of which stands one butcher Skorupski (who himself does business with Jews and borrows money from

645 In the original, 2–3 metres of wood, 10 metres of potatoes, 4–5 metres of coal.

646 (German) “House commander”. The function of a *Haus-Kommandant* has not been ascertained.

them), strengthened its agitation. [They] travelled from one German office to another, to determine that the Jews should be confined in a ghetto and separated from the Christians.

The second week of December, a Sunday, the *Haus-Kommandant* came to *kościół*⁶⁴⁷ and, in his presence, the priest had to hold a Jew-baiting sermon. The Jews are the leeches of Polish peasants, they spread various diseases, dishonour the Catholic religion, etc. One must therefore put an end to them. The same thing occurred in several neighbouring villages. Immediately on the following morning, in the county town, Radom, at the *Kreishauptmann*,⁶⁴⁸ there was a conference of all the village council heads and village heads from the entire [3] county of Radom, regarding the establishment of Jewish quarters everywhere. This was immediately conveyed to all the Polish communes and Jewish *kehillahs*.

The task of installing the Garbatka Jews in the ghetto was given to the previously mentioned commandant, Krawczyk. The Jewish community board selected a place, totally off to a side, near a tract by the highway, taking into account that they could have contact with the outside world. Approval of the chosen place meant payment to the *Haus-Kommandant* of 10,000 zlotys and several furs. The *Haus-Kommandant* informed the *Kreishauptmann* that he had already decided on a place of residence for the Jews of Garbatka. The other responded that he must come himself, see and approve the place (a message had reached him from the *Endek* group that Jews would live too well there). At precisely 3 o'clock in the afternoon, on 28 December, the *Kreishauptmann* arrived from Radom and surveyed the selected place. He was accompanied by the experts on the ghetto matters. He immediately proclaimed that it will be too good for the Jews in this place. They will have too much free movement and will breathe fresh air. He apparently declared as follows:

"I must have you Jews in one place. You must not be too spread out. It is enough that you are dispersed across the entire world. I must keep an eye on you at all times. I will not go looking for you when it will be necessary."

647 (Polish) church.

648 Friedrich Egen (1903–1974), from September to December 1939, the *Stadthauptmann* of Radom and *Landrat* in Sandomierz; head of the Radom District from December 1939 to June 1942 and from September 1943 to the end of 1944; from January 1940 also vice-governor of the Radom District. After the war, he was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 469.

Immediately, driving quickly in his car, he began to look for another place for the Jews. Searching in great haste, he stopped and gave an order that here, in this place, would be the Jewish ghetto. The deadline for relocating – until 30 December at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Christians and Jews who do not move by this hour will be shot. On the same day and at the same hour, he himself and the gendarmerie will come and check whether his order had been precisely carried out.

Among the Jews, a *Yom Kippur* and *Tisha b'Av*⁶⁴⁹ mood ensued. Among the Christians there immediately arose the incitement of a pogrom. The reason for the difficult situation that had been created, was: a) the short deadline for relocation; b) the leader of the *Endeks* declared to the Polish populace that the Jews do not want to depart from here, but rather wish to live together with the Christians; and moreover, they bribed the county governor, so that he should ostensibly give them only the place he had designated for them. In this way, antagonism was created at lightning speed.

[4] The kernel of hatred fell upon fruitful ground. In order to understand this, one must explain the following: the Garbatka Jews, numbering approximately 500, have already been living here for several generations, and more or less reside in one concentrated place. Only those Jews who settled a few years ago, on account of insufficient space, lived a bit further away, separated from the rest of the Jews. In total, that was 17 families. These 17 families must move to the ghetto, to join the rest of the Jews, who must remain living in the places where they have lived up until now. In contrast, the number of Christian families who must leave the living area designated for the Jews is 70. These are the wealthiest peasants, who have the wealthiest properties on this piece of soil. So, firstly, they do not have where to move, because the houses of the 17 families would have sufficed only for a small portion of the peasants; and secondly, the Jewish houses are not suited to their needs, because they are lacking the necessary buildings, such as: barns and stables for the livestock and “dead” stock. Moreover, they all shouted in a single voice: “For no price.” Even if there should be victims, they will not retreat from their land and their property. And they will seek revenge on the Jews, who apparently chose this place and no other.

649 (Hebrew) ninth day of the month of *Av*; day devoted to mourning and fasting in commemoration of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. and 70 C.E.

“The Jews will die of hunger in the ghetto; we will not allow any food to reach them, because they want to ruin us,” the peasants shouted.

A group of *shkotsim* from among the school youths organised themselves under the leadership of louts, like: Bolek Szczur, leader; Gieniek Rutka, Heniek Małolepszy, armed with hatchets and pitchforks, and threatened to assault the Jews, should they dare to relocate. First of all, they cruelly beat up the head of the Jewish community, Perelsztajn.⁶⁵⁰ Stones were thrown into Jewish flats. Out of fear, Jews have not left their homes since the 28 [December]. Everyone packed up their most necessary things. It is already 3 days that the Jews are fasting without a spoonful of cooked food. All of them are bemoaning their fate. The 17 Jewish families that have to relocate to the ghetto decided to move in with the Jews who live in the area that has been designated for them as a living quarter.

(The informant was not able to report what happened there subsequently. Because of the tense situation that was created, she tried [to obtain] a transit pass, and on the 30 [December] returned to Warsaw, where she has her family and home.)

The *Haus-Kommandant* Krawczyk, who is the master of life and property of all the Garbatka Jews, was characterised by my informant in the following manner: He is a huge bribe-taker, and a drunk, an alcoholic. [5] For a glass of liquor one can achieve everything with him. He does a lot of favors for the Jews. Already at the beginning of winter, he loaned Jews military ovens from the barracks, which were built there in great number following the German-Russian war, and stood idle – and this, without a grosz of money. He also distributed a shipment of wood to the poor, for 11 zlotys a metre. At every opportunity, he confronts Jews and demands a glass of liquor. Once, while walking down the street, he caught the head of the Jewish community, Yankl Perelsztajn and Sh. Flamenbaum, dragged them into a tavern, and allowed himself a drinking spree. It grew very late. His wife calls him home. But it is difficult for him to part from the bottle. The wife sat down outside on a bench to wait. At around 10 o'clock in the evening, the two Jews had to take him home: he was no longer able to walk on his own. Arriving home, he did not find his wife. He began to beat the Jews, saying that they intentionally got

650 Yankl Perelsztajn, chairman of the *Judenrat* and of the ŻSS Delegation in Garbatka. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/27, pp. 52; 210/331, pp. 1–2.

him drunk, tricked him, and murdered his wife. They must immediately find her. At the same time, he immediately informed the Radom gendarmerie and ordered all Jews to be killed. The entire Jewish population was terrified. All the Jews went looking for Krawczyk's wife. Only at around 2 o'clock in the morning did she return home. Krawczyk explained that out of fear, the Jews freed her. And that is their luck, because if...

For the Jewish houses in Garbatka – and almost every Jew lives in his own little house – a commissioner was appointed by the Germans. He takes the rent money in advance from all the Jews. For 1 room, one pays 18 zlotys per month, for 2 rooms 30 zlotys. There are homeowners who pay up to 60 zlotys a month to live in their own little houses.

The same informant related other details about the general situation in the Radom region. She relates as follows:

Polish train workers throw down coal onto the Dęblin-Radom track from the coal trains that pass through. In a single journey they throw down up to 10 cartloads of coal, which are collected by the civilian population.

A number of Polish workers who, prior to the war, worked in the Radom arms factory,⁶⁵¹ do not appear at work, although there is the threat of a death sentence for sabotage. Many of them try to obtain certificates from doctors that they are ill. The number of saboteurs grows constantly larger. The agitation falls under the slogan: not to produce any bullets for the purpose of murdering our own brothers. A lot of workers are involved in smuggling and often risk their lives.

The German gendarmerie carries out frequent searches in Christian and Jewish dwellings to confirm whether meat is being cooked or whether dry potatoes are being eaten. Both things are strictly forbidden. [6] The discovery of a grater in someone's home serves as proof that someone is grating potatoes, and cooking potato dumplings or potato pancakes. That is against the German decree: Potatoes may only be consumed in soups. Many residents, on

651 The State Arms Factory in Radom, one of the largest small arms factories in Poland in the interwar period. Established in 1926, it worked for the Polish Army. During the war, the plant was managed by the Steyer-Daimler-Puch company. In the period 1942–1944, it employed approximately 2,500 Jews from the labour camp on Szkolna Street in Radom. Now the “Łucznik” Metalworks. See S. Piątkowski, *Dni życia*, pp. 229–231; J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 150.

account of that transgression, were severely punished. During the searches, pots are searched for meat. If found, it is requisitioned.

The anniversary of Poland's independence, the 11th of November, was celebrated in Garbatka in such a fashion: Upon all government buildings Polish eagles were drawn with chalk with the inscriptions: "Long live a free and independent Poland of the peasants and workers." In some places, there hung flags of red paper. The cemetery where the fallen Polish soldiers lay, was covered with red paper wreaths. The Polish population marked its holiday that day by gathering in front of the church and saying prayers. The church was locked that day.

About Polish train workers who freed Russian prisoners, it is reported that: On the Dęblin-Radom line while transporting the prisoners, the Polish train workers used to detach two railway cars at every station where the trains with the prisoners stopped. All the Russian soldiers who were still able to stand on their feet fled to the fields and forests. The Polish and Jewish populace would help them with money, food, and clothing. The authorities in Radom, where there is a major assembling area for prisoners, realised that there were missing cars with Russian prisoners. Gendarmes and SS. people were immediately dispatched across the aforementioned stretch. They conducted searches in the forests and houses, but without any results. As recounted, in such a manner up to 800 members of the Red Army were freed. Among them, there were also Jews from Poland (2 from Koźienice). The wounded and weak remained in the cars. Their appearance was appalling: in tatters and rags, without shoes, robbed of their clothes, filthy and starving. They asked passers-by for bread and water. The gendarme threatened to shoot anyone who approaches and gives help to the prisoners. For several days, the cars with the prisoners stood at the stations, and the prisoners did not receive any food.

Over the course of a longer period, the Germans placed an armed patrol over an area of 70 km along the train line, at every half kilometre, so that these acts of sabotage would not be repeated. [7] From the trains that passed through, members of the Red Army would jump from the cars while the train was moving. Many saved themselves in this way. One of them, while jumping, fell upon an iron pole and died on the spot. The commandant did not allow the populace to organise a funeral for the person killed, but asked that he be buried in secret at the Christian cemetery, in the state in which he lay.

The commandant obtained a red rug and ordered that the dead person be buried in it. The entire population of Garbatka, quietly and not saying anything with lowered heads, accompanied the dead Russian soldier to his eternal rest. The following day, his grave was covered with red flowers and wreaths. The grave is always maintained.

ARG I 731 (Ring. I/986)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (Ś*), ink, 150×210 mm; duplicate: 3 copies, typewritten, 210×297 mm, minor damage and fragments missing; Yiddish, 16 sheets, 16 pages. On p. 1 of the first copy of the typewritten duplicate, information by Hersh Wasser in Yiddish (ink): “Avrom Lewin”. Attached is Wasser’s note in Polish and Yiddish: “Garbatka by Radom. Jewish life in Garbatka at the time until the end of 1941. A testimony recorded by Avrom Lewin, member of the board of Oyneg Shabes.” In HWC, file No. 7–1 (handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 2 sheets), there is another [?] account concerning Garbatka. Edition based on the original, 4 sheets, 7 pages.

KOZIENICE

94

After November 1940, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account “קאָזיעניץ” [Kozienice], recorded by Rabbi Shimon Huberband. Relations with German settlers before the war, the outbreak of war, the bombardment, escape to surrounding forests; occupation by the Germans and persecutions; profile of a German physician Dr Neumann who helped the Jews.

[1] Kozienice

[Notebook I]

[2] Contents:

1. The shtetl before the war
2. The atmosphere on the eve of war
3. The *Volksdeutsche* to Bereza

4. The bombardment
5. The shtetl in the forest
6. The Sabbath meeting
7. Back to the shtetl
8. The “welcome” from the “new masters”
9. Seven days in the church courtyard – the Seven Degrees of Hell
10. The gallows
11. The “resurrection” of 60 Jews
12. Emptied flats
13. The “New Order”...
- [2a] 14. Work and beatings
15. *Rassenschande*
16. The *Maggid’s* synagogue in flames
17. Vandalism
18. The Poniatowski palace also in flames...
19. Crime and Punishment
20. An exception to the rule – the German Dr Neuman[n]
21. The life of the *kehillah*⁶⁵²

[3] 1. The shtetl before the war

On the banks of the Vistula, in forests of tall pines, to the side of the Radom-Lublin railway line, lies the old, historic Jewish shtetl of Kozenice. Everybody knows the saying: Why is Kozenice called Kozenice? Because the Kozenice *Maggid* lived there!⁶⁵³

And although more than 100 years have passed since the great man lived there, when you come to the shtetl today, you still feel his presence.

You see it both in the historical buildings and in the behaviour of the inhabitants as they go about their daily lives: When a Kozenice Jew finds himself in a time of sorrow, he goes to the *Maggid’s* tomb to pray. Women go to the *Maggid’s mikvah* as a remedy. Merchants swear on the *Maggid’s* name – even Christians trust such an oath... because even they are in great awe of his name.

652 This chapter is missing; perhaps it was not written.

653 Yisroel Yitskhok Hofstein, known as the Kozenice *Maggid* (1733–1814), a *tzaddik*, famous preacher, one of the most important propagators of Hasidism in Poland.

Amongst the Christians, to this day, legends have been passed down from generation to generation about the holiness of the *Maggid*. They also know that the famous Polish prince Józef Poniatowski⁶⁵⁴ [4] had visited the little house where the *Maggid* once lived and had written his name on the wall, amongst those of all the visitors from all corners of Poland who had all felt obliged to inscribe their name on the day of their visit.

The majority of the inhabitants of the shtetl were Jewish craftsmen in the shoe trade, who earned a living by manufacturing shoes for the large cities.

All in all, [it is] a shtetl like all Jewish shtetls, but with something extra: its *yikhus*. He's from Kozienice, the *Maggid's* shtetl.

The historical sites in Kozienice are the following: the *Maggid's* synagogue – which he himself built and laid out 100 gold ducats for the foundations (as related in the town *pinkas*), the little house where he was born and lived his entire life; and his tomb in the cemetery. In Kozienice, there is also the great historic palace of the last Polish king, Stanisław August Poniatowski,⁶⁵⁵ which tour groups would visit because of its historical importance, its royal splendour and beauty, and everything which bore the stamp of the generosity and [5] largesse of a Polish monarch.

Volksdeutsche made up the majority of the Christian population of the shtetl. And the large German settlement of Wilki was not far away.

The Germans had very good neighbourly relations with the Jews. They rented their fields and gardens to Jews, sold their grain to Jews, and in general were very friendly.

And so it all appeared, until ...

2. The atmosphere on the eve of war

There had not been such a successful year for a long time, the peasants revealed to the Jews of the shtetl. The Jews were pleased: They would not have cause to be angry at the summer visitors who came and made everything more expensive by buying everything up. If it was a good harvest, there would be enough for everyone...

654 Józef Poniatowski (1763–1813), prince, nephew of King Stanisław August. General, military commander in the war with Russia in 1792, then commander of the army of the Duchy of Warsaw, marshal under Napoleon.

655 In the original, incorrectly, Zygmunt August Poniatowski.

But strangely, it was not working out; something was wrong. People were talking quite seriously about war... Old people were frightened... Young people scoffed: it's nothing! It won't happen... [6] "He"⁶⁵⁶ is only threatening the world... he's bluffing, he wants more concessions, but he's afraid to fight... "They"⁶⁵⁷ are hungry... (*Der Moment*⁶⁵⁸ wrote this explicitly). The "boycott"⁶⁵⁹ has ruined them... (the wireless explained) – they can't fight, they have nothing to fight with... (so says today's *Nayes*⁶⁶⁰ and all the "world" press).

And the pause between *mincha* and *maariv* gets longer and longer as people bicker over politics. Those in the know say war is inevitable. The few taverns in the shtetl which have a "radio" are besieged by people wanting to hear the news. People are getting more worried by the day and have no patience for work. Everyone is anxious, nervous, tense.

Large numbers of soldiers travel through the shtetl to Dęblin (an airport), to Pionki, and this is even more worrying and unsettling. The agitation reaches its climax on Wednesday when pink posters appear on the streets announcing general mobilization.⁶⁶¹ The elderly begin to tremble, their hands shaking even more with the thought that they have to live through yet another war. They felt they had already suffered enough for generations to come in the last war ... [7] Once more the blood, once more the tears, once more the ruins... young people weep... heartrending scenes play themselves out: Everyone stands weeping beside young Rejzman, who was married only two weeks ago and has to leave his wife and go to the front... The tragedy is even greater because two other brothers from the same family, as well as their father, have been called up. They leave at home an old, broken wife and mother.

656 Adolf Hitler.

657 The Germans.

658 *Der Moment*, a high-circulation, Yiddish-language daily, published in Warsaw from 1910 to 1939.

659 In 1933, in reaction to the wave of anti-Jewish persecution following Hitler's coming to power in Germany, the American Jewish Congress called for an economic boycott of German goods. In Poland, a *Centralny Komitet Antyhitlerowski* (Central Anti-Hitlerite Committee) was set up, but was dissolved by the state authorities in 1935.

660 A reference to *Hayntike Nayes*, a noontime Yiddish-language tabloid published with the high-circulation newspaper *Haynt*.

661 30 August 1939.

The men are transported to Dęblin. The entire shtetl sees them off. Among those escorting them are quite a few who will have to leave the next day. Women weep and wail. The Polish police mercilessly beat women and children who cling to their husbands and fathers. The police accuse them of lack of patriotism because they cannot part from their menfolk. (The patriotism of the Polish police during the German occupation is a chapter in itself...).

A melancholy quiet descends on the shtetl. People sense the coming nightmare, they feel it in their heart and soul.... The more experienced besiege the food shops and lay in supplies. Everyone feels the cloud hanging overhead and the storm about to break...

[8] 3. All the Germans are sent to Bereza.⁶⁶²

Who didn't know the shtetl's "Yiddish-speaking *goyim*"? (*Volksdeutsche* was a later term) They were on good terms with the Jews, as opposed to the Poles to whom they gave a good deal of trouble. They would beat Polish farmhands, oppress Polish workers, and in general ignore all orders from the Polish government. They obeyed only their *wójt*,⁶⁶³ and the *wójt* was clear that he answered to Berlin, not Warsaw... The Polish government had attempted to be more accommodating to them, but that had produced the opposite effect: The more rights they obtained, the more they demanded and the more they neglected their obligations as Polish citizens.

They were on friendly terms only with... the Jews (in order to spite the Poles) and when the *Endeks* proclaimed a "Jewish boycott" in the shtetl, the first "boycott-breakers" were the... Germans. But in the last weeks before the war, they suddenly began, as if under orders, to hate their Jewish neighbours, stopped coming to see them, and under no circumstances would do business with them, and only very grudgingly replied to a Yiddish "good morning".

At the same time, they greatly provoked the local Poles...

[9] One fine morning, people noticed that all the chimneys in the German estate had been painted red... and that the chimneys on the German houses in the shtetl had also been painted red... It was realised that these were signals

662 Penal camp in Bereza Kartuska (now in Belarus, Brest region), established in 1934, where persons whom the state authorities considered a threat to public order were detained for 3 to 6 months without trial.

663 (Polish) village head.

for the enemy and, on an order from Składkowski,⁶⁶⁴ all the German men were sent to Bereza... They were driven through the shtetl in cars and their attitude was insolent. They shouted insults at the Polish government employees and cried “Heil Hitler”. Their behaviour was so aggressive that the police had to use rubber truncheons to defend themselves. They were transported in sealed vehicles to Bereza. And while they were on the way, their German *Reichsbrüder*⁶⁶⁵ suddenly arrived, not in cars but in aeroplanes, and dropped bombs precisely on the houses whose chimneys were not painted red...

[10] 4. The bombardment

The previous night, people had heard enthusiastic speeches on the radio, speeches which stirred their feelings, “we shall win, because we must win.” As soon as the loudspeaker fell silent, they became somewhat uneasy. Perhaps fear of the night had something to do with it, the darkness (the compulsory blackout was already in force), and all that could be heard were the footsteps of the LOP[P] members on duty.

This happened on Friday, 8 September, at dawn. The shtetl was awakened by the sound of aeroplanes... Frequent explosions were heard nearby. The houses began to shake and window panes fell out. Terrible shrieks were heard on all sides. People ran to help, but the planes were flying literally over their heads and dropping heavy-calibre bombs on “military targets” – the peaceful civilian population.

Terrible reports arrived from all over the shtetl, many streets were in flames and the toll of victims [11] rose from hour to hour. Even the air-raid cellars were of no help; even there the devastation was enormous and the number of casualties terrible. The destroyer prevailed in every corner. As the sky became lighter, they could see exactly where to drop their bombs, and they bombed non-stop.

People ran around half mad with fear and there was nowhere to hide from a terrible death. Mothers ran around with children in their arms looking for a safe refuge. The sick were carried on pallets, but nobody knew where to go... The streets were full of people shouting and weeping and reciting *viduy*.

664 Felicjan Sławoj Składkowski (1885–1962), minister of foreign affairs in the *Sanacja* governments. Poland's prime minister in 1936–1939.

665 (German) brothers from the *Reich*.

Suddenly, as if by command, everybody began to run to Radomska Street which led to the nearby forest. And so, all at once, the whole Jewish shtetl, including the women and children, hastily grabbed some provisions and fled to the nearby forest...

But not everyone reached it. The planes chased and bombed the people as they fled, and there was the horrendous sight of Moyshe, the ritual slaughterer, carrying the remains of his dismembered wife into the forest with him...

[12] 5. The shtetl in the forest

Friday at dusk, Jews gathered in the forest, in that same forest where they used to stroll so often peacefully in the evening... forgetting their everyday worries. In the quiet shadows of the trees at dusk, they gathered in that same beloved spot, at the same time of day and ... with so much fear and so much dread. As night came on, they spoke quietly... they themselves had no idea why. They kept quiet without being ordered, responding to the trembling of their hearts...

Nobody knew where the enemy was or how far away he was. Only Polish soldiers and officers were seen fleeing in disorder, in panic, with and without weapons, with boots and... barefoot...

They crossed the Vistula [River] in boats and the aeroplanes took aim at them as they moved across... The unarmed soldiers cried out horribly as they were slaughtered aboard the boats crossing the Vistula... And the river flowed on as if nothing had happened, continuing to follow its peaceful natural course...

[13] Night fell, it was pitch black, shots were heard all around, from near and afar, people lay on the ground. It grew cold and they constantly saw searchlights which illuminated heaven and earth... and their hearts became even blacker... At every instance, family members would ask each other if they were still there and whether they were all right. Jews were heard quietly reciting psalms from memory... From time to time the silence was broken by a groan and a voice saying, "Oh, holy *maggid*, intercede for us!" Then a woman's voice was heard: "Oh, great God, forgive us, today a whole shtetl of women have not blessed the Sabbath candles"...

... There was a slight movement somewhere, everyone began to murmur in the silence, no one knew what was happening... but their hearts were in their mouths. People said a figure was approaching... it looked like a soldier. Those closest to the figure said calm down, it's one of ours, a Polish officer...

What is he doing here? Perhaps he has come to tell us the enemy has been driven off and we can return to the shtetl... People wanted to get close to him to hear what he himself had to say... but they were told to stay sitting where they were...

The officer told the Jews around him, in a [14] tone of quiet agitation: "Our government has already fled from Warsaw... the traitors ... The army has collapsed... we are all lost...". He had heard that the Jews from the shtetl were in the forest... He had always been a friend of the Jews... He came from Vilna... He had a mother and wife there... He asked people to note his name, Józef Dębski, and to write and tell them he had taken his life here...

And before he had finished the sentence, a shot was heard ... and he fell... There was an indescribable stampede as people tried to flee and fell down again, but they realized immediately what a tragedy had occurred... he was dead, he was a patriot... unwilling to be taken prisoner...

People were afraid the Jews would be accused of murdering him. The older ones said a grave should be dug at once... but there was nothing to dig with. They found some branches... dug with their hands... it was done quickly and quietly, and when he was buried, the Jews breathed a little more easily...

After such a terrifying night, day broke... and people did not know which to pray for: night, which was quieter without [15] the planes and bombings, or day, to find out what was happening in the shtetl, what had become of their homes and possessions. There was no food left...

But their hearts were pounding, day had broken, and who knew what it would bring...

People were still under the shock of the night's events, their heads still full of the nightmare... And Jews reminded each other: "We have to remember: Józef Dębski from Vilna. We must not forget to write as soon as we can"...

6. The Sabbath meeting

At lightning speed, nobody knew from where, a rumour suddenly spread that the Germans were already in the shtetl... But how was that possible? The whole war was only a week old and they were already near Lublin?

It wasn't possible. People didn't want to believe it... What did it mean? Them, the Germans? They had read about their savagery and cruelty to Jews. Them! The Germans! *They* had entered the shtetl?... What to do?

[16] Go back to the shtetl? Hand themselves over to the hangman? Or maybe flee deeper into the forest? Spontaneously, a meeting took shape.

Everyone, young and old, pious Jews and free-thinkers, men and women, everyone beat their breasts in remorse. One man cried out, “This is all because we used to read about the savagery in the Czech lands⁶⁶⁶ in the newspapers over lunch, eating fish and meat, and, for desert ... Jewish suffering.”

An old man cried out, “This has happened to us because we did not observe the Sabbath”...

“Why they’ve come here is no longer important, what is important is that they are here and we have to think seriously about what to do, because our lives are in danger at any moment”...

Jews weep, moan, women wring their hands, have fits, young men tear their hair. “What shall we do, what shall we do?”...

The argument was interrupted by a young man who had come running from the shtetl. He said he been unable to restrain himself and at dawn had gone to the shtetl [17] to see what was happening at home. He encountered the Germans, who asked him, “Where are the Jews?” He replied that they were all in the forest, having fled there to escape the bombing.

They ordered him to pass on the following: If the Jews did not return to the shtetl by 1 o’clock, they would open fire on the forest...

Indescribable chaos broke out. Everyone took sides: Some said that people should return, since they had already had a taste of their bombs and had heard about their deeds, and their threats were no idle chatter. Others argued, and amongst them the head of the *kahal*, that they should make their way to Lublin through the forest, together with the retreating Polish army.

A very small number decided to follow the suggestion of the head of the *kahal*, took their leave quickly of those near to them, and set off deep into the forest in the direction of Lublin, while the majority, with a heavy heart, decided to return to the shtetl and entrust themselves to God!

[18] 7. Back to town

The scene of the return to the shtetl was unforgettable. They formed rows in the following order, a column of 2,000 people: the elderly walking in front,

666 On 15 March 1939, German forces annexed the territory of Bohemia, Moravia, and Teschen (Cieszyn) Silesia.

the young people in the middle and the women behind... so as to screen the young and protect the women... Everybody carried a small bundle on their back and felt instinctively that this return was not taking them home, but to a new exile... They knew they were going into the mouth of the tiger... They didn't want to, but they had no choice... They stopped every few minutes, not because they were exhausted but because they wanted ... the journey to last as long as possible... They didn't want to meet "them" ... and perhaps a "miracle" would occur in the meantime...

Nobody spoke... a swarm of Jews on the move and nobody spoke. Their faces expressed silent pain. The elderly trembled... young people wept – it is worth noting that it was the women and mothers who provided reassurance [19] and consolation...

They were close to the shtetl when they met a peasant known to them. They asked him what was going on in the shtetl. Everybody surrounded him and he said, "I barely escaped with my life from the bastards; they are beating everyone and taking them away in trucks"...

The young people broke out in spasms of weeping. One of them, Mikhl Horowic, called out to his father: "Daddy, take a knife and slaughter me, as our grandfathers did in the crusades – don't hand me over to the hangman"...

It felt as though the young people were speaking through him, many of them would have liked to proudly embrace such a death, a martyr's death, rather than suffer moral humiliation and physical torture...

We could see the first houses of the shtetl. We walked past the hospital, but it was barely recognisable... It was a total ruin. They had bombed it for two solid hours, despite the fact that the [20] Red Cross flag was visible from afar... More than 60 casualties had been lying there, amongst them two women in childbirth.

How could one not be afraid of such barbarians, for whom everything was cheap? Nothing stands in their way, nothing has any value, not even the most elementary human, ethical principles....

The noise of a passing car full of soldiers interrupted the melancholy contemplation. With bestial, murderous cries they shrieked *Juda, verrecke!*⁶⁶⁷...

The Jews flinched, but calmed down when the car drove past...

But the calm was short-lived...

667 (German) Perish, Jew! or: Death to Jews! – Nazi propaganda slogan.

[21] 8. The “welcome” from the “new masters”

Suddenly trucks full of soldiers roared up like angels of destruction. The trucks surrounded the whole column of Jews and soldiers jumped out, fully armed. With fists and rifles they began to beat murderously and kill men and women, whomever their hands or rifle butts happened to encounter...

They seized men by their beards, tugged and tore at them... Others used their bayonets to hack off beards along with pieces of flesh...

The chaos was indescribable. People felt as if they had been attacked by wild animals. Because the soldiers were screaming so loudly and wildly, it seemed like they were the ones who were under attack.

The Jews, for their part, were so terribly bewildered and confused that they could barely even scream... In the midst of the onslaught, they caught sight of a young man, a “hunchback”... Saul the water-carrier’s son. [22] They took him out of the column and shot him on the spot in front of everyone.

People stood frozen at the horrible sight... The boy’s mother began to scream and howl dreadfully.... Then came an order:

*Ruhig! Stehen bleiben! Wenn nicht – werdet ihr alle hier erschossen!...*⁶⁶⁸

“We will now search you to see if you have any weapons.”

There, in the middle of the street, they searched everyone and found on everyone... the small amount of money, zlotys, dollars which we had brought with us as we fled – and took it from us...

Even the women were searched by the soldiers in a brutal and hateful fashion... but what could these helpless Jewish women do about the shame of being left standing there half-naked in broad daylight?...

They just looked at them with contempt and disgust...

And after they had robbed the Jews of all their “weapons” [23] and confiscated them, came the order: “Forward march”...

Under strict guard, surrounded by a patrol of soldiers, everyone, men, women and children, were led into the shtetl, to the church courtyard.

9. Seven days in the church courtyard – the seven degrees of hell...

Broken and exhausted from the events of the last few days, we arrived at the church courtyard on the evening of the Sabbath, 9 September. People thought they would be kept there for a while and then sent home...

668 (German) Quiet! Stand still! If not, everyone here will be shot.

But, unfortunately, it was only there that the real torture, humiliation and inquisition began ...

First, a soldier ordered: Men on one side of the courtyard and women on the other. At the moment the order was given, the soldiers began to drive everyone wildly to establish

*Ordnung*⁶⁶⁹... They shoved, they beat, kicked. [24] It was clear that they did not have enough limbs with which to beat the Jews...

After we had been separated, another search was made for “weapons”, that is, Jewish property. And if anyone still happened to have a little money on them, it was now seized in this thorough search...

The sun set. Night fell. People lay in the street and shivered from the cold, but they were pleased that the villains were also going to sleep... thus would be able to close their eyes, even on the street, even in the cold. They had not slept for a couple of nights..

But suddenly frightful screams were heard from inside the church... All the Jews sat up. What had happened? Someone could be heard screaming inside.

“They are torturing someone”... At night, in the dark, it was terrible to hear... H...e...l...p! H...e...l...p! Aah... aah... aah...”

[25] People shuddered with fear, the main question on everyone’s lips was, “Who is it? Who is missing?” Nobody knew. Perhaps someone had remained in the shtetl?...

More screams... they listened hard... but it suddenly fell quiet... Thank God! Perhaps the monsters had stopped their inquisition...

When the church door opened, soldiers came out carrying out a stretcher. They carried it over to the Jews, turned their torches on it and ... oh! ... oh! ... a human “lump” was lying there, face and clothes soaked in blood... He groaned, poor thing, in the silence... Everyone tried to see if they could recognise him. But in vain...

The soldiers said: “We’ll do the same to all of you, you dogs”...

The Jews were ordered to make space amongst them. The soldiers put down the stretcher... took out a few shovels and gave them to the Jews, ordering them to dig a “grave”. The man was heard groaning. They wanted to say he was still alive... but they were too frightened to say a word... [26] Their hands

669 (German) order.

shook with fright... The soldiers also seemed somehow serious. They did not beat the Jews, but urged them on, faster... faster...

The grave was ready, the man groaned... The soldiers called a few Jews and ordered them to throw him into the grave from the stretcher. Their knees buckled and they barely managed to stay on their feet. The Jews' lips moved in a whisper. People felt they were asking forgiveness from him... and revenge from God... They threw him into the grave and a loud "Aah!!!" was heard. The torches shone into the grave... They ordered the men to cover him with earth... and they obeyed...

Then the soldiers took the stretcher and went back into the church.

The Jews roused themselves from their paralysis and wept softly... They ran to the "gravediggers"... Perhaps they had recognised the man? But they were so shaken that they could not speak to anyone... They lay curled up on the ground with their teeth chattering... One of them asked for a drink of water as he felt sick, but how could one get water? People rubbed his hands and feet to warm them. The Jews turned away from the grave of the "unknown martyr". They huddled together like helpless lambs...

[27] It grew quiet again... Some people fell asleep from exhaustion, others could not sleep from fear... Another commotion... More Germans... More shouts... They shone torches... and ripped the coats off the men... A sense of justice had been awakened in the robbers..! The women and children were cold... they should have the coats... "Oh, how merciful they are"...

10. The gallows

Dawn was breaking. 10 September. It was cold. People were broken. They hadn't eaten for two days...

"Get up, get up, you lazy dogs"... They were made to line up in rows of four, young and old alike, but not the women

Now they had to do some "sport"...

"Run... faster... faster... and when an old man fell, they set upon him with rubber clubs and beat him mercilessly...

"Stop!... Down on the ground! Stand up! Run... Down... Run"... The younger ones managed to keep up... the older ones fell [27a] and the poor things were beaten callously... The "sport" lasted more than an hour... "Now we shall work... Everyone has to work"... They brought brooms and shovels. The people

were ordered to sweep the courtyard. Bearded Jews were made to sweep the courtyard with their beards...

One group of Jews was led away to clean the “toilets”, not with rags and brooms but with their bare hands... Others were forced to eat the human excrement... People vomited ... fainted...

It was 12 o'clock. Now the meal.

People cheered up for a moment, thinking they would be given meal, since they were completely exhausted. The soldiers told them cynically, “We are going to have a meal. You will get nothing to eat here... Jews wanted the war, let them die of hunger”...

After such a meal, there came an order: “Women and children will be freed – the men must stay here”... The soldiers added, “You will all be shot as enemies of humanity” ... An indescribable wail rose from the women... they did not want to leave the men...

[28] But they were “released” from the courtyard with rifle butts... The parting was tragic and terrible, nobody knew whether they would ever see each other again...

The women clustered restlessly around the churchyard fence, trying to pass some food to the men through the slats... They all shared what they managed to get... but it wasn't much comfort... You could feel that something else was coming after the pause...

Then a soldier came out and announced that the Jews had to tell them where Rabbi Perłow (the town rabbi)⁶⁷⁰ was, otherwise they would all be hanged on the spot. You can image the panic and fear amongst the Jews... (the rabbi wasn't there, he had left for Lublin during the bombing).

And so they took the most prominent citizen, a great religious scholar and the richest man in town, Shmuel Moyshe Korman, led him to a tree... and hanged him in front of everyone. At the last minute they... cut the rope. He fell from the tree ... and when he had come to himself, they strung him up again and ... again cut the rope... Mr Korman began to beg them [29] to let him die...

The hangmen's answer was as follows: “You kill a dog, but a Jew is worse than a dog, a Jew you torture”...

670 Nokhem Shloyme Perłow (1911–1942), rabbi of Kozienice from December 1938.

The inquisition lasted several hours until he had been hanged for the fifth time. Whoever cried out in horror... was beaten. "We'll do this to all of you," they said.

When Korman's wife found out what they were doing to her husband, she ran to the commandants' headquarters with a *Volksdeutscher* and for 50,000 zlotys plus material for a suit and a coat, the execution by hanging was annulled...

[Notebook II]

[3] 11. The resurrection of 60 Jews

Monday 11 September – last night too they slept in the courtyard... and again the bestial awakening... more sport... more beating...

Life was already unbearable. What would happen next? How long would they be tortured here in this manner. They felt their strength simply ebbing away... All they had to eat was what was smuggled in through the slats of the fence... And the soldiers beat the women heavily when they found them committing such a crime...

They were ordered to stand in rows of four – a senior officer walked through and selected 60 Jews.

*Kommen Sie mit*⁶⁷¹... The men were given shovels... and ordered to march... But where? No one knew...

They were led into the nearby forest... and ordered to collect the weapons that had been discarded and scattered throughout the forest... by [4] the retreating Polish soldiers...

And they were warned that if they tried to run away, they would be shot on the spot...

Thus, they worked until midday.

The senior officer ordered everyone to assemble in one spot and made a speech:

"Since Jews are the enemies of humanity, they and ... Chamberlain⁶⁷² provoked this war... Therefore, they must dig themselves a grave here"...

671 (German) Follow me.

672 Arthur Neville Chamberlain (1869–1940), prime minister of the United Kingdom from 1937 to 1940, partisan of appeasement, signatory of the Munich Agreement giving Germany sovereignty over the Sudetenland. Signed the mutual aid treaty with Poland on 25 August 1939 and the declaration of war with Germany on 3 September 1939.

The Jews began to plead, to weep, to fall at his feet, but to no avail... they had to dig – and if they did not, he would shoot everyone immediately...

It was all over.

Jews said *viduy* and dug themselves a large mass grave... They wet the earth with bloody tears... and they dug sluggishly and slowly, their hands gave out, their knees buckled, they fell with their shovels... No one looked another in the eye... and... no one yet knew which of the “four deaths”⁶⁷³ was in store for them...

[5] They dug a large grave... He ordered them to lie down on top of each other, alive, in the grave...

Jews fell upon each other's necks... They said farewell and asked each other for forgiveness... They called out *Shema Yisroel* and went alive into the grave...

He called his “comrades” to fill the grave with earth...

The Jews lay stretched out with their eyes closed... They could not open them for fear... Then they heard one of the “comrades” who had come, call out to him: “Karol, we don't need this”...

And they once again heard the “Düsseldorf man-eater”⁶⁷⁴ say to them “On your feet!”

Two of the 60 Jews, Gorzyczański and Borukh Manela,⁶⁷⁵ went mad from the experience...

Two youths came out of the grave [6] as grey as two white doves...

The others came back to the courtyard of the church, barely able to walk... and encouraged the remaining Jews not to worry... “Jews have a great God”! If they had been “resurrected” from the grave, then they would most surely get out of the church...

And they resolved to celebrate a holiday every year on that same day and to give charity in memory of the miracle that had happened to them..

And the Jews in the shtetl say that the “comrade” was no comrade... but the spirit of the holy *Maggid*...

673 The four forms of capital punishment referred to in the Talmud (*Sanhedrin*, 74a) are stoning, burning, beheading and strangulation.

674 Possibly, a vague reference to the “Vampire of Düsseldorf”, Peter Kürten, a serial killer of women and children who was active in Düsseldorf in the 1920s.

675 Reading of surname uncertain.

[7] 12. Emptied flats

All the acts of torture took place in the courtyard of the church, but Jews were not allowed into the church itself, on the grounds that their presence would defile it...

However, on 13 September, the fifth day that they had been in the courtyard, an order came: "All the Jews must go into the church" – and there the Jews suffered a new misfortune: Air! Air!

The torturers calculated that at night it was indeed cold in the courtyard, but during the day, the Jews had enough air to breathe.

And so, they took approximately 2,000 people and locked them into one room, so that it immediately became suffocating... People fainted from the overcrowding and when Chaim Klajnbojm, a 65-year-old man, an important person and a great scholar, fainted, Jews wanted to give him air and keep him alive, so they asked the guard for water – and they received [8] the cynical reply: "Your days are numbered, all of you,... so what if this Jew dies a day earlier"...

They were not even allowed to take care of their physical needs... and when the Jews demanded a place for it – the pious Protestants assigned them a special one: by the altar!...

It is impossible to imagine how stinking and suffocating the air became... and in addition, soldiers would constantly come in and artificially create congestion... and order the Jews to make a wide passageway so that the dirty Jews wouldn't touch them...

Jews suffocated, but the walls could not be stretched... and the blood-thirsty guards beat them with rubber truncheons until they bled...

They battered them, wounded them, smashed their heads open, just for the pleasure of seeing Jewish blood...

The Jews felt as though they had fallen among hungry wolves...

[9] And here the misery became even greater because, inside the church, there was no possibility of obtaining food from the outside.

Jews prayed: "Lord of the Universe! May death come from your hand and not from these evil-doers."...

And so they remained in this hell for a day and a night – on the morning of the sixth day an order came that they were all to leave the church... They were lined up, they had become shadows of human beings, broken, tortured, and starved...

They were ordered to wait.

They did not have to wait long; a transport of Polish “prisoners of war” who had been captured from around Kozienice were brought up. You would never have known from these filthy, weakened and tattered soldiers that they had once been Polish troops... who had looked so smart on parade... The prisoners of war saw how the Jews looked and the Jews saw how the prisoners of war looked and with silent glances these “brothers in sorrow” [10] expressed their commiseration.

But as soon as the Poles saw the Germans beating the Jews, their own anti-Semitism was awakened and they began to murmur:

“We didn’t want this war”...

“They talked the *Rzqd*⁶⁷⁶ into this tragedy”...

With every minute their hatred of the Jews increased; they forgot about the common enemy.

The Polish prisoners pointed out that they were barefoot and in tatters while the “Yids” had everything ...

And so, the prisoners of war were granted freedom to tear off the Jews’ boots, shoes, and clothes...

They demonstrated their inexhaustible valour against the helpless Jews... With wild hatred they tore the shoes and clothing from them and left them standing naked and barefoot...

Thus the captured heroes showed their depravity and lack of human conscience – in contrast, the Jews behaved with dignity and understood that the Polish beggars... were being tossed a Jewish bone...

[11] And as a reward for their valour ... they were immediately quartered in the “stalls” of the church courtyard. The Jews, on the other hand – back inside the church.

The next day, the seventh day in the morning, everyone was made to stand in the courtyard and older Jews over 45 were thoroughly beaten and thrown out of the yard... The younger ones, from 17 to 45, were ordered to remain... They felt they were lost...

They looked at the older ones who had not yet gone home, but remained standing by the fence to say farewell to their children with pain and tears...

676 (Polish) government.

The hangmen put the younger ones into armoured cars and drove them off in an unknown direction... (to a concentration camp in Radom).⁶⁷⁷

Grown old and grey in those 7 days, broken, barely alive after the seven degrees of hell, they returned to their homes (those still standing after the bombardment). Many wives did not recognise their own husbands; the men did not recognise their flats, because the Germans had [12] stolen everything and emptied out the contents...

And most importantly, they had emptied out all the joy from their homes: Their young sons, their children and husbands, had been carried off to torture and destruction...

13. The New Order

When the Jews had recovered a little, they began to think how they might earn a zloty for their livelihood... They wanted to return gradually to trade and crafts. Every day, however, they had to contend with a hail of *Bekanntmachungen*,⁶⁷⁸ aimed at re-establishing peace and order in the shtetl... There came an order that peasants were not allowed to sell foodstuffs to Jews... And for violation of this order: the death penalty!...

That order sowed unrest and disorder in the area... because people were living human beings, albeit Jews, and living human beings have to eat... and have to buy food...

[13] And the peasants too wanted to sell their food produce to the Jews, because they would obtain kerosene and salt in return...

So smuggling began on a very large scale, along with attempts to catch offenders and with bribes. They, the Germans, soon learned the ropes and took bribes quite openly. And soon “fixers” were identified through known Germans... And thus the first steps of the New Order were taken...

One fine morning about two weeks after *Sukkot*, gendarmes came and drove out the Jews from the two main streets as they went about their business. These streets, Radomska Street and Poczтова Street, were the streets where the prosperous Jews of the shtetl lived.

The Jews were not allowed to take anything with them, neither from their shops, nor from their household effects.

677 It is probably the reference to the Radom ghetto, see Docs. 60 and 61.

678 (German) proclamations, announcements.

They were moved into narrow alleys – and poor families of *Volksdeutsche* were installed in the homes they had been forced to leave.

The Jews watched from afar as their hard-earned possessions were taken over by their former [14] “good neighbours”...

The forced removal of the Jews into one cramped quarter understandably worsened sanitary conditions. The Germans said that Jews spread disease and so they instituted the “New Order” in that area too.

Whenever Dr. Krüger, a *Volksdeutscher*, notified the authorities of a case of typhus, soldiers would come and shoot the sick person in his sick-bed...

On account of one such “notification”, they shot Szapiro’s only son, a 20-year-old (Kościelna Street 16) on his sick-bed... while his mother had gone to the pharmacy to collect a prescription for him...

The “New Order” also posted the following announcement: that all women, as a “sign of shame”, must cut off their hair and the men their beards... They also requisitioned quilts and blankets from the “dirty Jews” for the soldiers... And likewise took furniture and beds from the “infected houses” for the officers...

[15] The Jews were thrown out of queues in front of food shops and bakeries...

Jews were forbidden to go into the countryside... to buy food... Everything was forbidden to the Jews and as “recompense”, the New Order demanded of the Jews – work! And that they let themselves be tortured...

16. Work and beatings

The day after *Yom Kippur*⁶⁷⁹ the “blacks”⁶⁸⁰ arrived, beat the Jews viciously and seized them for work.

The “invitation” to work took place as follows: “They” would go out into the street and wherever they found someone who looked Jewish (this was before armbands), they would invite him to work with a blow on the head...

People were taken to clean the highways and roads, but they had special work for the Jews, “hard labour”. They were made to dig pits ... and ... then

679 24 September 1939.

680 Probably self-defence units composed of local *Volksdeutsche*. See Alina Skibińska, entry “Kozienice” in *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945*, vol. 2, ed. Geoffrey P. Megargee, Bloomington 2009, p. 249–251.

fill them in again. First, they would order the Jews to gather stones together in a given place and then they would order them to carry the stones back to the place from which they had taken them...

[16] They were not fed while they worked... They were beaten terribly until they bled... And they suffered the most vile verbal abuse...

This repeated itself every day... Hiding from them was useless, because from 7 [o'clock] in the morning the "blacks" would go from house to house, from attic to cellar... If they found a Jew hiding, they would shoot him on the spot...

And so, although they were so tormented at work, the Jews did not attempt to hide from it.

The Germans would seize the oldest and weakest for the hardest labour and, on top of everything, they would even order everyone to "sing" while they worked.

They would bring cameras to photograph the "working Jews", ordering them to laugh and smile... so that the photos would show their "gratitude" for the work they had been given... and their contentment with the New Order...

And on one occasion, on "bloody Thursday" (as it was called in the shtetl), there was literally not a single Jew who was not bloodied...

[17] From early in the morning, the *Sturmführer* himself with about 100 "blacks" rampaged through the town "inspecting" Jewish homes... "He" himself would tear off the *mezuzahs* and trample them underfoot... and every Jew he came across, either he or his companions would beat savagely till the blood ran... Once they saw blood, they would calm down, leave the person alone and continue their "hunt"...

They would especially seize for work those who were "fatter" and smartly dressed...

And they chanced upon the district *wicestarosta*,⁶⁸¹ Dr. Gąsior.⁶⁸² No one in the shtetl thought he was a Jew. He just looked Jewish, had a Jewish face...

They stopped him with a question: *Jude?*⁶⁸³

681 (Polish) County head's deputy.

682 Maksymilian Gąsior (ca. 1887–1939), veterinary surgeon. Lived at 11 Listopada Street 22, with his wife Dvoyra and 19-year-old daughter Halina. See USHMM, Kozienice, pp. 23–24; Sh. Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, pp. 260–261.

683 (German) Jew.

The response was not long in coming and he answered calmly and with dignity: *Ja, Jude*.⁶⁸⁴

He immediately felt the taste of Jewish blows. They led him in among the whole group of Jews, who were stunned not only by their own [18] situation and the blows they had received, but by what they had just seen: their new “brother in sorrow”, the assistant district head...

When the whole group reached the courtyard, the *Sturmführer* came out with a Torah scroll in his hands, carried it to Dr. Gaşior and ordered him to burn it...

The Jews were petrified by the scene... They did not know how the “new sage” would react... Dr. Gaşior turned very pale and again replied calmly that he could not do so...

They fell on him with rubber truncheons and stamped on him.

“You have to do it”, screamed the *Sturmführer*, beating him with his fists...

But Dr. Gaşior categorically... refused to comply...

The *Sturmführer* was seized with rage and told him he wouldn’t get out of there alive...

It didn’t help... They beat him over the head and he fell down gushing blood. Next to him lay the Torah scroll, splattered with his blood, but in one piece...

[19] “He” ordered the Jews to take the dirty Jew with them...

The Jews took him away and, with great effort, managed to keep him alive for a short while...

The *Sturmführer* could not calm down and ran back into town... As he ran, he encountered a young man, Yitzhok Rawicki, running along the street towards him. He ordered him to stop...

The young man explained that he was running for a doctor for his wife who was about to give birth...

He beat him thoroughly and stamped on him and falsely accused him of knocking down a German soldier as he ran...

The young man began to plead... for mercy. His wife needed a doctor straightaway, she was in great danger...

The young man was sent to... a concentration camp.

The unfortunate wife wrestled with pain and death... She saw that her husband was not there, she waited and waited...but the child could not wait.

684 (German) Yes, a Jew.

From fear, she gave birth to a stillborn child... and when the wife came to herself, she was told that her husband had been seized for hard labour...

[20] 15. *Rassenschande*⁶⁸⁵

It is worth recording that, on the one hand, these villains degrade Jews in this manner and, on the other, the same degenerates, officers to boot, raped a Jewish girl...

It was late at night: Two officers came to Dr. Gašior's wife, a dentist. (She was sitting *shiva* for her husband whom the Germans had tortured to death...)

They had supposedly come to seize the equipment... She asked her daughter to go and fetch it... The officers went with her... The mother heard her daughter screaming for help from the other room. She tried to run in, but the door was bolted.. And the officers told her that if she did not calm down, they would shoot both her and her daughter on the spot...

It went on and on... The officers came out... and told Dr. Gašior's wife that if she reported this to the commandant's headquarters, they would set fire to the whole shtetl.

The mother went into the room where her daughter was and they stared at each other in silence...

[21] The daughter wanted to drink ammonia, but her mother stopped her.

My child! We have lost your father and my husband because of these barbarians...

He died with dignity...

You, my child, stay by me! You are young, you must stay alive.

And the shame is not yours. The shame is theirs...

[Notebook III]

[2] 16. The *Maggid's* synagogue in flames

It was the evening of *Simchat Torah*.⁶⁸⁶ We performed *hakafot*⁶⁸⁷ like mourners. Our *minyans* crowded together in the courtyard dwellings. With almost

685 (German) racial shame, a Nazi propaganda concept denoting sexual relations of Germans with Jews. Under the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, such conduct was illegal and criminal.

686 Night of 4 to 5 October 1939.

687 (Hebrew) literally, rounds; ceremonial transfer of a Torah scroll to a *bimah* (raised platform) during *Sukkot*.

no light, without songs or joy. Above all, everyone couldn't wait for it to end... so they could get back to their own homes...

And when everyone had gone home and gone to bed, around midnight, the shtetl was shaken by a terrifying explosion... but no one knew what had happened. No one was allowed on the street. Then... a second explosion was heard... and a third...

People did not know what to do, nor what it meant... Perhaps... a spark of hope flickered ... Perhaps it was the English bombing the shtetl... and so, they would have to flee...

But if more bombs fell, they might fall ... "on the unpainted chimneys"...

So the Jews began to pack up their "surviving remnant,"⁶⁸⁸ the little bedding, linen and few household items remaining to them...

[3] Suddenly people saw that the whole sky had turned red... and the entire shtetl was lit up...

They could see there was a big fire, but nobody knew where it was...

And this is what had happened:

In the last few days people had noticed that "taxis" carrying officers had often come to the *Maggid's* synagogue. They would go inside, look around, photograph it from all sides, and drive away...

Some said Germans had a taste for "historical antiquities"... The sight of a primitive yet artistic work like the ancient ark decorated with gold, was an attraction for them...

Others said not to be so naïve: There had been things to see in the Berlin and Frankfurt synagogues too.. but they had been burnt down nevertheless, together with the art...

And therefore it was necessary to remove everything possible from the synagogue little by little and before it was too late, above all the Torah scrolls, the holy books and objects of historic value... because surprises were to be expected...

[4] And indeed it happened that on *Simchat Torah* after midnight, the *Sturmführer* himself, with a lot of soldiers, went into the synagogue and found two *yeshiva* students there. They were strangers, not from Kozenice, who had

688 In the original, *she'erit hapletah*, ironic reference to Leviticus 2:44-45; after WWII, often: the Holocaust survivors.

remained there because of the war... And they were accustomed to spending the night in the *Maggid's* synagogue...

First of all, they were beaten and tortured and not permitted to leave the synagogue. Then they, the villains, spread explosive material throughout the synagogue and ignited it.

The synagogue was immediately engulfed in flames. They woke up the neighbours nearby, men and women, told them the synagogue was burning and ordered them to bring water to put out the fire...

Everybody grabbed what they could, buckets, washtubs, saucepans. They ran to the wells, filled them with water and ran to put out the fire in the *Maggid's* synagogue, so beloved and sacred to them...

But when they reached the synagogue with the water, the soldiers poured it over them...[5] and soaked them from head to foot, laughing sadistically...

Then they brought the shtetl's *moreh hora'ah*, the elderly Yoysef Szapiro,⁶⁸⁹ to the scene...

They threw him into the fire and... pulled him out... threw him in again... until his clothes started to catch fire... and then they pulled him out again... until he fainted...

While the old *moreh hora'ah* was lying in a faint, the screams of the two unfortunate *yeshiva* students were heard from inside the synagogue. The whole synagogue was in flames and the soldiers posted themselves around it and began to sing, with wild fanaticism, "When Jewish blood spurts from the knife."⁶⁹⁰...

If savage tribes from the jungle had come to this European shtetl at midnight, they would surely have said, "We too do this kind of thing... but we use all kinds of drums so as not hear the screams of the tortured. You do it even better – with no drums, no musicians, only song... and inner passion."

That same night they also burnt down the town's *bet hamidrash*.

689 Josef (Josek) Szapiro (ca. 1880–?), assistant rabbi of Koziénice from 1904. In 1939, he lived with his wife Zysla and grandsons Szulim, Mordka Wolf, and Abram Chaskel at Pusta Street 12; see USHMM, Koziénice, p. 129.

690 A quote from the anti-Semitic version of the *Heckerlied*, a folk song of the 1848–1849 revolution in Baden.

[6] 17. Vandalism

The morning after *Simchat Torah*, the ruins of the *Maggid's* synagogue were still smouldering from the conflagration... Jews passed by without stopping. They gazed at the ruins of their holy site and source of pride, shed a tear, and went on their way.

But the vandals were still unable to calm down... They had not yet quenched their thirst for torture... And so, they went again that day from house to house searching for Torah scrolls! Holy books! And ordered them to be brought to the courtyard of the *Maggid's* synagogue...

The Jews trembled with fear... Why take Torah scrolls to the courtyard of the *Maggid's* synagogue... Were we supposed to perform *hakafot* there? And why the Talmud?.. And why all the holy books? But they were not allowed to think... they were beaten till the blood flowed... and they yelled at them, "faster!" In one place, they found a copy of the Vilna Talmud⁶⁹¹ hidden in the cellar, so they went to search all the cellars in the shtetl...

[7] It was a strange and horrifying sight! Jews carrying Torah scrolls, accompanied by... soldiers! Women and even children carrying copies of the Talmud and holy books, guarded by uniformed Germans...

They gathered together many Torah scrolls and very many Talmuds and holy books. They were ordered to put them in the synagogue square...

They herded together almost all the Jews in the shtetl, selected the oldest and most eminent and ordered them to set fire to the Torah scrolls and holy books... They refused, so they were beaten and tortured... they had to do it!!

The scholars of the shtetl delivered a legal opinion on the spot, that this was not an incident which required sacrifice of life rather than compliance. If evildoers forced them to do it, they were not obligated to martyr themselves over this... There were only three instances for which Jews were compelled to sacrifice their lives: idol-worship, incest, or the spilling of blood...

With tears and blood, with trembling limbs, the old men poured kerosene over their holy of holies... and prayed silently [8] that this would not be considered a sin...

And they were ordered to set fire to them...

691 Edition of the Romm publishing house, from the years 1880–1886, considered one of the best publishers in the world.

Jewish scholars who would spend entire days and nights striving to understand a page of *Gemara*,⁶⁹² Jews who wracked their brains over the study of holy books... and who derived consolation and hope from them... Now had to set fire to them with their own hands. Alas, that they had lived to see the day...

And when the holy books were already covered with smoke, an order came: "Dance!"...

Jews had to... dance around their burning holy books... They were beaten... and they danced...

Then came another order: "Sing!"

And the Jews wept... and danced... and sang... around the ashes of the burnt *Maggid's* synagogue and around the fire and smoke of the burning Torah scrolls ... and holy books...

And so, it will be recorded in the new *Kozienice pinkas*: Thus did Jews perform *hakafot* on *Simchat Torah* in the year 5700, two weeks after the entry of the Germans...

[9] 18. The Poniatowski palace also in flames

They consider themselves above all races... more valuable than any other stock and from all of their subjugated peoples they will erase every trace of independence, every memory of past fame and freedom... Will art, antiquities, history stand in the way of their sacred goal? When the human being himself has lost his sanctity, what respect can they have for human art and works?...

And thus, on 17 October,⁶⁹³ they burnt down the historic Poniatowski palace...

And they did it in broad daylight... With explosives, blasts, noise and laughter... and now the Christians too go about with clenched fists... pale. This was something they did not expect... Such splendour, such architecture... such a huge library of ancient books... Shall all this go up in smoke? Why?

They did not understand, the Poles ... that it starts with the Jews, and that those same Germans who can burn synagogues and Torah scrolls can

692 (Aramaic) completion; collection of rabbinical comments and supplement to *Mishna*; part of the Talmud.

693 It was already partially destroyed in September 1939. The palace was restored in the 1970s.

also destroy and burn, excuse the comparison, magnificent works of art and thousands of books...

[10] 19. Crime and punishment

History will certainly record that the German penal code began with... shooting! This was for them the smallest and lightest punishment... not only for military crimes but also for civil offences (because there was an official announcement shortly after Poland was occupied that we were changing from military to civilian rule).

There was no proclamation which did not end by saying that for any violation, the offender would be shot... Whether it concerned “armbands”, baking white bread, leaving the ghetto or filling out questionnaires, for everything – shooting!

And unfortunately, so many of us knew that for these monsters it was indeed the lightest punishment, because how many thousands of Jews were not deemed worthy of such punishment? Their punishment was that they were not allowed to live or to die, just to be tortured over and over again... until the martyrs surrendered their souls in torment.

We have already reached the point where, before we can record an incident of shooting, we have to preface it with a kind of excuse that we know their atrocities can be much greater... But history must record every fact...

[11] The entire Jewish population of the shtetl was enclosed in three narrow alleys (previously there had been 15 streets). They were deprived of bread and air. There were not allowed to go out into the countryside, there was no contact with other towns. What were Jews supposed to do – die?

Despite their suffering, people wanted to live. They still hoped for better times, that there would be a world for them again...

So what did the Jews do? At midnight, they went to the cemetery (a kilometre from the shtetl) ... they were risking their lives, but what else could they do? ... And from there they went on foot or in a peasant's cart to Radom.

Those caught committing such a crime were shot on the spot. And once it happened that there were (8) eight such victims in one day. They caught an entire cartload of passengers, eight people in all: six from Radom, two from Koziencice. But they did not shoot them at the scene of the crime... They brought them to the courtyard of the command headquarters. The *kehillah*

exerted all its influence through *Volksdeutsche*, but to no avail. The blood-thirsty villains really wanted nothing else than... blood!

They were offered a ransom, but they wouldn't hear of it... An appeal was made to their *Kulturgewissen*⁶⁹⁴ ... [12] that they might at least free the women, but the crime was "so great" that no ransom would suffice, and so they shot all eight in the courtyard of the command headquarters. They let them out again, but in coffins nailed shut...

The two Kozienice victims were the Cukier sisters from Magietowska Street, Chana and Freyda, one 18 and the other 20 years old. The other six were from Radom...

And thus, the poor victims fell, one after the other, for the crime of wanting to live...

Then another horrifying incident occurred:

The Jews had been confined to a few alleys, but in the beginning they were not fenced in; only the boundaries were marked ... with the warning that violators would be shot... For adults, this was sufficient warning, but what did one do with the children? Keep them all day under lock and key?

And what if they should slip out, the mothers thought – what would they do to children?

For the first few days they didn't pay attention to this until... until... the villains demonstrated their "culture". In those first few days, they shot three little children for crossing their *eruv*⁶⁹⁵ aimlessly, unintentionally and unconsciously – perhaps only because a child's toy had rolled across it...

[13] 20. An exception to the rule, Dr. Neumann

Who he was is still a big question for everyone – his name is beloved by all, but he himself was a bit of a mystery... The Kozienice Jews maintained that the holy *Maggid* had taken pains to ensure they would have something unheard of in any other town: a uniformed German officer who greatly loved Jews and literally devoted himself to them!...

He is worthy of having his name inscribed in history – for the good!

694 (German) cultural conscience; the conscience of a civilised, cultivated people.

695 (Hebrew) symbolic boundary within which observant Jews are permitted to carry items outside of their homes on the Sabbath. Here the term is used ironically.

Dr. Neumann came from Berlin, his place of residence, and took over the direction of the Kozienice military hospital.

Jews saw him for the first time at the ruins of the *Maggid's* synagogue, with a camera, not just once but several days in a row. The Jews soon knew him: he came to show the world their suffering...

But children grew to like the tall German with the camera and were more and more at ease with him. The German distributed sweets to them, chatted to them, talked with them at length about where they lived, how they were getting on, what their parents did, what line of work they were in. At first the children were afraid to tell a German such things ... but the German's kind eyes and, even more, [14] the delicious sweets he distributed so generously, made them talkative. They told him about their hard, bitter life and how Jews returned day after day, chilled and bruised from working for the Germans... And that at home there was nothing to eat... The children noticed that the German had tears in his eyes. What's this? A German weeping over Jewish suffering?

And then 10-year-old Shmulik Prager butted in, saying his father had come home from work today with a swollen foot after being struck by a soldier. He was lying in bed unable to move...

Dr. Neumann turned to the little boy and said, "Where do you live, sonny?"

The little boy took fright, under no circumstances would he say... until Dr Neumann took him by the hand and immediately went with him... They walked like that the whole length of Magietowska Street until they came to number 26, where Prager, a poor tailor, lived in the cellar. He was lying there in bed with a swollen foot. Catching sight of a German... the poor man had the fright of his life. Dr. Neumann went up to him, examined him, prescribed him ointment, and ordered him to stay in bed...

Then he went to the *kehillah* and asked them to send a town doctor to Prager, not on account of the prescription, but so he could get a doctor's certificate attesting that he was unable to work for a few days...⁶⁹⁶

696 Here an annotation in brackets: "Chapter continued in second notebook."

An exception to the rule, Dr Neumann
continuation

Every day Dr Neumann would secretly sneak into the poor Jewish dwelling (it was already forbidden at that point for German soldiers to visit Jewish homes). He would bring medicine, bread for a poor family, on occasion he would bring kerosene and sugar, and everything necessary until he had stood the sick man on his feet again.

Dr Neumann would modestly respond, "No thanks are due to me. I am fulfilling a human duty". (You must remember that these were the words of a German military doctor to a Jew...) "If you hear of a Jew who is ill, send your son to me in the hospital and I will immediately understand and come... to you, and you will take me to the sick person..."

Needless to say, such a thing could not be kept secret and it was soon known throughout the shtetl.

And Dr Neumann acquired a large practice... The sick and the weak soon learned that there was a [3] German doctor who would not charge you, would give you medicine for free and even a little food... and above all that he was so polite, so gracious, that he gave people courage and consolation... day in and day out...

With the utmost devotion, he did everything he could for a certain patient, the greatest scholar in the shtetl, the head of the Kozienice *yeshiva*, who had become critically ill. Dr Neumann examined him and said that it was very serious, but he would do everything possible...

And he kept his word... This case shows how his behaviour towards Jews was nothing less than self-sacrifice... First of all he brought palliative drugs from the hospital. And when that did not help, he asked the commandant for permission to use the x-ray machine in the military hospital for... the head of the Kozienice *yeshiva*... and for permission for him to come daily to the hospital.

The Commandant warned him not to become so personally involved with the Jews... to no avail...

Dr Neumann again requested the x-ray equipment... [4] He said it was for a personal friend of his...

The commandant was aware of his merit as a military doctor and his high distinctions as an officer and he authorized him to use the x-ray equipment.

If someone had seen the joy shining from Dr Neumann's face when he ran to the head of the *yeshiva* and announced: "My friend, you will soon be well again", he would certainly have said he had just heard a voice from heaven, the voice of dreams, filled with the love of humanity...

But the commandant had a surprise in store for him: That very day, he sent him to Puławy for ten days to carry out improvements at the Puławy military hospital...

The Jews in Kozienice did not know where Dr Neumann had gone. Rumours immediately spread that he had been arrested for his relations with the Jews... The Jews of the shtetl were greatly saddened [5] and feared there would be repercussions for the Jews as well...

Ten days later, Dr Neumann reappeared in the shtetl. He came to the head of the *yeshiva* in a state of high agitation... He understood that this had been his payment for his friendliness to the Jews...

He swallowed the pill in silence and redoubled his efforts to help Jews...

He advised the head of the *yeshiva* to travel to Warsaw and gave him a letter for a doctor he knew who directed the hospital of the Radium Institute,⁶⁹⁷ asking him to treat the patient with radium free of charge... (This letter from Dr Neumann, written in his own hand, remains in the possession of the family, because it was never used.)

Dr Neumann sent food parcels to Warsaw for him... because during the first winter it was very difficult to obtain food in Warsaw. And since the private treatment for the head of the *yeshiva* was to last for about 6 weeks, he told the family that he wanted to pay the sick man a visit.

[6] He asked for his address and told them to write to Warsaw to inform the people living in the house where the head of the *yeshiva* was lodging that he was coming and that they should not be frightened by him...

When the head of the *yeshiva* returned home in a greatly worsened condition, Dr Neumann saw that the end was near and so he would come often to spend time with him and, in particular, he would come every Friday night for *kiddush* and sit at the table...

697 The Radium Institute in Warsaw, a centre for the treatment of cancerous diseases, founded in 1932 by Maria Skłodowska-Curie. At present, the Institute of Oncology.

And, as visits by soldiers to Jewish homes became even more restricted and the question of food in the shtetl became even more pressing, he would send bread to the sick with a little *shaygetz*...

When the head of the *yeshiva* passed away, Dr Neumann wept like a small child... and like a dear friend...

It would be very interesting to recount the subjects of their discussions. Many curious biographical details about his life in general and his life in Germany became known through these conversations. But it would take too much space. We will confine ourselves to a short account of his truly interesting biography, [7] insofar as it has historical value in relation to his friendliness to Jews.

He was born in Berlin and had degrees in medicine, the humanities, and philosophy.

He had always had an impulse and a desire to be in the company of Jews, so much so that even at school they called him *Jude*. Most of his friends were Jews. Even after Hitler came to power,⁶⁹⁸ the doctor continued to spend time with Jews.

In his home, he hid many Jews from the SS squads. In Berlin, the SS had seized Rabbi Professor Ezra Munk,⁶⁹⁹ and Dr Neumann happened to pass by as they were beating him. He interceded for him and rescued him. He subsequently fought a duel with a *Scharführer* (an SS rank) on this account and still had a scar on his head to show for it.

He truly loved Germany, but hated the current regime. He would say, "Anyone who is an enemy of Jews cannot be a friend of humanity"...

And once his eyes clouded over in the middle of a conversation. He fell silent a while [8] and then he recounted a family tragedy of his own, a really heart-rending tale.

In a low voice he told the story:

"I had a 14-year-old son. Against my will he became a member of the *Hitler-Jugend*.⁷⁰⁰ Now he is... dead. Thank God...! If he had lived, I would have

698 Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany on 30 January 1933.

699 Ezra Munk (1867–1940), German orthodox rabbi, published many works. *Agudat Israel* activist, co-founder of the Association of Jewish Academics and the Union of Orthodox Congregations.

700 (German) Hitler Youth. A paramilitary youth organisation of the German Nazi Party.

hated him because of the Jewish question...and there would have always been conflicts between us. It is better that he is dead.”

In the basement of his home in Berlin, Dr Neumann had a library of pro-Jewish books which he would lend to his friends, although such a thing constituted high treason...

Dr Neumann donated money both to the *Jüdische Kultusgemeinde*⁷⁰¹ and to the German “Ezra” Society⁷⁰²...

He kept the receipts from his donations ... Dr Neumann wrote an official letter to the head of the Jewish Community in Kozienice saying that he must immediately establish a clinic for the poor [9] Jewish sick, ostensibly for reasons of hygiene...

In reality, however, it was because it had already become almost impossible for him to visit the Jewish sick...

So, Dr Neumann paid a visit to the town’s Jewish physician Dr Abramowicz⁷⁰³ and asked him to spend a few hours a day at the clinic... and actually appointed him head of that clinic.

Then it became apparent that the work could not begin due to the lack of medicine... The commandant’s headquarters would not grant a travel permit to fetch medicine from Warsaw. “Let the Jews die” was the response.

But Dr Neumann found a way... He brought medicine from the military hospital, paying thousands for it, and thanks to that, a fine Jewish clinic was established.

His second proposal he put to the *Judenrat* was to establish a soup kitchen for the Jewish poor.

His third proposal was his crowning achievement [10] in Kozienice: the orphanage. And everything was done with his moral support. He visited (his) three institutions in an official capacity and praised them highly... and spoke about the Jewish creative spirit...

His work was cut short by an order: to the front...

And in early November 1940 Dr Neumann left for the front...

701 (German) Jewish Religious Community.

702 *Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden “Ezra”* (Aid Society of German Jews).

703 Arnold (Aron) Abramowicz (1896–1942), MD. During the war, director of the *Judenrat* clinic in Kozienice. In 1939, lived with his wife Estera and sons Bronisław and Adolf at 11 Listopada Street 22. Committed suicide during the *Aktion* in 1942; cf. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/426, p. 12; USHMM, Kozienice, p. 23; A. Skibińska, entry “Kozienice,” see footnote XXXX.

In one house, he left a picture of himself with the inscription: “The suffering of the tortured is my suffering”...

It was our duty to inscribe the name of the esteemed Dr Neumann in our Kozienice war chronicle, first because he was the only ray of light in the black and stormy period when his fellow countrymen were massively spilling Jewish blood like water...

And their greatest pleasure was to watch “When Jewish blood spurts from the knife”...

But one other thing dictated that we immortalise his name, that is, the particular objectivity of Jewish chroniclers right from ancient times.

Amongst all the cursed Hamans, we have also immortalised Charbonah⁷⁰⁴ and remembered him for the good...

We thus have a special obligation to record the beloved, warm-hearted Dr. Neumann, who risked his life to alleviate, if only a little, at least some of the Jewish hardship in one small Jewish shtetl...

ARG I 810 (Ring. I/846)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (Hub.*), 4 notebooks, ink, Yiddish 155×195 mm, 80 sheets, 77 pages. Each notebook is paginated separately, also in this edition. The full list of contents precedes the Notebook I; Notebooks II and III are preceded only with lists of chapters they include, respectively; they were not repeated here. In Notebook I the chapter numbers in the text are in Hebrew letters; in Notebook II and III, in addition to the subtitles, their numbers with the word “chapter” are added in parentheses. In the edition, throughout the text, subtitles and their numbers appear as in the list of contents in Notebook I. Printed: *The Book of Kozienice. On the 27th Anniversary of the Savage Destruction of our Former Home*, (ed.) Barukh Kaplinsky, Tel Aviv 1969 – New York 1985, pp. 433–453.

704 Eunuch of King Ahasverus, in *Megilat Esther*.

RADOMSKO COUNTY

RADOMSKO⁷⁰⁵

95

After September 1939, Radomsko, Chairman [of the Jewish Community in Radomsko]. Form for a certificate entitling a discount for a new identity card.

Radomsko, 1939

No. /39

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that

.....
resident(s) of Radomsko, street No. is (are)
has (have) nothing to live on, because

It is recommended to issue the identity card at the reduced fee.

Chairman

ARG I 981 a (Ring. I/513)

Description: Original (3 copies), typewritten, German, 207×102 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages. Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Certificate for a discount for a new identity card".

705 It might be assumed that official documents from Radomsko (Docs. 95–109) were collected and brought to Warsaw by Moyshe Frenkel; see Doc. 110.

After September 1939, Radomsko, [German authorities]. Form for registering the household members in Radomsko.

LIST
of household members in Radomsko, streetNo.

No.	Given name and family name	Age	Profession	Family relationship	Subtenant	Remarks
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

The data given above are genuine, for which the undersigned is fully responsible.

Radomsko.1939

Signature of the flat owner

ARG I 981 b (Ring. I/513)

Description: Original (4 copies), printed, German, 180×145 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Inquiry concerning bread cards".

After September 1939, Radomsko, [German authorities]. Form for a census of the Jewish population.

Jewish Community
in Radomsko

No.	Family name	Given name	Age	Profession	Address	Family relationship	Sub-tenant	Remarks
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								

ARG I 981 c (Ring. I/513)

Description: Original (2 copies), printed, German, Polish, 270×207 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Handwritten note (red ink?): "Inquiry concerning population census".

After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Form for a certificate authorising a pass.

Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
RADOMSKO

No./39

Certificate

This is to confirm that the Jewish Community of Radomsko has no objections toward the departure of the bearer of this certificate, resident of Radomsko, street.....No.for days, with the purpose of.....

Radomsko,1939

CHAIRMAN
of the Jewish
Community⁷⁰⁶

ARG I 981 (Ring. I/513)

Description: Original (3 copies), typewritten, German, 217×175 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages. Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Pass".

706 The first chairman of the *Judenrat* of Radomsko was Moshe Berger, a merchant. In August 1940, he also chaired the Aid Committee. In May 1941, documents were signed by Wiktor Gutsztadt, the next chairman of the *Judenrat*. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/869, pp. 1, 8.

99

After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Form for a certificate from members of the Judenrat exempting forced labour.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS of the Jewish Community
RADOMSKO

This is to certify that
is a member of the Council of Elders.

Chairman

The aforementioned
is exempt from the call to forced labour.

Zipser
Town Builder

ARG I 981 e (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), typewritten, German, 202×163 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages. Handwritten note (red ink) in Polish on each copy: "Certificate for the members of the Council of Elders and Committee [?] for the purpose of exemption from forced labour."

100

After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Form for a demand notice of payment for community taxes to the Jewish Community in Radomsko at the Community office at Mickiewicza Street 5.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN RADOMSKO

No. Radomsko, date..... 19.....
To Mr

Demand notice for payment

We hereby inform that pursuant to the resolution of the Finance Committee a community tax has been imposed on you for the local Jewish Community, for the period of months, in the amount of zlotys per month.

Therefore, we request that you pay zlotys within 3 days at the latest from the date of receiving this demand notice as a tax for the month of to the Community Office at Mickiewicza Street 5, as shown in this notice.

Failure to pay the tax on time shall result in taking immediate steps to enforce the payment.

The cash desk is opened from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Lodging complaint does not exempt from the obligation to pay on time.

The Council of Elders

I have received the demand notice for payment of a contribution dated193.....

Radomsko, date 19....

/-/ signature

ARG I 981 f (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), printed, German, Polish, 227×245 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages. Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Demand notice for payment of a monthly contribution".

101 *After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Form for notification to leave Radom and depart for Piotrków.*

The Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
Radomsko

Radomsko, date

SUMMONS

Pursuant to the orders of the Commissioner, you are⁷⁰⁷ obliged along with all family members to depart for Piotrków today, where you shall report to the local Jewish Community.

Before leaving, you are obliged to pay the local Community the amountRmk for..... passes, 5 Rmk for each family member, after which you shall receive the pass.

Failure to comply with this notice will result in unpleasant consequences for you.

Chairman of the Council of Elders

Those obliged to depart
for Piotrków together with you are:

ARG I 981 g (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), typewritten, Polish, 200×160, 218×175 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages. Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Summons to the arrivals of 1 September 1939 and afterward to leave the city."

102 *After September 1939, Radom, Jewish Community in Radomsko. Form for a call to report people who come to Radomsko for permanent residence or leave the town permanently.*

By the order of the Authorities, the Jewish Community urges all flat owners to promptly report to any persons who come to Radomsko, or leave the town for permanent residence.

707 The literal translation would be: "Your Honour is," in striking contrast with the matter. The same form of addressing is used below: "Those obliged to depart for Piotrków together with Your Honour are:"

Reports must be submitted on the same day at the Community office,
under threat of severe punishment.

I hereby confirm that I have been informed of the above.

Owner of the flat:

First name and surname, address

Signature

ARG I 981 h (Ring. I/513)

Description: Original (2 copies), typewritten, Polish, 206×75 mm, 2 sheets,
2 pages. Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Registration".

103 *After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Bread ration cards for November 1939*

The Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Radomsko

No. 1792

Bread ration card

..... from Radomsko, Street No. is authorized to buy
in November 1939 kilograms of bread for members of his household.
Bread is sold by baker: Street.....

Chairman
Berger Moses

first	fifth
eight	eight
kilogram	kilogram
month November	month November
second	sixth
eight	eight

kilogram	kilogram
month November	month November
third	seventh
eight	eight
kilogram	kilogram
month November	month November
fourth	eighth
eight	eight
kilogram	kilogram
month November	month November

The Council of Elders
of the Jewish community in Radomsko

No. 1792

Ration card for ...kilo of bread
for the month of November 1939
(This request must be submitted to the baker.....)

Chairman
Berger Moses

ARG I 981 i (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), printed, German, 307×117 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages.
Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Bread ration card".
The archival unit contains 3 bread cards for November 1939, numbered: 1792,
1793, 1794.

104 *After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Notice calling to report for three days for forced labour.*

[1] The Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
Radomsko

First shift
Group No.

Mr
Radomsko

Pursuant to the ordinance of the AUTHORITIES, you are hereby called to report for three days of forced labour, i.e. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, on 1939.

You should report on the corner of Żeromskiego and Piłsudskiego Streets, at 7 o'clock in the morning sharp, from where you will set off to work for 8 hours a day, with a midday meal break.

Those who fail to report will be forcibly brought to work a full week, and face the most severe punishment from the AUTHORITIES.

The Council of Elders

Mr

I hereby certify that I have received the notice calling to report for forced labour,

Signature

[2] The Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Radomsko

Second shift
Group No.

Mr.....
Radomsko

Pursuant to the ordinance of the AUTHORITIES, you are hereby called to report for three days of forced labour, i.e. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, on 1939.

You should report on the corner of Żeromskiego and Piłsudskiego Streets, at 7 o'clock in the morning sharp, from where you will set off to work for 8 hours a day, with a midday meal break.

Persons who fail to report will be forcibly brought to work a full week, and face the most severe punishment from the AUTHORITIES.

The Council of Elders

Mr.....

I hereby certify that I have received the notice calling to report for forced labour,

Signature

ARG I 981 j (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (6 copies), printed, Polish, 120×157 mm, 6 sheets, 6 pages.

Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Call for work".

105 *After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Notice calling to report for forced labour.*

The Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Radomsko

GroupNo.

Mr

Radomsko

NOTICE

Pursuant to the ordinance of the AUTHORITIES, you are hereby called to report also on at 7 o'clock in the morning on the corner of Żeromskiego and Piłsudskiego Streets, with a shovel. Attendance absolutely mandatory.

The Council of Elders

Mr
I hereby certify that I have received the notice calling to report for forced labour,

Signature
Group No.

ARG I 981 k (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), printed, Polish, 115×155 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages.

Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Call to report for work when a larger number of workers was needed".

106 *After September, 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Notice calling to report for forced labour.*

The Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community in Radomsko

VERY URGENT!

Mr.....

NOTICE

Pursuant to the ordinance of the Authorities, by which all men aged 16 to 65 years, regardless of the colour of their badges,⁷⁰⁸ are required for forced labour during the entire week, you are summoned to report in person to the premises of the Community within 24 hours of receiving this notice, in order to make necessary arrangements.

Should you fail to report within the specified time, you will be automatically placed on the list of persons subject to forced labour for a full week on a permanent basis.

708 In Radomsko, the forced labour workers were divided into three categories, reflected in the colour of badges: red – working for three days, yellow – working six days a week, and violet – released from work. See Doc. 110, p. [26].

Pursuant to the abovementioned order of the Authorities, families of men aged 16 to 65 who leave the city or evade forced labour shall be immediately resettled.

The Council of Elders

ARG I 981 I (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), printed, Polish, 120×170 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages.

Handwritten note (red ink?): "Call to report for work when number of workers was increased".

107 *After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Notice calling women to report for forced labour.*

Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Radomsko

Radomsko, date..... 1939

Mrs

in situ

.....Street No.

On the orders of the Authorities, you are hereby summoned to report for work at the premises of the Authorities at Brzozowa Street 6

on at

Failure to report within the specified time will result in unpleasant consequences for you.

The Council of Elders

ARG I 981 I (Ring. I/513)

Description: original (3 copies), typewritten, *Judenrat* stamp in German, Polish, 201×91, 201×101 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages.

Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish on each copy: "Call for work for women".

108 *After September 1939, Radomsko, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko. Form for a call to provide housing for the resettled from other cities.*

Council of Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Radomsko

Radomsko, date 1939

To
Mr/Mrs
in situ
..... Street No.....

Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Radomsko hereby refers to you Mr/Mrstogether with [number of]persons, requesting that you provide room for these persons as per your declaration.

The Council of Elders

ARG I 981 m (Ring. I/513)

Description: original, typewritten, *Judenrat* stamp in German, Polish, 208×98 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. Handwritten note (red ink?) in Polish: “For 500 persons resettled from other cities who are to arrive”.

109 *Before 1 January 1940, Radomsko, Jewish Community in Radomsko, Department of Supply. Card No. 367 with 31 vouchers for Jewish Community kitchen for Jakub Szlama Zelwer, for one meal a day from 1 to 31 January 1940.*

[1] Jewish Community in Radomsko
Department of Supply

First name and surname Zelwer Jakub Szlama

Address
No. 367

Reymonta
1 serving

[2] Kitchen of the Jewish Community in Radomsko

1 serving

No. 367

date 1 January 1940

ARG I 982 (Ring. I/1206)

Description: original, printed, handwritten, stamp, German, ink, 90×31, 97×68 mm, 33 sheets, 33 pages. The unit contains 30 blank forms, each with a subsequent date: from January 2 to 31, 1940. Last form is without a date.

110

[1941], Warsaw ghetto, [Moyshe] Frenkel.⁷⁰⁹ Account 1.9.1939 "קטמאדא" 15.12.1939 – [Radomsko, 1 September 1939 15 – December 1939], recorded by Yekhiel Górný. Situation of the Jewish population from the beginning of the war: September 1939, persecutions, relations with Poles, forced labour, levy, establishment of the ghetto on Limanowskiego Street.

[1] Radomsko, 1 September 1939–15 December 1939

M[oyshe] Frenkel

On 1 September 1939 at 5:50 in the morning, we were still sound asleep, having gone to bed with complete confidence that, despite everything, Hitler would be successfully stopped in his efforts to kindle a new fire in Europe. Suddenly, as we slept, we heard several loud explosions. We got up quickly, ran to the windows and saw black smoke mixed with sparks. Everybody at home was sure the smoke was from Polish bomb tests, but we dressed quickly, went out into the street to see what was actually happening.

709 In the Warsaw ghetto Moyshe Frenkel was a member of the religious community workers' section of the Jewish Society for Social Welfare (ŻTOS). He is the author of accounts for Oyneg Shabes concerning the fate of the Jews of Radomsko, Rawa Mazowiecka, Miechów, Pustków near Dębica (labour camp), Grodzisk, Szumowo near Zambrów, Zaręby Kościelne in the years 1939–1941. See ARG I 47 b, c (Ring. I/448).

Many people had already gathered in the street and were discussing what the explosions might mean. Some said that they were from German bombers, basing their opinion on the strength of the explosions. Others said they were Polish, since how could enemy aircraft penetrate so deeply into the country and freely drop their bombs without meeting any resistance? We had not been standing there long, pleasantly discussing the explosions we had heard a few minutes earlier, when a number of dead and wounded people were driven past us.

It turned out that this is what had happened: A German bomber had been flying around since 2 [o'clock] in the morning over the large French factory in [. . .].⁷¹⁰

At 5:50, soon after the official declaration of war, it had dropped two heavy bombs on [2] the ammunition section, killing several people. Having done so, the plane disappeared.

The wounded were taken to the hospital, but there was no longer a surgeon there to operate on them. The dead were taken to the hospital mortuary, from which a solemn public funeral was supposed to be arranged, but all of us assembled in the street were overcome by terrible fear and dread. We had come to fully realise whom we would soon be fighting. It was clear to us that a process of real human brutalisation was under way. In this mood, and with such thoughts in our heads, we slipped back into the courtyard and did not know how to react to all that had happened.

The youths with the green armbands of LOP[P] set to work to “defend” the civilian population from the attacking enemy. With heavy hearts, we went back into our homes; we turned on the radio and instead of hearing music, we heard *eyn kol anot gevurah*.⁷¹¹ We listened to the short speech by the Polish President exhorting the whole population to defend the homeland. Shortly afterwards, we listened to the stormy speech of Chancellor Hitler:

“It is war.”

The fire is burning.

710 Unclear here, possibly “Peyktulek” or “Feyktulek”. There was a metallurgical factory in Radomsko since 1879, established by French entrepreneurs, north of the residential part of the town.

711 (Hebrew) not the sound of crying out in triumph; Exodus 32:18.

[3] We, too, soon felt the consequences of war. Many bomber aeroplanes soon appeared overhead, but at that time there were still optimists who said they were “ours” and greeted them with rousing cheers. The aeroplanes disappeared and then fresh squadrons appeared and flew round and round the town. They also dropped a few bombs on the residential district, wounding and killing many people. Among those killed was a man named Bass, and his brother lost his right hand. Face to face with great danger, and seeing that the civilian population was being bombed and that there was absolutely no resistance, we were forced to go down to the cellar. We saw it as our only defence, our only refuge. We lay in the cellar for a few hours, because the aeroplanes had not left the town. The war had been going on for only 6 hours and we already had neither strength nor patience for it.

The aeroplanes left at nightfall and so we went up to our flat to eat something. All the neighbours assembled in our place and we ate hurriedly. After we finished eating, we younger people went down to the courtyard to arrange the cellar so that we could spend the night there. We brought in beds, chairs, and benches. The tenants from the upper floors had gathered in a flat on the ground floor which happened to be empty. When we came down to that flat, the Christian inhabitants were already there. When they saw us coming in, it was like another war for them.

[4] They sent a message to the landlord (also a Christian), saying that he must do something about the “yids”, because on no account did they want to stay with them. The landlord came up with the bright idea that since the flat had two entrances, the Christians should take the two front rooms and we, the Jews, the majority, would have the kitchen.

The first ghetto.

8:45 in the evening. The radio broadcast good news. We had the impression that the war would not last long, a week at most.

Night. Many of us slept on the floor, some on the ledge next to the stove. We adults went out into the street to see what was happening, to see how the street looked on the first night of the war.

The scene before us was shocking and dramatic – tens of thousands of people, Jews and Christians, cattle and horses, and carts loaded with all kinds of possessions; it all stretched out in a long, long procession. We learned from the people that they had been evacuated from a succession of towns and townships which the Germans had already captured and destroyed.

The procession went past for a few hours. Many people from Radomsko joined it, because they already sensed the danger in Radomsko as well. But not everybody could flee, not everyone had the strength for it nor the means: no horse, no cart, and no way of getting one. And in that desperate state we spent the night and the next morning until 12 o'clock.

A few minutes after 12 [o'clock], as we lay tired on the floor, we suddenly heard great turmoil outside. We soon learned that a messenger from the town hall had come and announced that danger was near and that whoever could, should leave the town immediately. We did not even think about what would [. . .] that we had to leave [5] the town (we simply knew the enemy was drawing near), where we might run to, whether we had the strength to run, and so on.

Without even thinking, we grabbed a suitcase with valuables and ran.

As we came out of the courtyard, we saw the same scene as the night before, except that the people were not from Wieluń, but from Radomsko. The whole town – old people, young people, men, women, Jews and Christians – was fleeing. A terrible panic. By chance, we managed to load ourselves onto a cart which was going in the direction of Przedbórz. As we drew away from the town, we had the impression that we were fleeing from Sodom. As we glanced back towards the town, we saw that it was burning.

There were many instances of non-Jews hurling stones after us and calling out hateful slogans such as *Precz z Żydami*, *Żydzi do Palestyny*, and *Polska bez Żydów*.⁷¹² We didn't hold it against them at that point; we felt no anger, we just felt sorry for them... We saw bombs falling in the distance and we cried out, *tamot nafshi im Pelishtim*.⁷¹³ Even if Jewish property is destroyed, even if it costs the lives of Jewish victims, a country that could produce such offspring should perish, even if we perish with it.

6 o'clock in the evening. We drew near to Przedbórz and had the impression that we had reached safety, because we had travelled a good 40 km away from the front. The opposite proved to be the case: when we arrived in the town, three armoured vehicles [with] heavy machine guns [6] came from a side road through the fields and woods. As they drew close, they fired a few shots, killing a Jew and wounding a Jewish girl. The vehicles then drove to the bridge

712 (Polish) "Out with the Jews", "Jews to Palestine", "Poland without Jews".

713 (Hebrew) Let me die with the Philistines; Judges 16:30.

over the Warta River and halted on it, shining their lights into the darkness of the night.

We didn't grasp what it all meant. Many of us said they were French vehicles which had to protect the bridge from German bombs. A Jew approached them, but they fired and shouted "Back!" A second Jew managed to approach them and speak to them, and when he asked them to let him to cross the bridge, they answered in German that they would be leaving next day at 8 in the morning and the bridge would then be free. The next day, after 9 o'clock, they obtained petrol from a Jew and paid him with Polish money. They treated him to some "Płaskie"⁷¹⁴ cigarettes and left in the direction of Radomsko. We all quickly ran across the bridge and again thought we were safe. On the other side, we had no idea what to do next. We stopped many cars, but no one would take us. Money had lost all meaning. Having no choice, we took ourselves to an acquaintance, Hershl Bass, where people from various towns and townships had already gathered.

Suddenly, we heard a siren). At first, we thought that it was an air raid, but it turned out to be [7] further mobilisation. It looked very funny: The enemy was already moving about quite freely in the town and here they were calling up more troops.

It didn't last long. The two vehicles returned, drove through the town, poured petrol over the houses, and set fire to them.

All of Przedbórz was in flames. When the fire came near us, we ran into the street, preferring to be killed by a bullet than be burned to death inside our houses.

Death is strong – but life is stronger. In the midst of the bullets and flames, we found a path which led us out of town. On the way, we met Polish troops already in disarray. We saw soldiers without rifles, horses wandered around unattended, and we came across officers hiding in the woods. In the distance, we could also see flames and exploding bombs.

We kept going, intent on reaching some village or other.

It was already late in the evening when we met an old *goyish* woman who consoled us and told us that nearby was a mill which belonged to a Jew. The news cheered us greatly. At the mill, there were already several hundred people, refugees from the surrounding towns and townships. The scenes were

714 (Polish) "Flat;" cigarettes brand.

heart-rending. Hundreds of people were lying in a small room, “four-by-four,”⁷¹⁵ including a pregnant woman.

[8] Sunday, 3 September 1939

In the morning, the young people ran on further, because we saw that, all things considered, this place was not safe either.

Many gave up and returned to Przedbórz to save their possessions, but they soon came back because the whole town was one great conflagration. We stayed in that village until Wednesday.

Wednesday, 6 September 1939. We saw that we couldn’t stay there any longer. We saw that the Polish soldiers were retreating everywhere and the Germans were moving forward. We had already heard artillery fire. We left for another village.

When we came to a village in the evening we thought the peasants would receive us in a friendly fashion. However, the opposite occurred. They wouldn’t even let our women spend the night in the stables. We kept going. In a third village, the peasants said that “for 1 zloty per Jew” we could spend the night.

In the morning, people were hungry. Many had fainted and suffered nervous attacks, and the peasants wouldn’t sell us any food. After lengthy entreaties, they agreed to sell us potatoes intended for the pigs, for 20 groszes apiece. Later we sent a *shaygetz* to Przedbórz on a bicycle to see whether it was possible for us to return. Perhaps the Germans had withdrawn [. . .] soon back with an answer [. . .] almost completely burned down and [. . .] by the Germans.

[9] There was no point in going on, because the enemy was faster. Nor could we remain, because the peasants had thrown us out and threatened that, if we did not leave willingly, they would drive us out with sticks. We were compelled to return to the miller, although we knew we were going into the fire.

9 September 1939. At 6 in the evening, we left the village behind and entered a thick forest, when we came across a German patrol of 10 soldiers, athletes riding on white horses, approaching at lightning speed. Once again, we saw death facing us. When they drew near, they called out, “Hands up!” They pointed their revolvers at our chests and asked whether we surrendered.

715 (Hebrew?) expression unclear, perhaps referring to some old measure and meaning a very limited space.

We raised our hands. My father pulled out his foreign passport and showed that he was a rabbi and had been in Germany on a few occasions. They quickly became very polite.

They asked us some questions: Had we seen any Polish troops, where were they hiding, and so on. They also asked where we had come from and when we told them that we had had to leave Radomsko because of the terrible bombing, they said that if the Polacks, the Polish pigs, hadn't shot at them, they would not have bombed the town. And when we asked them whether we could go home, they took out a map and [showed us] that from Przedbórz [10] to Katowice was already German. They advised us not to return home today, because the road was still occupied by soldiers. They politely took their leave and left. We were astounded.

When we returned to the miller, we found a German patrol there, also very polite. One of them turned to us and, in fine Hebrew with a Sephardi pronunciation, asked, *Mi mikem m'daber ivrit?*⁷¹⁶ When nobody answered, he continued, *Ani mitpale' – atem sh'losh meot ish v'af'ehad eineno m'daber b'safato.*⁷¹⁷

When I replied, *Anokhi m'daber ivrit,*⁷¹⁸ he told me in Hebrew that he had studied in Egypt and spoke all Middle-Eastern languages well. After they left, a third patrol arrived, real Germans this time. They took several wrist-watches from us, beat many of us and took a couple of young people with them, gave them chocolate, sugar, cigarettes and money, and got all the information from them. After they had got everything out of them, they tied them to the horses and dragged them for about a kilometre; they made others run in front of the horses and chased them. After a couple of hours, they released them. As we sat at the miller's, we heard that in Przedbórz all the Jews had been assembled in the synagogue and held for three days, and today they were all to be sent to a concentration camp.

But that night, when we heard that the Jews had been released from the synagogue, we decided to return to Przedbórz.

[11] When we arrived in town, they seized one of our group, Mr Żarnowiecki, for work and cut off with a knife the beards of Yankl Hartman and the Przedbórz ritual slaughterer.

716 (Hebrew) Which one of you speaks Hebrew?

717 (Hebrew) I am astonished. You are three hundred men, and not one speaks his language.

718 (Hebrew) I speak Hebrew.

We went to the home of an acquaintance and soon heard a frightening uproar – three rifles had been found in a Jew’s cellar. The Jew was brought before a court-martial and two Poles testified that he had nothing to do with it, because he had returned only today, and that the affair was most assuredly a provocation. As a result, the Jew was freed from a death sentence but sentenced to 10 lashes. While the court-martial was taking place, all the Jews were subjected to three thorough body searches in case they had any weapons on them. The searchers seized the opportunity to take whatever they fancied from the Jews, mainly merchandise.

They also went into the Jews’ flats, threw everything they found there out of the windows and told the Poles to take it. During the searches, they stood us up against the wall a few times to be shot, but they didn’t shoot.

All in all, the soldiers were different types.

There was a woman from Będzin among us and when a soldier brought all the children chocolate, she told him that one of the children was not well and he went to the military pharmacy and brought back various medicines. Another soldier told us that in four weeks’ time there would not be a single Jew left in Poland – just like back home in Germany.

Yet a third soldier told us not to worry, we would be treated well by them and want [12] for nothing. The same socialist order would be maintained in Poland as they had in Germany. “Everybody equal”. They talked politics with us and said they had not imagined that Poland was so weak and that because of that England and France had retracted their declaration of war.⁷¹⁹

There was massive troop movement on the street: thousands, tens of thousands of vehicles carrying soldiers, tanks, machine guns, all going in the direction of Warsaw. We wanted to go to the town hall to obtain a pass for Radomsko, but it was impossible to cross the road.

In the morning, we went back to the bridge, but the guard would not let us across, saying, “Jews have to cross in the water, the bridge is for human beings only.” We went away and came to a place where soldiers were bathing. We asked their leader to intervene to enable us to cross the bridge. He replied politely that he was not in a position to do so, but he sent a *shaygetz* who

719 Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939, but took no part in military operations until the spring of 1940.

happened to be bathing in the river to fetch a boat to ferry all the Jews across. When the *shaygetz* refused, the soldier pointed his revolver at him, whereupon the *shaygetz* went and brought a boat and ferried us all across the water. We thanked the soldier very much and he asked us to let him photograph us and we agreed.

[13] On the other side of the river, the real German scenes were already taking place. Men and women were being seized for work, beaten, robbed, and even shot. We did not stay there long, but went on – towards Radomsko.

The road was again full of troops and we just pushed our way through.

We walked till evening without reaching the town. We decided to spend the night in a little house by the roadside which happened to be the home of a Jew.

At midnight, we said *selichot*, despite the roar of the vehicles and cannon.

Sunday 10 September 1939

We are back in Radomsko. We soon learned that on Saturday 2 September about 100 heavy bombs had fallen on Radomsko and on Sunday a few hundred more. (It is worth mentioning in passing that Radomsko put up no resistance – there had been no troops at all in the town.) Dozens of houses had been completely destroyed and whole streets were obliterated.

We learned that although it had happened on a Sabbath evening, there had not been a single person in town. Everyone had left. Moreover, several dozen people had perished, including many Jews, among them a friend of ours, Volf Wajdenblat.

During the bombing, when there was no one in the town, the *goyim* who lived on the outskirts, in Kowalowiec, had gone into town and added to the [destruction]. They broke open all, almost all, the Jewish shops, plundered the goods, and then [14] set fire to the shops so that there would be no traces and people would think the fire was caused by a bomb. The losses from the looting were no less than those from the bombing.

When the Germans arrived in Radomsko, two Jews remained, two old men of 90 who had not been able to flee.

Early the next day the Jews' migration back to Radomsko began. Not having any source of income because everything had been pillaged, they began to trade in the streets with soda water, tomatoes, and apples. Jews made money from this because the soldiers bought from them and paid.

Monday 11 September 1939. An order was issued that Jews should doff their caps.⁷²⁰

Tuesday 12 September 1939. At 9 in the morning precisely, there was banging on the door. At first, we thought it was cannon fire or bombs falling, because we did not imagine that such banging could come from human beings. We opened the door and in came two *Volksdeutsche* and a uniformed Gestapo man, who ordered my father and me to quickly go down into the courtyard. We went immediately. Downstairs two Gestapo men were waiting for us. When we greeted them and took off our hats, they hit us over the head with their whips. And as we stood there in the courtyard waiting for them to assemble the remaining Jewish tenants, they punched me and pulled my father's beard.

[15] In a few minutes, some people had been assembled and we were given the order “*Los!*”. When we reached the marketplace, a terrible sight met our eyes. Several thousand Jews were already assembled there, small children and elderly greybeards. All of them were standing in the trenches working. We learned that the authorities had ordered that the trenches which had been dug as protection against air attacks were to be immediately filled in by us. And since the Poles had told them that the Jews alone had dug the trenches, even to the accompaniment of an orchestra, the Jews would have to fill those trenches in again. They had also told the Germans that three weeks before war broke out, Jews from Radomsko had bought an aeroplane and solemnly presented it to a Polish general. We had no shovels for the work and so we were forced to lie on the ground and fill in the trenches with our hands and hats. A Gestapo man stood over every 3 to 5 Jews and beat them with inhuman brutality, shouting “Lazy dogs! You wanted the war. You will be shot instantly”, and so on... When all of the trenches in the marketplace had been filled, they lined us up and ordered us to form a circle. Men with sidelocks were made to step aside, put their *tales-kotns* over their outer clothes, and dance, dance... in order to [. . .] the earth over the filled-in trenches.

[16] Thus, we sang and danced for an hour. Facing us stood the entire Polish population, men, women and children dressed in their holiday best, watching us with a smile on their lips.

720 To greet a German.

An order... line up in pairs and march towards [the] “New Road.”⁷²¹ They led about 150 of us to a square and the rest were taken further. With us 150 Jews were 48 Gestapo men. The first torment was that they took out one of us, Avigdor Moyshe Bugajski, and gave him a large pair of scissors to cut off everyone’s beards, sidelocks, and fringes. Naturally, while he was cutting hair, they were tearing it out, and tearing out pieces of flesh at the same time. They tore out one man’s hair and he fell in a pool of blood, so that even the Germans decided it would be a good idea to take him away.

Then, we had to take off our *tales-kotns* and burn them. Anyone not wearing a *tales-kotn* was beaten terribly. After this, we were ordered to run fast, shouting “We Jews wanted war”.

Next, they set up a tall door-frame with a window in the middle and we had to run up to it and jump through the window. On both sides of the window, Germans stood, beating us murderously with whips as we did it [. . .] somehow managed [. . .], but, crawling, older Jews, aged 60 to 70 [. . .] lasted [16] a few minutes and during that time they were badly beaten. A Jew who was weak and a cripple was incapable of crawling through, so they threw him across; he was entirely bloodied and lay on the ground in a pool of blood.

We were ordered to lie down with faces and stomachs to the ground, and in that position to run fast. Naturally that was impossible and so they beat us. Then, they called us all together and said that, by 6 [o’clock] in the evening, there was not to be a single Jew in town; everyone was to go to the Polish side.⁷²² Any Jew who stayed would be shot immediately. A German ordered a Jew to repeat this in Polish and Yiddish. We realised the seriousness of his words, but we were indifferent to everything. They brought a large barrel of water and every Jew was made to stand head-down in the barrel with his feet in the air. We were to hold our legs straight while they beat them with a thick stick.

Many, the majority of us, lost consciousness and when we got out of the barrel of water, we were not allowed to dry ourselves; the water had to simply drip off. Shorn, wet from water, tears, and blood, we came back out into the street. We did not know where they were leading us. We were led around the whole town until we arrived at Reymonta Street, where there were also

721 The road or street name is not identified.

722 To the Polish territory not occupied by the Germans.

trenches. [18] There, we were divided into various groups. Once more, we filled the trenches, once more we danced, and once more they beat us.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we were already very tired. We young people were separated from the other workers and led away to a place where we were given shovels and told to work hard.

After an hour's work, my hands were covered with blisters, so I asked a friend of mine to hide me for a minute, so that the German would not see me and I could catch my breath. The Gestapo did notice and stormed over to me shouting *Fauler Jude, warum arbeitest du nicht?*⁷²³ I showed him the blisters on my hands and in a great rage he threw me into one of the trenches which had not yet been filled. He ordered me to take my clothes off and close my eyes, and one of my friends, the one who had hidden me, was made to cover me with earth. When the Jew covered me with little earth, the German shoved him away and covered me up completely. I don't know what happened next. I lost consciousness and remember only that, when I came round, I was lying in water and a Gestapo man was standing on my stomach. Around me were standing thousands of Poles enjoying the drama. After this, we were led to another place to fill in trenches.

The star attraction of those trenches was not me, [19] but the Minc brothers, the manufacturers from the large furniture factory. Their workers, approximately 500 men, stood around them and pointed to them, saying they had exploited the working classes before the war. The Germans needed no more: They laid 28 heavy shovels on Minc's shoulders, tied straw to his hands, and made him dance and shout: "I tormented my workers. I, a Jew, wanted war." He collapsed, fainting from misery and shame. They stood him up, revived him. He danced again and sang the same refrain.

At 7:30, they lined us up and told us we were now going to be shot. We were no longer frightened. Meanwhile they made us dance gaily and sing. We sang *Shir Hama'alot, Mi-ma'amakim*,⁷²⁴ and then *Hatikvah*. My father, who was sitting with the older workers, felt unwell. When the German, after much pleading, allowed us to bring him a little water – oh, the same German who forced him to wear a cap full of earth the whole time he was working, the same German who beat him and did not let him rest – that same German

723 (German) Lazy Jew, why aren't you working?

724 (Hebrew) Song of Ascents (Psalm 126), Out of the Depths (Psalm 130).

now said to him, "Don't drink the water quickly, because it's cold and it's not healthy to drink cold water when you're sweating."

It was 8:30. They stood all of us young people [. . .] the wall and said they now intended to [. . .] us. [20] They did in fact fire a couple of shots, but nobody fell. They ordered us to load up the shovels quickly and getting moving. We were led through the whole town dancing and singing. We sang *Hatikvah*. We deposited the shovels in the town hall store-room on the market square and were driven off, like dogs.

We Radomsko Jews called that day "Black Tuesday." A Hasidic young man, a son-in-law of Fojgieltojb, suffered a nervous attack on his return from work and hanged himself.

Wednesday [13 September] was a quiet day.

On Thursday [14 September], events were the same as on Tuesday: the same torments, the same pain, only there were other star attractions. Thursday's star was not Moyshe Frenkel, but Leybl Blas.

On Friday [15 September], Rosh Hashanah 5700, the Jews were in turmoil over posters that had been put up announcing that all men from 16 to 45 should present themselves in a square on Saturday morning. Jews added comments that we were being assembled for the purpose of sending us to Germany, to concentration camps, possibly to work.

At 7 o'clock on Saturday [16 September] morning, terrible panic reigned. We put on winter clothes, said goodbye to our nearest, wept hot tears, and left... forever.

[21] We all presented ourselves at the set time. The Jewish comments proved false: All that took place was a registration.

On the way back from the registration, a group of men were seized for work, myself included. They led us to a church where horses and carts were standing, and our task was to load milk-cans onto them. From Sunday [17 September], the work went back to normal: we worked on the New Road, laying down the new surface and building a new bridge. The work was carried out exclusively by Jews, but under the supervision of Poles.

As we were returning home at 2 o'clock for the midday meal, the Germans again seized us for work. We had to drag a broken-down car – when we got home we heard that there were notices in the street that all Jews from 14 to 60 were to report in front of the synagogue at precisely 6 o'clock in the evening. The news filled us with fear again.

At 6 o'clock precisely, all the Jews presented themselves in front of the synagogue. At five past six, the Gestapo arrived with the Polish *burmistrz*⁷²⁵ Kwaśniewski⁷²⁶ at their head, and he lectured us on the task awaiting us. He said: "Times have changed. You have to work and, if you work, you'll get food."

The next morning at 8 o'clock, all of us between 14 and 60 reported for work. There were about [22] 2,000 people – many were released and the rest were led off to the railway station.

On the way, we were forced to sing various folksongs. The Zionists sang *Hatikvah* and *Anu bonim namal*.⁷²⁷ The Hasids sang *Zol shoyn Meshiakh kumen*⁷²⁸ and the Bundists sang their folksongs.

We were on the platform. There was no proper work for us and we soon understood that the course of the day would be difficult. And so it was.

They divided us into several groups. One group was assigned to polish boots, another to wash windows, and yet another to clean out crates. The rest were assigned to pull out the grass from between the railway lines and some to wash cars; there were still about 100 people left. Some of them were ordered to dig a ditch which we were made to fill in again the next morning. I and a few others were sent to the other side of the platform to pick up straw from the road.

All the groups set to work under strict control by Germans.

I collected straw.

A German came up to me, an airman, and told me I shouldn't bend down to pick up each piece of straw separately, but should sit down so that [. .] collect the straw.

[23] A good German, I thought to myself.

I sit down and he takes a whip out of his boot and beats me murderously and screams at me, demanding to know why I'm working sitting down. It began to rain heavily. He got into a car and warned us not to stop working. After an hour, we had worked very hard and we were soaked from the rain, so we were assigned another job – washing the cars. This work was much easier,

725 (Polish) Mayor.

726 Lucjan Kwaśniewski was mayor of Radomsko from 1935.

727 (Hebrew) We are building a haven.

728 (Yiddish) May the Messiah come soon.

especially because the rain had stopped and the cars were clean. Meanwhile, they had brought me a change of clothes from home, thinking that mine must be wet from the rain. I changed quickly, but a German spotted me from a distance. He called me over, threw me under a lorry and sprayed me with water from a rubber hose. I was wetter now than after the rain.

At 8 in the evening, 15 Gestapo men arrived. They called us together and ordered us to form a circle and dance gaily. We danced and sang, conducted by German birch rods. We danced in this fashion for over an hour, then they led us through the town again and allowed us to disperse.

Tuesday [19 September] morning. We assembled again in front of the Gestapo. Many people had brought doctors' certificates, which the Gestapo honoured that day and actually released many of us.

They counted us and led us to the station, where they again considered requests for release. They wanted to let a few men go, because there were too many. Those who were released had to kneel before [. . .] the German and the German [24] kicked them in the stomach. I burst out laughing hysterically from agitation. He asked me if I wanted to leave and I answered him boldly – no.

We were again divided into several groups. I was assigned to the group pulling up grass from between the railway lines. When we had collected a high mound of grass, we were ordered to jump up on top of it. Anyone who was able to manage the jump of 1.5 metres was beaten on top of the mound. As for those who could not jump up, the German came down and beat them below. When we were all on the top, we were ordered to carry the grass away to the side. We collected grass in our arms and set off. An order: Back!!!

An order: Spread the rubbish.

An order: Put the rubbish in our caps, put them on our heads, and then take big armfuls of rubbish and go like that.

There was water on the road. A German was already standing guard there to make sure we walked through it.

Wednesday [20 September] morning. We reported for work again. We went through the same procedure as yesterday. In addition, we had to carry heavy beams of 100 kilos a piece. There were enough of us, even too many, but in no way would they permit more than two people to carry a beam. Before going home, we [. . .] carried those beams back [. . .] from which we had [25] taken them. It was a real “labour of Sisypheus”.

Thursday, 21 September [19]39. Thanks to considerable recommendation, I went to work at the municipality building. The work wasn't hard at first. We poured cement, laid paving stones and swept the streets. Our Polish overseers couldn't bear to see how much freedom we had. Once they saw what our work looked like under German overseers, they made it harder. They gave us wheelbarrows to push with stones in them. The stones were very heavy. One weighed 42 kilos and we had to push three of them in a wheelbarrow. Before we went home, a Christian I knew told me that because the Jews were hiding from work, a decision had been made to introduce special Jewish signs so that they could tell whether Jews were working or not.

At night, turmoil. We didn't know what was happening and in the morning we found out that the Gestapo had dragged a few dozen Jews from their beds and had taken them away in their nightshirts for a certain job. They kept them there for hours, beat them murderously, and [then] freed them.

Friday, the eve of *Yom Kippur* 5700.⁷²⁹ 22 September 1939. We didn't go to work, because there was an announcement in the street that all Jewish men aged 14 to 60 were to report to the municipality where it would be determined who was liable for forced labour and who was exempt.

We went and took with us all the documents we possessed, all the doctors' certificates on the basis of which we hoped to be exempted. We went up. The room was already packed with Jews [. . .] stood a long table covered with [26] a green cloth, around which were sitting various members of the Gestapo, SS, and SA.

At 10 o'clock precisely, on the basis of the first registration, they called people one by one in alphabetical order and attached a patch to their breast. This most terrible shame in all of its antiquity was suddenly renewed for us, "the return of the yellow patch".

The patches came in three colours: yellow, red, and violet. The yellow ones, which meant 6 days' work, bore the letter "J" and a Roman series number. The red ones meant 3 days' work and bore a "J", with an "A" for people working on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and a "B" for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. People wearing violet patches were entirely exempt from work. Only the *chevra kadisha* and members of the *Judenrat* received violet patches.

729 In the original, 5701, apparently by mistake.

They came to the letter “F” and soon called my father out. They stuck a yellow patch on him and when he showed the letter from the Viennese professor saying that he had recently undergone serious stomach surgery, they shoved him away and told him to go to Vienna.

After my father, they called Shloyme Fizzman, a young giant of a man, and gave him a red patch to make my father’s disability even greater.

Just when they called me, a soldier came in saying he needed 10 Jews. The board decided that I should be one of the 10, because he had come in when I [. .] should be the first nine who [. .] they were ill. After a few minutes [. .] Jews into the street, fixed to their breast [. .]

[27] We reached the French factory. We were led into the courtyard and assigned to work. I worked with lime, removing hot lime out of a pit. Then I cleaned the toilets with my hands. Later, we had to carry the lime away in wheelbarrows weighing 100 kilos. I fell while pushing a wheelbarrow and the German asked me why I was so weak. I answered him that I had not yet eaten today and had worked so hard and he replied: *Ach, Jude, du bist faul. Du willst nicht arbeiten.*⁷³⁰ Then he whipped me like a horse to make me keep going.

At 7 [o’clock] in the evening, before returning home, a German told me to shine his boots. I shined his boots and when I had finished he gave me the stub of a cigarette out of his mouth. I did not want to take it. When we got home, we met another group coming home from work on “New Road”. The Gestapo arrived with *burmistrz* Kwaśniewski and ordered us to come to work the next day, on *Yom Kippur*, not at 8, but at 6. Afterwards, we found out that this had happened because of an intercession by the *Judenrat* requesting that Jews should be freed from work on *Yom Kippur*.

On *Yom Kippur*, complying with the order from the Gestapo, we all presented ourselves for work promptly at 6 o’clock. The Jews were sent to various work places, but 20 of the healthiest were selected to clean the house of the French, which the Gestapo had moved into in their absence. I was one of the 20. Our first task was to clean out the rooms, wash [. .] and windows, rehang the pictures lying on the floor, some slashed [28] with knives.

It was not hard work, but they made it hard for us. For example, two men had to drag a heavy cupboard; a German stood behind, kicking and hitting

730 (German) Oh, Jew, you are lazy. You don’t want to work.

them. A German came to me and ordered me to wash out a spittoon. When I simply washed it without wiping it, he threw me down, kicked me terribly, ordered me to stand up and hit me again.

Then we cleaned the courtyard. It was already 2 o'clock.

Haze,⁷³¹ a Jewish refugee from Berlin, came by. He had some sort of "connection" with the Germans and told us secretly that he was assigned to take five men to another place where the work would be easier. He suggested that if I gave him something, I would be one of the five. We went to Dr. Oczkowski's house, where the Gestapo were living at the time. We laid bricks over the entire courtyard. The work was finished at 3 o'clock, but we were not released because it was still daylight and we had to work until 8 o'clock in the evening.

We were assigned other work, filling ditches.

Sunday 24 September [19]39. A notice was posted announcing that on Tuesday only those who had a certificate from the authorities would be able to exchange their yellow patches for red ones.

Monday 25 September. A soldier arrived in Radomsko, whom we later called "the fat soldier". His cruelty exceeded all boundaries. He left no one in peace.

If a Jew walked on the pavement, he beat him cruelly [. . .] how a dog could dare walk on the pavement with human beings.

[29] If another Jew walked in the middle of the road, he beat him for blocking the traffic. If a Jew had a beard, he ripped it out. If another didn't have a beard, he ripped out his hair. An old Jew passed by and he beat him for walking so slowly. He was especially brutal in the way he beat women. The next morning, we were all working at the ruins. We were collecting bricks: One person threw a brick to the next, and the last person in line stacked it up. Suddenly, the "fat soldier" arrived and ordered us to spread out to make it harder to catch the bricks. Naturally, we were unable to catch bricks from such a distance, and he came up and threw the bricks at our stomachs, at our legs, and often at our heads.

The next day, Tuesday, I went to the municipality to exchange my yellow patch for a red one. At the door of the municipality building stood a high-ranking German in a brown uniform with a red swastika on his arm. I found

731 Could be spelled "Hase".

out later that this was Commissioner Ruter.⁷³² He stood by the door and hit every Jew who came in or out. The *Volksdeutsche* sat around a green table. I approach with my certificate. He glances at it and says “a Jewish doctor”. I’m sure he doesn’t understand the certificate, because most of the *Volksdeutsche* had been working for the Jews as night-watchmen or water-carriers. After much pleading, he exchanges my patch. Those who received red patches were assigned to very hard labour on a freshly asphalted highway to Przedbórz. The work was overseen by a bloody anti-Semite, engineer Zipser. We recognised Zipser. Shortly before the war, when Poland was building the new Kraków–Warsaw motorway, there was great competition for the work. In the end, a Czech firm headed by that same engineer Zipser was to carry out the major enterprise.

We had to set off for work at 6 [o’clock] in the morning. [30] They drove us like dogs for several kilometres. I managed to get work in the school, in the Polish middle school. Our task was to carry out [. . .] in the school, put in window panes, wash the walls, floors, and windows. We needed a few paving slabs and they sent Rapoport, a boy of about 15, to fetch them. He was unable to carry 3 slabs weighing 34 kilos apiece and, dropping them, he broke them. At the time, the three slabs cost no more than 3 zlotys. The Polish overseers handed the boy over to the Germans who ruled that he must pay a fine of 750 zlotys for the three stones. Since he was a minor, the money was to be taken from his father and since the father had no money to pay, he was put in jail until the money was paid.

The next day, 28 September, soldiers appeared on the streets with cameras and took photographs of the Jews. They compelled a Jew to grab a German and hit him. They forced another Jew to throw a soldier to the ground and hit him. They also took some pictures which appeared as illustrations in “*Der Stürmer*.”⁷³³ One scene showed Yekhiel Jakubowicz doing business with Shloyme Rabinowicz: They were posed in such a way as to give the impression that they were hatching a plan to rob someone. [31] They photographed Avrom Goldberg, a usurer before the war, as a Jewish intellectual and a doctor, and a Hasidic Jew as a pimp.

732 In the original, it is incorrectly spelled “Rotoyb” (German spelling unknown). Ruter was the town commandant.

733 German propaganda weekly published by the Nazi Party.

That day I worked at the gymnasium putting panes in the windows and cleaning the schoolyard. Although the yard was very large and wide, two Jews and I cleaned it in a short time. When we were gathering the rubbish, the overseer, a *shaygetz* of about 30, came up to me and called me “*parszywa żydowska chucpa*.”⁷³⁴ When I asked him what his words meant, he angrily grabbed the board from my hand and asked me if I also picked up rubbish for the Germans with a board. I asked him if he was German. Then he grabbed me and wanted to take me to the Germans and denounce me for slandering the German people... I saw that there was no way out and picked up the rubbish with my hands. His anger subsided. Then, we went off to fetch benches. The overseer in the store-room was an acquaintance of mine, a leader in the socialist organisation in Radomsko. I told him what had happened to me today with the *shaygetz*, “a good socialist, by the way”. He gritted his teeth and said nothing.

We rested for an hour there, which the overseer let us do, warning that if Germans came, we should pretend we were working.

When we returned to the school with the benches, the same scoundrel attacked me, swore at me, and [32] threatened that I would pay with my life. It turned out that, soon after, the other Christian [. . .] had written down who the *shaygetz* was and briefly [. . .] him that he would settle accounts with him after the war. When we went home, the scoundrel gave everyone an attestation that the Jews had been working under him, but he refused to give one to me.

On 29 September [19]39, I worked in the school again. Lessons were already taking place normally, except that it was forbidden to teach the students Polish [history?].

We were getting ready to go home when an order came that we were to return immediately to empty the school, throw out the benches, bring in bundles of straw and straw mattresses, and prepare places to sleep for troops who were coming.

We had the satisfaction of seeing that the students had to go home again.

Supervision of this work was carried out by good Germans. They discussed politics with us and one soldier said to me, “We have already taken

734 (Polish, in Latin characters) “lousy Jewish chutzpah.” The Hebrew/Yiddish word *chutzpah* is commonly used in Polish, spelled as in the text.

Warsaw, but we haven't been fighting for Poland. The war will not end until we have captured the English and French colonies. We Germans must rule, because we are the greatest and strongest people in Europe."

Levy

Radomsko did not have a chance to catch its breath. Persecutions fell on us like hail and a word was resurrected for a new use: "levy." The *gmina* received notification that within 48 hours the Jews had to pay a levy of 50,000 zlotys. The *Judenrat* quickly summoned the rich [33] and wealthy of the town. The Jews gave money willingly because they understood the purpose, but in the end not even half of the amount had been collected.

A delegation went to the commandant, but he would listen to nothing. No compromise was possible. He agreed only to one thing: He made a few Germans available to arrest those Jews whom the *Judenrat* thought had to give money.

And thus it was. All the wealthy men who did not pay the full amount required of them were arrested, and by the fourth day the sum of 50,000 zlotys had been collected.

Women's work

The Germans had got used to men working, and so had the Jews. Something new was needed. There was nothing left to impose on us men; we performed the worst tasks with a smile. The *Volksdeutsche* made a list of women, pretty girls: One was selected because she used to eat oranges before the war; another because she wore make-up; a third simply because she was pretty. And so, at first every Saturday and later in the middle of the week too, they seized around 40 women for work and persecuted them in a terrible, sadistic fashion. [34] In the course of a day, they were forced to wash dozens of floors, clean toilets with their hands, and so on. Those who did not carry out the work were flung into prison for 48 hours.

Avner Gurfinkel

One of Avner Gurfinkel's neighbours was a *Volksdeutscher* [from] Warsaw. They became close friends, so close that they discussed politics. Mr Gurfinkel hid various things with the *Volksdeutsche*, including a file containing bills of exchange worth several thousand zlotys.

Their “love” was mutual. The *Volksdeutscher* told Gurfinkel that he felt unhappy to belong to such a dirty race. One fine day, the Gestapo came looking for the *Volksdeutscher* and Avner Gurfinkel.

They took Gurfinkel with them but not the *Volksdeutscher*, because they did not find him at home. Nobody knew why.

When the *Volksdeutscher* came home, Gurfinkel’s mother ran in crying that he must save her son. He told her curtly that he did not want to get involved in such matters. The suspicion formed that he had some connection with the business.

And so it was. On the third day of Gurfinkel’s imprisonment, during which he was summoned twice daily to the Gestapo to be beaten, the Gestapo called the *Volksdeutscher*, who declared face to face with Gurfinkel that through the door he had heard Gurfinkel say “All the troubles of the Jews are the fault of the damned Führer.”

[35] After that declaration, Gurfinkel was thrown into prison. Thanks to a lot of influence and [. . .] money, they managed to free him after 6 days. Before leaving, he had to sign a statement that he had been in prison for defaming the Führer and he also had to pay 20 zlotys before being whipped. When he came out, his whole body was black, literally black, from beatings. They had given him 50 lashes twice daily and banged his head against the wall. They had doused him with hot water. It took a few months in bed for him to become a human being again.

Forced labour was transferred to the *gmina*. Every day they supplied 1,200 workers, but many were released because of influence and pay-offs. The population began to rebel against the *gmina*, and one day, when the workers returned hungry and frozen, they went straight to the *gmina* and wrecked it.

The *Judenrat* called in the Gestapo to help and they beat the “aggressors” murderously. As punishment, there was a pogrom for three days.

Those three days were terrible. In particular, all Jewish passers-by were beaten terribly and stripped of their clothes, which were given away to Poles who happened to be passing. In front of our house, a Gestapo man found Shloyme Najmark. He stopped him and ordered him to take off his jacket, trousers, and shirt.

[36] When he objected, he was led away to the Gestapo, where everybody deprived of the basic garment were given a lesson on the German rule

of “cleanliness.” He was beaten again and his clothes removed and given to a Christian.

With the evacuation of a large part of the Polish population from Poznań,⁷³⁵ some of whom were resettled in Radomsko, a new wave of troubles broke over the Radomsko Jews.

These Poles were brought in special trains, sealed cars. They were split up as were the Jews: Families were torn apart, children torn away from parents, parents sent to one town and the children to another. Most of them were wealthy, well-dressed and wore astrakhan furs. Now, dressed in their fur coats, they were carrying sacks of bed linen on their backs. And upon their arrival, many Jewish flats were requisitioned and all necessary items for their use were taken from the Jews: furniture, linen and clothes.

Commissioner Ruter sent for the mayor and told him that the Poles would have to settle the evacuees at their own expense. The mayor explained that the Poles had been greatly impoverished during the war and persuaded him that they should not be settled at their expense, but at the expense of the Jews. And so it was. From that day on, there were massive requisitions of flats and entire houses. All their contents were pillaged.

The next morning, the Poznań residents went into the street, saw the “yids” and harassed them. There was often serious blood-letting.

[37] From the time the Poznań residents arrived, a systematic “ghetto” began. Then, one day, something happened that set us all trembling.

An order came that within 15 minutes all Jews living on the “New Road” must leave their [flats]. We went there to help save something, but [. . .]. We saw a frightful scene. Out of the windows, cupboards, beds, dinner services, and pillows were falling, even children.

Suddenly gendarmes and Gestapo in black uniforms arrived. The 15 minutes had already passed. The gates were shut and no more “saving” was allowed. Soon thereafter, the Jews with their packages on their backs were all driven away without even being allowed to take with them what was already lying in the street.

735 In the period 1939–1941, the German occupation authorities expelled more than 360,000 Poles and Jews from the territories annexed to the Reich (Pomerania, Silesia, Greater Poland). See *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich* (forthcoming).

Most of the Jews living on the “New Road” were wealthy. The losses were estimated at tens of millions. The new refugees squeezed into a corner of another Jew’s home, in another street. They “settled in” and “acclimatised themselves”. The next morning, there was another order to leave Reymonta Street, the same way as the previous day. That afternoon, the same order concerning the market place. The more it went on, the more brutal it became. Fatally ill people, old men of 90, were thrown out. They laid them out in the street. When the *Judenrat* saw that a cramped “ghetto” was to be established, they tried to find out where it would be, so that people shouldn’t have to move from one street to another. So they [. . .] to Ruter to inform them [38] where Jews would be permitted to live. When they entered, he stamped his foot and shouted, “Dogs, you will be completely [chased?] from the town.”

And so the Jews wandered from one street to another, and the wandering became easier and easier, because there was nothing left to take with. After a few days, the entire Jewish population was packed into a single street, Limanowskiego, which was later declared a “ghetto” for Jews, whose boundaries Jews were not permitted to cross.

On New Year 1940, the whole population of Radomsko was issued passes. The cost for non-Jews was 50 groszes, for Jews 10 zlotys. The Jewish passes were yellow, with a large stamp on them, “*Jude*”.

ARG I 983 (Ring. I/901)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (U*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, much minor damage and fragments missing, 76 sheets, 76 pages.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 38 sheets, 38 pages.

TOMASZÓW MAZOWIECKI COUNTY

TOMASZÓW MAZOWIECKI

111

After October 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Monisz Szyk. Account ןוֹאַשְׁטאַט
“[חֲזָזוֹן אֶזְרָאָה] [Tomaszów Maz[owiecki]]. Gradual removal of the Jewish
population from the town; numerous fatalities of victims, people flee-
ing to the countryside.

[1] Tomaszów Maz[owiecki]

It was bearable until July of the year 1941. From August, when he⁷³⁶ took over the town, the situation got much worse.

[...] Goebbels' article about the Jews: *Obóz Zawada*⁷³⁷ was organised, a camp in which forced labourers, young people taken from their homes or seized on the street, worked under abnormal conditions. 25 per cent never returned; the rest came back crippled and half of them died.

“He sent orders to all enterprises that all Jews must be released from work, even the skilled workers who were needed, justifying [his instructions] on grounds of [...]”⁷³⁸

After the article: The very next morning, the so-called “small ghetto”,⁷³⁹ which was situated on the other side of Piłsudskiego Street, was surrounded, and all the inhabitants, young and old, were thrown out of their homes and led to a bath, where everyone's hair was shaven off (including that of the women). After waiting 12 hours under the open sky, not being allowed food

736 It is not clear to which German official “he” refers. The *Stadtkommissar* in Tomaszów was Siegfried Lucas; the *Kreishauptmann* from February 1940 was Karl Glehn.

737 (Polish) “Camp Zawada”, a labour camp in Zawada near Tomaszów engaged in river control, employing some 300 prisoners, both Jews and Poles. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 51, 156.

738 ^c Annotation from the margin on p. 1, inserted according to the author's mark.

739 A ghetto in Tomaszów, established in December 1940, was divided into three parts, see. K. Urbański, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie radomskim*, Kraków 2004, p. 130.

(2 young people were shot for trying to provide them with food), they were led to a train, loaded into carriages and taken away in an unknown direction. As we have now found out, some of them were taken to Opoczno and Rawa Mazowiecka.

To be noted: “He” himself led the *Aktion*. It is simply impossible to convey the methods “he” used; for example, he did not allow people to take any clothing with them, and there were cases where people when thrown out almost naked and sent away in that state.

In one of the flats there was a woman in confinement with a new-born child (of 2 days). When he was told that the woman could not get up because she was in confinement, he grabbed the baby and threw it out of the window, and the woman was carried out.

[2] Another case: A paralysed man who could not move was beaten until he died.

The next day he set to work on the “big ghetto”. The inhabitants of all the houses bordering on Piłsudskiego Street were driven out.

Many of the inhabitants hid outside town for 2 days, fearing they would be deported, just as he did with the inhabitants of the “small ghetto”.

ARG I 1028 (Ring. I/925)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 215×340 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser’s note in Polish: “Tomaszów Mazowiecki. Short report from the second half of 1941 (resettlement and cases of murders). Monisz Szyk wrote.” Title written in another handwriting (pencil).

112

28 January 1942, Koluszki, [Leon]. Letter to an unknown person in the Warsaw ghetto. The situation in the Koluszki ghetto; request for information about the Markowicz family, financial support, and a railway pass.

Dear ones!

How are you, why aren't you writing, how is business and health, how are the Markowiczes, we have been doing much worse lately, they are shooting for leaving the ghetto, there's been some victims already, and we've had some financial loss they took 3,000 zlotys worth of merchandise, so we're left without any money, this is why I'm writing to you so you are kind enough to [. . .] [live] what we have with you, send us by post because if there is something to be made now [2] we do not have the money to buy it so that we have to make do with the last few coins. So do not hesitate and do it now. We have no news from Nalek and his wife, God only knows where they are. Icek Honig has been doing worse lately, there's nothing to be earned and they have no money. I hear that in Warsaw you can get a pass to travel by train. Perhaps Markowicz could find out if it is true let [. . .] need such pass cost for a month so we could make one.

[3] So I'm asking you again arrange everything and write us soon.

I am ending this letter sending love for you all, Leon

Koluszki, 28 January 1942.

~~15 victims.~~ –

Additionally, to the remark about 15 victims. Currently, leaving is impossible.⁷⁴⁰

ARG I 797 (Ring. I/560)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 143×204 mm, minor damage and missing text fragments, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

740 Two lines added in pencil in a different handwriting. "15 victims" crossed out in the original.

Part IV

Warsaw District

GARWOLIN COUNTY

ŁASKARZEW

113 *After 25 December 1940, Warsaw ghetto, Yeshayohu Sz. Testimony “לֵאֶסְקָרְזֶׁוּ” [Łaskarzew]. The Germans’ entry on 17 September 1939, setting the town ablaze, persecutions of Jews and Poles, round-ups, group executions.*

[1] Łaskarzew

On Sunday, 17 September 1939, despite the heroic resistance displayed by Łaskarzew, despite the great heroic courage of all of its inhabitants (approximately 400 Jewish families, 1,500 Christian families) and jointly built barricades, the town fell into the enemy’s hands. Immediately 3 enemy groups started operating: 1. murderers, 2. arsonists, and 3. takers of prisoners.

The first group ruthlessly shot 52 Jews and over 70 Christians and threw them all into a fire. The second group set almost all houses on fire sparing only the official buildings (the town hall, school, *urząd gminy*,⁷⁴¹ etc.),

741 (Polish) commune office.

in total about 15 out of 250. The third group took the entire male population as prisoners. The majority of women and children wandered around beyond the town. An episode: The Wajnberg family was stopped by a German soldier, who wanted to shoot the husband. The wife threw herself between the murderer and the husband, enabling him to hide. The enraged soldier shot their 8-year old daughter on the spot. A Polish soldier (24 Polish soldiers covered the retreat; it was proven that they dressed up as Jews and, in this way, saved themselves from the Germans following the capture of the town) witnessed the tragedy from a neighbouring balcony and shot the German on the spot. The father, shocked, dragged his dead daughter by a leg.

The prisoners were led out of town, here and there. Towards the evening, we all were led to the stationed soldiers, where thereafter 48 fallen German soldiers were brought. Probably the “good friend” assumed that the Jews had shot the Germans. In any case, on this pretext it was decided to destroy all Jewish prisoners – they separated Christians from Jews, and began taking the Jews to the place of execution. We walked through the town one last time. At first, the Jews did not want to believe [it] but shortly the imminent end became certain. Everyone said *viduy*. The Jews did not behave like men: Everyone without exception, even Dr. Feldshuh and Dr. Alter, was broken, people cried, some even had spasms. Each of us went as if to slaughter.

It was evening, a beautiful warm day; some houses were still burning, some were smouldering, and some stood bare. One saw Christian women in deep despair, not allowed to rescue the remains of their possessions. 2 Christians were thrown alive into fire when they tried to put it out. The heat smacked the face and stifled the breath. The destruction and annihilation were complete. Here and there, one could see a half-burnt cow, pig, horse, one could hear [2] blood-curling shrieks of animals locked in barns. The cobblestones were red-hot; the air was filled with smells of burning. I saw a dead Jew wrapped in a *tales*; as I found out later on, it was an elderly tailor, Yitskhok Fridman; when the Germans were going to shoot him, he wrapped himself in the *tales*. In another place lay a half-burnt dead Jew, and next to him lay his 5-year-old daughter. Images of indescribable suffering.

Two rows of soldiers did not allow anyone near the Jews sentenced to death. When my 8-year-old little daughter wanted to say goodbye for the last time, a soldier beat her forcefully with a rifle. One could see a feeling of satisfaction on the part of the Germans: *Aber Sowjetrussland ist mit uns – und wo*

*ist euer Gott?*⁷⁴² and the like. At the last moment, and thanks to Dr. Feldshuh and Dr. Alter, it was successfully proven that Jews did not shoot at the soldiers, but the Polish soldiers dressed up as Jews did it. Everyone below 16 and above 50 years of age was released on the spot. Those who remained were taken for several days to Węgrów and Wyszaków for forced labour.

I must also recount what happened to the women and the children. In the meantime, all women and children were assembled on the riverbank outside of town, where a group of soldiers kept them separate from the men. In the evening, the soldiers noticed some smoke, a sign that the artillery would shell this place. The soldiers quickly cleared off, yet did not allow the women to leave the spot. Shortly afterwards shrapnel shells and bombs began to fall on the assembly place; 15 women and children were killed, but despite the German orders the vast majority ran away.

All released Jews remained on the edge of the town. Moreover, it must be stressed that the church was also shelled and burnt. Also, all the extinguishing equipment was completely burnt. On the third day⁷⁴³ of the Ten Days of Penitence,⁷⁴⁴ some Jews returned to the ruined town.

[3] Ruins and basements became our dwellings. We slept at first up to 50 people in one basement. People cooked outside and in ditches, where from a few bricks and fence they made a cooking place. Obviously, there was no electricity. What did the Jews live from? In small measure, from hidden provisions, and the majority went to adjacent villages to dig potatoes and to chop wood. The only clothing that remained was what one was wearing. People also lived in the stalls in the market-place, the slightest rain completely soaked them. The Germans who drove by malevolently shot at the stalls, filling the hearts of the inhabitants with fear and horror. For a time, we were also terrorized by Polish hooligans, but the former Polish teachers fought them firmly and successfully.

After *Sukkot*, several regiments of the German army were stationed outside of town. Immediately on the first Sabbath, they summoned all the Jews to the market square and after a sermon, during which it was said that all

742 (German) But Soviet Russia is with us – and where is your God?

743 On 17 September 1939.

744 Called also *Yamim Noraim* (Hebrew: days of awe), the High Holy Days; ten days from Rosh Hashanah through *Yom Kippur*.

the Jews are German slaves and they should be ready at every call of their German masters, the Jews were taken to a nearby village. There we finally properly encountered the German ways. After having carried out the filthiest work (like, for example, scraping excrement with bare hands under the blows of the Germans, all the bearded Jews went through indescribable tortures of having their beards cut off. The beards were not cut off with scissors, but with knives, often tearing off whole pieces of flesh with them. In the course of the next 8 days, all male Jews went into hiding in the surrounding villages. The warnings that all the women and children would be shot did not help. Finally, an agreement was reached to deliver 30 people daily [for labour].

This situation persisted for 3 weeks, when the soldiers left their stations, after which the atmosphere in Łaskarzew became bearable. Meanwhile, small grocery stores opened and one settled down [. . .] ‘from the stone-age period.’⁷⁴⁵ However, the SS. did not forget about us. They came on the 9th day of Kislev, on Tuesday, 21 November 1939, and provided new tragedies, among them my personal [one], and the [. . .] leaving of Łaskarzew by the Jews [4]. Without reason, a dread fell upon everyone. A dark nightmare persecuted [everyone]. Around 10:30 a lorry and passenger truck arrived from Garwolin and stopped at the market place. The Jews dispersed like a flock of birds. The market square was immediately surrounded by several patrols, the SS.-men went from cellar to cellar, and in this manner caught 28 Jews. Some Jews were hidden by local Christians. Stanisław Kędzior, a [member of the] PPS, hid 12 Jews. The 28 persons were executed in a neighbouring forest.

After having tortured everyone to insanity, all were divided into 7 groups, and each group dug graves for the others, only to be later killed and hurled into the grave. They asked Eliezer Waldman, who was there with his three sons, which of them he loved the most, and they sadistically tormented exactly that one, and then shot [him] without covering their eyes. Mordkhe Shalit had already been shot and buried, but because of a too shallow grave, he was flung out of the pit and thereby survived. On his return to the town, he related that all those who were taken away are chopping wood in the forest.⁷⁴⁶

745 ^c Phrase only in duplicate (b).

746 According to the testimony of Yoyne (Toba) Nojman in the Yad Vashem Archive, the Germans shot the last victim of that execution and left without covering up the grave. The man got out of the pit and a Dr. Lipsztat provided him with medical assistance.

For me, too, this day was full of misfortune. When the SS. arrived, I sent my son for cigarettes. After a long time, he had not returned. I went to my neighbour Mendel Zylbersztajn. A woman holding a Torah scroll rushed in, threw it on the floor and sobbed terribly. It shocked me, too, and led to tears. I picked up the Torah scroll and walked out in the street. Two gendarmes were walking on the way, but they paid no attention to me. I brought the Torah scroll to my cellar; meanwhile, I became so nervously shaken that I could not sit still at home, fearing both for my son and for the Torah scroll, particularly as shooting could be heard. I went out to find a ladder from M. Zylbersztajn's attic, but while in the street, I really do not know why, I went towards the market square. An SS. man caught me, and only thanks to the dedication of Mrs Reyzl Fajnzylber, who threw herself between me and the soldier, I was miraculously saved. When I was already hidden in my cellar, my son arrived, who had saved himself from the hands of the hangmen, although he was shot at four times; he was no longer mentally normal.

[5] Łaskarzew was in shock, Jews despondent and resigned. Poles, both the intelligentsia and the ordinary folk full of compassion, even Franek Poboży, organiser of pickets, stood among the Jews and cried with them. It became clear that the Jews must leave. Everything was abandoned. I, along with both my sons, escaped out of town. The commune clerk Rapacz was afraid to take us in. A Jewish woman, whose husband had escaped to the Soviet Union, [upon] seeing us, started having spasms out of fear. And so, we wandered through woods, fields and meadows, like cursed ghosts. The dread filled the entire surroundings. First, a Christian friend (shoemaker) hid us at his place for 3 days, and at an appropriate moment we stole away on foot to Sobolew, and from there by train to Warsaw, where my wife, with the 2 youngest children, already stayed.

Warsaw, 25 Dec[ember 19]40.

Yeshayohu Sz.

See Barbara Engelking, *Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach dystryktu warszawskiego*, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 128. Mentioned is probably Paweł Abraham Lipsztat (1903–?), physician employed from 1940 by the Warsaw *Judenrat*.

[6] List 1.⁷⁴⁷

	[name and surname]	[age]	[profession]
1.	Zelig Brajtsztajn	45	merchant
2.	Yitskhok Morel	40	“
3.	Volf Bornsztajn	40	“
4.-5.	2 Jews from Myszów ⁷⁴⁸ (unknown)		
6.	Yitskhok Fridman	52	tailor
7.	Rahmiel Gelibter	17	merchant
8.	Moyshe Frydman	45	butcher
9.	<i>Oddziałowa</i> ⁷⁴⁹	60	[nurse]
10.	Yisroel Szuster	55	shoemaker
11.	Motl Helfgot	40	woodman
12.	his [Motl Helfgot's] brother-in-law		
13.	Yehude Warszewer	18	fishmonger
14.	Pelte Fajnwaks	34	butcher
15.	his [Pelte Fajnwaks's] daughter	8	
16.	Sore Fajnwaks		
17.	Yitskhok Aronzon	55	merchant
18.	Avrom Bystrowicz	48	baker
19.	Moyshe Nahum Zylbersztajn	48	tailor
20.	Miriam Wajnberg	8	
21.	Borekh Witman	70	<i>shammes</i>
22.	Dobra Zilberberg	75	
23.	Moyshe Yankev Treger	13	
24.	Gershon Treger	10	
25.	A physycian from Łódź		
26.	Yisroel Langewicz	24	tailor
27.	Malke Miodowska	75	
28.	Motl Hutman	94	
29.	Haya Toyve Barenholc	60	

747 The lists have no titles. They are possibly lists of victims of German terror in Łaskarzew.

748 Perhaps Myszory (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

749 (Polish) ward nurse, supervising other nurses in a hospital ward.

30.	Sore Braf	11	
31.	Perets Maczewicer	40	glazier
32.	Moyshe Borekh Rozenblum	26	merchant
33.	Feyge Tsirl Hanower	40	“
34.-37.	4 Jews from Myszów burnt in the <i>bet midrash</i>		
38.	Pinkhes Fajnsznajder	70	

[7] List 2.

	[name and surname]	[age]	[profession]
1.	Eliezer Waldman	70	merchant
2.	Asher Waldman	22	Eliezer Waldman's son
3.	Shloyme Waldman	28	Eliezer Waldman's son
4.	Mendl Waldman		Eliezer Waldman's son
5.	Yoysef Szalit	62	tanning manufacturer
6.	Yehoyshua Szalit	35	Yoysef Shalit's son
7.	Borekh Fajnsznajder	45	watchmaker
8.	Avrom-Yankev Fajnsznajder	14	Borekh Feinshneider's son
9.	Efraim Goldberg	43	merchant
10.	Eliezer Fizman	70	shoemaker
11.	Yankev Wasser	37	merchant
12.	Moyshe Fajnwaks	47	bakery owner
13.	Yehiel Rozenblum	45	merchant
14.	Nosn Rozenblum	14	Yehiel Rozenblum's son
15.	Mendl Horowicz	70	jewellery merchant
16.	Moyshe Szalit	25	tanner
17.	Moyshe Szalit	17	merchant
18.	Yeshayohu Szarfharc	50	[merchant]
19.	Shmuel Waldman	45	bakery owner
20.	Asher Waldman	47	merchant

21.	Shloyme Rotfus	35	butcher
22.	Alter Glazer	40	saddler
23.	Maks Najman	47	barber shop
24.	Yoysef Hutman	22	gaiters – stitching – cutting
25.	Aron Koński	40	forest merchant
26.	Yankev Rozenblum	25	baker

ARG I 872 (Ring. I/851)

Description: duplicates: (a) handwritten (H.W.*), ink, 145×210 mm, illegible fragments); (b) handwritten (MS*), (list of victims [?] in 2 copies; pencil, 145×210 mm, major damage and fragments missing), Yiddish, 11 sheets, 14 pages. Letters “xx” in the margins of duplicate (a) (ink) and “+” on p. 1 (red pencil); sign “///” on the duplicate (b) (ink).

Edition based on duplicate (a), 7 sheets, 7 pages.

SOBIENIE-JEZIORY

114 *After October 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Moyshe Zalcman. Testimony “חורבן סובין” [Destruction of Sobienie], recorded by Kalman Huberband.⁷⁵⁰ The Aktion in Sobienie-Jeziory on 9 October 1942.*

[1] Recorded by K.H. Band

Destruction of Sobienie

Moyshe Zalcman, a resident of Otwock, who escaped from the destruction of Otwock⁷⁵¹ to Sobienie-Jeziory (a shtetl in the Warsaw district,

⁷⁵⁰ Kalman Huberband (?–1943), Rabbi Shimon Huberband’s older half-brother. He was active in *Agudat Israel*, worked as director of the yeshiva “Daat Moshe,” established by their oldest half-brother, Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman Shapiro (1889–1943). K. Huberband was involved in purchase of weapons for the ghetto uprising, see Hersh Wasser’s note attached to ARG I 417 (Ring. I/218).

⁷⁵¹ The Otwock Jews were deported to Treblinka on 19 August 1942.

which numbers about 2,000 Jews, including those who have just arrived)⁷⁵² recounts:

Having arrived in Sobienie, 11 days after the destruction of Otwock, I found the local Jewish population in a quiet mood. As in many other shtetls, they were sure that they would avoid the disaster.

On the first day of *Sukkot*, the chairman of the *Judenrat*, Mr Ari[. . .],⁷⁵³ together with local community activist Moyshe Klajnman, announced to the Jewish population that they were worried about the fate of the Sobienie Jews, because the local gendarmes were claiming gifts from the *Judenrat*, such as boots, linen, gold, etc., and they absolutely demanded that those gifts be handed over to them by 12 o'clock that night. They demanded this in such a threatening manner that it stirred up a fear that something could happen the next day. These rumours evoked an anxious mood among the local Jewish population.

In the afternoon, three SS men arrived from Garwolin together with 40 Polish policemen, and the news spread, which was soon confirmed, that the gendarmerie [2] had commanded the municipal authorities of Sobienie to deliver 150 carts by Sunday morning.⁷⁵⁴ The Jewish population could still not believe that a "resettlement" was being prepared. They said that they were capturing Poles to go to Germany for work.

At 12 o'clock at night, after the chairman had handed over the "gifts" to the local gendarmerie, they explained to him in a cynical manner that the "resettlement" of the Sobienie Jews would take place the next morning. The chairman announced this to the Jews gathered in the streets of the shtetl. A wailing began in the shtetl. People soon tried to escape, but the whole shtetl was surrounded by the local gendarmerie and Polish police. The first victims among the fleeing Jews soon fell at the border of the shtetl. The police shot all of those trying to escape.

Then the chairman informed the local Jews that the German authorities had decreed that the entire Jewish population should present themselves with luggage punctually at 6 o'clock in the morning in the courtyard of the

752 According to ŻSS files, in April 1942 Sobienie-Jeziory had 3,675 residents. See Tatiana Brustin-Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada skupisk żydowskich w dystrykcie warszawskim," BŻIH, 1(3) (1952), table VIII.

753 This is probably a reference to Arie Frydsohn. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/394, p. 50ff.

754 The next day, 27 September 1942.

bet hamidrash, from where they would be sent off to the occupied territories in Russia for work.

At the appointed time, the courtyard of the *bet hamidrash* was already full of men, women and children. The cries went [3] right up to heaven.

After the appointed time, the Germans together with the Polish police went to the Jewish dwellings and looked for hidden Jews. Whenever they came upon a Jew, they shot him on the spot. The same fate befell the sick people, who were not able to present themselves at the courtyard. They were shot lying in their beds. The murderers found the family Kołkowicz, which comprised 18 people, lying in the cellar. For a large amount of money, the family Kołkowicz persuaded them not to shoot them in the cellar. They were led out to the cemetery and were shot dead there. Approximately 100 Jews, among them sick people and small children, were shot dead at that time.

The Polish police worked extremely hard. Through a crack in my hiding-place (an attic of a storehouse), I noticed that three small children, whose mother had run away from them in great confusion, were nestling up to one another, poor things, trembling all over in great terror. Suddenly, two Polish policemen arrived and, with sadistic calm, shot the three children, leaving them dead on the spot.

[4] Along with the shooting of hidden Jews, the operation of emptying the Jewish flats took place. All Jewish possessions were loaded onto carts and taken away to the gendarmerie station.

At noon, the whole crowd, men on foot and women and children on carts, accompanied by blows with sharp rods and gun butts, was driven to Puławy, 16 km from Sobienie, and from there they were loaded onto rail carriages to Treblinka.

Since I was hidden and did not experience the journey to Puławy, it is not possible for me to recount in detail how the hellish journey from Sobienie to Puławy went and how dozens of Jews fell from the frightful blows and other tortures.

This is how the community of Sobienie was destroyed.⁷⁵⁵

ARG II 365 (Ring. II/309)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (S^J*), ink, Yiddish, 154×199 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

755 According to Sura Drożdżiarz's testimony, three Jews from Sobienie-Jeziory survived the war. AŻIH, Holocaust testimonies, 301/5490, p. 1.

115

21 January 1941, Grójec, Ernst Maurer. Ordinance regarding resettlement of Jews from rural communes in the Grójec County to small towns.

We announce the following ordinance of the Authorities:

All Jews living outside the towns of Błędów, Tarczyn, Mogielnica, Góra Kalwaria, Warka, and Grójec are to immediately move to the nearest town. The village heads are to personally ensure that by 27 January 1941 there are no Jews living in their commune. The village heads are to immediately notify the Jews about this ordinance and personally supervise directing them to their new places of residence. The Jews are to be issued a suitable recommendation addressed to the local mayor. By 27 January 1941, the village heads are to submit to me lists of names of the resettled Jews, including information about where they have been directed to. Similarly, by 29 January 1941, the mayors of the above-mentioned towns are to submit to me a detailed list of Jews who have registered in their town. It is forbidden to take Jews in towns other than those specified for settlement by the village heads of the communes.

The above ordinance is motivated by the fact that Jews living in villages have not been subject to sanitary inspections and have caused epidemics.

At the same time, as of 27 January 1941, all Jews are forbidden to stay outside their commune of residence without permits issued exclusively by me. Jews encountered outside the area of their residence after this deadline may be shot on the spot. The *Judenräte* are to immediately announce this ordinance and they are personally responsible for possible breaches hereof.

Grójec, 21 January 1941.

/-/ as authorised, Maurer⁷⁵⁶

ARG I 760 (Ring. I/881)

Description: original (typewritten, seal of the *Judenrat* in Grójec, 220×350 mm, thumbtack holes), duplicate (typewritten, 203×293 mm); German, Polish, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

756 Ernst Maurer, employee of the county governor's office in Grójec. His surname can be found in all German ordinances regarding the Jewish population of Grójec. See Karolina

Early 1942?, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account of events in the Grójec ghetto, recorded by Nekhemia Tytelman [?]. Fragment of a note on the frame of mind in the Grójec ghetto; information about Poalei Tsiyon activists.⁷⁵⁷

[1] [. . .] The leader of P[oale] Z[ion] is Werber. He [. . .] for 1,200 zlotys, he set out by *samochód*⁷⁵⁸ to Warsaw without a *przepustka*. In Grójec, he was removed from the car and shot. ^cAll checks were made on persons who were noted as prisoners.⁷⁵⁹

The ghetto, as mentioned, is not walled in, but nevertheless tightly sealed. People registered in one ghetto and found sleeping in the other are shot instantaneously.

The ghetto gets narrower all the time, with streets constantly being removed from it. Recently, some streets were removed where sheds are to be set up. For allegedly failing to leave dwellings in proper order, the Jews had to pay a levy of 300,000 zlotys.

There is great fear of expulsion, ^cof physical extermination.^c People see that the selection is already being made. Jews who received “unfit”⁷⁶⁰ or [. . .] at the first registration (2½ years ago) can under no circumstances get a *placówka*, or a place to work. They are the ones who tremble most. The whole population works at the German workplaces. [. . .] those who [. . .] starve and tremble [. . .] their tomorrow.

Panz, “Zagłada sztetl Grice,” *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 3 (2007), p. 20; D. Libionka, L. Weinbaum, *Bohaterowie, hochsztaplerzy, opisywacze...*, p. 290.

757 The document is a fragment of a larger unit. Pages are missing at the beginning and at the end.

758 (Polish) Automobile.

759 ^cHere and below, text written in different coloured ink between the lines and on the side of the page.

760 Persons designated as unfit for work during registration for forced labour.

[2] [. . .] Jews, order to stretch themselves 10[?] times between the legs of horses and other amusements such as [. . .]

Relations [. . .] the Poles are good; during their massacres, the intelligentsia suffered the most, mainly the teaching profession.

Recently, an interesting fact occurred here:

Thanks to the Jewish informer (the aforementioned [. . .]), a certain comrade, A. N. Isrolik, was arrested. It was three weeks ago, on a Saturday evening. On Sunday morning, 8 Poles with revolvers walked into the Jewish police headquarters and forced the Jewish policemen to lie down on the ground. They ordered Isrolik to give himself up and took him with them. The police had to lie still for a while until they disappeared. The S.P.⁷⁶¹ then arrested Isrolik's wife [. . .], who was [pregnant] in her eighth month. She miscarried from fright and was released only after a difficult operation in the Jewish hospital (a stillborn child). The opportunity was then taken to arrest a number of Jewish workers who were suspected of contacts with Polish workers. Among those arrested was Comrade Moyshe Goldsztejn, who is in prison to this day. They also looked for the well-known old P[oale] Z[ion] activist Dovid Wajntraub. When they did not find him, they attempted to take his wife and daughter. However, they managed to prove that he had not been living there for a long time and was in [. . .]. All those arrested are still [. . .] with Polish comrades. Also [. . .]

ARG I 761 (Ring. I/1054)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (Ł*), ink, Yiddish, 111×350 mm, damage and fragments missing, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attached is Hersch Wasser's note in Yiddish: "1942, Nekhemia Natan Tytelman, manuscript."

761 (Polish) Abbreviation for *Służba Porządkowa*; Order Police.

117

After 19 August 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony גור "קאלוואריע (גער)" [Góra Kalwaria (Ger)]. The situation of the Jewish population before the war and during the occupation: activity of the Judenrat, aid from the AJDC, forced labour, spread of illegal trade with Warsaw, deportation on 25–26 February 1941, and fate of the deportees in the Warsaw ghetto.

[1] Góra Kalwaria (Ger)

Just before the war, Góra Kalwaria numbered 7,000 (seven thousand) souls, including 3,300 Jews. Thus, Jews were represented in the communal institutions as a minority, even at the time of the democratic elections. In fact, Jews in Góra Kalwaria constituted a majority, but the Christians wanting to dominate the Jews and, for this purpose, added several Christian settlements from other communes into the town. They also included the ill from the Christian hospital, *Dom dla starców i kalek*,⁷⁶² which amounted to several hundred people from other towns. In this way, the Christians created a fictitious majority.

Economically the town of Góra Kalwaria was different from other towns due to its distinctive character, because the *Gerer rebbe* lived there.⁷⁶³ Hasids were always visiting, especially on festivals and Sabbaths. Their numbers reached up to 6,000 people. The majority of the Jewish population made their living from this, for example: hoteliers (thieves is how they were called, for no reason), grocers, butchers, fishmongers, fruit sellers, and so on. Especially on *Yamim Noraim*⁷⁶⁴ and *Shavuot*, up to 90 per cent of all private dwellings were rented out as lodgings for Hasids. Jews lived from these earnings for several months, paid the rent, debts, bills of exchange, and so on.

762 (Polish, in Latin characters) Home for the elderly and disabled.

763 The *tzaddik* of Góra Kalwaria. At that time, it was Abraham Mordecai Alter (1866–1948), fourth *tzaddik* of the Ger dynasty, co-founder of the *Agudat Israel* Orthodox party, one of the most influential representatives of Orthodox Judaism during the interwar period.

764 See footnote XXX.

Jews represented 90 per cent and Christians 10 per cent of the food trade. As well, Jews owned the entire trade of textiles and ready-made clothes. Jews represented 80 per cent of the shoe industry. On the whole, up to 35 per cent Jews occupied themselves with craft work, such as cobblers, tailors, carpenters, painters, glaziers, wagon drivers, bakers, butchers, boot makers, etc. The tailors and cobblers occupied themselves with old clothes and with producing ready-made merchandise, prosperous work.

The trade with soldiers constituted a separate small branch of trade, because soldiers were always stationed in Góra Kalwaria, such as the artillery or sometimes the *Straż Pograniczna*.⁷⁶⁵

[2] Although the *Gerer rebbe* lived in the town and this factor provided livelihood for local Jews, this also had a negative impact on the economic life in Góra Kalwaria. Namely, many Jews expected earnings from the visiting Hasids and at the same time did not try to seek other sources of income, like trading in the surrounding towns or learning vocations, and this was the reason why Góra Kalwaria was inferior to other towns, and also poorer.

There was no industry in Góra Kalwaria, with the exception of 2 mills, steam and electric ones, which were in Christian hands, but were partly rented out to Jews. It is worth mentioning that thanks to a Jew, Mr Wajnsztok, who had moved [here] 10 years ago, a sawmill, obviously a Jewish one, was recently opened in Góra Kalwaria. It prospered and in the time of the war it was requisitioned.

Góra Kalwaria did not operate with large capital. The sawmill operated with up to 100,000 zlotys; the flour trade up to 50,000 zlotys; the textile trade up to 50,000 zlotys; shoes and clothes industries up to 50,000 zlotys; other branches up to 150,000 zlotys. All in total, up to 500,000 zlotys of Jewish-owned capital, obviously including the credit received from the outside in money, merchandise, and bills of exchange.

It can be said that many years before the war, the relations with the local Christians were not bad, and the same can be said about the relations with the peasant population. This had the effect that in communal institutions one could get better service, and even a Jewish clerk was appointed in the municipality. Sometimes a compromise was reached for elections. However, the trends worsened when anti-Semitism in Poland started to grow. Then, the

765 (Polish, in Latin characters) border guard.

number of Christian businesses grew and controversies arose as a result. But in comparison with other towns, it was bearable in Góra Kalwaria.

[3] Unfortunately nothing good can be said about the Jewish community in Góra Kalwaria, because the leadership of the community was in the hands of *Agudas Yisroel*. The majority of the Jewish population was always against this leadership because it never did any constructive work, and did not even pay the rabbi his salary. The *Agudah* came to power in the community by terror, threatening Jews that Hasids would not lodge with anyone who would not vote for *Agudah*. Especially by external means: they used Clause 20⁷⁶⁶ to cross out candidates from lists, and protested to the regional authorities; a rabbi, a Ger supporter, sat in Grójec and took care of everything. Jews suffered a lot from the bad community leadership of the clique of the Gerer Hasids. They could not provide any constructive support or appropriate education for children. The aid was provided in the old-fashioned system by donations. When a person became ill or needed to marry off an old spinster, donations were collected. This did not have a socially organised character, but [rather] a sporadic and private one.

The only constructive help for the Jews of Góra Kalwaria was the Jewish Cooperative Bank, owing to the fact that its management was made up of progressive elements. In the beginning, it was managed by the *Agudah* people, but after several months of their management, leaving the bank half-bankrupt, they had to give way to the progressive group, such as craftsmen and Zionists, who reorganised the bank and restored it to such a state that it was rated in the 1st category by the Association (Rymarska Street 6)⁷⁶⁷ and the Foundation;⁷⁶⁸

766 Pursuant to Clause 20 of the Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Education's of 24 October 1930, regulations concerning elections to Jewish communities, those who publicly opposed Judaism could be excluded from the list of electors. *Żydzi w Polsce Odrodzonej. Działalność społeczna, gospodarcza, oświatowa i kulturalna*, vol. 2, ed. Ignacy Schiper, Arie Tartakower, Aleksander Hafftk (Warszawa, 1933), p. 247.

767 Perhaps a reference to the Central Union of Jewish Craftsmen in the Republic of Poland (*Centralny Związek Rzemieślników Żydów R.P.*). The purpose of that association, established in 1921, was to protect the interests of its members in craft chambers, apprentice sections, and guilds, to organise the cooperative movement and credit unions, and to provide legal aid. Its address in Warsaw was Rymarska Street 6.

768 Transliterated in the Yiddish original as pronounced in English, most probably reference to the American Joint Reconstruction Fund, organised in May 1924 by AJDC and ICA. It supported loans, cooperatives, and craftsmen.

it functioned normally until the outbreak of the war. The bank functioned normally thanks to the energetic and strict supervision of the inspector Dr I. Szalman,⁷⁶⁹ who provided or rather helped the bank to get credit and, in this way, saved many Jewish enterprises from going under.

Nevertheless, after their failure in the above-mentioned bank, the *Agudah* established a separate *Bank kupiecki*,⁷⁷⁰ which after a short time went bankrupt with a bang.

[4] Regarding the *Gemilut-Chesed* bank. The bank provided a smaller credit, only up to 150 zlotys (the Cooperative Bank provided up to 1,000 zlotys), but the portfolio was 75 per cent in debt, also thanks to the management of the *Agudah*.

The Cooperative Bank benefited from the Foundation credit, in the beginning up to 15,000 zlotys, long-term credit, for up to three-and-a-half years. Recently, however, the credit was decreased by the Foundation to 8,000 zlotys. Nevertheless, the bank received a short-term credit, 'rediscount of 8,000 in the central',⁷⁷¹ as well as 5,000 zlotys in bank in Płońsk, the latter thanks to the support and intervention of the inspector, Dr I. Szalman.⁷⁷²

The outbreak of the war.

One must say that the outbreak of the war completely ruined the economic life of the Jews of Góra Kalwaria. The possibility for the Hasids of earning money was immediately liquidated. On the sixth day after the war broke out the *Rebbe* left Góra Kalwaria,⁷⁷³ and straightaway on the next day, that is on the 7 September when the front came closer to the town, almost all Jews from the town fled, many to Warsaw, and others to the other side of

769 Dr Józef Szalman (1889–?), before WWII inspector of the Union of Jewish Cooperatives in Poland; from January 1940 inspector of AJDC for the Warsaw District; then inspector of ŻKOM in the Warsaw ghetto.

770 (Polish) Merchant bank.

771 Rediscount credit, credit granted by the central bank to a commercial bank, secured with bills discounted by the commercial bank.

772 ^c Text removed from the duplicate.

773 *Tzaddik* Alter went to Warsaw, where he hid until the spring of 1940. Thanks to complicated diplomatic efforts, he managed to go to Palestine with part of his family. See Esther Farbstein, *Hidden in Thunder. Perspectives on Faith, Halachah and Leadership during the Holocaust*, vol. 1, Jerusalem 2007, pp. 82–86.

the Vistula River. Only a small portion of Jews stayed, approximately 10 per cent. The refugees left their belongings to God's mercy as they ran away in panic. Góra Kalwaria did not suffer from bombardments. A bomb hit the house of the notary, killing 6 people including the notary. Jews did not suffer from this. On Friday, 8 September, the German army occupied Góra Kalwaria. Immediately after, the young Jews of those who stayed in town were taken and sent to POW camp where they spent several months and came back.

After a week the Jews returned, only to find out that most of the merchandise and household goods had been stolen, because in their absence dark elements had opened houses and shops and taken away whatever they wanted. The *Rebbe's* house was broken into first, and many precious items, clothes, furniture, etc. were stolen, which they could not and did not manage to take along.

One can only imagine the state of the Jews who returned home and found such a situation. Moreover, everyone lived in fear. Every day up to several hundred (from 200 to 400) Jews had to [5] report for work in barracks, highways, and sometimes town roads. At the time, Jews in Góra Kalwaria did not have representation, and so a person, a tailor by profession named Yankl Czarnaczapka, put himself forward to represent the Jewish population. It is self-evident that he did not do the Jews any good. He supposedly defended them, but he cared only about himself. This situation continued for several months until the *Judenrat* was established, that is until January. Jews lived in chaos, went to work, and absolutely did not engage in any trade, received no help from anyone; aid offices ceased to exist.

There was no damage to dwellings since, as previously mentioned, Góra Kalwaria did not suffer from the bombardments.

The *Judenrat*

With the establishment of the *Judenrat* in Góra Kalwaria, the situation changed somewhat. The negligence of Czarnaczapka ended. The same [person] should have been in the *Judenrat*, but the town was against it. Mainly the *Ortskommendantur* opposed it, for it understood well that Czarnaczapka could not represent Jews in Góra Kalwaria. It is telling that in certain cases the local military authorities advised Czarnaczapka that he did not deal well with the Jews, that he needed to treat them better.

The *Judenrat* was formed following an order from the *Kreishauptmann*⁷⁷⁴ on the general order of the Governor General. The *Judenrat* was formed on 15 January 1940. Compromise elections were held. There were 6 people elected from the old Jewish community and 6 new [ones], altogether 12 people. The chairman, Mr M. Skrzypek was one of the new people. The *Judenrat* immediately had a very difficult and responsible task to supply the authorities with various items and simultaneously to regulate the labour issue. The supply of the items entailed colossal expenses for such a town. A monthly budget had to be fixed for this purpose. In some months, the budget reached 5,000 zlotys a month. The collection of these sums for [6] this monthly tax, as it was called, had to sometimes be done by sanctions, such as taking funds, even by locking up, with the help of the police, later the Jewish police.

The material situation of the Jews of Góra Kalwaria at that time became very bad. Their merchandise had been confiscated; trade was clandestine. It is telling that in the adjacent town of Piaseczno Jews traded freely and openly, whereas in Góra Kalwaria everything was prohibited. It is true that a new branch of income was added: smuggling food into Warsaw and bringing back sugar and other foods.

There were up to 900 refugees at that time. They lived better than the poor of Góra Kalwaria. They were supported as much as possible. The destitution among the Jews of Góra Kalwaria was great, contact with the Warsaw Joint was soon established, and after receiving the first 3,000 zlotys in February 1940, the Jews immediately began to set up a soup kitchen. Understandably, the *Judenrat* took over the work, and in no time the kitchen was ready and distributed up to 1,200 daily midday meals for 10 groszes a meal, free to the poor. The kitchen lasted until June and, when the Joint stopped providing support, the kitchen ceased to exist. It is worth mentioning that the *Judenrat* supplemented up to 10,000 zlotys for the kitchen.

There were no special aid committees. The *Judenrat* provided all aid. Medical help, one zloty per visit to a doctor (a Jew, P. Rozenberg), partly free of charge, and prescriptions were also free, and partly subsidised. The *Judenrat* distributed support to the poor in money, up to 1,500 zlotys monthly. It is

774 From September 1939 to 1 March 1940, the *Kreishauptmann* of the Grójec County was Paul Hampel (1907–?). Later, until February 1943, he held the position of *Landrat* of Zawiercie (*Wartheland*). See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 479.

worth mentioning that the *Judenrat* distributed help for the Passover of 1940: 15,000 zlotys in money and matzos,⁷⁷⁵ naturally with the additional support of the Joint.

Labour issues

As I have already mentioned, up to several hundred people had to present themselves for work every day. The *Judenrat* regulated the issue according to the following system. Here I must digress and mention that in Góra Kalwaria there was an exception with regard to the labour system. At the beginning, that is in January 1940, on a certain Sunday all Jews were assembled in the municipality building, and they were given numbers. Every Jew had to [7] wear a number, which was allocated to him according to a list. The number was embroidered on fabric and absolutely had to be worn. Otherwise one was punished. The *Judenrat* regulated the labour issues according to the numbers. Naturally, the numbers were not according to the *Judenrat*, but were from before, from Czarnaczapka's times. But it was the *Judenrat* that rationalised the system so that every Jew had to perform work except for the ill, so no one should need to work for anyone else. The *Judenrat* did not oppose someone hiring a worker for money. Every Jew ended up working from 2 to 3 times a week.

Work at the *placówki*

In the middle of the summer of 1940, the work at the *placówki* began. In addition to the municipal works in the barracks, roads, levees drainage work, and peasant works – work in the fields, which altogether required up to 500 people daily, Góra Kalwaria had to send 170 workers to Lublin. Then two difficult tasks for the *Judenrat* began, because the situation was simply catastrophic. Where does one get so many people? But with great effort, they found a solution: the work for the authorities, barracks, highways, municipal works was carried out meticulously; at the *placówki*. However, where the work was supposed to be paid for, at the levees and the drainage works, the haggling began. The entrepreneurs, engineers, leaders, wanted as much as possible to exploit the Jews for free, while the *Judenrat*, on the other hand, fought so that the Jews would be rewarded for the work. Thus, some *placówki* disappeared, and

775 For the lists of people who received matzo and financial aid on 28 April 1940, on the occasion of Passover, see AŻIH, AJDC, 210/347, pp. 4–21.

where work was paid for, Jews gladly went to work, and the entrepreneurs were extremely satisfied with the Jewish labour. As to the sending of Jewish workers away to Lublin, it is shameful to say that the Jewish representatives in the region, that is in Grójec, treated the Jews treacherously in the adjacent towns; instead of taking care of all the Jews from the region and treating them equally, they threw the hard work onto Jews from other towns. This way, Góra Kalwaria was forced to provide 170 Jews, which for them meant a sacrifice. But the *Judenrat* struggled with its powers and only sent an additional 40 workers. This cost extraordinary efforts. The work at the *placówki* continued until late autumn. In the above mentioned was included the help for the workers in the camps, and further demands from the *Judenrat* and from the Jews of Góra Kalwaria were not possible.

Now comes a separate chapter: bath facility, hospital and the isolation building.

[8] The authorities, the district Health Office, commanded that as soon as possible, within several weeks, a modern bath facility should be erected, with showers and a delousing furnace. This was very costly. They began building, and further taxed the Jews of Góra Kalwaria 35,000 zlotys, and with great effort, within 6 weeks, the bath facility was erected, a paragon for the entire region.

And when it was complete, they had to start building the isolation house, which was converted from a *bet hamidrash* (as in other towns, in Góra Kalwaria the *bet hamidrash* was [no longer] open for its own purposes). Walls were installed in the *bet hamidrash* creating separate rooms. The work, due to sending the Jews away, was not completed, but 90 per cent of it was done, and this cost many thousand zlotys.

The municipal general hospital was used for the ill. There were only several cases of typhus, equal among Christians and Jews – among Christians, proportionally more. The municipal physician and the sanitary supervisor, both Poles, did not help Jews in this respect at all; on the contrary, they sometimes undermined the work, sought that it should cost us more, and in many cases hurried us greatly...

With the start of winter 1940, began the calamity of the resettlement of Jews into specifically designated streets and the issue of dwellings. In particular, the Jewish populations of the adjacent villages and communities, up to 30 families, were resettled. So, the *Judenrat* had to use its power and

competence to provide all Jews with residences. This succeeded, 100 per cent. It is evident that it was no longer comfortable, but no one was looking for comforts then, and in times of need one had to also make do with cramped accommodation. When the ghettos were created, Jews lost their last livelihood – smuggling and transporting merchandise. The peasants were not allowed to enter the Jewish quarter; no one traded or did any business.

Now came the final stage: the expulsion of the Jews of Góra Kalwaria, at which the Jews, along with their settlement, are utterly destroyed. Jews sell their belongings of hundreds of years of labour and toil for a few groszes, because nothing is allowed out. People sell for negligible prices; sending out packages entails mortal danger, as the things are taken away, confiscated. Finally, the sad day came when the town that for hundreds of years was the well-known Jewish settlement of Góra Kalwaria,⁷⁷⁶ is abandoned. The dark days of 25 and 26 February – woe to the Jews who lived through this and saw all the Jews assembled in the market square, those still remaining, with their bundles on their shoulders, with their children and the elderly, as they started marching towards the train.⁷⁷⁷ The conduct of the authorities was not bad. Special wagons were provided to transport the luggage. Up to 80 per cent of Jews were sent to Warsaw. Those who remained travelled on their own to poor small towns. Those, who were sent to Warsaw, had [9] the same journey as all others sent away. Bath, delousing, etc.⁷⁷⁸ The *Judenrat* remained temporarily for 8 days in Góra Kalwaria with the task of collecting the requisitioned property from the gendarmerie, as well as recovering provisions, such as potatoes, flour, etc. The stay was partially successful. The requisitioned property was partially retrieved and, in the case of the potatoes, 5,000 kilos,⁷⁷⁹ out of 40,000, were successfully sent away. The rest was left behind in Góra Kalwaria. And this was thanks to the Poles, the Polish Red Cross, who hindered us in recovering the potatoes. They also ruined the Jewish things that were left behind.

776 Jews were allowed to settle in Góra Kalwaria in the early 19th century.

777 The narrow-gauge commuter train from Góra Kalwaria to Warsaw, in operation from 1898, among whose funders was the *tzaddik* Yehuda Arye Leyb Alter (1847–1905).

778 After their arrival in Warsaw, the deportees were quarantined, while their belongings underwent delousing. They then waited to be placed in the refugee centres.

779 In the original, 50 metres of potatoes.

Now we returned to Warsaw. When we arrived in Warsaw, we encountered a real disaster and lamentation. Even though the *landsmanshaft*⁷⁸⁰ was immediately established, one instantly noticed that the situation was not under control. The belongings were stolen in Warsaw, midday meals were not provided, no support, nothing. On the contrary, a completely hostile attitude was displayed towards the *landsmanshaft*, simply leaving the refugees abandoned, to die en masse, like dogs... ‘The current situation of the refugees from Góra Kalwaria is beyond description. Destitution, hunger, suffering, high mortality rate. Of 2,700 refugees, several hundred have already died here in the course of several months and, unfortunately, it is difficult to estimate their number, because it is growing every minute.’⁷⁸¹

Now the question arises: Who is to blame?

The representatives of the Joint took the position that the refugees should have acclimatised to Warsaw with time, just like all the native citizens, and as such they should have been treated like the indigenous poor. And it is self-evident that the house committees⁷⁸² fell under the control of the [ghetto] districts, making the *landsmanshaft* seem redundant. So, what came out of it? The present tragic situation. The assessment was extremely perilous and bad. Why? First of all, they took respected people, citizens, and suddenly treated them the same as the local poor folk; and thus, they avoided providing decent human support. A person coming to get a meal for a refugee was given the same old excuse: “*Nie ma przydziału.*”⁷⁸³ In cases the support could not come to the refugee directly through the *landsmanshaft* but through the house committees, [it turned out that] for every active committee there were 5 which were not active. As if we do not remember the support for Passover for Warsaw. This was simply a scandal. They allowed the rich of Warsaw to make a luxurious festival for themselves, while the middle and the poor

780 The author uses intermittently the Polish term *ziomkostwo* and Yiddish *landsmanshaft*, the editors decided to use the latter throughout the text.

781 The paragraph marked ‘c’ is only in the duplicate made by BW* (see description below the document); the rest of p. [9] of the original is crossed out with red pencil.

782 Form of social self-help, dating from the first bombardments of Warsaw in September 1939. Their members were in charge of material support, especially food for the poorest residents, and organisation of social life in a building during a curfew. In January 1942, there were over 1,100 House Committees in the Warsaw ghetto.

783 (Polish, in Latin characters) “No allocation”, meaning no ration card has been issued.

classes were dying for a bite of *chamets*.⁷⁸⁴ [10] The incompetent Warsaw representatives and activists should know that this will never remain silent; the stain of disgrace will never be removed from them, but will stay as the eternal mark of Cain on their souls and conscience. If the rich men of Warsaw and their hearts of stone could not be moved for the sake of their destitute brothers, then who asks these gentlemen to represent us? Let them try to admit other, better activists, people with long-time experience in communal work. History has proved that the simple title of engineer, doctor, lawyer, or former grain merchant from Gęsia Street is just not enough to represent and provide for Jews in such a difficult situation. What came out of it: One can say with clear awareness and conscience that the situation was not resolved or, in other words, no good will was displayed. And that is the biggest scandal.

The only institution, which wants to wholeheartedly help the refugees, is the CKU (Central Committee for Refugees). This institution has the most difficult task. It directly greets the refugee and is the first authority for him. Unfortunately, the institution has limited opportunities to help such a huge mass of refugees, especially as CKU is also not properly treated. Thus, in such a difficult situation, it works beyond its capabilities. I mean its treatment by higher authorities, which unfortunately want to throw the work onto the house committees and districts, which are greatly limited in their possibilities and objectives. It would be much better for the refugees if they dealt with only one body, the CKU, which is the actual legal and rational authority for all the refugees.

Now a few words about the technical administrative labour.

Unfortunately, one has to admit that the administrative arrangement for the refugees is miserable. Thus, with the individual distribution of ration cards for meals, all the needy must crowd together in great masses. This is not desirable, with respect to cleanliness, time, and health. The administrative system consists of many voluntary workers [11] who do not know how to appropriately deal with a customer. Alongside the volunteers are paid workers who think that they should also exhibit such treatment to the client. Indeed, not everyone is like this. One must also point out that there are clerks who display an

784 (Hebrew) leaven; leavened food is not permitted during Passover, however, here it is emblematic for any food.

appropriate attitude towards the refugees and treat them in the most normal way and with heart. A model of a devoted and capable clerk is Mrs Towbin,⁷⁸⁵ who deserves appreciation for her treatment of the clients.

It is the current demand that everyone receive midday meals as soon as possible. And also cheaply, because the current price cannot be called help for the poor refugees; 70 groszes for such a meal is definitely too much and the refugees cannot pay such a sum. In a growing number of cases, the meals are not bought out.

19 August 1941⁷⁸⁶

ARG I 746 (Ring. I/809)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten, ink, 220×355 mm; duplicate (2 incomplete copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, 148×210 mm); Yiddish, 29 sheets, 35 pages. Attached are two post-war notes in Yiddish: "Remark. In the copy, the text is missing from the line [. . .]"; "Góra Kalwaria (Ger), 12 pages. 2 copies. Copy. Transcribed on 19 VIII 1941." Edition based on the original, 6 sheets, 11 pages.

TARCZYN

118 *After 28 February 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony "טאַרטשין" [Tarczyn]. Situation of the Jews before the war, the fire in the town in September 1939, the establishment of the ghetto, deportation to the Warsaw ghetto on 28 February 1942.*

[1] Tarczyn

Life in the small town of Tarczyn near Warsaw flowed calmly and monotonously; very seldom did something happen that would arouse or shake it up from its slumbering state. Wintertime, a white snow covered the market,

785 Perhaps Mrs Towbin, active in the campaign to help refugees in the Warsaw ghetto. See ARG II 199 (Ring. II/86).

786 The date appears only on the duplicate done by BW*.

or a grey mud was absorbed in clothing, shoes, and in general, within one's entire life. All Jewish businesses with *goyim*, mostly peasants, took place in the so-called "market." This was a rounded place, somewhat elongated, with low houses built around, some masonry, some wooden, bowed. Houses grey from age, which already had the mould of several hundred years on them. Across the market, the new road, paved from flat, hewn stones passes through, which stretches from Warsaw to Kraków, which does not rest for a minute from the cars and bicycles along the way. That is the only thing that contributes something lively to the town. Thus, on both sides of the road, all of the transactions of Jews and the peasants, who come with their carts of produce, wood, and so forth, are conducted. Both the Jews and the peasants chew straw with deliberation. They do not rush to complete the transactions with the specific peasant-like fairness. They want to raise the price. [They] know that a Jew wants to deceive them, but yet they do not want to sell their merchandise to a non-Jew.

[2] Also, they likewise do not want to make their purchases from a non-Jew, because this has already been engrained for several generations, and that is how it remains. Even the pickets that were placed outside the Jewish businesses did not persuade them, and [they] continued to trade with the Jewish swindler, as they called him, partly in jest, partly in earnest; but trade they did, and Jews barely supported themselves. With the town's *areylim*,⁷⁸⁷ one did not do great business, because, what for? A peasant was the most important. Recently, the town's young *areylim* raised their heads a bit; from time to time they had a drink and threw a few stones at the Jewish passers-by. But they quickly sobered up, so as to further sleep alongside the general slumber that held the town as though in clamps.

The particular internal Jewish life found satisfaction only in the *bet hamidrash* and in the *mikvah*, but it was very pallid. The town did not have any intelligentsia; the quasi-intelligentsia groups blandly played [political] parties, discussions, libraries, but all [was] pallid, without fervour. Seldom, when it came to scandals in the *bet hamidrash*, when a Zionist lecturer did not really find favour among the Revisionists, then it was lively; but this happened very rarely. Up until the war there was almost never any [community] board⁷⁸⁸

787 (Hebrew) uncircumcised, gentiles, non-Jews; derogatory term.

788 In the original, the word *dozores* is used, deriving from *dozór* (Polish); board of a Jewish community in the 19th century, sometimes used also later on.

membership question; simply, because nobody wanted to be [a member]. With effort one managed to put together [3] a full set of 5 persons; they never conducted any activities, simply, because there was nothing with which to be active, except for when somebody died (but this happened very rarely), and one needed to collect several zlotys burial money.

This is how it went, until “he” arrived. “He” is not even worth being given so much attention, but with such paucity of communal life in such a small town, “he” put his feet on the anthill, and the swamp came to life and began to swarm and buzz. Starting as a chairman of the *Ezrat Holim*⁷⁸⁹ to [being] a chairman of the Jewish Community. The expulsion came and pushed “him” back into his place and back to [being] quiet again. The swamp fell asleep again, and “he” is sleeping somewhere in a small room in the big city, Warsaw, and dreams of what? Who knows? “He,” a tall, thin [man] with an ascetic face, with an imagined intelligence, which consists only of directing. An *amerykanka*⁷⁹⁰ broke out.

He came from a big city, impoverished, embittered that Warsaw had not recognized his great talent, and not having any employment, he took up communal work. First of all, wanting to be popular among the *goyish* proprietors, he put forward a proposal to name a street (so to speak, a Tarczyn street) in the name of the great Polish statesman, P.⁷⁹¹ Not a bad honour. Understandably, the proposal fell through... (It came from a Jew.) Afterwards, [he] conducted a prayer for another statesman, and when all of this did not help, he entered the *Ezrat Holim Aniim*⁷⁹² Society and reached the level of chairman.

And when the war broke out, and in Tarczyn, a bit [4] of a fight took place between the retreating Polish military and the incoming German scout tanks, half of the town was burnt down. The *bet hamidrash*, the *mikvah*, Jewish life receives a blow; some flee, some hide in mouse holes. The [. . .] *Judenrat* has come into power, and our intelligent one is the right person in the right place. He leads for 3 months, until they were arrested for three

789 (Hebrew) Help for the sick, a welfare organisation aimed at helping ill and infirm members of the local Jewish community. It was active in Tarczyn until 1939. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/680, p. 1.

790 (Polish) literally, female American. Usually with addition of the word “free” (*wolna amerykanka*) used to describe a major struggle with no holds barred.

791 Probably a reference to Józef Piłsudski (1867–1935).

792 (Hebrew) Help for the poor sick, see also footnote XXXX.

24-hour periods. A second *Judenrat* with a second chairman is established.⁷⁹³ But our hero suddenly becomes active again, and presides in this way until the expulsion, which drove him back to his place, which actually he deserves. Will he still emerge?

Our town endured three difficult moments, which deeply disturbed it and left behind bloody stains upon its thousand-year existence.⁷⁹⁴

1. The conflagration that consumed a third of the houses and left behind a wasteland.
2. The establishment of a Jewish district. The town looked bleak when the Jewish poor wandered around in the gutters, and did not find any place of refuge to which to go. Barns with holes in the roofs were converted into Jewish dwellings.
3. The expulsion of the Jews from this settled place of hundreds of years, where one was used to every little stone and little road. My pen is too poor to describe the chaos regarding the saving of the few impoverished [ones]. Every[one] wanted to save something in good time, and death actually stood before one's eyes. Both those who paid good money for every bundle, and in particular, [5] [for] those who travelled at the community's expense. It must be said that fortunately, our town had more possibilities of things being taken out than did other places.

But today, the few impoverished Jews wander around, and with eyes full of tears, yearning and languishing, they hold their gazes fixed on the small Tarczyn, though burnt down. Despite a Jewish *dzielnica*⁷⁹⁵ (ghetto), despite little livelihood; however, [it remains] very close to one's heart. One asks oneself constantly, when will we be going home to Tarczyn?

ARG I 1025 (Ring. I/921)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×208 mm, 10 sheets, 10 pages. A dot in a small circle in the margins (ink) and “+” on p. 1 (red pencil).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 5 sheets, 5 pages.

793 In 1940, the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Tarczyn was Yisroel Aspis. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/680, p. 8.

794 The Jewish settlement in Tarczyn began in the late 18th century.

795 (Polish) literally, quarter, neighbourhood.

After 28 February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “טאַרטשין” [Tarczyn]. Entry of the Germans, arrests of civilian prisoners, Poles and Jews, and their exile to Sieradz, establishment of the ghetto, deportation to the Warsaw ghetto on 28 February 1941.

[1] Tarczyn

The Jewish community in Tarczyn is quite an old one. The local cemetery is almost 400 years old.⁷⁹⁶ There was no synagogue there, only an old *bet hamidrash*, which was rebuilt 30 years ago. One of the Tarczyn rabbis was Rabbi Yekhiel, later the Aleksandrów *rebbe* and founder of the dynasty.⁷⁹⁷

During the first days of the war, the shtetl was shelled by the German artillery. In total, only a few grenades dropped on the shtetl. But as a result, the *bet hamidrash*, the *mikvah*, the rabbi's house, and houses in 2 streets, which were inhabited exclusively by Jews, burnt down.

On the eve of Rosh Hashanah⁷⁹⁸ of the year 5700, on 10 September 1939, they⁷⁹⁹ entered the shtetl. They gathered together all men, Jews and Christians alike, of the ages from the tenderest youth to the deepest old age, including the priest,⁸⁰⁰ and gave an order that all were to march to Grójec, which is 12 km away from Tarczyn. They started to chase them under the guard of a regiment of soldiers armed with machine guns. On the way, they frightfully beat up a great number of Jews; an order came to run fast [and] many of those running fell behind. If it was a Christian, they did nothing to him. If the straggler was a Jew, he was badly beaten and stabbed with bayonets. Many Jews were beaten up and stabbed until they bled.

On the way, they stopped the group, selected 10 people, Christians only, and announced that those 10 people would be shot, and also that upon

796 In fact, around 150 years.

797 Yekhiel Danciger (1848–1894), *tzaddik*, founder of the Hasidic court in Aleksandrów Łódzki. Formerly a rabbi in Tarczyn, Grójec, and Warka.

798 Not literal meaning. Some time before Rosh Hashanah.

799 The author does not use the word “Germans”, instead substituting “they” or “them” throughout the document.

800 It was Father Czesław Oszkinel (1889–1944), who was then murdered by the Germans. Jerzy Golański, *Z dziejów Tarczyna*, Tarczyn 1997, pp. 71–72.

arrival at the destination, every tenth person from the group would be shot. The 10 selected people were separated from the group [2] and led away, and the group received an order to continue marching to Grójec.

In the evening, in the fading light of the dusk, the group, hungry and tired, arrived at Grójec. They were taken to the prison yard. In front of the prison gate lay the 10 shot people, including 7 Jewish refugees from Kalisz and Łódź, and 3 Christians. The entire prison yard was covered with people lying on the ground. An order came that we, too, were to lie down on the ground and not move from the spot; those who made the slightest movement, would be immediately shot on the spot. Because many people had already been lying in the yard, there was no room on the ground for our group to lie down. There was no solution, and we squeezed in next to each other, greatly cramped. From time to time, we heard several gunshots, and it was clear to us that with each shot, one of us was losing his life. We lay like that all night. When day broke, some people pleaded for mercy from the guards to permit them to relieve themselves. The response was blows. Having no choice, the people had to relieve themselves in their clothes.

About an hour after the rise of the morning star, on the first day of Rosh Hashanah of the year 5700, all were led out of the prison yard and taken to the Grójec pig market. There we again found several thousand men, Jews and Christians, waiting. [3] Firstly, all the priests and bearded Jews, having been designated as rabbis, were picked out from the crowd, they were given brooms and ordered to clean the market and the nearby streets. At the same time, the sweepers were mocked, ridiculed, insulted, and humiliated. They lifted the Tarczyn priest and several Jews up in the air and suddenly dropped them onto the ground, whereby they were badly injured. Then, an order came that all those who were younger than 16 years of age and older than 50 years of age were to stand to one side. All the persons concerned obeyed the order out of fear. All the Christians from the group were immediately freed; the rest were re-absorbed into the group. Then they started to distribute food. The Christians received white bread. Jews, stale brown bread. No one received water. Thirst was great.

An officer held a speech. A Polish interpreter translated, saying among other things: the group would now be taken on a journey of several tens of kilometres; therefore, anyone weak and ill should report. But everyone needs to know that upon declaring oneself frail, one will be put before a medical

commission, and if it turns out that the person is healthy, he will be immediately shot on the spot. No one reported. The group, which consisted of several thousand men, was then driven and chased on the way to Biała.⁸⁰¹ [4] Throughout the entire journey, only the Jews were beaten and stabbed with bayonets. Halfway through [the journey], the officer who was in charge of the group, gave a signal to stop. We did so. The officer held a speech and announced, "As the people are walking badly, it is sabotage, therefore every bad walker will be shot just like the first 10 men from the group were shot for having fired at the German military. After the speech, the group was chased again. We had to run at the same speed as our guards, who were riding bicycles.

We arrived in Biała and were taken to an estate by the same name, right by the town. We were packed into the barns, where it was very cramped. At night, groups of people were removed from the barns several times. It was explained that they were being taken for work, but every time after a group was taken away, shooting was heard. In the morning, we learnt that all the groups of people who had been led out of the barns consisted entirely of Jews and they had all been shot, among them 2 young men from our shtetl Tarczyn, Chaim Wolfson, 22 years old, and Israel Kaper, 18 years old. The names of the other Jews are not known because they were from other towns. They explained that the Jews had been shot because they wanted to run away, but this was not true.

An order came again not to move from the spot. Several people asked to be permitted to relieve themselves. With every day and hour, this matter became increasingly vexed. Some guards had already agreed to this because it was terribly cramped in the barns [5] and this could not be done there, but the other soldiers did not agree under any circumstances. Some people, unable to hold it in any longer, went out of the barn and got badly beaten. Finally, the barns were opened and we were assembled in one place. Everyone was terribly thirsty because we had not had a drop of water in our mouths for 3 days. The officer explained that we would have been given [something] to drink that day, but because we ran away we would not get water; instead, marching continues. From a distance, we saw Jewish girls approaching with buckets and jugs of water. We thought it was an illusion. When we saw how

801 Biała Rawska (Rawa Mazowiecka County).

savagely the cultured soldiers beat the girls for wanting to give us a little water, we were convinced that it was a reality, from which unfortunately we were unable to benefit.

After that, it was announced again that all those who were older than 50 years of age and younger than 16 years of age were to stand aside, and a rather large group of people separated itself. As soon as the group stood aside, a larger group of military men approached them and started brutally beating them with sticks, planks, cudgels and whips. Several Jews suffered haemorrhages from the blows, but no one was freed.

The journey to Rawa [Mazowiecka] began. The group was escorted by gendarmes [6] who were riding on horseback. It was the second day of Rosh Hashanah; the day was very rainy as if it was weeping for our tragic fate. The weeping of the day, however, was hardly a blessing for us. We received an order to go into the ditches by the road: the Christians on the road and the Jews in the ditches, which were full of water. We also received an order to run as fast as the military guards rode. The Jews, drained and exhausted, could under no circumstances run so fast. All the Jews who fell behind in running were stabbed to death on the spot. In the group in which we ran, 14 Jews died in this way. They remained lying dead on the road, without receiving a Jewish burial.

We were chased as far as Biała and there we were led into a park. Shortly after arriving, Jews were separated from Christians. The Jews were arranged in rows of 4, one right next to the other. They gave an order that no one must move from the spot and [we] must sit down on the ground. It was impossible not to move from the spot while sitting down. Therefore, we simply stayed suspended in the air in a sitting position. Many military men and a group of *Volksdeutsche* approached the Jews; some of them were scratched all over; the *Volksdeutsche* pointed at the Jews [7] that it was they who had scratched and beaten the *Volksdeutsche* and that the Jews had stolen their property. First of all, they took from all the Jews all that was theirs, searched them and took all the money that they had on them, leaving them with only 20 zlotys each. Then other soldiers came, they took the 20 zlotys too, leaving only 10 groszes each. Then they had the Jews take off their clothes and shoes, leaving them literally in their underwear. Only then did the real execution begin. The military men and the *Volksdeutsche* pounced on the Jews like true animals, beating them brutally with spades, cudgels, whips, and rifles. For the entire journey until this point, the Jews had not been beaten as much as now.

The number of Jews was large. There were several thousand men among the wanderers during the bombardments of Kalisz, Łódź and the surrounding areas, as well as specially arrested Jews from Mogielnica, Żyrardów, Góra Kalwaria, Tarczyn, and other shtetls in the Warsaw district. Among the Jews, there were many rabbis, doctors and lawyers. Among the Christians, there were many Polish soldiers, prisoners of war. Among the Jews, there were 6 Polish POWs.

An officer approached the group of Jews [8] and ordered that the Jewish POWs step out of the group; the 6 Jewish soldiers stood separately to a side. The officer approached one soldier and asked, "How many German soldiers did you kill?" The Jewish soldier was taken aback by the unexpected question and replied hesitantly, "None." The officer called out in a loud voice that the Jew had replied that he had killed one German soldier. The Jew had allegedly replied, "one." The Jew started to shout that he had said "none" and not "one", but his speaking out naturally accomplished nothing.⁸⁰²

The officer then approached the second Jewish soldier and also addressed him with the same question. Having seen what happened with the first soldier, he did not answer the posed question at all. The officer went on to announce in a loud voice that the Jew did not reply because he had killed many Germans.

Near the spot where the 6 Jewish POWs stood, there were 3 trees. The Jewish soldiers were stripped naked, many military men and *Volksdeutsche* stood around them, as well as many Polish POWs, who were forced to do it. Every participant in the circle was armed with a stick, bar, whip, or another destructive weapon. [9] The Jewish POWs received an order to run in a circle around the 3 trees and when the naked Jews ran by, each one of those who formed the circle delivered a deadly blow in any place, in the head, back, stomach, or another part of the body. After a few minutes of running, the Jews turned into a running bloody mass, and after a few minutes they all suffered haemorrhages. One after another, they fell to the ground, where they were hacked to pieces by the evil beasts. In this tragic way, the holy martyrs gave up their purified souls.

The hands of those, for whom the word "beasts" would be a title, did not tremble, murdering the unfortunate Jews in such a cruel way. Demons! Not forever will you dance your demonic dance!

802 In German, the word *kein* (none) taken to be *ein* (one).

In the evening, the Jews were brought into the local church; the church had been packed earlier with Poles. The Poles became angry [on account of] why the Jews had entered the Christian church, and also that it was crowded enough without them, and that all troubles came from the *yids*, who were always making the Polish people unhappy. They started to shove the Jews under the pews. For some Jews, there was no room under the pews, so they remained standing among the Poles. [10] Many Jews started to faint due to the lack of air because of the crowd. The Jewish doctors wanted to revive them and save them, but could not get through to the unfortunate ones, who were lying under the pews, nor did they have with what to save them. Moreover, there was not a drop of water for a remedy. The Jews lying under the pews saved one another with... urine and creating artificial air by waving their hats.

Some Poles started to pick on the Jews, started to beat them, insult them, and search them in order to take from the Jews whatever had been left by the brown locusts. The Jews resisted, not letting themselves be robbed. There was a threat of blood being shed. The Jewish doctors and lawyers intervened, started to appeal to their feelings of pity, gave them to understand how bad such treatment of Jews was on their part. It worked, things calmed down.

In Biała, Jewish girls and women brought food and water for the detained Jews, but here, too, they were not allowed anywhere near, only beaten up.

The following day, the day after Rosh Hashanah, the Jews were taken away from the Poles, who remained in the church, and only the Jews were driven to Jeżów. Also on this march, the Jews were not permitted to go on the road, but were driven along into the ditches. The riders aggressively chased the Jews; people were constantly falling. Their neighbours hoisted those who had fainted onto their backs and kept running, but when a rider saw a Jew fall, he shot him dead on the spot. [11] In this manner, 14 Jews were shot dead in our group, lying on the road like carcasses, without a Jewish burial.

We arrived in Jeżów. No Jew was seen in the light of day. The local Jews in hiding must have learnt of our arrival because straightaway many Jewish women and girls arrived with a variety of food and water; here the women were indeed allowed to give us food and drink. They brought us back to life with the water. It was simply no longer possible to endure the thirst after not having had a drop of water in our mouths for so long. The Jewish women comforted and encouraged us; with their words of comfort they brought us a fresh and new soul. (Bless you, Jewish women of Jeżów!)

We stayed in Jeżów for 2 days. After that time, they loaded us onto big trucks and drove to Pabianice.

When we arrived in Pabianice, they locked us up in Kindler's factory.⁸⁰³ We were not permitted to go out into the yard. One of the bitterest problems was not being allowed to go out into the yard to relieve ourselves. From a party of several thousand men, only a group of 15 people was permitted to go out. When one group returned, another group of 15 people went, and it continued like this. The people therefore relieved themselves into their caps or hats and gave them to the 15 Jews, who [12] were fortunate to go out.

In Pabianice, Jews were photographed many times in various laughable poses. The Jews were mocked, pointed at: These are the "heroes" who went to fight the brave German army.

We spent 36 hours in the Pabianice camp. From there, we were taken to Sieradz. In Sieradz, we were brought into the prison yard. Assembled in the yard were about 10,000 Poles. A German officer arrived, who held a speech for the Poles in a beautiful Polish. He announced that the Jews alone were to blame for all the misfortunes from which the Poles were suffering. Poland had lost its independence because of Jewish war incitement. Germany has nothing against Poland; if not for the Jews it would not have come to a war with Poland. The relations with Poland had been the best, but the Jews ruined them; therefore, one must get even with the Jews. The officer's speech had fatal consequences. The roused Poles threw themselves at the Jews and beat them savagely. It was simply a pogrom. Not a single Jew remained unscathed, without getting bloodied. In the prison buildings around the yard, many Polish prisoners were interned, among them many officers. Some of them began to incite the attackers with various exclamations through the tiny prison windows. [13] This encouraged the attackers, who intensified their activity. Upon seeing this, other officers started to shout at the attackers, "Stop! This is a disgrace for Poles! The Jews are our brothers!" and similar proclamations. Those utterances encouraged the Jewish doctors and lawyers, who turned to the attackers and explained to them what a crime they were committing. This had an effect, they stopped the combat, and only thanks to that

803 The R. Kindler joint-stock company's semi-woollen textile factory at Zamkowa Street 31; see *Księga adresowa Polski (wraz z W. M. Gdańskiem) dla handlu, przemysłu, rzemiosł i rolnictwa 1929*, Bydgoszcz 1929, p. 962.

did it not come to casualties. If not for this, the pogrom would have ended with many Jewish victims.

During the fighting, the Jews screamed terribly. Germans came and took the Jews away to one of the prison buildings. From the yard to the prison building, the Germans and Poles were lined up in two rows. Each Jew had to go through the “fire”,⁸⁰⁴ during which they were badly beaten both by the Germans and the Poles. Jews hid in the yard in order not to go through the “fire”. The Poles in the yard and the officers through the tiny prison windows indicated where the Jews were hiding. The same thing happened again: Other officers shouted at the Poles that they were criminals, that it was a disgrace; in any event, all the Jews had to go through the “blaze” and each one was beaten.

From the prison, the Jews were taken to the railway. At the station in Sieradz, a train with 110 freight cars was waiting for them. [14] The cars were filthy, the floor full of horse manure. Up to 45 people were packed in each car. The freight cars were bolted from the outside. Since there were many Jews in proportion to the number of cars, many actually stayed put.

The train started to move. It was dark, stuffy and crowded in the cars. Scant daylight got in through the cracks. There was nowhere to sit down. We travelled for hours and could by no means orient ourselves as to where they were taking us. We were beaten, tired, broken, and apart from that, suffering from terrible hunger and thirst. We travelled like that for full 48 hours in the locked dark freight cars, in which there hung a terrible stench of horse dung and human waste...

After 48 hours of being locked in the moving freight cars, the train stopped. The doors opened for a while and we saw that we were at Breslau⁸⁰⁵ station. The guarding of us was taken over by railway workers. They learnt from us about our latest experiences and that we had been fasting literally for over 48 hours, so they secretly brought in water for us and gave their bread away. They also let us out, one by one, to relieve ourselves, which had been such a painful issue for us. At the station, there were also many Poles, brought here just like the Jews. Some woman came, who held a speech in Polish for the Poles, [stating] that the Jews were to blame for all their misfortunes.

804 A walk between two rows of men who hit them with clubs.

805 Wrocław today.

[15] On the same day, a commission came, which went from car to car and examined everyone. Finally, the commission announced that “*solche Scheisse brauchen wir nicht*”.⁸⁰⁶ The opinion of the commission gave rise to various speculations among us; the pessimists maintained that we were, God forbid, completely done for. Since we are not needed, who knows what they will do to us. The optimists maintained, on the contrary, that they would send us back to where we came from.

It did take long before the train started to move in the opposite direction. Through the cracks and holes in the cars, we established that we were going back.

We arrived back in Sieradz, were unloaded from the freight cars and divided into two groups. One group was taken to the Sieradz synagogue, the other one was moved to Łask and put up in the local synagogue. 10 days had passed between taking us away from Sieradz and returning. Yet 4 whole weeks had passed until our coming home to Tarczyn. For the following reasons: They started to release the Jews from captivity in groups. When the Jews were being sent home, they were not given any certificate or a document that they were free, so as soon as a German encountered them, he detained them again. Thus, for example, several Jews in Sieradz were placed on a square [16] and jets of cold water from firemen's hoses were released at them from all sides. When they finished the water job, they regaled the Jews with a savage beating. Another instance was: Several soldiers seized a couple of Jews returning to Tarczyn from the camp; they threw them into a potato cellar, filled the cellar with water, and the Jews stood there in the water, which reached up to their necks, for several hours. Because of these reasons and hiding from the German soldiers, the way home lasted for up to 4 weeks. Upon their return home, many of the tortured died.

When we arrived in the shtetl, it was quite quiet there, except that all the Jews were without beards, which had been cut off.

Every few days, new robberies took place in the shtetl; everything that belonged to the Jews was taken from them, there was no end to the requisitions. The Jewish shops and flats were emptied. Even rolling pins and dough-cutting boards were taken.

806 (German) We don't need such shit.

Capture for work also took place in a terrible way. During the great frosts of the winter of 1940, the Jews received an order: that all men, women and children must present themselves for work to clear snow from the road. At 6:30 a.m., all the Jews, men, women and children, reported for work.

[17] In January 1941, a ghetto for Jews was established in Tarczyn. The ghetto consisted of a few houses; the ghetto was very confined and narrow. After the establishment of the ghetto, an order was issued: that any Jew who leaves the ghetto would be shot on the spot.⁸⁰⁷

In early February, 1941 rumours circulated that an expulsion of the local Jewish population was being prepared. The Jews wanted to flee before the expulsion in order to save some of their possessions, but they were afraid to leave the borders of the ghetto because of the aforementioned order.

On 28 February 1941, the decree came that all the Jews must leave the shtetl without the right to take any of their possessions. Warsaw was indicated to the Jews as a place of refuge. For a hefty sum of money, one pretended not to see that the Jews took some of their belongings with them. However, [some] Jews informed on other Jews that they had removed their possessions, but they were already out of the town. The authorities notified Warsaw about this, and when the Tarczyn refugees arrived, they were all detained. A strict inspection took place and everything that was theirs was taken from them in Warsaw.

Today, there is not a single Jew in the old Jewish settlement of Tarczyn. The informers did not benefit from their denunciations; they went into exile just like all the other Jews.

Those from Tarczyn, like all other Jews, are waiting for help to rebuild their destroyed home.

ARG I 1024 (Ring. I/920)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (NN*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 34 sheets, 34 pages. A dot in a small circle at the top (second copy) (ink). Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish on p. 1 (ink): "Hoher."⁸⁰⁸

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 17 sheets, 17 pages.

807 Ernst Maurer's ordinance of 2 January 1941. See Doc. 115.

808 Or possibly "Haber", most likely the narrator's surname.

ŁOWICZ COUNTY

ŁOWICZ

120 *After March 1941[?], Warsaw ghetto, [Czarnobroda].⁸⁰⁹ Account on the first days of the war in Łowicz, recorded by Hersh Wasser.*

[1] Łowicz. 5,000 local Jews and 6,000 newcomers, but on the day of expulsion⁸¹⁰ 4,000 locals + 2,500 refugees.⁸¹¹ On Sunday, 3 September [19]39, the train station and town bombed. On 5 [September], rare cases of Jewish war victims. On Sabbath, 9 September, the Germans entered at 8:30 a.m.,⁸¹² and at 9:30 all men [summoned] without exception at Rynek Jana Kilińskiego, even *Volksdeutsche*, under a strict guard in the synagogue. Everyone despaired deeply. Within 2 hours, shot at the synagogue, great panic. After recovering some composure (eating not allowed). In the evening, various issues (beating with rifle butts), [running] to the synagogue courtyard and back. At night, in order to torment, they threw hand grenades. On Sunday morning, the women gained permission to bring in food, thanks to the efforts of Mrs Regina Waldberg.⁸¹³ [They] started to release old people. From Sunday till Monday, the torments were repeated. An unknown Pole was shot in the synagogue courtyard. On Saturday, 4 p.m., the commandant arrived and said that Warsaw

809 Perhaps Lejzor Czarnobroda [1920?–?], a pre-war Janusz Korczak's associate; see Anna Landau, *Wielki "Mały Przegląd,"* Warszawa 2018, pp. 50, 55, 478, and/or the author of a testimony of the *Grossaktion* in the Warsaw ghetto, see ARG II 244 (Ring. II/205, Ring. II/207).

810 A reference to the deportation to Warsaw, which took place in February and March 1941.

811 Before 1 September 1939, Łowicz had 4,339 Jewish inhabitants. On 12 January 1940, the Committee for Aid to Refugees registered 1,933 people in its care (AŻIH, AJDC, 210/471, p. 4). In March 1940, over 3,100 refugees came from Aleksandrów Łódzki, Zgierz, Stryków, Łódź, and Konstancin. In February 1941, there were approximately 7,000 Jews in Łowicz. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada," table IV.

812 The Germans temporarily seized the town during 9–11 September 1939.

813 Regina Waldberg, an activist of the Committee for Aid to Refugees in Łowicz. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/471, p. 9.

would fall shortly.⁸¹⁴ England has betrayed you (the Jews),⁸¹⁵ all because of Chamberlain.

On Monday, 11 September, 12:30 p.m., the commandant released everyone. At 5 p.m., the Germans started to withdraw. Battles continued until 17 of the month.⁸¹⁶ Raging fires, 25 per cent houses burnt. 15 killed. It has to be said that on one of these days a squad burst [3] into the old town, took Poles and Jews out of the houses and made them into a human shield – two Jews, Yosef Gurt and Bender, were killed.⁸¹⁷ Immediately after arriving on 17 September, [they] started tackling the work. Before the arrival of the Germans (the) power was in the hands of the mayor and the leader of the citizen's militia, Kreczmer and Sadkowiak (pseudo-*owszem*⁸¹⁸ [. . .] merchants), actually already organized after the seizure of the town in order to avoid being captured for work. A Jewish citizens' committee was created, but it did not help much. On the eve of *Yom Kippur*, also the rabbi [was taken] to work.⁸¹⁹ Very special torments: given swedes to eat, stripped, given wheelbarrows to drag, stripped naked, beaten, also those remaining, cut beards en masse. *Yom Kippur*, a general round-up, Jews badly tormented. In the meantime, Jewish businesses were closed. However, people traded at a slow pace.

ARG I 875 (Ring. I/1149)

Description: original, handwritten (H.W.*), ink, Yiddish, 150×200 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish and Polish: "1939. Łowicz. Original. A testimony from the first days of war by a refugee from Łowicz, Czarnobroda. [Recorded] by H. Wasser."

814 German troops began the siege of Warsaw on 8 September 1939.

815 Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939, but did not launch any military operations at that time.

816 The battle of Łowicz on 13–15 September 1939 was the second stage of the battle of the Bzura River, the largest battle of the Polish-German war. The Germans seized the town on 16 September.

817 That happened on 13 September.

818 (Polish) Indeed. A reference to Polish Prime Minister Felicjan Sławoj Składkowski's speech of 1936, in which he condemned violence against the Jews, but supported the Jewish trade boycott saying, "Economic struggle, indeed, but violence is out of the question."

819 The rabbi of the town of Łowicz was Abram Kolborn. See Jakub K. Petelewicz, "Dzieje ludności żydowskiej w Łowiczu 1939–1945," *Teka Historyka*, part I, 11 (1998), p. 100.

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “ליוויטש” [Łowicz]. Treatment of Jewish labourers from Warsaw, sent to work in Łowicz on 5 October 1939.

Łowicz

During our return from Warsaw, we were stopped in Łowicz to carry out work. It was 5 October 1939. We were taken to clear away bricks from the railway station which had previously been bombed. We were lined up sufficiently far from one another and ordered to throw bricks to each other. A soldier with a gun stood there and made sure that it went quickly enough. [A day] earlier, taking the opportunity, they shot two Jews. The game with us lasted long enough. Later, they led us back to the station. We were told to sit down, you have to rest. Now we will send you home by train. After a couple of minutes, a group of soldiers emerged. We were lined up in a row. The *Feldfebel*⁸²⁰ ordered us to admit that we were to blame for the war. “We Jews are to blame for the war.” This had to be shouted loudly and clearly. The soldiers made sure that everybody did this. After that, we were led behind the station and they started driving us along hitting us violently in the direction of Bolimów.⁸²¹ After [. . .] minutes of [. . .], violent chasing and blows that were by no means light, we were left alone. All along the way peasants were standing [waiting to] collect the overcoats and bundles thrown away by the people being hurried along. The game, as I heard later, lasted for another two weeks.

ARG I 876 (Ring. I/848)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×120 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page. The document was stored in a binder.

820 (German) non-commissioned officer rank.

821 Bolimów (Łowicz County).

122 *After March 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “ליווייטש” [Łowicz]. Situation of the Jewish population since September 1939: destruction and casualties during the first days of the war, persecutions of the Jews, setting the synagogue on fire, arrests, arrival of refugees from Łódź, establishment of the ghetto, relations with Poles, resettlements from the environs of the town, and expulsion to the Warsaw ghetto.*

[1] Łowicz

Łowicz is one of the oldest Polish towns. A few years ago, it celebrated its 800th anniversary. Many historical churches are in Łowicz, which people from Poland and abroad come to visit. Łowicz is not an industrial but a trade town. It is also known for its big fairs, which used to take place there.

The Jewish community is not an old one; it is 130 years old. Before the outbreak of the war 1,200 Jewish families lived in Łowicz.⁸²² It is a Zionist town; the *Agudah* also had a strong presence. The Bund did not exist there at all.

There was a splendid great synagogue in Łowicz until the war. It was built in the year 5636.⁸²³ It was one of the most beautiful synagogues in the entire region. There was an anteroom in the synagogue, in which tens of Jews studied *Mishnayot*.⁸²⁴ The society for *Mishna*⁸²⁵ study was founded 70 years ago by Rabbi Dov of blessed memory.

After the outbreak of the war, Łowicz was bombarded for three days: Sunday, 3 September, Tuesday and Wednesday.⁸²⁶ Żelechowski's large mill, the post office, and the railroad bridge on Bzura were burned down. The bombardment on Wednesday took terrible forms. The entire centre of the town was wiped out. They also opened fire with machine guns, which killed

822 See footnote XXX.

823 The Great Synagogue on Zduńska Street was completed in 1871 or 1872. The Hebrew year 5636 is 1875/1876.

824 Collection of comments on the Torah, legal rules and parables dating back to 2nd century C.E.; basic part of Talmud; see also footnote XXX.

825 (Hebrew) learning, repeating, study; oral tradition.

826 That is 3, 5 and 6 September 1939.

20 Jewish victims. On Wednesday morning, the news started spreading that the Germans were approaching the town. A big part of the population, the majority of the young, fled in the direction of Warsaw.

[2] On Saturday, 9 September, the town was badly shelled by the German artillery and an entire side of 11 Listopada Street burnt down. On the same day, the Polish army blew up the new concrete bridge on the Bzura River. Soon afterwards, the German army entered the town.

As soon as they entered, they summoned all Jewish men to the New Market Square. After several hours of standing there, the Jews were led into the synagogue. Many refugees from Łódź were among the assembled, as well as many rabbis from the Łódź area.⁸²⁷ The Jews sat in the synagogue for 48 hours until Monday evening; they were not allowed any food. They were also not allowed to go out to the courtyard. Many Jews collapsed from hunger and suffering, and there was nothing with which to save them. Outside the windows, a terrible shooting broke out; everyone was sure that they were shooting at the Jews inside the synagogue. Everyone threw themselves onto the floor crying *Shema Yisroel*.

Scenes like this took place several times every day. The picture looked even worse at night when the fire of the shots illuminated the dark night. On this particular night, the Jews were chased out of the synagogue and back inside tens of times, while many Jews were brutally beaten and wounded. On Sunday evening, it was permitted to bring in some food. [3] The most depressed mood was on Monday morning, when people saw German soldiers pulling back through the Łódzka Street through the windows of the synagogue, and a rumour spread that, before they withdraw from town, they would set the synagogue on fire and burn the Jews assembled inside.

The despair and anguish of the people was great. Some tried to escape, but they were shot at. Two Jews went crazy. One Christian who was also in the synagogue also lost his mind. He threw himself upon a German soldier who immediately shot him and buried him in the courtyard. On Monday afternoon, everyone was released from the synagogue.

On Monday evening, the German army left Łowicz and on Tuesday, the Polish army returned. The ovation, which the Jews gave the returning Polish

827 Łódź was captured by German troops on 8 September 1939.

army, was very warm. From all Jewish dwellings people threw flowers, and carried out bread and tea, fruit, sweets, etc.

The joy, however, did not last long. Soon an order came to deploy artillery in town and to shoot, because the enemy was near the town. And thus began very fierce battles in the centre of the town. The fighting continued for 8 days, during which Łowicz was left abandoned, not captured by anyone. A German patrol was seen requisitioning bread in one bakery, and a Polish patrol in another one. [4] The town was under ceaseless shrapnel fire, which caused great damage. It was impossible to put out the fires due to the ceaseless shooting. At night, bayonet fights took place in town, and the next morning there lay big piles of the dead from both sides, Germans and Poles.

On Wednesday, 13 September, on the day before Rosh Hashanah, a German patrol entered the town and took away people from Jewish homes: men, women, even old people and little children. They laid everyone down in the main square and shot over them at the Polish army, and when the Polish army returned fire, the Germans escaped to the gates and shot with their rifles aiming at the Jews [who were] lying down. 2 young boys, Gurt and Bender were killed in this way.⁸²⁸ Tens of Jews were heavily wounded who later died from the injuries. As a result of these fights, more than half of the town was destroyed.

Then, when the German army officially entered the town for the second time, the second series of Jewish misfortunes and suffering began. Every day, all men were taken to work, where they were barbarically tormented. Every day, all Jews, even old people 80 years of age, had to appear in front of the synagogue, where they were horribly tormented, their beards torn out, they were searched and everything they had was taken away and distributed among the Poles who waited there for the plunder.

[5] They set dogs on the Jews. The provoked dogs inflicted terrible wounds on the Jews. Only afterwards, the Jews were sent away to various places to hard labour. On the way, they were beaten because they were walking too slowly; when they walked faster, they were beaten because they were running away. So, the Jews suffered before they arrived at their work place. But there, the great torments began. There, the second act of the wild bestial exploits of the bloodthirsty masters began. Jews were forced to empty toilets with bare hands, to lick floors, drag stones from one place to another and back, dig holes

828 See Doc. 120.

and cover them back up. All this took place under a hail of lashes. The Jews worked like this without eating anything the whole day. On their way home late in the evening, these exhausted Jews had to sing jolly folk songs, which the Germans accompanied with lashes of rubber whips.

On the eve of *Yom Kippur*, they took the town rabbi⁸²⁹ at work, led him around the town and humiliated him: They shaved off half of his beard; the other half they tore out together with pieces of flesh. They ordered him to stand within a circle of hundreds of Jews who had to dance around him, and he had to do somersaults. These sufferings lasted for several weeks, until the *Landrat* issued an order that the rabbi should form a *Judenrat*, which would take over the entire supervision of the Jews.⁸³⁰

[6] From 5 to 10 November, many Jews were arrested in Łowicz. In jail, the Jews underwent terrible sufferings. On Friday morning, 10 November, the Jews were released. On the Friday night before, 11 November, the Germans set the Great Synagogue on fire. The Germans allowed several people to put out the fire, but only in the neighbouring houses; they did not allow the synagogue building to be saved. The synagogue burned throughout the whole night, Saturday, and the whole of Sunday; only on Monday evening did the fire subside. There were no Torah scrolls in the synagogue at the time of the fire because, immediately after the Germans had entered Łowicz, the Jews had taken out the Torah scrolls and hidden them in private homes.

On the following day, Saturday, 11 November, the rabbi was summoned to the commandant's office and asked whether he knew, or suspected, who had set the synagogue on fire. The rabbi answered that he did not know. Then he was given a statement to sign that he had no idea who caused the fire of the synagogue. He was forced to sign this statement. Only a bare skeleton of the burned synagogue remained standing, which was later bought and dismantled by a Christian after the expulsion of Jews from Łowicz.

[7] On Sunday, 12 November, Jews were arrested again without reason, several dozens of Jews, among them Dr. Jakubowski, the former chairman of the Jewish community, a Zionist activist and Councillor in the municipality.

829 Rabbi Abram Kolborn.

830 The chairman of the *Judenrat* was Butshe Szapiro. Its members were A. Berensztajn, Dovid Shiye Brand, Buchner, Fajfer, Elye Figlarz, Finkelsztajn, Bentsiyon Miedzigórski, Rodziński, A. Urbach, Alter Wiener, and Shaye Zylberman. See J.K. Petelewicz, *Dzieje ludności żydowskiej w Łowiczu*, part I, pp. 110–111.

Also arrested were the rich paint traders, Avraham Grynberg and his son, and also H. Szreker, the chairman of Maccabi, former corporal in the Polish army. Besides the 4 men mentioned, all the Jews were released after spending a longer time in jail. These four were sent to a concentration camp, where every trace of them vanished.⁸³¹

They were sent away because the Christians informed the Germans that these Jews had committed serious offences: Dr Jakubowski had raised money among the Jews and bought a canon for the Polish army. He had also collected money, including taking 5,000 zlotys from the owners of the “Grynberg and Son” company, which he had sent to Berlin for an assassination attempt on Hitler. And the assassination attempt was indeed carried out. H. Szreker was accused of bullying a *Volksdeutsch* soldier at the time when he was a corporal in the Polish army.

On a certain day in Łowicz, an order was issued that all Jews should assemble on the New Market Square. All the Jews were lined up in rows and a Polish POW was led before them so that he should recognise someone among the Jews, but he did not recognise anyone. [8] Then the commandant reported: Three people were seen carrying guns in the street; the Polish soldier was a witness to that. When they wanted to arrest them, they fled, and “due to the way they ran” they recognised that they were Jews. And if the soldier could not recognise anyone now, it is only because not all the Jews had presented themselves. Therefore, the Jews must pay a ransom of 2,000 zlotys and all the Jews would remain arrested until the missing ones presented themselves. Within two hours, the ransom was raised to 10,000 zlotys. The Jews were taken away to a brewery outside of the town and after they were tormented for 3 days, they were released.

On 20 December, hundreds of Jews from Łódź and the surroundings arrived in Łowicz.⁸³² The Jews arrived in a terrible state, half alive. They were brought in sealed carriages and on the way they were brutally tormented. Many of them froze to death in the carriages. The Jews of Łowicz greeted the refugees warmly, despite the fact that they themselves were terribly impoverished and

831 According to J.K. Petelewicz, those people were deported to Warsaw and detained in the Pawiak prison. Their later fate remains unknown. *Ibidem*, part I, p. 104.

832 In January 1940, there were 1,933 people registered in the Committee for Aid to Refugees. See Doc. 120.

homeless. The situation in town continued to worsen. The sources of livelihood for Jews dried up. Jewish businesses shut down one by one on the order of the *Landrat*, Dr. Schwender,⁸³³ and were taken over by Christians. The refugees, despite finding themselves in such a critical situation, nevertheless did not lose faith, [9] faith that they would outlive the enemy. The German authority sent demands several times to the community that the refugees should leave the town, but the community “bought out” the decree with bribery.

Before Passover 1940, another wave of misfortunes fell on the heads of the Jews of Łowicz. Various diseases spread due to great overcrowding, and many people died. Strict measures against the Jews were applied, under the slogan of the “fight against the epidemic.” Zduńska Street was closed off; a German doctor was deployed at the entrance, and made various manoeuvres with the Jews. At first, they sent all Jews to the bath, steamed their flats and clothes. Zduńska Street was not further re-opened. Following an order of the *Landrat*, the Jewish police under the leadership of Messrs Weinsztok⁸³⁴ and Zilberg⁸³⁵ was formed. Zduńska Street was the first step towards a ghetto in Łowicz.⁸³⁶ Wooden scaffoldings: The provisional fencing of the ghetto was removed only several weeks later and replaced with high walls, which separated the Jews from the remaining population. The *Landrat* Dr. Schwender boasted that he was the initiator and creator of the first ghetto in the Warsaw district.⁸³⁷

[10] The Polish population mobilised against the Jews. They sent memorandums and delegations to the authorities and requested that the Jewish ghetto should be moved outside of town, arguing that it is a disgrace that Jews

833 Heinz Werner Schwender (1909–1999), lawyer, joined the NSDAP and SS in 1933, supervised NSDAP party training courses from 1938, also worked as a clerk in Prussia; on 20 September 1939 became the Łowicz *Kreishauptmann*, in early 1943 transferred to the *Wehrmacht*, interned after the war and exonerated, worked in the Federal Republic of Germany’s Ministry of Construction. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 503.

834 Yosl Weinsztok, sportsman, owner of a mill in Łowicz, during the war commander of the Łowicz Order Service until the deportation, died in the Warsaw ghetto. See J.K. Petelewicz, *Dzieje ludności żydowskiej w Łowiczu*, part I, p. 116.

835 M. Zylberg, deputy commander of the Order Service, son of a sugar factory owner. *Ibidem*.

836 The ghetto in Łowicz was established pursuant to the 22 March 1940 ordinance of *Kreishauptmann* Heinz Schwender.

837 In the Łowicz County (in Łowicz, Głowno, Łyszkowice, Bolimów, Kiernożia) ghettos were established in the spring of 1940, much earlier than in the rest of the district. See B. Engelking, “Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach...,” in *Prowincja noc*, p. 168.

should live in such an old Polish town. Many Poles had already bought axes and knives and other tools, with which they intended to tear apart Jewish shops and homes during the evacuation. The *Landrat*, however, was also no friend of the Poles and did not carry out their request.

The ghetto was formed in the middle of the town and was divided into four parts. Going from one side of the ghetto to another, one had to cross Aryan streets. So, they started to cut bits out of it, until only Zduńska Street remained, and a bit of Sienkiewicza Street.⁸³⁸ At the gates of the ghetto stood Jewish and Polish policemen. In the ghetto, the Polish police did not have a say, but they visited the ghetto in order to catch Christians who smuggled in provisions for the Jews.

From the beginning when the ghetto was established, the situation of the Jews was critical. No one earned a penny, and as well, they were severely tormented. However, the power of life is stronger than the ghetto walls. Jews knocked out holes in the walls, jumped over the walls, went to villages, and bit by bit brought provisions. Many times, they were caught by *Volksdeutsche* or the Polish police. [11] All this did not stop Jews from saving their children from starving to death in the sealed ghetto.

Two months later special permits were introduced to leave the ghetto. The permits were monthly, the minimum fee was 15 zlotys. Jews obtained all of this after they bribed the *Landrat* with great sums of money. A week later the *Judenrat* received an order sent from the *Landrat* that every day they must supply a certain amount of clothes, furniture, and other items. The members of the *Judenrat* had to themselves go around the impoverished Jewish homes, requisition all valuable things and deliver them to the Gestapo.

At the beginning of summer, a work post was created in Łowicz to regulate the Bzura River.⁸³⁹ Every Jew had to work there 3 days a week. Sometime later, this work started to be paid at 3 zlotys a day. Then a larger number of

838 In the Łowicz ghetto, at the beginning, Jews were allowed to live in buildings on the following streets: Zduńska, Bielawska, Browarna, Ciemna, Ciasna, as well as on a section of New Market Square, and Stanisławskiego and Sienkiewicza Streets. See J.K. Petelewicz, *Dzieje ludności żydowskiej w Łowiczu*, part I, p. 113.

839 The purpose of the works was to move the main river bed away from the town. Two forced labour camps for Jews were set up: on Kapitulna Street (for approximately 500 people) and in Małszyce near Łowicz (approximately 150). See J.K. Petelewicz, *Dzieje ludności żydowskiej w Łowiczu*, part II, pp. 106–107.

volunteers reported for work. The Germans did not like this and changed the system. The work ceased to be the goal, and [the goal] became the tormenting. Every day several Jews came home from work terribly beaten, and many of them were crippled.

Before Rosh Hashanah 1940, the population of Łowicz was preparing to receive the governor Dr. Frank, who was coming especially to become acquainted with the creation of his distinguished student Dr. Schwender: the ghetto. [12] In honour of this celebration, the ghetto was narrowed, and also a 6 metre-wide neutral strip was set around it. The Jewish police received police hats on this day. Dr. Frank drove through the ghetto with great fanfare and applauded Dr. Schwender for his brilliant masterpiece.

The Jews lived in this way until the end of January 1941, when they began to be driven out of surrounding towns, such as Żyrardów, Błonie, Sochaczew, etc.⁸⁴⁰ A rumour spread in Łowicz that Jews would also be driven from here. The *Judenrat* went with a petition to the vice-*Landrat* Mr Munkel, who kept assuring [them] that there was no order for an expulsion.

Suddenly, on Sabbath, 22 February 1941 a gendarme came to the community with an expulsion order: Every day, 300 Jews must leave the town and this way by the 19 March Łowicz should be *Judenrein*.

Rich Jews had fled even earlier, driven by fear, so that by 1 March only quite a small number of Jews remained in Łowicz. The wealthier went off in cars, taking with them various things, as one was allowed to take everything except for merchandise. The poor, however, were compelled to leave on foot, leaving everything behind. The journey was very painful. Germans assaulted and robbed the last things of these unfortunates.

One could only go to Warsaw. The expulsion included 7,000 Jews. All of these Jews have come to Warsaw, where they are slowly dying from destitution and hunger.

ARG I 878 (Ring. I/850)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), handwritten (NN*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 36 sheets, 36 pages. Hebrew letter “ש” in the margins (first and third copy) (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 12 sheets, 12 pages.

840 On 21 January 1941, the *Landrat* of Sochaczew-Błonie County issued an ordinance on resettlement of Jews from Żyrardów, Wiskitki, and Mszczonów on 1–9 February 1941; from Sochaczew on 15–16 February; and from Błonie on 17–19 February. See Doc. 135.

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31 August 1939²⁷– March 1940, Głowno, [Yankev Volf ?].⁸⁴¹ Testimony 1939 טאָג בוך פֿון דעם טאָג פֿון אָנפֿאַנג קריעג צווישן פּוילן [און דײַטשלאַנד 31/8 דען [Diary from the day of the start of the war between Poland and Germany, 31 August 1939]. The war, refugees from various towns, entry of the Germans, everyday life, religious life, forced labour.

[cover] Diary from the start day of the war between Poland and Germany,
31 August 1939

[1]⁸⁴² *Yoman min hayom hehel hamilhamah Polin Ashkenaz*,⁸⁴³ 31 August 1939 Thursday, 31 August 1939. There were rumours of war in the air. No newspapers had arrived, leaving us reliant merely on the radio, which said that the Germans had posed 16 conditions which Poland could not accept and that war must break out. At 2 p.m. as we sat together, I, Shimshon Sochaczewski, and Anshl Rochwerger, went to [the] bath [house]. On the way there, we saw messengers with bicycles sitting in front of the municipality [building] waiting for the mobilisation order. And, sure enough, on our way back we met groups of people reading the pink posters about mobilisation for men up to 40 who had white mobilisation cards, and reservists began to leave.

Friday, 1 September. When we got up, we found out that war had already broken out and that crowds of reservists had left for their assigned posts by car and train. At 10 a.m., we heard the first signal from the siren which had been especially installed on the roof of the municipality building in case of an *nalot samolotów*, an air raid.

The entire day passed in this way.

841 Name of the assumed author is found on p. [9a] of the document.

842 The pagination of sheets as in the original, the letter “a” is added to mark the pages on reverse.

843 (Hebrew) Diary from the start day of Poland-Germany war.

[1a] All those with *przepustki* from the L.O.P.P. or the O.P.L.⁸⁴⁴ went on duty. The shops were closed. Everything went dead, but we did not see any enemy aircraft. The alarm lasted until 12 noon, when it was called off by the same signal. At 6 p.m., there was another alarm, which lasted till 8 in the evening, and duty watches were set up for the whole night. At 10 in the evening, we heard on the radio that Polish cities such as Częstochowa, Kraków, Toruń, Warsaw, and others had been bombed.

Saturday, 2 September. More reservists departed. At 8 a.m., another siren sounded when aeroplanes were heard. It lasted until 12 noon. At 2 in the afternoon, reservists arrived from Łask, already with blue mobilisation cards. They came on foot because the train for civilians was not running. They told us that Sieradz, Łask, Zduńska Wola and Pabianice had been heavily damaged by bombs from the aeroplanes. Many people also arrived from Łódź, fleeing from the bombing in the city. [2] The Łódź Kaliska station had been smashed to pieces. There was panic because the cars had not arrived in time.

Sunday, 3 September. More sirens. Enemy aeroplanes appeared and dropped bombs on parts of the town like Osiny, the railway station, and Młynarska Street. Many people were killed and many wounded. That night another alarm, but nothing happened and no aeroplanes were seen.

Monday, 4 September. More sirens. Aeroplanes re-appeared, dropped bombs and caused casualties. The shops were closed and the population hid in the shelters. For fear of the bombs, the inhabitants began to flee to the surrounding villages. Transportation came to a complete standstill, and there was no electricity. In the evening, my in-law Landsberg and his wife arrived on foot from Sieradz. They had abandoned everything and told us that the Germans had already taken Wieluń, Częstochowa,⁸⁴⁵ etc., and that Sieradz and the surroundings had been bombed on Saturday.

[2a] Tuesday, 5 September. There was no market. Sirens were heard and aeroplanes flew overhead. The population fled to the villages. The city looked dead, a "remarkable" sight. A Christian, Warda, drove in from the village of Skaratki,⁸⁴⁶ bringing potatoes to sell. Not finding any customers and wanting to buy a sweater for himself, he came to me and offered to take us to the

844 Abbreviations in Polish, in Latin characters.

845 Wieluń was taken by the Germans on 2 September; Częstochowa on 3 September.

846 Skaratki (Łowicz County).

village. We settled on that, but when the Christian came to pick up the things, Meir Szumiraj and Yankl Cesław⁸⁴⁷ walked up and hired him first, and they travelled to the village with him. Thus, we had no way of going nor anyone to take us, but my father ran to Ziewanice⁸⁴⁸ to the Cechalskis and got a cart. That same evening, we set off for Ziewanice, taking with us everything of value and the two children, Chaim and Shimen. My wife Reyzl travelled with them.

My son Leybl had remained in town looking after the wounded Polish soldiers who had arrived by train. The inhabitants of the town had collected [3] various products for them: tea, milk, sugar, rolls, cigarettes, and so on. He had gone along to the station to help distribute them among the 750 wounded who lay groaning in the freight cars. I didn't know where Leybl had gone, so I wandered the streets waiting for him. The moon was shining and another cart appeared en route to the village. The town looked dead. My neighbour Anshl Rochwerger also found a cart to carry his possessions to Gózd,⁸⁴⁹ where his wife had been since Monday. I helped him pack his things on the cart.

At 11 in the evening, standing in front of my house, I heard someone crying. Drawing closer to the doctor's house, I saw a young man from Ozorków⁸⁵⁰ lying there on a pallet. His brother said that he had been run over by a car coming from Łowicz. When the doctor examined the stricken man, he asked me to run to the municipality building for the key to the hospital. [3a] When I entered the municipality at exactly 11 p.m., I heard on the radio that the Polish army had recaptured Częstochowa, and the Głowno riflemen were coming into the town hall from the street for their shift. But the officials didn't give me the key to the hospital. They didn't know who had it. When I returned to the doctor, I found out that he had already taken the wounded man to Moyshe Mordkhe Gąsior's place, where he had examined him and ordered him to be taken to hospital. It was getting on for midnight. We went to bed. Shloyme Feder also slept at my place. At 3 a.m., we were awakened by my brother Zalman and his father-in-law Landsberg. We went out to them in the street, and they told us that the police and the municipality officials

847 Spelling of names uncertain.

848 Ziewanice (Łowicz County).

849 Gózd (Garwolin County).

850 Ozorków (Łęczyca County).

were leaving town, and that when they had met the mayor and asked him what they should do, he had shrugged his shoulders and said, “Do as you see fit. We have received an order to withdraw to Rawa Mazowiecka.”

[4] At 4 a.m., true enough, we saw all the police marching away, and all night long the municipality officials burnt all the papers at Moyshe Białek the baker’s, and at dawn all the officials left with the mayor at their head. The last cart to leave carried goods and women, the two wives of the policemen Rybarczyk and Andrzejczak who followed them on bicycles, saying goodbye to all the town’s *obywatele*⁸⁵¹. As they abandoned the town to its fate, dreadful panic broke out. People nailed their shops shut and ran. It was getting light.

Wednesday, 6 September. People greeted each other with tear-stained faces, asking each other what to do and where to go. Around 6 a.m., the crowd thinned out. Everybody grabbed a loaf of bread and ran to wife and children; in the meantime refugees were arriving from Łódź, Zgierz and Stryków, amongst them the Stryków rabbi who was also running *w stronę Warszawy*.⁸⁵²

Seeing what was happening and that the German army was already near our town, and not knowing what to do, [4a] we thought it over and decided to go to Yisroel Avrom and discuss with him whether to bring the women and children home or join them in the village. We said our prayers and had breakfast together with Yitzhok Hermelin. We also had a good drop of brandy and drank a toast literally *lechaim*⁸⁵³ then we went straight to Zakopane,⁸⁵⁴ to Yisroel Avrom. We found Yisroel Avrom and Hinde very worried, not knowing where to go. Finally, they agreed to go with us to Ziewanice and to ask the women whether they wanted to stay in the village or go back to town. However, as soon as we entered the woods, we heard the aeroplane bombing the railway line, and several times we had to throw ourselves to the ground in the woods. As we lay in the woods, and my in-law Landsberg who was lying next to me recited *Shema Yisroel*, Zalman lay a bit further away stuffing bread and sprats into his mouth. Finally, after many trials and tribulations, we reached the women in Ziewanice, but it was impossible to go back home to town, because the aeroplanes dropped bombs all day. In the middle

851 (Polish) citizens.

852 (Polish) towards Warsaw.

853 (Hebrew) to life.

854 District of Głowno from 1935.

of the day, my son Leybl arrived in the village on a bicycle and told us that there were tens of thousands of people in the town on their way to Warsaw and that the bombs which had been dropped during the day had landed on a freight train without passengers and blown it to pieces.

[5] We remained in the village until evening, and at 7 o'clock Zalman, Leybl, the father-in-law Landsberg and I went back into town. When we arrived, we found thousands of people. As there was no bread, they fed on eggs boiled by [. . .] Feyvish, Przytyk[?], and the like. When we were in town, we saw that it was impossible to stay there, and so we decided to pack up the rest of our goods, put them in the cellar of a brick house and return to the village. At 2 in the morning, when we were at my parents' house, my wife Reyzl arrived together with Renia, Yisroel Avrom, and Shayke, who came with a pack under his arm to go to Warsaw. He sought out Zalman and myself, saying we should go with him to Warsaw, but Zalman and I categorically refused. Finally, after much pleading, also by Ignacy Janiszewski who told him not to go, he decided to remain. We stayed in the house until 5 a.m. on Thursday, 7 September, when Reyzl, Renia, Yisroel Avrom, Shayke, Leybl, and Landsberg returned to the village. Zalman and I waited until 7 a.m., when we bought bread and, after locking up the houses, Zalman gave the keys to a member of his family, Mania, from Łódź. Mania had also begun to flee to Warsaw, but having arrived in Głowno she had decided to rest on Thursday and return to Łódź. We went out to the village, to the women and children, leaving everything at the mercy of God. [5a] When we got to the village, we were – may no evil eye befall us! – no more than 17 people altogether, including 6 women who bought a few litres of milk for 15 groszes. They had some butter left over from town to put on the bread, but there was not very much for breakfast. Potatoes were served in one large bowl, and we men gathered round it and ate together in the barn which was our lodgings for the entire day. The same thing was repeated for midday meal. When there was a short lull in the bombing, we went to the wealthy landlord Kocharek and bought apples, pears, and plums. When we came back with the apples and everyone had some, I began to learn to ride a bicycle. However, we soon heard the drone of an aeroplane and we had to hide quickly in the barn for the whole day.

At 7 in the evening, we saw something burning near the neighbouring mill. It turned out that the Polish troops who had been crossing the mill bridge all day had left behind two large vehicles which they were unable to

take with them. At nightfall they had poured petrol on them and set them alight. We heard cannon fire not far from us all night, and we found out later that it had been between Ozorków and Zgierz and the surroundings. We didn't go back to town to spend the night, because Zalman said that he didn't have the strength for it and I didn't want to go into town alone.

[6] Friday, 8 September. At 5 a.m., my wife Reyzl and my son Leybl went into town to get some news. They were back by 7 o'clock, demanding that we all go back home to town, but my father would not hear of it. So Zalman and I returned to town at 9 o'clock to find out exactly what was going on. The entire time we were in the woods, we met no one, until we got to the iron railway bridge and came upon a number of Polish cavalrymen on horses, who checked our identities and rode off. At Nowy Warchałów,⁸⁵⁵ we found all the shops and houses open, emptied of their contents, windows broken. On the road were things the troops had left behind, including two passenger vehicles. When we got into town at 10 o'clock, our neighbours were pleased to see us and asked us to come home. We were convinced it was possible to come back home again. We wanted to return to the village without delay to bring our wives and children and our household goods home to town for the Sabbath, but when we heard that the *chazan-shochet* was now slaughtering animals, we took two ducks and a hen and had them slaughtered to have something to eat for the Sabbath. Zalman and I finished plucking them ourselves when Yekhiel's Beyle, who had been helping us pluck them, [6a] ran away in the middle of everything because an aeroplane was heard and there were many Polish troops moving through town towards Łowicz. When things quieted down a bit, I had to run to make sure I got a loaf of bread from Shmuel Cwajgenbojm. Meanwhile Koze Dancyger koshered the fowl. I came back with the bread, but the baker hadn't wanted to give more than one loaf, so Zalman sent dumb Shime Brejtsztajn for another loaf and promised him something for going there. Zalman himself also went for a loaf. We managed to get three loaves, but it was impossible to go back to the village because the aeroplane was still flying over the town and neighbourhood.

It was getting on for 1.30, so we decided to cook the fowl in town and at 6 o'clock take the cooked meat, leave town, and go to the village. Unable to fetch our women neighbours, neither Koze nor Beyle, Zalman said he would

855 District of Głowno.

go to Moyshe Białek and ask his daughters to cook the meat for us or roast the two ducks in their baker's oven. So, Zalman went to the baker, his neighbour Moyshe Białek leaving me the key to his house. Left alone in the house, I looked out at the street, which was empty [7] because people were hiding. Opposite me, next to Mordkhe Grynbojm's house, I saw a Polish soldier with a gun in his hand running out and looking round every second. Standing in the gateway, I heard German spoken. I froze. Was I dreaming? But I could clearly hear German. Out of fear, I didn't know where to go, and I wanted to get a look at a German soldier. So, I closed the gate and ran upstairs to the window on the landing. When I got up to the window, I heard shooting. I threw myself to the floor and heard more shots. Not knowing what to do, I stood against the wall outside the door to Zalman's place. Coming to my senses, I realised standing there wasn't a good idea and I went down into the house and closed the gate behind me. As I was alone in the house, I lay on the floor in another dark room and stayed like that for 20 minutes. [7a] Still curious to see a German, I stood up and looked through a crack, but I saw nothing. Then I heard my neighbour Shimshon Rotenbach making a great commotion and speaking German.

I finally understood that the Germans were here. This is what had happened: As soon as the Germans arrived, they searched everyone to see if they had any weapons or dangerous objects. And when Mordkhe Ber Rotenbach and his son Shimshon were ordered to put their hands up to be searched, they started wailing, thinking the German was, God forbid, going to kill them. That was why Shimshon had cried out, and only his brother-in-law from Łódź, who was there at the time, managed to calm them down. Immediately after the Germans arrived in the town, they also went to the baker Moyshe Białek. My brother Zalman was there. They searched everyone present and ordered them to go home, so Zalman came running to see if I was alright. He knocked and I opened, and we went into the house and remained there until 3 [o'clock] in the afternoon. People were coming out of hiding and moving about in the street more freely, and the aeroplane had stopped flying over the town. At 3 p.m., Zalman went back to Moyshe Białek and asked his daughter Freydl to cook the fowl. And so, thanks to Freydl Białek, who came and cooked the fowl as well as 800 grams of rice, we had something to eat on the Sabbath.

Night was falling. We were very frightened of the night, because machine guns were positioned in the middle of town and several fatal incidents had

occurred shortly after the entry of the German troops. To be precise, they found a Christian with a cut-throat razor on him, and with that same razor they cut his throat. By chance, they also shot a certain Pese Ite Szwarc, who was lying sick. Bentzion, the deaf shoemaker, was walking out of town and didn't hear the shout from a German soldier, who then shot him. Eliezer Rozenbojm's house was set on fire, but, thank God, the night passed in peace, and only a few rifle shots were heard.

Saturday, 9 September 1939. I rose very early and met Reuven Leyb Rotenbach, who had already eaten. I asked him how things were, and he replied that there was nothing new. We had a small bottle of alcohol, so we offered Reuven Leyb Rotenbach a small glass. To thank us, he put tea from a tin in a teapot for us, and we drank, and afterwards offered Yitzhok Hermelin some fresh hot tea for the Sabbath. [8a] At 7 o'clock precisely, we finished praying and set to work, that is, we made *kiddush* over 95-proof spirit and ate a bit of the roast duck. Then we waited until 9 o'clock. At exactly 9, we made proper Sabbath onions with chopped liver, eggs and chicken fat, and washed our hands before eating the bread which we had had since Friday.

In the middle of our meal, my wife Reyzl and my two sons Chaim and Shimon arrived from the village to find out what was happening in town. After discussing the situation, we decided that my wife Reyzl should return to the village to fetch food for everyone and hire a cart in the village. So Reyzl went to the village and began to try to hire a cart, but none of the peasants in the village were willing to travel because they were afraid their horses would be taken from them. By good fortune, a householder, Chabera, brought our possessions into town. It happened like this: One of his daughters had died and since he needed an outfit for her, my wife Reyzl promised to give him everything he needed from my shop. Thus, Reyzl got what she wanted from him and he set out. But one cart wasn't enough, so my father ran around the village and after great effort [9] managed to hire another cart, and thus they all arrived home safely from the village at around 4 p.m. on the Sabbath. Everyone else began returning to town from the surrounding villages. People who had fled Łódź also started going back. Nobody bothered them.

The whole night between Saturday and Sunday was quiet. The German authorities had already announced that it was not permitted to be on the street between nightfall and daybreak.

Sunday, 10 September [19]39. A fine summer's day. There was much movement of troops in and out of town on motorcycles, bicycles, and in cars, etc. No one was interfered with. People who had fled and who were now returning to Łódź and the surrounding area continued to arrive on foot. Sunday also passed quietly. We had already adopted the routine of going to bed at 7 p.m. and getting up at 5 in the morning, but on Sunday night we heard cannon fire over the town which shook the houses. Fear made it impossible to sleep. All the neighbours crowded together in my place: Yankl Litvak and his son Hershl Pietrkowski and his children, Yitzhok and his wife, and so on. Among them was also Chaya, Hershl Pietrkowski's 12-year-old [9a] daughter, who gave me no peace all night. As soon as the first cannon fire was heard in the evening, she woke up and came into my room shouting "Yankev Volf, why are you sleeping, why aren't you reciting psalms?" Since she knew all the women's prayers with their melodies, she began to pray to God for mercy, and, thank God, the night passed peacefully.

Monday, 10 [11]⁸⁵⁶ September. The same. We got up early and had to find bread for the day. That Monday many people arrived on their way back to Łódź. Among them was my cousin Hershl Najmark and also my supplier Mendl Klinger of Nowomiejska Street 9, Łódź, who landed on my doorstep wailing for me to find him a piece of bread. I didn't have any bread, but there were a few cold potatoes left over from lunch and a glass of cold borsht. He grabbed them and ate them like a locust. More hungry acquaintances from Łódź came, so I cooked an extra pot of potatoes, and the peels, together with a cup of borsht; [this] delighted them as much as the finest roast. Afterwards they had a wash and a bit of a rest. In the evening, we cooked [10] rice and milk which we ate together with our guests, who decided to stay the night with us. After dark, more cannon fire was heard but, thank God, the night passed peacefully.

Tuesday, 11 [12] September. We rose early to run out for bread. My guests also bought bread and left for Łódź. Tuesday during the day there was again cannon fire, but this time very intense. The shells flew over the town, and some Głowno inhabitants, Moyshe Białek, Shmuel Cwajgenbojm and Yosl Cwajgenbojm, who were standing in front of the Głowno mill, were badly hit by flying shrapnel. A doctor was called for Moyshe Białek and found that he

856 Up to Sunday, 17 September, the author is consistently one day behind the correct date.

had lost an eye. He had wounds in other parts of his body, too. In addition, Yosl Cwajgenbojm was lightly wounded, and a Christian woman was lightly wounded in the leg. Only Shmuel Cwajgenbojm escaped injury. On Tuesday afternoon, we heard the following, and we came to the conclusion that, since everything that happens is the will of God, blessed be His Name, it should be told in detail, thus:

[10a] When we were in the village at Mrs Cechalska, one of her sons, Janek, was there. He had gone away with all the people fleeing to Warsaw but, after being away one day, he returned the next, saying that he had seen so many dead people on the road that he had become scared that he too might be killed on the way. He [decided he] would be safer at home. Indeed, whenever he heard an aeroplane or cannon fire, he immediately crawled into the potato cellar to save himself from death. But on Tuesday, 11 [12] September, when there was heavy cannon fire over the village of Ziewanice, and Janek was hid in the potato cellar, shrapnel flew right into the cellar and killed him on the spot, and the barn where we had stayed earlier was burned down, along with the stalls for the animals. Several *gospodarze*⁸⁵⁷ from the same village were also killed. On that same Tuesday, it was quiet in Głowno, but at night the heavy thunder of cannon fire was heard, and it lasted until morning.

Wednesday, 12 [13] September 1939. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah 5700, we rose very early [11] to say the *selichot* of *Zechor Brit*⁸⁵⁸ with a *minyan* at Hershl Pietrkowski's and to recite *hatarat nedarim*⁸⁵⁹ in accordance with Jewish custom. We heard that fowl were being slaughtered in honour of the festival, and it turned out that the *chazan* was slaughtering and people had bought geese from the farms for 6 zlotys a piece. Everything seemed fine, but the important Rosh Hashanah festival was marred by the misfortune which befell our town: At 1 p.m., as Avrom Yitzhok Rotenbach, a distinguished member of the community, was going to the *mikvah* with his son Shmuel Zaynvil in honour of the festival, they were stopped by a murderous hand, and the father Avrom Yitzhok was shot on the spot near the *mikvah*. The humble burial took place straightaway at 3 p.m., and the mourning in our town was

857 (Polish) farmers.

858 (Hebrew) "Remember the Covenant," one of the *selichot*.

859 (Hebrew) prayer for the formal annulment of vows before *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*.

indescribable. The evening of Rosh Hashanah approached, and the synagogue was occupied by soldiers. Every heart again poured out its anguish to God in private. There were only a few separate *minyans* where neighbours came together to pray collectively. Thus, we and a few neighbours gathered at Hershl Pietrkowski's house and prayed together. We had to pray in silence, pouring out our bitter hearts to God in silence. [11a] There was more cannon fire during the night, but a little further from town, and, thank God, the night passed peacefully.

Thursday, 13 [14] September 1939, first day of Rosh Hashanah. We rose early and at 6 in the morning we gathered again at Hershl Pietrkowski's, 2 or 3 *minyans*. We had gotten hold of a *shofar*. Noyekh led the prayers from start to finish and Yankl Litvak blew the *shofar*. By 9:30 in the morning, we had finished praying. Returning home from prayer, we heard the terrible news, may God preserve us, that Lekechbeker and his son Yekhiel, who lived in [Nowe] Zakopane, had been murdered. We buried them on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. The night passed peacefully and we no longer heard any heavy cannon fire. Many soldiers arrived during the night, so we were unable to say the evening prayers collectively. The whole town was occupied by soldiers.

Friday, 14 [15] September 1939, second day of Rosh Hashanah festival. We rose very early but were unable to gather to pray like the previous day, because there were soldiers everywhere. We couldn't start prayers until 8 o'clock. The prayer leader was Levi Lejzerowicz. May we all see better times, so well did he lead the prayers. [12] And so by 9:30, we had finished praying. The whole day passed peacefully. The night also went by without cannon fire.

Saturday, 15 [16] September 1939. No change. We prayed collectively. People began to be taken for work. The last refugees from the villages and towns had arrived. The bakers had to bake throughout the Rosh Hashanah holiday and even on the Sabbath. Although people forced them to do so, they were willing because they did good business.

Sunday, 17 September 1939. Got up very early. A beautiful summer's day, but we were unable to go out on the street because they were rounding up men, especially Jews, to work burying people and horses. It turned out that they had worked in Noworabka,⁸⁶⁰ where the army had been positioned, and

860 Possibly Nowa Rabka, a district of Głowno.

had buried many soldiers, both German and Polish, as well as many horses. The night passed peacefully.

Monday, 18 September 1939. Everything the same as yesterday. They seized (horses) men for work. Among them was Yisroel Avrom, who had been on his way to Łódź, but they took him from his cart and sent him to work on the railway. [12a] In the afternoon, German *Reichswehr*⁸⁶¹ officials went about cutting off beards. The first victim was the *chazan*, then Avrom Mordkhe Golenberg, Yitzhok Joskowicz, Mordkhe Ber Rotenbach. So after that, anyone who had a beard shaved it off himself. The rest of the day passed peacefully. The night passed peacefully.

Tuesday, 19 September 1939. Got up late, that is, at 7 o'clock in the morning, because we were afraid that we would be seized for work. My brother-in-law Yisroel Avrom had worked for them the day before and they had treated him very badly, especially because he is a Jew. My wife Reyzl went to Chaim Oyzer Szumiraj⁸⁶² to give him some money to bring us merchandise from Łódź. Meanwhile my brother-in-law Yitzhok Borekh had come by. He had left home because men were being seized for work, especially Jews. Yitzhok stayed at my place till 10 a.m. It was market day and there were many customers wanting to buy various goods, but I had nothing to sell. I could not even have breakfast.

[13] At 1 p.m. precisely, when I went out with my son Leybl, two German policemen approached us asking if we were Jews, and one of them seized us immediately for work. By lucky chance I was able to avoid work, but Leybl was taken to work at the school, where he had to work hard pumping up tires. It was not until 4 p.m. that he let them know he was a watchmaker, and so they gave him three watches to fix and sent him home. When he got home, he was physically and morally broken because of the insults directed at Jews. Levi Lejzerowicz and my son-in-law Moyshe Mordkhe also worked. They, the Germans, forced Shimshon Gros to shave off Levi and Mordkhe's beards, and they had to pay him 20 groszes for the shave. "Oh, the shame

861 (German) Defence Forces of the Third Reich.

862 He later appears in the correspondence of the ŻSS. He applied for assistance as a war invalid from the 1920 Polish-Bolshevik War. In January 1942, he was in Izbica on the Wieprz River with his wife Perla and children: Trana, Chawa, Mariem, Estera Fajga, Abram Layb, Chana, Łaja and Róża. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/84, pp. 21–26.

of it!" At 5 in the evening, the town heard the bad news, may God preserve us, that the entire Goldsztejn family had been killed in Kiernožia, where they had gone to their son and brother Chaim F. Six families were murdered, may God preserve us.

At 8 o'clock in the evening, we were frightened again by the following occurrence: [13a] Hershl Pietrkowski and his wife were at my place when there was a knock at the gate. When I asked who was there, mother Sieradzka answered that we should open up. It turned out that the German soldier who had given Leybl the watch to mend had knocked on my parents' door and my mother had brought him here to Leybl. It reminds me of two incidents which occurred today. I sold some German soldiers 6 zlotys' worth of varnish and paint, but they wouldn't pay more than 4.20. In the evening, a car drove up and someone came in demanding to buy shirts. And choosing 3 for 12 zlotys, he said *Dankeschön!*⁸⁶³ and left without paying. May the Lord, blessed be He, put an end to the shame and suffering we have endured till now, and may he say of our troubles, enough!...

Wednesday, 20 September. At 6 a.m. we woke with a fright. Yitzhok Borekh was knocking on our door, shouting in German, *Jude, mach auf!*⁸⁶⁴ He had fled from his house to avoid being seized for work and, since people were being seized on our street too, Yitzhok Borekh had hidden [14] in the cellar and torn his trousers. When he came out of the cellar, he had to mend them himself, sitting in his underpants. Meanwhile, my wife Reyzl had gone to Chaim Oyzer Szumiraj to find out whether he had brought me the few goods I had ordered from Łódź, for which we had given him money on Tuesday. However, he had brought the money back, saying that in Łódź they wouldn't sell him anything. Since we didn't know if this was true, we decided that Reyzl herself would go to Łódź. And she went with my son Chaim. She also took with her a few loaves for the family, and as she did not leave until noon, she was sure to spend the night in Łódź. In the meantime, the authorities announced that we had to open our shops and trade normally, etc. The Germans also decreed that Jews could not possess more than 2,000 zlotys per entire family, and vacationers could not take more than 10 marks with them when they set out.

863 (German) Thank you!

864 (German) Jew, open up!

We opened our shops immediately, despite the lack of goods. We sold out what we had. Note: When Reyzl was leaving [14a] for Łódź, she cooked us a pot of rice with milk which we ate for breakfast and in midday. We also bought a kilo of wild pears for 15 groszes. In the evening, after closing our shutters, we felt hungry and ate bread and butter. We had a quarter of a glass of milk, so we made four cups of coffee with it, but it tasted very good. Thus, the day passed quietly. It's now 7:30 and I'm writing the account of the day. Hershl Pietrkowski and his wife Frumet have come with the children, because they thought it was miserable to sit at home or go to bed too early, and my wife Reyzl and my son Chaiml have stayed the night in Łódź. So, we're sitting together and I'm writing, and my neighbour Frumet asks me whether I'm writing a letter to Australia or to my suppliers. When I explain to her what I'm writing, she marvels at what I'm doing. We sat together till 8:30 and only went to bed when the neighbours' children grew sleepy. The night passed peacefully.

Thursday, 21 September. Got up very early. People were already being seized for work, but by a miracle Leybl and I were not taken. By 9:30 Reyzl wasn't back [15] from Łódź, so we breakfasted on bread, butter, and coffee. We earned very little because we had nothing to sell. At 4 p.m. an officer came demanding varnish. When I said I had no varnish left, he searched my shop and, finding none, threatened to close my shop if I didn't find him some. I asked Mrs Wolpert to speak up for me to the officer, but she walked away. Finally, after much pleading, they listened to me and went to Shloyme the Redhead, where they obtained some varnish. Only then did they leave me alone. At precisely 7 p.m. Reyzl arrived from Łódź with Sender Szumiraj. She had paid 9 zlotys for haberdashery and brought home some merchandise which she had obtained with great difficulty and for which she had paid 25 per cent extra. She told of the hardship facing people in Łódź: a 2 kilo [bread] loaf cost 1.80, meat cost 3 zlotys a kilo, potatoes cost 3 zlotys for 25 kilos[?], but people had to get up at 5 a.m. to begin queueing. Sugar could not be bought at any price. And as if this were not enough, Jews were tormented by being singled out and seized for work. People told of cases where Jews were forced to pull their *tales-kotn* over their heads and then be photographed and made to laugh at the game. What's more, our brother-in-law Yekhezkhl from Zgierz and his son Shmuel Leyb received such beatings on the way to Łódź that they had to go to a doctor. Not a single man showed himself on the street, and all the shops were closed.

This morning we recited the *Shelosh-esre midot*⁸⁶⁵ during *selichot* at Hershl Pietrkowski's with a *minyan*. [15a] We performed the *kaparot*⁸⁶⁶ ceremony as well and slaughtered the fowl during the day. We also bought fish and I cooked it myself. I also cooked rice with milk for midday meal. Nothing else worth noting happened today. The night from Thursday to Friday passed peacefully.

Friday, 22 September, eve of *Yom Kippur*. I rose very early and said my prayers in preparation for *Yom Kippur*. I didn't have a proper breakfast because I had some customers. And there were more customers all day. Aside from the village inhabitants, we also did business with the German soldiers. We sold shirts, braces, handkerchiefs, and socks. In general, the town had a good deal of business from the German soldiers. We ran out of men's shoes, women's shoes, furs, jackets, and so on. Everything would have been fine, but at 3 p.m. a special *Reichswehr* detachment arrived and caused much torment. In the end, they went from house to house searching for weapons. It's hard to describe the fear this aroused in the town. It went on till 5 p.m. and they finally drove off when it was night, that is *Yom Kippur*. There were no *minyans* in town, except in our house in Hershl Pietrkowski's courtyard, where about two *minyans* gathered and we stood and [16] recited *Kol Nidre*. Dovid Złotnik and old Zalcman from Sochaczew also came to our *minyan*, as well as my father Mordkhe. They spent the night with us because they couldn't go home. The night passed peacefully.

Saturday, 23 September, *Yom Kippur*. Got up very early. At exactly 6 a.m., we gathered together and began to pray, so that by 8 a.m. one *minyan* had already finished praying. Various people arrived, formed another *minyan* and prayed again. At 9:30 we began *musaf*⁸⁶⁷. The service was led by Shmuel Bocian until the *Avodah*⁸⁶⁸ prayer, when soldiers arrived. They went around the houses looking for men for work, so we had to flee. Each hid as best he could, but in the end many of our co-worshippers were taken off to work, including the prayer leader Shmuel Bocian and Yankl Szumiraj and his son. When they

865 (Hebrew) thirteen attributes of God, or forms of mercy.

866 (Hebrew, from sing. *kapara*) sacrificial offering for forgiveness, a ceremony carried out before *Yom Kippur*, with the goal of transferring one's sins on a hen (women) or a rooster.

867 (Hebrew) supplement; the additional prayers added to the morning service on Sabbath, festivals, and *Rosh Chodesh*.

868 (Hebrew) literally, work; description of the service in the Temple in Jerusalem, part of the *Yom Kippur musaf*.

returned and we went to recite *ne'ilah*,⁸⁶⁹ they told us about the terrible hardships they had endured, especially because they were Jews. At 5 o'clock, Polish soldiers, POWs, were brought in to the summer huts, as many as 2,000 of them, and they were very hungry. The townspeople brought them [16a] food: bread, milk, tomatoes, and the like. And with that, *Yom Kippur* ended peacefully. The night too passed peacefully.

Sunday, 24 September. Got up very early, because there was a great deal of movement on the streets from 5 a.m., with people buying bread to take with them to Łódź. Droshkies and carts were leaving for Łódź. There were no soldiers around. All the soldiers had already left during the day on Saturday. It was a fine summer's day and people strolled through the streets until 9 in the morning, when several Germans arrived and went from house to house seizing Jews for work. They also came to my place to take me for work, but as I was alone at home because my wife had gone to Stryków to buy shoes from the wholesaler, the soldiers left me at home. And thus the street was quickly emptied of people. Then, once again, there were some customers from the villages, because the street got busier as soon as people had been taken away to work. When the men returned at dusk after a whole day's work, they told us terrible things: They had not been allowed to eat even a small piece of bread all day [17] or to relieve themselves. They had been forced to pick up filth with their bare hands, and so on. Nevertheless, when they went home, they each received a loaf of bread to take with them.

Such was Sunday. But come what may, Jews are still Jews. As soon as the seizures for work slackened off, I began to prepare the *sukkah* for *Sukkot*, and may the Lord, blessed be His name, help us, so that we can properly fulfill the commandment to dwell in the *sukkah*. Several thousand Polish soldiers, POWs, arrived in town. The townspeople brought them food: bread, tea, apples, pears, etc.

Monday, 25 September. I got up at 5 a.m. and ran to the baker's to buy some loaves to take to Łódź, since my wife Reyzl was going there again in Sender Szumiraj's droshky to buy merchandise. I was barely able to get hold of a few loaves. Reyzl left for Łódź at exactly 6 o'clock. I cooked myself breakfast and ate it with my brother-in-law Yitzhok Borekh, who had fled his home

869 (Hebrew) closure; originally referring to the closing of the Temple gates; concluding prayer service on *Yom Kippur*.

because he was afraid of being seized for work. There was little business until 10 a.m. when things began [17a] to pick up. Then a German arrived with Mr Las from the brickworks, who had brought him to me deliberately to seize me for work. It didn't help that I was alone in the shop. Las had done it to me on purpose... And so, I had to go to work at the brickworks yard in Borówka⁸⁷⁰ to dig a pit for the newly-arrived Polish POWs. After we had worked for two hours – it wasn't a hard job because there were as many as 16 of us – they let us go, after which the whole day passed quietly. My wife didn't get back from Łódź until 8 in the evening, so we hadn't eaten all day, only dried bread. It was only at nightfall that I cooked a few small fish I had bought, and that was our supper. Nothing else of importance happened.

Tuesday, 26 September. My father woke me at 6 a.m. to hear the news from Łódź, in particular whether Reyzl had brought him spoons from Łódź, for which he had given her 20 zlotys. I immediately returned his 20 zlotys, because she hadn't brought any spoons back with her. [18] The shops had been closed. At 8 o'clock, I opened the shop and started to take in some money. Business actually went quite well. It was the first day they didn't seize people for work.

Wednesday, 27 September, the eve of *Sukkot* 5700, a fine autumn day. It looked like peace time. Geese were being slaughtered, people were buying carp in the street. They were going to Łódź and bringing back flour, baking *challah*, building *sukkahs*. Night approached. In various places, people prayed collectively. It started to rain a bit but the rain didn't last long, and people welcomed the first night of *Sukkot* in their *sukkah*.

Thursday 28 September. The first day of *Sukkot*, but without an *etrog*, and what does a Jewish community do without an *etrog*! People got up very early to finish praying as soon as possible. There wasn't a single soldier in town, but there were still a few on the outskirts, for example near the railway and the schools. A town militia has been set up, consisting of local Christian reservists headed by a local German, Mr Las, and the *Landrat* in Brzeziny has appointed a mayor for Głowno, Mr Rynkowski.⁸⁷¹ Mr Wolpert⁸⁷² has been [. . .] and all former officials have returned to work in the municipality.

870 District of Głowno from 1935.

871 Henryk Rynkowski (1893–?), schoolteacher; director of Głowno elementary school from 1918–1921; municipal civil servant from 1924. Mayor of Głowno from 1927–1934 and

[18a] Certificates were issued for transporting food products from Głowno to Łódź. It seemed as though everything was once more in good order in our town. People strolled around the market square in a holiday mood. Nobody was being seized for work. Permission had even been given for some men to form a *minyān* in the synagogue and pray. But our joy was suddenly broken by several German gendarmes who arrived in town and were immediately led to the synagogue. All the people praying there were driven out, and each of them had to pay a fine set by the local militia: 10, 20, 30 or as much as 100 zlotys. The gendarmes then went to the Jewish shops which were open and imposed a series of fines from 30 to 500 zlotys. Anyone who didn't pay up immediately was handcuffed or held in the police station until he paid the fine imposed on him. As if this were not enough, another detachment of soldiers came and arrested the Głowno furriers Avrom Niewiadowicz and Shloyme Niewiadowicz and his wife for [. .] for their furs, and they were sentenced on the spot to 3 months. This all lasted until 4:30 p.m. Then they left and the atmosphere lightened a bit.

People began to stroll around again, but the evening of *Simchat Bet Hashoevah*⁸⁷³ [19] was ruined by a notice on the municipality [building] that all the Jewish men of Głowno aged 17 to 40 were to be mobilized on Friday, 29 September. They were to present themselves on Friday at 7 a.m. in front of the municipality building and would be sent to dig potatoes on the surrounding estates. Men aged 40 to 60 and over were to present themselves in front of the municipality building at 8 a.m. with brooms in their hands, because they would be sent to sweep the Głowno marketplace. You cannot imagine

1939–1940; chairman of the *Nadzieja* (Hope) consumer cooperative in Głowno from 1940–1949. During the occupation, a soldier in the *Armia Krajowa* (Home Army). After the war, imprisoned for alleged membership in the anti-communist resistance organisation. See *Głowno. Dzieje miasta*, (ed.) Maria Nartonowicz-Kat (Łódź, 2010), pp. 185, 415–418.

872 Ludwik Wolpert (?–1945), of German origin, owner of a brickworks on Łowicka Street in Głowno. During the war, briefly mayor of Głowno. After the expulsion of the Jews in April 1942, director of the *Biuro Zarządu nad Nieruchomościami Pożydowskimi* (Bureau for the Administration of Former Jewish Immovable Property). Committed suicide in January 1945. See *ibidem*, pp. 274, 277, 300, 340.

873 (Hebrew) Celebration of the water-drawing, recalling one of the services in the Temple in Jerusalem.

the distress this caused in the population. On the evening of *Simchat Bet Hashoevah* no one ate in a *sukkah*, no one sang *Shir Hama'alot*,⁸⁷⁴ and no liquor was consumed at the rabbi's house. The electricity had come on in our homes, but our hearts were dark. We could not lie down for shame, but the Jewish people are resistant and used to everything. And so it was.

Friday, 29 September. Everyone got up very early and went out into the street to find out what the crowd was intending to do. It turned out that all the Jews from 17 to 60 had decided to report for work. So all these Jewish men from 17 to 60 were standing in front of the municipality building, up to 300 of them, may God protect them. All the wives and children came to look at the frightful scene. [19a] But instead of the officials coming to send us off to work at 7 o'clock as the notice had stipulated, we stood there in the street until 9 o'clock. Then they began transporting the older group of 40 to 60-year-olds, composed of 140 men with brooms in their hands under the control of a Christian overseer, to Bielawska Street, where we were ordered to clean up the square, on which paving slabs had been laid for the town. The work could have been done by 4 hired Christians, but 140 men had to make a performance of finishing it off by midday meal time. The young Jewish men aged 17 to 40 were also taken to various places to dig potatoes or pick beet-roots: to Bratoszewice, to Osiny, to the Głowno manor estate, or to Jabłoński at Rudnik, and the like. The day will certainly remain a shameful stain on the new Głowno municipality, because it turned out that the whole business had taken place not at the demand of the *Landrat* but thanks to the municipality itself, headed by Mr Rynkowski. The proof is that when Mr Wolpert found out about it, he came into town immediately and had a row with the municipality *rachmistrz*,⁸⁷⁵ demanding to know what right he had to bring such shame on the town. And those who had not yet been sent to work, he sent home right away. [20] In any case, the second day of the holiday was greatly disrupted. Many worked until noon, many until evening. No soldiers and no gendarmes showed up. In the evening, people livened up. On Friday night, we welcomed in the Sabbath again with a *minyan*.

Saturday, 30 September, the Sabbath of the intermediate days of *Sukkot*. We prayed collectively. The prayer-leader, Mr Pinkhes Zalcman from

874 See footnote XXX.

875 (Polish) paymaster, chief accountant.

Sochaczew, had a *yortsayt*.⁸⁷⁶ Mr Mikhl Goldwaser was given an *aliyah*.⁸⁷⁷ He had come and asked for an *aliyah* because he needed to give a name to a grandchild. Rabbi Avrom Volf Pietrkowski, who had returned from the army, was given *maftir*.⁸⁷⁸ People ate the Sabbath *cholent*. It was quiet and the shops were closed, but in the early afternoon the gendarmes came back and again ordered people to open the shops. People were upset, but it passed without incident. No one was taken for work, except a few young people to clean up the market.

Sunday, 1 October, the second of the intermediate days of *Sukkot*. Reyzl left early for Łódź. The whole day passed peacefully. Now it's nightfall and Reyzl hasn't returned. Shayke and Hinde stay the night.

[20a] Monday, 2 October. A fine day. In the morning, there were people travelling to Łódź. I sent a letter to my wife in Łódź with Shloyme Klimeks, since she has spent the night there. People selected by the secretary of the Jewish *gmina* going to work. 12 householders from the town have been called to the militia – Złotnik, Mendl Niewiadowicz, Fishl Golenberg, Reuven Lezer, Eleazar Meir, myself, and others – to clean out the old school near the *Strzelec*.⁸⁷⁹ I worked until 10 [o'clock] and then changed places and sent my son Leybl to replace me until noon. Thereafter, the day passed peacefully without disturbance. Nothing important happened.

Tuesday, 3 October. Reyzl came back from Łódź with some merchandise. At 8:30, the children assembled to enrol in school. There was a bit of a market. In the afternoon, German soldiers who had returned from Warsaw arrived. They came into town and we did business with them. All the people who had fled from their homes and who had been in Warsaw returned. Among them was Gershen Hajman, our cousin from Aleksandrów, whom we didn't recognise. He had been in Warsaw for four weeks. He arrived by horse and cart with several people known to me and also my brother-in-law Shloyme, Chava's husband, from Aleksandrów. They drove [21] into my courtyard and came in. They were starving hungry and thirsty, so Gershen made some tea in the kitchen while we were busy in the shop. Then he cooked them some

876 (Yiddish) anniversary of death according to Jewish calendar.

877 (Hebrew) ascent. He was called up to read from the Torah; an honour.

878 (Hebrew) reading from the Prophets.

879 (Polish) "The Rifleman". Possibly the headquarters of the *Związek Strzelecki* (Riflemen Union), a Polish paramilitary organisation.

rice and they took some bread and butter. They hadn't seen bread in a long time. Among them was a Jew from Aleksandrów called Meyerl who became ill from eating. We had to call a doctor for him. They said Meyerl had eaten a carrot⁸⁸⁰ and become ill. Dr Rosenthal did not want to take any money from him. We made him a bed, which he left in a very indecent condition. They also left the third plague...⁸⁸¹ We made it through the night until it was day, when they climbed onto their cart and drove off. Gershen didn't leave with them. He travelled to Łódź by droshky. I even gave him money to bring some ribbon from Łódź, and that is how the day began.

Wednesday, 4 October. *Hoshana Rabbah*, but without the seven circuits. We prayed collectively. The day passed quietly.

[21b] Thursday, 5 October. *Shemini Atzeret*.⁸⁸² We said the benediction for rain and Noyekh Buksztejn led the prayers. May we have a better year, so well did he pray for rain. However, after that we had to open the shops and do business, but nothing else of importance happened. In the evening, many people on their way back from Warsaw arrived in town and spent the night. We had to provide them with food and somewhere to sleep.

Friday, 6 October. *Simchat Torah*, but a very meagre *Simchat Torah* without *kiddush* and without dancing. We finished praying the seven circuits very quickly. We had only a small *kiddush* from Hershl Pietrkowski. He had promised a *kiddush* when his son came home from captivity and also because he was called up as *Chatan Torah*,⁸⁸³ but he used Dovid Złotnik's cherry brandy for the *kiddush*, which Dovid had brought him. *Simchat Torah* passed quietly. May we have the good fortune to celebrate better, more beautiful and more joyful *Simchat Torah* festivals. Once again there were many people returning from Warsaw. We put each of them up with a Jew for the Sabbath and *Simchat Torah* passed quietly.

Saturday, 7 October, *Shabbat Bereshit*.⁸⁸⁴ We prayed very early in a *minyan*. A small incident took place while we were praying. Hershl Pietrkowski

880 The Yiddish word for little carrot, *merl*, sounds like the name Meyerl.

881 See footnote 194.

882 (Hebrew) eighth [day] of congregation; last day of *Sukkot*.

883 (Hebrew) "The bridegroom of the Torah," the man given the honour of being called up to read the last portion of the Torah and conclude the yearly cycle.

884 The Sabbath on which the Genesis 1:1–6:8 Torah portion is read, starting with the word *bereshit* (in the beginning).

became angry with Yosele Lekechbeker, because the latter had carried on praying [22] without waiting for him as the leader. Nothing else of importance happened the whole Sabbath, that is *Shabbat Bereshit* passed peacefully.

Sunday, 8 October. I had to get up early to get some bread, because we were short on account of the people returning from Warsaw. Reyzl left for Łódź. We did good business the whole day. The day passed in peace and quiet.

Monday, 9 October. I rose very early at 5 because I had to get some money to Łódź for Reyzl. It was a bleak autumn day and it was raining. My sister-in-law Renia was going to Łódź, so I gave her a letter with money to take to Reyzl. Business was slow all day. I sold a few items, mostly winter things like galoshes, rainwear, and warm children's shoes. It rained all day and the whole day passed peacefully in the rain.

Tuesday, 10 October. Market day. It rained from the morning on, but a nice market assembled and business was good. Nothing new happened and the day passed peacefully.

Wednesday, 11 October. Shloyme Flamholz woke us up very early wanting advice about what goods to buy in Łódź in order to spend his money well. We soon got up, because Reyzl had to go to Łódź to buy more galoshes and also on account of the [. .] [22a] owed to me at Gershen's in Aleksandrów. Business was good all day. I soon bought other goods from the knitwear dealer, who had brought sweaters and socks. At 8 o'clock, I received a short letter from Reyzl from Łódź, in which she wrote that she couldn't buy anything for the money she had and that all the prices had shot up. I bought 12 shawls and 12 kilos of sugar from Meshulem Szwager. I also bought 2 kilos of dumplings[?] from Golda from Stryków. Nothing else of importance happened today.

Thursday, 12 October. I got up very early since I needed to send money to Reyzl in Łódź. I opened the shop, wanting to do at least a little business although you couldn't buy goods for any amount of money. But I did some trade anyway. In the afternoon, Noyekh Goldsztejn arrived from Łódź. I bought 70 zlotys worth of merchandise from him. Today we also bought sawdust to burn for 6 zlotys a [cubic] metre.⁸⁸⁵ In the afternoon lots of soldiers also arrived and we did a good business. Nothing else of importance happened today.

885 A cubic metre of wet sawdust is approximately 350 kilos. When dried, it is approximately 15 per cent less.

Friday, 13 October. I got up very early to run for bread, but we couldn't get any so we had to buy rolls. We didn't get any potatoes either. Peasants brought potatoes to the market and [23] didn't know how much to ask for them. There was a rush and everything got very expensive. We did business and sold at good prices. But customers wouldn't buy at whatever price. They wouldn't buy their *challahs* from the baker and so they only got them after the market, when night had fallen, and the baker put their *cholent* in the oven at 7 in the evening. It was a real war-time Sabbath. Nothing of importance happened that Friday.

Saturday, 14 October, the beginning of the month of Cheshvan, Torah portion *Noah*.⁸⁸⁶ When I got up at 7 a.m., they were already praying at Hershl's. After we finished, I went to my father's to make *kiddush* and drink tea. When I came home, we were made to open our shops. Anyone who failed to open his shop by the time the militia came to check up on him, had to pay a fine of 3 zlotys, and so we were obliged to keep our shops open all day. We didn't want to do business, but it passed peacefully. It is worth mentioning that on Saturday evening Reyzl ran out to buy two pairs of soles from Shmuel [. . .] and she paid 13 zlotys for 2 pairs of soles without heels, just half soles. That came to 37 groszes per 10 gram. She'd been taken for a ride. We went for bread but couldn't [. . .].

Sunday, 15 October. I got up at 4.30 and ran to the baker's for a few loaves, because Reyzl wanted to take some loaves with her [23a] for her sisters Gitl and Rivke. I did manage to buy 4 loaves; if I had gone a bit later, I would have had to queue and would have got only 1 loaf. Reyzl left for Łódź at 8. It was a lovely summer day, bright sunshine like in summer. Customers came but I didn't want to sell, because I'd heard from Łódź that the dealers were not selling any merchandise.

An incident occurred: A boy came from Volf Morgensztern saying there was a watch for sale, and Leybl went to look at it. It was an Omega. He promised him 30 marks for it. When he came back to me for the money, I wouldn't let him buy a watch from a soldier. Before long, the boy brought the soldier to my house and he asked Leybl why he hadn't come to pay for the watch. Leybl told him that he couldn't buy it because he didn't have any money, and so the soldier beat him. We all started shouting, but he wouldn't listen to a word.

886 Genesis 6:9–11:32.

I managed to get him out of the house with difficulty. I bought a few packets of matches, at [. .] groszes a box. Nothing else of importance happened till noon, and the remainder of the day was peaceful.

Monday, 16 October. Reyzl spent the night in Łódź. I opened the shop at [. .] in the morning. Trading started again, but I [24] avoided doing business. Leybl went to the bridge to work. The children were at school. I was alone in the house, so I closed the shop from 1 to 3. Nothing else of importance happened during the day.

Tuesday, 17 October. A fine day. The market traders came in. There was a little business, but not like last Tuesday, because now it was warm. An incident occurred: Various traders were inspected, including Elimelech Gurt, that is Chava's [. .]. Someone had taken merchandise worth a lot of money from him and paid 350 zlotys for it. In the end, it turned out that it was a swindler. The swindler was surely taken to the commandant headquarters in Stryków, but officially nothing important happened.

Wednesday, 18 October. Reyzl went to Łódź with Leybl on a gloomy autumn day. I did a bit of business. An incident: 2 militiamen came from Stryków and went to Siciński's house where they found a number of bags of salt, sugar, and flour, and took them away. It also caused a stir in town when the same militiamen, of whom Knapczyński from Stryków was one, shaved off Eliezer Ginzberg's beard. And Dovid Zlotnik, who was arrested last Thursday, is still under arrest. Reyzl and Leybl came back early today. Nothing else of importance happened in town today.

[24a] Thursday, 19 October. I got up a bit later. It was a gloomy day. Sales were more meagre because it was raining. It was announced that anyone owning a radio, Christian or Jew, had to surrender it, so Gozicki also had to hand in the radio he had bought from Leybl. It rained all day, but nothing important happened.

Friday, 20 October. It was raining. The market traders came in, but there was very little trade. People were already hearing from Łódź that prices had dropped, especially for knitwear. The day ended without anything important happening.

Saturday, 21 October. It was announced that every trader would have to hand in a *cennik*.⁸⁸⁷ I had already drawn up a *cennik* for 16 October. I handed it

887 (Polish) price list. Plural is *cenniki*, further in the text.

in to the municipality to be certified. We had to open the shops. A newspaper from Łódź appeared with a proclamation that Jews were not allowed to engage in trade in textiles or leather goods.⁸⁸⁸ There was a great hue and cry among the traders concerned. Nothing else of importance happened during the day.

Sunday, 22 October. It rained all day. The weather matched the Jewish troubles. We had to hand in the *cenniki* at the municipality the next day to be certified. The traders were going mad. Thank God it's nightfall and we can put our troubles to sleep. A pail of cabbage was pickled for the first time in my household. I went to bed at 9 p.m., thanking God that the day had passed in peace.

[25] Monday, 23 October. No merchants went to Łódź because of the new decree of 18 October. It rained all day. I went with Zalman to Osiny to fetch the coal we had received from the municipality. We took 1,200 kilos of slack and, with the coal, we also took 100 kilo of charcoal. We came home soaking wet and irritated. It took a whole day. Nothing of importance happened.

Tuesday, 24 October. It rained all night until 8 a.m. The rain stopped and there was a market, but it wasn't long before it started raining again. We did a bit of business. At 5 p.m., I was called to the recorder at the town hall to state the prices of the haberdashery merchandise. Mr Wiśniewski and Mr Wiatroszak were there. And thus the day ended without anything of importance.

Wednesday, 25 October. Reyzl and Leybl left for Łódź early with Fishl Zintz. It is very hard dealing with customers who want to buy goods for next to nothing because they say that the Jewish shops will eventually be taken over. There is very little business. In the evening, Leybl arrived alone. He said that in Łódź the dealers wouldn't sell anything because they were busy stocktaking. What they did want to sell, people in the provinces didn't want to buy, so most of the traders came home with no merchandise. Reyzl, too, bought nothing today. She only bought a winter coat for Shimen. Thus ended a wasted day.

[25a] Thursday, 26 October. I got up very early to get a letter off to Reyzl, telling her not to buy any merchandise. I managed to send it with Shloyme

888 On 18 October 1939, the *Zarząd Cywilny* (Civilian Board) in Łódź issued a decree forbidding Jews to trade in textiles and leather goods, and requiring owners of shops selling such goods to draw up inventories of their stocks and submit them to the police authorities. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Hitlerowskie dyskryminacje gospodarcze...", p. 165.

Klimeks. There were various unpleasant incidents with customers. For that reason, we did little business but managed to get through until nightfall. Reyzl got back at 8 p.m. bringing hardly any merchandise. Thus the day ended.

Friday, 27 October. We bought two fat ducks from Yankl Jastrzębski for 8.50 zlotys. It was raining and customers came for galoshes. We did a little business. Nothing else of importance happened during the day.

Saturday, 28 October. We prayed at Hershl's. We opened the shops. We had to do a little business. After eating, I went to lie down. In the evening, Miller's brother-in-law came from Warsaw and bought merchandise from me for 250 zlotys. Then I bought goods from Betzalel Brejtsztejn for 128 zlotys. I bought a kilo of salt for 3 zlotys. Nothing else of importance happened during the Sabbath.

Sunday, 29 October. At 9 in the morning troops arrived in town. They were billeted in private homes. Before getting drunk, they searched all the houses in town, looking for radios, weapons, and so on, and they seized men for work. It was not a pleasant day. Business was poor. Only towards evening, when it was quiet, did my Leybl go out for a bit. But before he had even looked round, he was seized to move straw out of the courtyard. He was even [. . .] in charge of the workers, but they didn't work long, until 6 in the evening. Nothing else of importance happened that day.

Monday, 30 October. Nobody went to Łódź, because it was rumoured that in Łódź all the shops were closed.⁸⁸⁹ It was better to stay home because it had become cold. I bought a few dozen pieces of braid trimming from Betzalel. Nothing important happened.

Tuesday, 31 October. Market day. It's very cold. We have already begun to sell snow boots, but it's not like other market days. The day passed quietly.

Wednesday, 1 November. Nothing particular happened today.

Thursday, 2 November. I bought a little merchandise from Noyekh Goldsztejn and sold some to soldiers buying presents to send home. Nothing important happened.

[26] Friday, 3 November. It was a cold day. We sold little and nothing new happened. Saturday, 4 November. Announcements were posted about

889 Probably refers to the textile and leather goods shops from which the Głowno traders bought their supplies.

reporting leather goods. It was a nice day. The shops were open, but nothing important happened.

Sunday, 5 November. It rained almost all day. We sold almost nothing. Nothing new happened.

Monday, 6 November. A beautiful day. A delegation of 3 men went to the mayor to ask whether haberdashery shops had to surrender their goods as well. Our group was composed of Zemler, Baumerder, and me. The mayor received us in the presence of Mr Jabłoński, the teacher's husband, and explained to us that we haberdashers were not obliged to surrender our merchandise. In the afternoon, the local militia went around to the drapers and ready-made goods merchants and seized all of their merchandise. They were helped by Polish traders who measured the goods and listed them. Miller's sister-in-law came from Warsaw and bought merchandise for 280 zlotys. I had to buy more goods from Betzalel for 48 zlotys. At night, I bought goods from a Łódź woman for 137 zlotys. At the end of the day, the traders were in a very depressed mood.

Tuesday, 7 November. Market day. It was a beautiful day. We did very little business. There was nothing new.

Wednesday, 8 November. Nothing new at all.

Thursday, 9 November. A fine, warm day. Business was very poor. Traders didn't go to Łódź. Nothing new happened.

[26a] Friday, 10 November. A fine, warm day. A meagre market. Very little was sold. We weren't allowed to be out after 5 p.m., since it was the eve of 11 November.⁸⁹⁰ A few householders, both Christian and Jewish, were already detained. We finished eating at 6. The atmosphere was gloomy. Leybl went to bed at 7. We went to bed at 8:30. By 12, we had slept enough. Leybl got up and ate some cake with tea. Then he went back to sleep until 7 a.m. Anyway, Friday passed quietly.

Saturday, 11 November. We were afraid to go to pray, because it was the Polish national holiday and people were not allowed to assemble. So, we said the blessings for the beginning of the month of Kislev privately. All those who

890 The Germans feared patriotic demonstrations on Polish Independence Day, 11 November. In Warsaw, they carried out preventive arrests and shot at persons found on the streets after the curfew hour; in Głowno, presumably for that reason, the curfew hour was brought forward to 5 p.m. on the previous day.

had been arrested were freed: Grabowic Mikhoel, [. . .] Kowalski and Brukhe[?], Eliezer Fas and his son-in-law Borukh Hersh, Leybl Cwern, Shloyme Kac, Moyshe Szczawiński and his son-in-law. Things calmed down and the day passed peacefully.

Sunday, 12 November. Reyzl left for Łódź after I had stamped the permit in the municipality and paid 5 zlotys. We heard news from Brzeziny and Łowicz that the synagogues had been burnt down,⁸⁹¹ may it not befall us. There was also some news from Łódź. Business was very poor all day, so I decided to send my son Chaim to Reyzl to tell her not to buy any merchandise because the roads were dangerous, and the day ended, blessed be His name, without anything new in our town.

Monday, 13 November. I got up very early to send my son Chaim to Łódź, to Reyzl, to warn her of what was happening on the road. I managed to send him on Volf Ber's droshky. It was a fine day. I did a bit of business. I don't feel very well. Golański came from Dmosin⁸⁹² and repaid a debt from before the war. The trader from Stryków came at the same time. Golański bought 3 pieces of cloth from him, and I earned 12 zlotys through it. Night was falling and I went to bed. Reyzl arrived from Łódź and what she told us wasn't very cheerful. The trader from Stryków, Zelik Kutas,⁸⁹³ slept at my place. The day and night passed peacefully.

Tuesday, 14 November. Market day. I didn't get up because I was ill. We did a little business. Kutas came from Stryków again, and again spent the night at my place. Everything passed peacefully.

Wednesday, 15 November. We heard from Łódź that the German synagogue⁸⁹⁴ had been burnt down. People came from Łódź. I sent Yehezkel from Zgierz 100 zlotys because he had lost his livelihood, may it not befall us. My sister arrived from Łódź. She stayed the night and returned early on Thursday. Wednesday passed quietly.

[27] Thursday, 16 November. I got up early because my sister Hinde knocked on my door and woke me. She went home, but I was unable to drag

891 In Brzeziny, it was on 9 November, and in Łowicz on the night of 10/11 November 1939.

892 Dmosin (Łowicz County).

893 This could be a nickname, meaning either a tassel or a penis in Polish.

894 The Reform synagogue on Spacerowa Street, burnt down by the Germans on the night of 10 to 11 November. In the following days, they burnt down the synagogues on Wolborska, Gdańska, and Wólczajska Streets.

myself around for long. I had to go back to bed and stayed there till 2 p.m. Golański came and bought merchandise from the Stryków trader. I received 8 zlotys as middleman. I didn't eat till the evening. I felt cold and had to go back to the bed I had just made. Thus ended the day, praise God, blessed be His name, without anything new happening.

Friday, 17 November. I got up but had to go back to bed because I felt ill. I didn't get up again till 11 and stayed in the shop till the evening. I did a bit of business, but nothing new happened.

Saturday, 18 November. I prayed at Mr Goldsztejn's. We were obliged to open the shops at 8 a.m. The soldiers who had come on Friday and were billeted in Fishl Fas's house arrived. All the inhabitants of the house had to move out: J. M. Poznański, A. D. Hendelsh[?], Wiskulski[?], Szajbler. From Szrager's house: Szrager himself and Moyshe Lajkowicz. People were made to wash the floors of the requisitioned living quarters. It was only at 3 p.m. that I was able to go out into the street a little. I went to make a sick call on Hershl Shaye, who had broken his arm, and I also dropped in on my parents. When I came home in the evening to recite the afternoon prayers it was getting dark and we cooked some potato soup. Leybl made some signs in German as ordered by the authorities.⁸⁹⁵ We worked until 10 p.m. and went to bed. Thus ended the Sabbath day.

Sunday, 19 November. At 8 a.m., I was ordered to carry planks from Gorajek's wood store to Yankev Moyshe Poznański's home. Soldiers arrived all day and took men for work but, thank God, the day passed peacefully.

[27a] Monday, 20 November. A lot of soldiers arrived during the night. In the morning men were seized for work. People were going to and from Łódź. They told us a border post had been set up in Bratoszewice.⁸⁹⁶ There were some house searches, but nothing else of importance happened during the day.

Tuesday, 21 November. A market was set up, but in the middle of the day they took goods from Yakhl[?] and others in the street. Then they fell on Beyle

895 Initially, signs in German were to be placed on all shops and workshops. With time, Jews were exempted from that requirement. See Tomasz Szarota, *Okupowanej Warszawy dzień powszedni*, 2nd edition (Warszawa, 1978), p. 59.

896 The borders of the General Government were in fact demarcated a few weeks after its formal establishment on 26 October 1939. Łódź was at first to be in the GG, and was incorporated into the Reich on 8 November.

Poznański's shop and took all her merchandise. They took all the pelts from the furriers as well. Thank God night came and passed peacefully.

Wednesday, 22 November. A peaceful day. People are saying the traders are to be given all their goods back. Shmuel arrived from Zgierz and told us he was searched at the new border. Nothing new happened. The day passed peacefully.

Thursday, 23 November. A cool day. Customers come, but there's nothing to sell. We can't travel to Łódź. A few goods are returned to the furriers, and they also give Shmuel Ayzik something back. The rest they sell to the Christian shoemakers. Night falls. Moyshe Pomeranc and his mother sit with me and we look through the "Jewish Pictures" book⁸⁹⁷ till 9 o'clock, when we feel sleepy and go to bed.

Friday, 24 November. A frosty day. We do no business because we have nothing to sell. A soldier comes running in through the back gate and looks around the house. We don't know what he's looking for. He is followed by a large wagon. The dog starts to bark at him, so he grabs a brush to hit it with. He starts shouting, looks around, and runs straight into Anshl's, grabs a bowl, throws it on the wagon and drives off. Night falls. Rokhl and her son sit till 8 p.m. and Moyshe looks through the "Jewish Pictures" book. We went to bed. It passed peacefully.

Saturday, 25 November. Shmulik from Zgierz and I pray privately. We have some tea and cake. We wait until 12 [o'clock] and then go and eat. It's a quiet day. It snows a little, the first snow. Night falls and I recite *havdalah* using sugared tea. Rokhl and her son Moyshe come in and he sings various folk songs. Meanwhile, Reyzl makes soup. The children are getting hungry. Rokhl goes home and we eat *melave malka*.⁸⁹⁸ It's only 6 p.m. and the day has been quiet.

[28] Sunday, 26 November. It's a quiet day. Nothing happens. Moyshe Pomeranc and Anshl sit at my place till 8 o'clock and then we go to bed. It begins to rain and rains all night.

Monday, 27 November. A quiet day with nothing important.

897 Possibly "*Yidishe Bilder*" (Jewish pictures), illustrated weekly published in the years 1937–1939 in Riga.

898 (Hebrew) "Accompanying the [Sabbath] Queen", the last meal at the conclusion of the Sabbath.

Tuesday, 28 November. A meagre market, but the day passes quietly. Rokhl and Moyshe sit with us and he reads *Payats*.⁸⁹⁹ Leybl and Shmulik say they feel sleepy. Chaim broke a lightbulb, then went to eat fried potatoes and dropped the frying pan. Then he went to eat something and overturned the chicken fat. Nothing of importance happened.

Wednesday, 29 November. Reyzl is going to Warsaw with Feygele Szumiraj. They are going by train to buy merchandise, because you can't bring any goods in from Łódź due to the customs patrol in Bratoszewice. In the afternoon, Zelik comes from Stryków to spend the night with me. I want to give him supper, but I have no bread. So I go down to Bluma, from whom I manage to get only a roll for him. The day has passed quietly. We go to bed. The night also passes peacefully.

Thursday, 30 November. Reyzl isn't back from Warsaw yet. Zelik goes off to Łowicz. In the afternoon, Soreshe comes from Zgierz bringing some linen. I buy a turkey for 14 zlotys. For midday meal, I cook rice with peas. The day passes peacefully. When Shmulik and Leybl go out in the evening, they are seized and put to work carrying coal. Night falls. We wait till 6 o'clock in case Reyzl arrives, but after 6 we eat. It's already 8:30 and Reyzl isn't back yet. We don't know what to think. Zelik has left his bicycle behind, and Shmulik tries to learn to ride it in the flat. He falls off and gives himself quite a knock. [28a] Moyshe Pomeranc is here and sings various things before going home to sleep. Reyzl is still not back. I set the [. . .]. The night passes quietly.

Friday, 1 December. It's already 10 o'clock in the morning and Reyzl is still not back. I'm getting worried. I send a message to my mother to buy fish, and Leybl buys *challahs*. 12 o'clock comes and my mother puts the chicken soup on. She prepares small dumplings and Reyzl has still not returned. Not until 3 in the afternoon does Reyzl arrive from Łowicz. She has brought very little merchandise, because it's expensive and hard to find in Warsaw. She's very tired from the journey. It went peacefully.

Saturday, 2 December. A Sabbath without rest. The shops were open. We did no business. People were not allowed to go to Łódź. The day passed peacefully. Zelik is still staying the night with us.

899 (Yiddish) clown. "*Der Payats*," (1939) one of about 40 satirical periodicals published in Warsaw in Yiddish in the interwar period. See Marian Fuks, *Prasa żydowska w Warszawie 1823–1939* (Warszawa, 1979), p. 252.

Sunday, 3 December. A fine day. Mrs Garstecka comes and buys a little merchandise which I bought from Dovid Morgensztern [and] Betzalel. It's a quiet day. Soldiers buy various things. In the evening Zelik comes again with a cover. We have supper. Zelik has brought bread and some liqueur. It's 8 in the evening. Leybl and Shmulik are already asleep and Zelik is still reading the "Jewish Pictures" book. The day has passed quietly.

Monday, 4 December. I got up very early because Reyzl was supposed to travel to Łódź with Meylekh Gurt, but he didn't go. It was a fine day. I had a piece of tar paper laid on the roof of the stall. People who had gone to Łódź came back. They had not been allowed through at the border. In the afternoon, Betzalel bought several cheap ladies' sweaters from me, as well as 3 better ones which I had bought from a Christian only 3 days before. Betzalel sold them immediately to Baumerder. I quickly bought 25 shawls from Yekhiel Jachlis [?] and 1 piece of elastic for 1.50 [?]. The day passed peacefully. It is now after 8 [o'clock] and Leybl and Shmulik are already in bed. Moyshe is standing chatting to them. Mother Rokhl is chatting to Reyzl, who is darning socks. I'm writing my daily report. We are preparing to go to bed soon, but someone knocks on the shutters and asks us to open. It's Yisroel Avrom from Łódź, who has come with some linen. He has supper and stays the night.

Tuesday, 5 December. When I opened the shutters during my morning prayers, I saw that the stall had been opened. A bag of feathers had been stolen. More linen and things were brought from Zgierz. At half past seven in the evening, Moyshe, who is sitting with me after supper, goes out by chance and sees that his house has been burgled. It transpires that Frumet's coat, a pair of fur-lined trousers and Rokhl's dress have been stolen. They searched until half past ten and Rokhl Liskowicer [?] brought 2 soldiers who searched Moyshe Pomeranc's house. Thus the day ended.

[29] Wednesday, 6 December. I buy a few stockings from Dovid and also buy a dozen skeins of yarn from Yekhiel at 4.20 for a 200 metre skein and 2.40 for a 100 metre skein, and gloves at 3.50. Prices have gone up a lot. They're asking 36 zlotys for fine-gauge stockings and 40 zlotys for silk. I also bought 3 tapestry brushes from Blusztejn from Zgierz, and with this, the day ended. I bought a bottle of vodka for 3 zlotys from Rokhl Kurok, and we drank it for *Hanukkah*.⁹⁰⁰

900 (Hebrew) dedication, renewal; eight-day holiday, also called Festival of Lights; celebrated for a week starting on the 25th day of *Kislev*, to commemorate the victory of

Thursday, 7 December, the first day of *Hanukkah*. I go to Łowicz with the Derkes brothers, the first time since the beginning of the war that I go anywhere. I buy aniline dyes in Łowicz from Lasman and another dealer, but it's 3 or 4 times more expensive. In the meantime, my Reyzl has sold 2 of the tapestry brushes for a good sum and taken one home for us. I get home before 6 [o'clock] and we light the second *Hanukkah* candle. I also had to buy an armband, white and blue,⁹⁰¹ in Łowicz, and so the day ended.

Friday, 8 December, second day of *Hanukkah*. It's a Christian holiday.⁹⁰² The shops are closed. The stove broke down and I had to work hard to get it going again. Then I went to the *mikvah*. Moyshe didn't come because he had gone to Warsaw. We went to bed early. During the night, we heard a noise and smelled something in the courtyard, and it transpired that the wall between Moyshe Nadel's annex and Hershl Pietrkowski's had burnt through. Betzalel the tenant had noticed it during the night and put it out. The day and night passed peacefully.

Saturday, 9 December. I pray at Mr Goldsztejn's. We make *kiddush* in my home together with my father. I have a little vodka. We eat *cholent*. I say the afternoon prayers at Mr Goldsztejn's. Reyzl cooks us borsht with potatoes. Moyshe returns from Warsaw. Everyone goes to bed at 8. The *Hanukkah* Sabbath too has passed peacefully. Zelik from Piotrków turned up and ate *cholent* with us.

[29a] Sunday, 10 December. A fine, frosty day. Levi and his son were seized and photographed. The day passed without anything important happening.

Monday, 11 December. I went to Łowicz and bought a little merchandise from Lasman. I got back at half past five and lit the sixth *Hanukkah* candle. At home they did good business. The day passed without anything important happening.

Tuesday, 12 December. In the morning, I went to Volf to buy some merchandise. There I met brother-in-law Betzalel. I bought half a dozen gloves from him and he bought one [?] of silk. When I came home, people were saying

the Maccabees over Antiochus IV in 164 B.C.E. and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem.

901 The white band with the blue Star of David, obligatory for the Jews in GG from 1 December 1939.

902 The Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

there would be house searches. It did cause us much aggravation but, thank God, it passed without trouble. And so the day passed peacefully.

Wednesday, 13 December. I get up at exactly 6 o'clock because Reyzl is going to Łódź and I have to order her a droshky, but no driver is willing to take her, because the border guards in Bratoszewice aren't letting any Jews through. It's only because my Reyzl has a certificate for the doctor in Łódź that Yisrolik takes her with him, and so she goes to Łódź, taking the yellow patch with her.⁹⁰³ Zalman borrowed my armband with the blue Star of David because he wanted to go to Warsaw. There was some anxiety, because we were afraid we were asking for trouble in this affair, with business and so on, but, thank God, the day passed peacefully. I am writing this at 8 p.m. and Reyzl isn't back. The children are already asleep. I myself cooked the midday [meal] with supper of rice and peas which our neighbour Bluma had given us, and I too am getting ready for bed. I bought 20 good grams of tea for 80 groszes and 90 groszes, because tea has become very expensive. In general, everything has become more expensive. They say cotton or knitted socks cost around 24 zlotys a dozen, [?] 36 zlotys and silk [?] 50 zlotys. I myself sold half a dozen [. . .] Kalisz cotton for 33 zlotys and Betzalel was asking 36, that is 6 zlotys a pair. Sugar costs 2.40, kerosene 6 zlotys a litre, and in general everything has become very expensive. A goose which cost 14 or 15 zlotys two weeks ago, costs 25 today. A spool of No. 40 knitting yarn which used to cost 22 groszes now costs 1.50 zlotys. [. . .] A metre of wool ribbon costs 50 groszes.

[30] Thursday, 14 December, the last day of *Hanukkah*. A cold day. People arrive from Łódź. They are fleeing because of a decree that all Jews must leave Łódź.⁹⁰⁴ In the evening, Chaiml comes from Zgierz with Pola, who collapses onto the table when she comes in and bangs her nose. We have to work long and hard to stem the blood, and she spends the night at my place. At dusk, Reyzl arrives from Łódź with Sheyne, bringing some linen, clothes, and so on. I had cooked barley grits with peas, which everyone ate with great appetite. Leybl went to sleep at Moyshe's, and thus passed the last day of *Hanukkah*.

903 Following the order of 14 November 1939, issued by Friedrich Übelhör, the chairman of the Kalisz-Łódź region, Jews were ordered to wear a yellow armband on their right arm. From 11 December, following the order of *Wartheland's* governor Arthur Greiser, they were ordered to wear a yellow Star of David on their breast and back.

904 On 12 December 1939, expulsions of the population of Łódź and *Wartheland* to the General Government began.

Friday, 15 December. They say a lot of people are leaving Łódź, but we haven't seen any wagons all day. Not until nightfall, when we had finished praying *kabalat shabbat*⁹⁰⁵ privately at home, did we hear that people were arriving. A woman came from Łódź and asked to be let in. In spasms and faint, she tells us she was beaten at the border and has left behind a child of 5 months. We manage to find out from her that her husband is called Najman, that he worked at Popowski's in Łódź and that she left the child with her mother-in-law at the border post. We give her tea and rolls and, as we are talking, in comes Toybe Rokhl, Aryeh's sister, with the child. We make *kiddush* in a tense atmosphere and hear that more people are arriving on wagons and are being put up in all the houses.

[30a] It's not very long before Volf Plamiak's son comes in and puts his packages down. Plamiak's brother-in-law Mr Grynbojm from Brzezińska Street 32 also arrives with a lot of packages and I have to find them a stable for the horse. I buy him some oats from Yehezkel Golenberg. It was half past nine before Mr Grynbojm prayed *kabalat shabbat* and made *kiddush*. In the meantime, Mrs Winter from Nowa Street arrives with the children and her brother Sieradzki, and they sleep at my place. I don't get to bed till half past ten, but at half past eleven more people from Łódź knock on the door and I have to get up and give my bed to Toybe Rokhl and Sheyne. I can't get back to sleep in any case and drag myself around all night. Yoel and Shmulik sleep in the small bed. Pola sleeps on the sofa. Soreshe from Zgierz and Ita's daughter sleep on the floor. Day breaks and it's

Saturday, 16 December. At my place, there are now Avrom Goldberg and Ita, Abel's daughter, and 4 children. He keeps urging me to find him lodgings. I go and rent him a 4-room flat at Israel Avrom's for 50 zlotys a month. When we try to hire a driver to take his few things to [Nowe] Zakopane, Oren Kalcman wants 100 zlotys. With difficulty, we find a cart for 30 zlotys, and I go with him to Zakopane to help him move in. Then I pray and make *kiddush*. Meir Brejtsztein comes looking for me, asking me to buy a little merchandise at his place. I buy something and let Meir earn 25 zlotys. I don't eat a midday meal until 3 p.m.

The street looks as if a disaster has hit it. People are still travelling to Łowicz and Warsaw and arriving from Łódź. They say Zgierska Street has

905 (Hebrew) "Welcoming the Sabbath", the Friday evening service.

already been evacuated, including the house where Rivke lives. Night falls. Again, carts begin to arrive with hundreds of people. It's freezing. Among the refugees at my place is a certain Joskowicz from Brzezińska Street 21, who had a paint business. He arrived during the day, having packed his belongings onto a child's pram and crossed the border with it. Night is falling, but more groups of people keep arriving. A Mrs Cohen comes in from Łódź, who lived on Nowomiejska Street and dealt in shoe accessories. A very wealthy woman. She has brought with her beds, grid irons and saucepans, and chocolate to eat. [31] It was so crowded that there was nowhere to sleep. I had just laid down when Gitl arrived from Łódź with Reyzl and we had to put their packages in the shop. Bakczyn from Łódź and Landsberg from Kalisz also put their packages there. No one else arrived till nightfall, but there was no room to move. So when Sheyne arrived at night, she had to go to Yitzkhok's. Bakczyn also had to leave. I had to get up and give my bed to Gitl and Reyzl. Shmulik got up too. Only later was I able to lie down next to Yoel and get a bit of sleep.

Sunday, 17 December. I went out early into the street and found it full of people who had spent the night there. The frost was bitter. They say the municipality is refusing to register the new arrivals, so they are beginning to move on. Those who can, move into the summer huts. Getsl's daughter Pola arrives in the evening with her husband Mikhoel Gertler and their landlord[?] Stanowski from Łódź, along with her aunt and their [. . .] Skorowski. They all occupy the small room, where it's very hot. We arrange for the women to sleep in the large room and we men sleep in the small room. They hire someone to guard their belongings in the storage space. When we are sleeping in the small room, Leybl gets up at midnight on the dot and starts eating. I get up too and feel around in the dark for something good to eat. I find some good cakes and a little vodka and we finish them up. This gives us an appetite, so Sieradzki, who is also sleeping at my place, installs himself comfortably with us, and I have to sell them a bottle of spirits. [31a] Then we sleep till 7 in the morning and get up ready to face the coming day.

Monday, 18 December. The crowd of newcomers is moving on, because the municipality refuses to register them. In town, it's chaotic. Everything is very expensive: bread costs 3 zlotys, milk 1 zloty, a goose 30 zlotys, fish 5 zlotys, eggs 7 zlotys, and so on.

Tuesday, 19 December. The golden market day before the Christian holiday. We do a little business. We buy goods from the newcomers. The crowd is

getting smaller because everyone is going to Warsaw. I bought some merchandise from Sieradzki, sold it, and made some money. And so Tuesday passed.

Wednesday, 20 December. The same as yesterday with nothing important happening. The people from Łódź who are staying with me are spending another night in the small room. Their father Sandowski arrives by cart. They buy a bottle of spirits and we drink together. Noyekh Buksztejn's son Eli looked after the cart and received 8 zlotys for it. Bakczyn also arrived, so Eli also guarded his cart and earned 4 zlotys. After the spirits, we slept through the night till 6 a.m.

Thursday, 21 December. Early in the morning, the Sandowski's set out for Warsaw with Gertler. Bakczyn also took his belongings and left for Warsaw. It's getting less cramped in my home, but not yet entirely comfortable.

Friday, 22 December. For a whole week I have had a newly married couple from Łódź staying with me, and it is only today that the husband has left for Warsaw and the wife has returned to Łódź. I bought a pair of trousers from them for 15 zlotys. Yoysef Borensztejn arrived, as well as Yehezkel Borekh. So at the table on Friday night, we were as many as 10 adult men, apart from the women. We spent a very good Friday evening. It looked like a wedding!

Saturday, 23 December. We got up very early, recited *hashkoma*,⁹⁰⁶ and made *kiddush* over vodka which I had bought. But because the vodka was weak, all the men caught a chill in their stomachs and got diarrhoea. We didn't eat the *cholent*, which had been put in the oven at midnight, until 2 p.m. After that we felt better and in the afternoon we recited the *sheva brakhot*.⁹⁰⁷

[32] Sunday, 24 December. It's a mild day. The oven has broken down and we can't light it. People come for bands which have to be worn on our arms. White bands with blue Stars of David. I buy a little merchandise from strangers. Joskowicz had also brought a small amount of merchandise from Łódź from his business, paints, which he straightaway left with me to buy. In the afternoon, when we're all sitting at the table, about 10 soldiers arrive. They take away the table in the large room and say they will return it tomorrow. And thus ends Sunday.

906 (Hebrew) arising; the first morning prayers, usually recited before dawn.

907 (Hebrew) seven blessings; recited during the wedding ceremony and at celebratory meals in the following days.

Monday, 25 December. A frosty day. It's very quiet. The soldiers are throwing snow at each other. The day passes uneventfully.

Tuesday, 26 December. The same as yesterday.

Wednesday, 27 December. We hear rumours that people fleeing from Zgierz and Aleksandrów are coming and, true enough, at 2 p.m. Gitl arrives with the children from Zgierz. Gershen also arrives from Aleksandrów with his father's family. Night is falling. Hundreds of people are arriving. People are lying on the floors, and an incident occurs. When Gershen lay down in my bed to sleep, his sister-in-law Miriam also lay down in her overcoat. When I lay down in bed next to Gershen, Miriam got undressed and also lay down in the bed. And when all the women started to laugh at her, she took no notice, but we couldn't sleep the whole night because of her... At 4 a.m. I had to get up.

[32a] Thursday, 28 December. I had to find lodgings for Miriam with Dovidshe's wife and she settled in there. There was a lot of bustle in town. Large numbers are leaving for Warsaw and many for Piotrków. Night falls. The house is full of people. Gershen and Rivtshe have left for Warsaw. His father Pinkhes sleeps with me in my bed.

Friday, 29 December. Rivtshe's father Henekh Cohen leaves with his wife and son. It's not long before refugees arrive from Stryków. It's bitterly cold. People are spending the night on the bare ground, because there are many refugees from Zgierz, Aleksandrów, Łódź, and Stryków. By chance, there is cheap fish, and all the people staying at my place buy fish and meat and organize a good Sabbath. The Sabbath night falls.

Saturday, 30 December. The streets are animated with refugees. The municipality is refusing to register them. Many refugees leave, but there are still many left.

Sunday, 31 December. It's a fine winter day. People stroll around the streets till nightfall.

Monday, 1 January 1940. The same as yesterday with nothing of importance.

Tuesday, 2 January 1940. It's market day. The refugees buy a lot of poultry and butter quite cheaply. Kosowski arrives with his horse and cart. Gertler brings 300 litres of kerosene and starts selling it, but it doesn't sell so easily. Only 100 litres sells and the rest is left.

Wednesday, 3 January. The municipality announces that the refugees have to leave town, and many do leave.

Thursday, 4 January. Pinkhes Hejman leaves for Łowicz with his daughter-in-law Miriam. Ita Holcman and her sister leave as well, but they return in the evening with two new women and stay until 6 in the morning, when they leave for Łódź. It's Friday morning, 5 January. There's no fish to be had. Sheyndl from Aleksandrów is here with her children. They spend the night and buy a goose, and she goes off to Warsaw on Friday morning with her mother-in-law. Yehezkel's Chaiml and Yoysef's Leybl go with her to Łowicz. They return on foot and don't get back till exactly 5 in the evening. [33] As we are about to make *kiddush* on Friday night, Hinde arrives from Błaszki with a neighbour of hers. They eat with us and spend the night.

Saturday, 6 January. It's the holiday of the Three Kings.⁹⁰⁸ The shops are closed. Yehezkel comes with the children and Yoel, and we make *kiddush* with the wine that Mindl left behind. We eat fish [and some?] meat, but don't eat the *cholent* until half past twelve. Then everyone goes out for a walk, and thus the day ends. Note: During the day, my son Leybl and Yoysef's Leybl had to go and work at the school.

Sunday 7 January. I went to Łowicz for merchandise with Mindl's Shloyme, the *dorożkarz*,⁹⁰⁹ but he didn't wait for me in Łowicz because along came Yoysef Borensztejn, Avrom Dancyger, Sheyne, and her *koleżanka*,⁹¹⁰ Joskowicz from Łódź and Piekarczyk, and they all travelled back to Głowno with him. But on the way, they encountered soldiers who beat them thoroughly, and each of them had to pay a fine of 20 zlotys. So I quickly got hold of Gabriel's droshky and went home with him without any trouble. Merchandise was very expensive in Łowicz. And thus Sunday ended peacefully.

From Monday 8 January to Thursday 24 January, I have not written for various reasons. Briefly, I was taken for work from the previous Thursday and worked 3 hours [a day] at the school. At the same time, I traded in [33a] ready-made suits, which earned me money to buy cloth for suits and other things. My Leybl also went to work several times during that period. Yoysef's Reyzl arrived from Łódź, but her goods had been taken from her on the road. Joskowicz's wife also transported a little merchandise, but it was taken from her in Nowosolna. During that time, my brother-in-law Arl was here from

908 Christian holiday of Epiphany.

909 (Polish) droshky driver.

910 (Polish) female colleague.

Warsaw, as well as Dovid, Gitl, and Rivka, who bought something and left. Gertler also brought kerosene here and sold it. Last Tuesday, the Łowicz police suddenly arrived and closed all the leather goods shops, as well as Yosl Zemler's. At half past five in the evening, two police guards came with Lang to search my place. They found many strangers. He told them to go into the kitchen and reassured us, the owners, that they wouldn't confiscate any merchandise but that we would have to hand it over. However, when he went into the shop and saw that I didn't have any textiles but had bought [ready-made] goods, he said they didn't need such things. Then he called the other one and the militiaman and they left the house.

Today, Wednesday, early in the morning, when I was saying my prayers and Gershen, Yoysef, Sieradzki, and Joskowicz from Łódź were present, two Christians came in and ordered us all to go to work, and we all had to go. Only Sieradzki managed to get out of it. When I arrived to the municipality, the overseer Raga released me. Gershen also came home in 1½ hours and Yosef came home after 3 hours. Only Joskowicz, who had to go to the doctor to get a note certifying him unfit for work because he possessed "gold," i.e. [. . .] had to work till 4 p.m. After he had returned and rested a little, a cart drew up bringing him some merchandise [. . .] [34] some of his merchandise had been confiscated by the guards and that his wife and daughter had not been allowed into town. He unloaded his few household goods into the flat he had rented from Rolkiewicz[?] and put the remaining merchandise into my storage space. But the driver did not want to take payment for the journey unless it was in *Reichsmarks*, and he didn't have any. His wife and daughter arrived on foot from Bratoszewice. Many searches were carried out in town all day, and by the end of the day a great deal of merchandise had been confiscated.

All trade has come to an end for several reasons. First of all, a dealer bringing merchandise from Łódź, demands payment in *Reichsmarks*, and we have none. Anyone who receives *Reichsmarks* or small change takes it to Stryków or Łódź, and no other *Reichsmarks* come in. Second, it has been announced that all 100 and 500 zloty notes have to be exchanged, so nobody is willing to accept them;⁹¹¹ and third, because of the confiscations. So all trade has come to a standstill, and people are very frightened. Also because

911 The German authorities decided to retain pre-war banknotes in the General Government, except for the highest denominations, 100 and 500 zloty, which had to be handed in.

throughout the day, in a frost that has lasted for 6 weeks, people are being seized for work, so it's impossible to go out on the street during the day. In their distress, people say: *Baboker tomar mi yiten erev u-va'erev tomar mi yiten boker*.⁹¹² In any case, *Mi she-amar yomar dai*.⁹¹³

[34a] Thursday, 25 January. It's getting a little easier. People are no longer being seized for work, but a certain number of workers have to be provided. It's possible to go out on the street. Goods seized the day before have been returned to some people, namely Shmuel Ayzik, Feyge Fuels[?], the tall red-head Pocięgiel[?], etc. Hinde's neighbour stayed at my house with a woman from Błaszki and bought some merchandise, so I made a little money. They went home this evening and, thank God, the day ended peacefully.

Friday, 26 January. People are being seized for work. They are being tormented by local Christians who make them do exercises in the snow and run through town shouting that the Jews had wanted the war, and such things. The soldiers who were stationed here for over 3 months have left. A few gendarmes and policemen from Łódź have arrived and are moving into new lodgings. Night falls and passes peacefully.

Saturday, 27 January. Nothing important happened, except a few cases of people being seized for work. Those Jews who were seized for work didn't return until evening. They marched through town with Mendl Poznański at their head, totally exhausted and soaked through from snow. On the way to work, they had come across Yehezkel Borekh and his son Chaiml. They tried to take them into the ranks, but Chaiml ran off and they chased him. While running away, Chaiml broke some panes of glass in the hothouse, and for that Yehezkel was beaten by the overseers. Thus the Sabbath ended.

Sunday, 28 January. People designated by Cwern are going to work, and my son Leybl and Fishl Beker went and notified them. Young women and girls are also being seized for work, but nothing important happens and the day ends peacefully.

100 zloty notes were allowed back into circulation after being stamped with the emblem of the GG.

912 (Hebrew) "In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning!" (Deuteronomy 28:67).

913 (Hebrew) "May He who said, say 'enough'." An abbreviated version of the rabbinic saying *Mi she'amar le'olamo dai yomar le-tzarotenu dai* (May He who said to His world "enough", say to our troubles "enough"). May God put an end to our troubles.

Monday, 29 January. Round-ups for work have eased off a bit. No incidents occur.

Tuesday, 30 January. It's bitterly cold. Coal costs up to 30 zlotys; poultry is very expensive. The Christian shops are closed so we do more business. The day passes without incident.

[35a] [. . .] The frost is even fiercer. I happen to walk along [. . .] to the Rozenbojms [. . .] and I'm amazed to see that the Jewish cemetery has been totally wrecked. Everything has gone up [in price]. They say a piece of linen costs 150 to 180 zlotys, coal costs up to 40 zlotys, a bag of sugar costs 3.50 in Polish money, flour up to 2 zlotys. German marks are rare. It's got so that we'll have to pay 3 zlotys for a mark, because people will sell only for marks. Nothing important happens.

Thursday, 1 February. The frost is even more severe, 24 degrees of frost. Trading has ceased because no permits are being issued. You can't get hold of any marks and you can't use 100 zloty notes. Yoysef has gone to Warsaw. Dovid and Gitl have also gone to Warsaw. Only Rivke is staying here till after the Sabbath, waiting for Aryeh to send her marks so that she can travel to Łódź. It's rather gloomy without the men, but they will surely be here for the Sabbath. Nothing new happened.

Friday, 2 February. The frost is even stronger. The day passes without anything new.

Saturday, 3 February. I go to Wolpert to find out about permits, and he tells me to apply to the *Landrat*. Nothing new today.

Sunday, 4 February. Yisroel Avrom writes applications to the *Landrat* for us. We order a sled from Alter Yisroel Hersch's son to take us to Łowicz. It costs us 40 zlotys for 5 people.

Monday, 5 February. We travel to Łowicz at dawn and go straight to the *Landrat* [35a] and hand in our applications. We go into town and each of us [. . .] go home. The frost is very severe. The day passes without anything important happening.

Tuesday, 6 February. The frost has eased off a bit, but I've caught a cold and have to stay in bed all day. The day passes without anything new till the evening, when a search is made at Yankev Volf Koze's house. In the evening, the assistant gendarme comes and buys a pair of warm underpants. He's a very decent man.

Wednesday, 7 February. There's only a slight frost. Nothing new happens.

Thursday, 8 February. The frost has gone completely. Big searches have been carried out in Nowy Otwock,⁹¹⁴ but without major incidents. The Jew from Łosice arrived with his wife, and Hinde also came. They soon returned home after buying products for their town. Yoysef hasn't come back from Warsaw yet. He has already been in Warsaw for 12 days. Joskowicz has arrived from Warsaw. Nothing important happened.

Friday, 9 February. The frost has become severe again from the beginning of the month of Adar I.⁹¹⁵ There is little business. It's very cold but nothing important is happening.

Saturday, 10 February. The frost is very severe, almost 30 degrees of frost. Yoysef still isn't back. Toybe Rokhl was here with her child, a very nice child. In the evening, Shloyme's Gitl was sitting on a chair when her head started spinning and she almost fell off the chair. Efroyim Menashe gave her some drops and she felt better. And so the day passed without anything important happening.

Sunday, 11 February to Sunday 25 February. Shloyme's Gitl went home and Gertl's Pola came from Warsaw, so I paid her back the rest of what I owed her. No permits were being issued to Jews, so I went to Łowicz to submit an application for a permit. Friday came and we were informed that Jews who did not have a licence must close their shops. I went to Łowicz again and they promised me I would get a permit. A whole week went by and I didn't get one. It wasn't until Saturday, 24 February that I was informed that I would get a permit on Monday. Of the Jewish bakers, Shloyme Nadel [?] and Laskowicz [?] obtained temporary ones, and with a great deal of effort Toybe also got one after paying 1,000 zlotys to the municipality. My sister has just arrived from Łódź with some shawls.

[36] Nothing important happened in these two weeks, but one event is worth noting: Yehezkel and I bought some goods from a Christian, and he came back two weeks later demanding money. The matter was settled only after a *din torah*.⁹¹⁶ Yosef went to Warsaw again, and wasn't back for the Sabbath. Leybl got a permit as a watchmaker and made himself a sign with

914 District of Głowno from 1935.

915 In 1940, the month of Adar in the Jewish calendar was preceded by an intercalary month, Adar I, because of the Jewish leap year. Adar I lasted from 10 February to 10 March.

916 (Hebrew) litigation in a rabbinical court. Since it is highly unlikely that a non-Jew would have agreed to appear before a rabbinical court, the expression is probably used here figuratively to mean litigation in general.

a watch to put in the window. Everything has gone up: sugar 5 zlotys, flour 3 zlotys, peas 6 zlotys, a chicken 20 zlotys and a goose 80 zlotys, oilcloth 20 zlotys a metre, stockings from 5 to 25 zlotys, 500 metre yarn 2 zlotys, velvet ribbon 4 zlotys, fringe 3 zlotys, [. . .] 60 groszes a dozen, and so on. Everything is expensive. It's time the war ended.

Sunday, 25 February. Noyekh Fisher comes in and buys a watch from Leybl. He boasts that he promised Mrs Nadel from Łódź that he could give [. . .] for his daughter to her grandchild. On Tuesday, Dovid came from Warsaw and left for Łódź. On Wednesday, Yoysef rented a flat from Walciszek together with Joskowicz. He wanted to move out immediately, but we kept him over the Sabbath. I still haven't received a permit. Wolpert promised to resolve the matter on Friday with the *starosta* in Łowicz, and on Saturday he told us [36a] that I should come to the municipality on Monday where I would receive [. . .] but when I went to the municipality on Monday, the mayor told me [. . .] day and postponed it until Tuesday morning. Berliński and his wife came from Łódź and went on to Warsaw. Yoysef moved out today. It's very gloomy here without Yoysef and the children. Nothing important happened during this period other than today, Monday, 4 March, when registration of the Jews began at the *gmina* for people aged 12 to 60.

Tuesday, 5 March. I got my permit from the municipality. The same day I also received an order from the Jewish *gmina* to work for 3 days. Moyshe Pomeranc also received a work order for 3 days. Nothing new happened.

Wednesday, 6 March to the end of the Sabbath on 16 March. Sheyne arrived and is still here. She is being very successful. I had to bring Sholem whitewash from Łowicz for 50 zlotys a 100 kilos and 40 zlotys for fare. At this moment, Moyshe Pomeranc is singing *Ikh for aheym*.⁹¹⁷ Sheyne is sitting here helping him sing various songs.

On Wednesday, 14 March,⁹¹⁸ there was a flood, and the water came into Yosef Bernstein's house up to the beds. In my courtyard, the water came up as far as Zawadzki's shed. Reyzl is peeling potatoes now for *melave malka*. The water has receded today and the weather is a little frosty again. Nothing very important occurred during this period. Efroyim Menashe ate the *seuda shlishit* with us.

917 (Yiddish) "I'm going home," a Zionist song of the 1930s about emigration to Palestine.

918 14 March was a Thursday.

Sunday, 17 March to Wednesday, 27 March. The frost returned after the flood. Before the Christian *Pesach*⁹¹⁹ we did a bit of business. We sold very little paint, because whitewash costs 1 zloty a kilo. It was cold. On the Sabbath before *Purim*, I prayed at Mr Goldsztejn's. Yoysef stayed the night at my place. I recited the *Megillah*.⁹²⁰ Yehezkel and the children were here. Hershl and Moyshe were also here and so was Hershek Srebrnik.⁹²¹ On his way home at 8 o'clock, he was beaten up and they knocked out one of his teeth. On Sunday morning, I also prayed at Mr Goldsztejn's and when I came home I had to recite the *Megillah* again. Afterwards, we all got together and drank vodka. The two men from Łódź, Lasman and Jakubowicz [. . .] sang and drank. I had to give them dumplings to eat. The Jews who had gone to work, paraded through the town on their way back singing Jewish songs such as *Zol shoyn zayn di geule*⁹²² and finally *Hatikvah*. On Monday, *Shushan Purim*⁹²³ and the second day of the Christian holiday,⁹²⁴ people also paraded and sang in the same way. On Tuesday, 26 March, we repaired the kitchen and the stove, paying Beyrush the tinsmith 15 zlotys and the painter 6 zlotys. I am ending my report on 27 March. I think this war will soon be over.

Wednesday, 27 March.

ARG I 741 (Ring. I/447)

Description: original, handwritten, notebook, ink, pencil, Yiddish, 155×195 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 38 sheets, 73 pages.

919 (Hebrew) Passover.

920 (Hebrew) Scroll [of Esther], read in its entirety on Purim.

921 Spelling of given name and family name uncertain.

922 (Yiddish) May the Redemption come soon.

923 The day after *Purim* (traditionally celebrated by Jews living in walled cities).

924 25 March 1940 was Easter Monday.

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After February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, [Nacia]. Memoir of a woman deported from Łódź on 10 February 1940, regarding her stay in Głowno during 1940–1941; expulsion of 2,000 resettled Jew, establishment of the ghetto, round-ups for forced labour, fire in the town, contacts with Poles, sanitary campaigns and deportation to Warsaw on 28 February 1941.

[Notebook No.] I

[1] I arrived in the town of Głowno on 10 February 1940. It was after all the resettlements⁹²⁵ from small, nearby towns. Of the total of 5,000 Jews living in Głowno, 2,000 were resettled.⁹²⁶ They had been resettled by stages from Stryków, Zgierz, Konstantynów, Aleksandrów, and Łódź. The resettled lacked bedding, clothes and other essential belongings. The resettlement was unexpected. The people had to assemble on the market square, usually at dawn. They were then put on carts and sent away. The further, the better! So that they would not be useless ballast in the Reich. Expelled, driven out of their homes into the unknown, they crossed the border between the territories recently incorporated into the Reich and the then-Protectorate⁹²⁷ and they stopped in the first town on the other side of the border. Głowno was that town, so they usually settled there. Besides, where were they supposed to go? In the morning, they had been in their homes. Now, in the evening, tired and cold, they were reaching their longed-for destination. Where were mothers, babies, and half-conscious children, who were begging for food, supposed to go? My father was in Głowno on 13 December 1939 and he saw the arriving transports. All those who saw those scenes were weeping. Lines of carts loaded with belongings, children, and women. The men were walking behind the carts.

925 Deportations to the General Government from the territories annexed to the Reich. 87,883 Jews and Poles were expelled from *Wartheland* by the end of 1939.

926 Information about 2,000 resettled Jews in Głowno appears in the correspondence between the Committee to Help Refugees in Głowno with the AJDC headquarters in Warsaw in April 1940. The undated list of names of beneficiaries of this Committee contains 540 families, a total of 2,334 people. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/338, pp. 3–19, 20. The convergence of the official data and those included in the testimony is striking.

927 The Protectorate became the future General Government.

The children were crying. The residents of Głowno⁹²⁸ were helping however they could. They brought food for the people, warmed them up, and took them into their homes. The German soldiers too were helping the resettled however they could. Walking down the main street of the town, [3] my father heard one of the soldiers say to his companions, while watching the resettlement, "This cannot be! Such things should not happen. Why, aren't they humans? Don't they have a right to live?" The rest of the soldiers hung their heads. Some replied, "You're right, pal." The expelled did not rest for long. The German authorities soon issued an order: The Jews are to leave Głowno within 24 hours and go east. Some set out, while others ignored the whole situation and settled in the town or, more often, in nearby resort villages, such as Nowy Otwock, [Nowe] Zakopane, or [Nowy] Warchałów.

The resettled became a thorn in the flesh of the Głowno Jews. Every now and then, posters were put up calling on the newly arrived Jews to leave the town. The aliens were [4] a nuisance to everybody. Why is food expensive? Because the aliens are increasing the demand for food and that causes an increase in food prices. In general, the aliens were regarded as criminals, frauds and utterly worthless. They also constituted totally useless ballast for the Community. The expelled, many of whom had nothing except the clothes they were wearing, were a burden to the Jewish Community. In early 1940, the Community received very substantial aid from American charities in the form of money, food products, and clothing. The Joint organised a soup kitchen, which issued approximately 500 midday meal rations. Moreover, the Community extended financial aid to the poor Jews passing through Głowno. As the town was close to the border, most locals made their living by smuggling goods from Łódź. Food, merchandise, and people were smuggled and then transported further, often [5] to Warsaw.

It was fairly peaceful until April 1940. From time to time, the gendarmerie⁹²⁹ entered somebody's home, conducted a search, and made a requisition. The border guards arrested smugglers, but it was possible to get by. After the horrible days in Łódź, Głowno seemed like a paradise to me. I became accustomed to constant rumours about plans to resettle the aliens.

928 It is not always clear whether "Głowno residents" in this text are Jews, or Christians as well.

929 The terms in this text -- field gendarmerie, gendarmerie, Jewish police, and militia -- seem to be used as synonyms.

Suddenly, days full of anxiety and waiting came. On 5 April 1940 an order was given that 1,200 newcomers must leave the town. It was given by the gendarmerie, probably upon the strong insistence of Głowno Germans. Who was sent away first? Obviously, the poorest newcomers who received support from the Community. The first transport of 400 people was to leave as early as 8 April. I cannot describe the impact [6] that news had on those people who had been driven out of their homes once already. Monday came, the day when the first group was to leave. The newly organised Order Service consisting of 20 people was to escort 400 people to the market square. Carts, which had been waiting there since the crack of dawn, were ready to depart. The Jewish police was sent away to fetch the people. The Community Chairman Adam Rosenberg and the Councillors went to the gendarmerie station one last time. Their earlier repeated pleas had proven fruitless.

Everything was ready. The carts were ready to depart. Militia men were sent to fetch the people. And then was the order revoked. All the aliens were overjoyed. But it was only the lull before the storm. One of the most horrible moments, “the race to Stryków” was about to happen.

[7] The whole thing began very joyfully. On the evening of Thursday 18 April 1940, the town suddenly buzzed with news that the aliens could return to their own homes. Even though it was long after curfew, everybody rushed to the Community to learn more about that joyful news. The Community confirmed that information. The Jews hugged one another, laughed and rejoiced. They thought that the war was about to end, that the Bolsheviks were coming, that...

But the most important thing was that they were going back home!

Those were the first hours of joy and bewilderment. Only then did the Jews begin to look for a catch, as they tend to. “If we can return home, to our town, then why must everybody come to the market square tomorrow morning? Besides, they just recently expelled us. And now they are letting us return. [8] Do they really want us Jews back so soon?” they reflected.

Their faces fell. All the newly arrived families began to pack their backpacks. I can recall the dim light of the kerosene lamp and the items scattered about the room. Helpless, I hold a backpack, not knowing what to pack first. What would come in handy? What awaits us? My father’s anxious voice, my mother’s frightened whisper, my sister’s crying... and the fear, which seized me again and again. I could simply feel the physical pain which accompanied

that feeling. Fear penetrated my bones, paralysing my every movement and stifling any possibility to act. Our neighbours kept dropping by, all with the same helpless expression on their faces.

– What are you doing?

– For the time being we are packing our things. And what are you doing?

All the resettled were doing the same in their flats. The threat of a misfortune hung over [9] us.

The night slowly passed. Nobody went to sleep. We waited in our clothes until dawn, which slowly made the sky a rosy pink. A new day began, 19 April. The first thing we thought about when we went out in the morning was who was on the market square. Our neighbours came running to us, all bearing the most preposterous news.

– Do you know that the order has been revoked?

– They are saying that the Bolsheviks are coming and that this is why they are sending Jews back to their towns.

– Smugglers returning from Stryków purportedly heard that the Christians had been ordered to wash floors in abandoned Jewish homes. They saw it with their own eyes.

My cousin came running.

– Do they really want to send you home?

A Jew fleeing from Głowno [10] with his possessions was stopped by a German van on the Głowno-Łódź road. The Jew was ordered by him to return to Głowno and he was told that he was certainly going back home. The German even wanted to pick up the Jew and take him across the border to Stryków.

I dismissed all that news with an ironic smile. Unfortunately, I did not believe the Germans. At 11a.m. a friend comes running.

– ‘It’s not good’⁹³⁰ [he says]. Three field gendarmerie buses have arrived! The situation is worse by the minute. They are to put guards on all roads leading out of the town. It’s getting hot!

– Children, that’s bad, daddy says. We must flee from Głowno. We do not know what awaits us. Field gendarmerie, ‘very bad’. But where to, for God’s sake?! Where to?!

930 Here and 3 lines further on, phrases marked ^{yy} are in Yiddish in Polish transliteration.

[11] A neighbour comes running.

– Listen, our friends are going to Sobota.⁹³¹ So is our family. Come with us.

Mama looked at us. We looked at her...

– But we can take only two persons – said the neighbour.

Two persons... It is bad... Who should go? The question lingers...

Our parents should go and we will stay! They should get out of this hell. We will manage.

– Hurry, hurry, the neighbours rush us.

We hand them our backpacks. Do you have everything? Food? Soap? Go, go, before it's too late.

God! How much would I have given for them to have already left the town! For them to be safe!

My sister stays at home and I escort my parents. We walk behind the houses so that [12] nobody sees us. Mama is weeping. People keep rushing forward. I do not cry even though tears are welling up in my eyes. Where are they going and for how long? And what awaits us here? I bid farewell to my parents at the crossroads. We are separating. Nobody knows what will happen in town.

– Goodbye!

– May God protect you.

I follow them with my eyes until I lose sight of them....

I can finally cry now that nobody can see me. I begin to sob violently. Why do we have to suffer so? Why do they drive us from place to place? I go past the cemetery. Can't they at least leave the dead in peace? Where is the beautiful, old Jewish cemetery with all the trees? Where [13] are the pines, which had seen so much, so many funerals of so many generations? The pines were cut down, destroyed in January 1940. The poor Christian mob got to the cemetery at the crack of dawn and began to cut down the trees. You could hear the sound of chopping for two days. Two days were enough to strip the cemetery of dignity and majesty. The priest's appeals to stop the robbery and leave the dead in peace proved fruitless. So did the persuasion of better-off Poles. The mob continued chopping. And it was not enough for them that they

931 Sobota (Łowicz County).

had the trunks. They began to dig up the roots, too. They dug up the soil and knocked over the gravestones...

Now, when I look at the lone gravestones, our situation seems even sadder. We are still here, in the town swarming with field [14] gendarmerie, while our parents are heading into the unknown.

I head toward the town. Large buses in which the gendarmerie had arrived are parked on a street close to the market square. Two gendarmes are standing before the bridge leading to the town. But what do I see? They are in full gear, in helmets and with machine guns hanging over their shoulders. This was when I became fully aware of the German danger. The Głowno gendarmes wore no helmets and they do not send field gendarmerie in ordinary cases. In the town, I learned that they had already blocked all roads leading out of the town. Escape was impossible. Fortunately, my parents had been gone for half an hour. But what will happen to us? What do they intend to do? I return home, my heart in my throat. A gendarme looked closely at me, from head to toe. I enter our empty flat. My sister [15] has gone out. Helpless, I stared at the walls. They were silent... It was so quiet... The fear intensified multiple times. I sat like that for several hours. At times, it seemed to me that it was all but a dream, that there was no order, no gendarmes. But the peace and quiet does not last long.

My sister rushes in, very anxious.

– You won't believe what's happening – she shouts from the doorstep. – The Community received an order that tomorrow, on 20 April, 2,000, newcomers are to come to the market square ready for departure. Otherwise 200 people will be shot.”

And so, the worst has come. Is it possible that 2,000 people will come to the market square tomorrow? The police rush to announce the order. They are terrified. The gendarmerie did not fail to [threaten], [16] to shoot all militia men unless they carry out the order. The Community chairman goes to the gendarmerie again. They tell him that the order did not come from them but from Łowicz, and that they have no part in this whole operation. The newly arrived field gendarmerie is taking over the authority. It is late afternoon. Their order has not been revoked. The resettled Jews are overcome by fear. What should they do? Where should they hide? Those who could flee the town did. The resettled Jews seek concealment at local Jews and at some Christians. Some hide, even with the Głowno Germans.

The night slowly passes, like a nightmare. It is full moon, as if out of spite. Hours pass so slowly. The sun is rising... A new day comes, the third day of anxiety. The memorable day of 20 April 1940 begins.

[17] Hours pass, slowly. Four o'clock... Five... Six? Six? Six! I cannot think about anything else. Who is at the market square? What is going on? Our next door neighbour decided to go with her baby son. Sobs shook her whole body while she was bidding farewell to us.

– Well, I must go. I have nowhere to hide! – she says, all in tears. She walks away... Her silhouette dressed in a red winter coat vanishes slowly. I can see her backpack, but then I lose sight of her. My cousin comes over.

– Nacia, what are you doing here? Go hide. There are only a few hundred people on the market square. The gendarmes are threatening to execute everybody who hid and did not come to the square. The police have dispersed about the town to fetch more people.

My sister, brother, and I hide in our cousin's attic. We lock the house. My knees are shaking [18] with terror. It is already 8 [o'clock]...

They are not even close to 2,000 people. It is 9, 10, and then 11 [o'clock], but they are still short of a thousand. The field gendarmerie is bustling about the whole town. The town seems deserted. Even Christians are afraid to stick their heads out. I do not have the patience to sit idly in the attic. I go downstairs to ask around...

Suddenly, a militia man I know comes running.

– Nacia! What are you doing here? The situation is tragic. I flee. The Councillors ran away in all directions! The Germans have taken 3 hostages! Two policemen and a Councillor! They put them by the wall to be shot! Even though they are all from Głowno!

There must be 2,000 people by 2 p.m. The residents of Głowno become furious. They all disperse about the town to pull people out of their hide-outs. [19] The hostages will be executed unless 2,000 people assemble by 2 p.m.

Oh, the cunning Germans! Now, they will surely have the required number of people. They have set Jews on Jews! The Głowno residents will surely drag the newly arrived Jews out of every nook and cranny. Furious, Głowno residents rush from house to house. Fearing for their own skins, the Councillors and the chairman rush out of the Community, seemingly to participate in the search.

Suddenly, through a small side window in the attic, I spot some residents of Głowno breaking into the neighbouring backyard. Councillor Juda Flamholz rushes in first, knife in hand. I can hear horrible screams and a tinkle of a shattering pane. The Głowno residents are dragging the people to the market square! Our house will be next – the thought [20] immediately rushes through my brain. They will break in here and drag us out to the market square, dead or alive! I can still hear inhuman screams and cries from the neighbouring backyard.

– Mama! Don't take mama! She's paralysed!

– We won't suffer because of you! People will be executed because of you! You need to go! – the Głowno residents scream.

Our house is next... Our house is next... We should not risk it... We need to go out...

My brother removes his armband and goes downstairs. Are they coming?

– Come what may – he says. – Maybe I'll manage to sneak out now – he says.

And he is gone. It is one o'clock. I remove my armband, grab a short sheepskin coat, and rush downstairs and out into the backyard. Without further thought, [21] I rush past a band of furious Głowno residents. I walk down the road. I do not know where I found so much courage. I still do not know how I endured the piercing glances of the German patrols. Holding my head high, I walk past all posts. I finally reach the forest. I leave the town, fear and anxiety behind me. The silent rustle of the forest soothes all my worries.

God, it is spring! Birds are chirping. It is a truly spring day, sunny and beautiful. I spread the sheepskin coat on the ground and sit down. The merciful forest soothes all my worries. My brother has probably fled, too. Perhaps my sister is fine as well... My worries gradually subside... The rustle of the forest grows monotonous. The song of birds falls more and more silent... I fall asleep... I wake up after more than an hour. I slowly [22] become aware of where I am. I am hungry. What should I do? Should I go back to town to find out what is going on? It can't be helped. I am more and more hungry. I decide to go back. I take a shortcut through the forest to go to town. The sky is cloudless. The heat is oppressive. I reach a road. Suddenly, I hear a strange hum. Something like moans, shouts, calls... What is it? The road turns where I am standing, so I cannot see what is happening ahead of me. I speed up. What is this sound?

People, people... Carts... People... Bundles, people... It is a nightmare? A dream?

No, these are Jews. These are the Jews from Łódź, Aleksandrów, Zgierz... Two thousand... A moan is coming out of two thousand [23] throats. The road is hot. The sky is cloudless. The field gendarmerie is escorting [the caravan].

– Stop! – the first one shouts. Rest!

The next one carries out the order. The Jews stop. Wide-eyed, I look at this strange, horrible sight before me. Is this what the exile from Babylon looked like? Is this how the Jews left the Holy Land?

– Move! – the Germans roar.

Moans, grinding noises of the carts. Everything moves on. They walk in fours. The scene continues, endless, endless...

No, I cannot stand the sight of women with children in their arms, of old men on the carts, all these visions...

I jump over the roadside ditch [24] and then rush through a birch grove. I then come across some railway tracks...

I hear the moan behind me. This beautiful April day is full of moaning and cruelty. Tears stream down my cheeks. I collapse on the ground... I get up... I ran ahead... The further, the better. I ran until I reached the first houses. I sober up at their sight. They are still there? There are still some people? Where am I? What have I seen just now? Whose house is it? It looks so familiar. Oh, it is Stary Warchałów.⁹³² I lived in this villa in summer. I recognised the watchman.

– Oh, it's you, Miss! – he says. – Your brother is here, too. You can calm down now. The Jews left the town half an hour ago.

[25] So my brother is here. Oh, it is so good that he is safe and sound. – But what happened to my sister? – I immediately think.

He gives me a chair. I sit down and look around. I sit. He brings me bread and tea. I eat and speak but I do it all half-consciously. I cannot understand that it is possible that people are still walking, talking, laughing...

My ears are still filled with the moans from the road. My eyes can see just one image. They see carts, people, carts, old men, gendarmes. I am half-mad. God, what a nightmare! How painful it was to look at my fellow countrymen being dragged down the burning road.

932 District of Głowno.

My cousin finds me half an hour later. [26] Worried, he has gone to look for my brother and me. I find out that I can return home because the town has calmed down. On my way home, I find out what happened in the town after I had left. The furious Głowno residents rushed to remove the non-Głowno Jews from their hideouts. They knew their town like the back of their hand, so they missed no hideout or hole. They dragged out both the living and dead, both the children and the old, both the sick and the crippled.

There must be 2,000 people in the market square, was their motto.

– We won't suffer for those damned aliens! – they roared.

The people standing by the wall were on the verge of madness. It is no pleasure to wait for death for two hours.⁹³³

(9) [. . .] by the machine gun. They kept looking at the watch.

– *Noch 20 Minut[en], noch 10 Minut[en], noch 5 Minut[en]!*⁹³⁴

The fever peaked. The Community [office] was almost empty as everybody had gone to (10) “fetch the people.” But in fact they all cut and ran. The hostages were about to faint.

– *2 Uhr.*⁹³⁵ Should I reload? – the gendarme with the machine gun asks. The iron clangs... Suddenly, a Jewish militia man and a gendarme come running. They report: There are 2,000 people.

The hostages are released and their families grab them immediately because they are unable to walk on their own.

The market square is full of people. Even though the required number of people is there, the Głowno residents who had dispersed about the town are still driving in more. The Głowno residents are looking for [. . .] resettled Jews. They storm into Polish flats, and even into German homes. The field gendarmerie put the people in line and they finally move on... The Głowno Jews sigh with relief! What is going to happen to these people? Where are they going? The Głowno Jews do not care about it. They have fulfilled their duty.

I reach the town. It is quiet. I can feel the calm in the air. A droshky with the chairman passes by me. The Community has sent bread, lemons, and beverages after the expelled. The droshky is moving very fast to catch

933 Here ends Notebook No. 1. The subsequent text follows the post-war copy, with its page numbers in parenthesis.

934 (German) Still 20 minutes left, still 10 minutes, still 5 minutes!

935 (German) Two o'clock.

up with the transport before the border. The local gendarmerie did not participate in the whole affair.

Night falls. At 10 p.m. the first carts return from Stryków. The drivers say that they transported the people to Stryków, where they were accommodated for the night. The Jews are to depart to their towns tomorrow. Głowno residents sigh with relief. Some already claim that it was a good thing that the Jews had been dragged out. For they are really returning to their towns!

The first quiet night in three days falls. The Saturday passed. The memorable day of 20 April 1940 passed. I fall asleep calm for the first time.

I wake up at 8 [o'clock] in the morning on 21 April. I approach the window. God, what is happening? Głowno residents rush toward the road, holding kettles, bread, and pitchers. What is happening? I learn the truth in a while. I see my cousin rushing past the house, holding a pitcher and a glass.

– Cousin, what is going on?

– Nacia, take some tea and bread and come to the road! They are coming back!

– They are coming back???

The tumult intensifies. Not only Jews, but also Christians run to the road. (11) I can also see our gendarmes in a distance. Dressed up on account of it being Sunday, they slowly walk toward the road, wondering what is going on.

Wolpert, the richest *Volksdeutscher* and the fiercest anti-Semite, runs, furious, kicking people left and right, and holding a revolver in his hand. God, they are coming back! So, it was one big lie! They have been lied to and cheated!

We need to walk quite a distance because the Jews were stopped by the starch production plant. Nobody knows what to do with them. Aha! This is why Wolpert is so furious! He has failed. They have come back! This is why he is rushing about like a beast! You human beast!

I did not reach the starch production plant. I got scared. The people who departed to Stryków are now running down the road toward the town.

– Have they released everybody? – I ask.

– No. We have escaped. Go there and help others flee – they told me.

The people are running, sunburned and dusty. The women's hair is unkempt. The children are barefoot. They run, looking back every now and

then. They have fear in their eyes. There is no point talking to them. They are half-conscious.

Suddenly, I notice a familiar-looking red coat. It is our neighbour. She is running, holding her son by the hand. I call her. She grows even more scared and she speeds up, her strength failing. I run after her.

– Mrs Łęczycka! Calm down! Stop running!

– I can't. They are going to chase me! – she shouts. I have no choice but to follow her, and I rush into her home with her.

– Water! – That is her first cry. She collapses onto the floor. Our Christian landlady and I lay her down on a bed. We sprinkle her with water and give her tincture. Instead of a breath, a strange wheezing sound comes out of her throat. Her exhausted lungs work with difficulty.

– Water! They were chasing us without stopping! Where is my backpack? Water!

It is difficult to figure out the meaning of her words. It is her little son who finally explains that his mama abandoned her backpack and ran away with him. All their documents and money were in that backpack.

– They won't come in here, will they? – the neighbour moans. I walk out onto the road. The tumult is even greater than before. Everybody is carrying several pitchers and (12) glasses, which are then handed to those who are being chased, so that it appears as if they have come here to distribute. Many Jews manage to flee in that way. Chased, they keep running. They are frantically looking around, their clothes flying as they run...

The town is agitated. We are afraid to stay in Głowno because we do not know how the authorities shall react to the Jews' return. We decide to walk to the countryside to our parents. Our parents had stopped in the countryside on their way to Sobota. They sent a letter to us through a peasant woman. The heat is unbearable. We become thirsty on the way. After several hours of walking, we finally see our parents. We need to look for new lodging since the peasant who has been sheltering them does not want so many people at his place. The entire day, we walk from peasant to peasant. By dusk, we are exhausted and we decide to return to the town. On our way back, we ask the peasants who are coming back from the town what is happening there. They say it is calm. The gendarmerie is not keeping guard. We stop on the outskirts of the town and my sister and I walk ahead to see what is going on. Głowno is peaceful. They packed the rest of the

people, those who did not manage to flee, into the starch production plant. We can return.

In the evening, we eat our first family supper together in 4 days. Only now do we realise what we have avoided. How lucky we are that we did not go to Stryków.

We also find out what the return to “their own homes” was like! The journey to Stryków was rather peaceful. The escorting gendarmes treated them in a humane way. They ordered frequent stops. Some of the gendarmes even helped those who became weak during the march. Whenever the Jews asked them where they were being led, they said they knew nothing. They were only carrying out orders to escort them to Stryków. They acted in a humane way. That was how the caravan reached Stryków. And in Stryków, the Jews had to gather in the courtyard of an unfinished synagogue after which they were accommodated in some rooms. No, not accommodated, but packed like cattle. They waited in dirt and stink for what was to come. Hungry, the children cried. The people relieved themselves on the spot. The night passed. At dawn, men were separated from women. It was announced that men would be shot. Indeed, shots rang out. The first victim collapsed...

(13) No! I do not envy the wives, mothers, and sisters at that moment. Now I understand that wild expression in their eyes.

Then fire broke out. Bundles with bedding were set ablaze. The paupers no longer had pillows to rest their heads on. The people were deprived of their property...

They were then lined up outside and driven ahead. In the chaos that ensued, it was impossible to say who was killed. The Jews were driven back to Głowno under escort of shock troops. There were no stops. The people threw all their possessions into the roadside ditches. They were severely beaten. On the way, one of the women gave birth on the road. She was put on a cart. They reached Głowno, where half of them fled. The rest were locked in the closed starch production plant.

The days that followed were filled with efforts to release the people from the starch production plant. The Community sent them food. As it was Easter, the detainees were issued matzo the Community received from Warsaw.⁹³⁶ The camp was guarded by the *Volksdeutsche* led by a man named

936 It was the Jewish holiday of Passover. The AJDC sent *matzot* to inmates of the ghettos.

Roger Deusny, a stoker in a brick factory. He was the most eager to beat the Jews. Among the Jews there were operators, for instance Fas and Szer,⁹³⁷ who released people in cooperation with the Germans and in return for big sums of money. Of course, there was an instance that they took the money but did nothing.

The number of the Jews in the camp decreased day by day. The remaining Jews had no money or connections to escape. But they had stolen backpacks with their companion's possessions; some people did not fail to steal from their companions in distress. Many months after closing the camp, the Jewish police retrieved objects stolen during the stay in the camp. In the end, the authorities dissolved the camp, as they did not know what to do with the people.

It is interesting that several days after the rush some Germans from Łódź came to the municipality. This also casts some light as to who was behind it all. Those Germans might have been from the SS or SA as they were wearing brown uniforms and bands with swastikas on their sleeves. They arrived in the municipality and demanded to see the Community chairman. They asked him detailed questions regarding the rush to Stryków. When did it take place? How many people left? They were surprised by that incident about which they had no idea. They came three times to conduct investigations. (14) It was then apparent that the whole uproar was the local Germans' doing. This is how the infamous rush to Stryków, which deprived people of life and property, ended.

It was Easter 1940. After all those experiences everybody was happy to have a roof over their head and nobody wanted to know the news, buzzing like troublesome flies.

New gendarmerie arrived from Skierniewice. People were saying that the Skierniewice inhabitants were happy to be rid of them. Their reputation could not be worse. People talked mostly about the gendarme whom Jews used to call "Szmul." He owed his nickname to the fact that each Jew he apprehended and asked about his name had to answer that his name was Szmul. The gendarme would not accept any other Jewish name and whenever he got a different answer he would beat the man who provided it. The new gendarmerie went to the Community offices first thing after its arrival. It demanded beds, straw mattresses, tables, chairs, etc. for their quarters. It even asked for net curtains to hang in the windows.

937 Leyzer Fas and Abram Szer.

Moreover, a branch of the Łowicz *Landrat*'s office⁹³⁸ began to operate in Głowno on 1 May. The deputy *Landrat* arrived with the newly appointed commissioner in order to take care of all the things that previously had required a trip to Łowicz. His secretary and his ADC arrived, too. They all requisitioned furniture from the Jews. A German teacher arrived to teach in the local elementary school. Furniture was requisitioned for him too. On the whole, requisitions were a frequent element of our lives. The Głowno Germans requisitioned tin, copper, and aluminium.

The training of *Volksdeutsche* took place once a week by the cemetery. The gendarmerie was a bit of a nuisance. It needed many Jews for work, but on the whole it was rather bearable.

From time to time, there were rumours about establishment of a ghetto. Smuggling on a larger scale, using carts, almost ceased. Now smuggling went on only across the border and it was very difficult because the border guard organised round-ups on roads and paths. At night, one often heard gunshots and the sound of machine guns.

In May, we also saw the last escapees from the Łódź ghetto passing through Głowno.⁹³⁹

Suddenly, exciting news reached the town. A *parówka* was coming! A German physician arrived. He was the director of the team. Strangely enough, he moved into the home of a Jewish Councillor. I saw him (15) several times in town. He was tall, wore high-top boots and a Tyrolese hat, and always carried a whip. When people heard that he would inspect their homes they frantically began a thorough cleaning. [. . .] came to town together with the *parówka* team [. . .]. In Nowy Otwock a fence and gate were being erected. One could also notice that the Christian inhabitants of Swoboda and Cichoraj[ka]⁹⁴⁰ were strangely agitated and excited. They were collecting money for something and holding meetings. When the Community was asked to confirm the news about the ghetto, it said it knew nothing. There were also rumours about resettlement and this worried the residents of Głowno. There were also rumours that the situation could be reversed with money. Hence, that option

938 The county governor (*Landrat*) in Łowicz appointed a county commissioner (*Landkomissar*) in Głowno, named Armin Ganz. See *Głowno. Dzieje miasta*, p. 274.

939 The Łódź ghetto was closed on 30 April 1940.

940 Districts of Głowno.

was taken into consideration. An estimates commission of Głowno Jews was organised to tax the inhabitants. 30,000 zlotys was purportedly enough to suspend the resettlement and to avoid the establishment of the ghetto. The commission worked in an atmosphere of continuous quarrels and disagreements. After much effort, on 6 April the first instalment was paid to the German mayor. The next instalment was to be paid in the near future. People were thinking about the ghetto and the town was crowded due to the ongoing disinfection process. The German physician assumed fictitious proportions. The doctor said this and that, the doctor did this and that. Anything he said or did was revered. As it turned out, he was just a director of the Łowicz county anti-epidemic campaign. He was not a Doctor of Medicine at all. He was just an ordinary disinfectant.

At that time, a sanitary commission of the *Judenrat* was established. Its task was to ensure the cleanliness of Jewish flats and [their] inhabitants, and to make disinfectants and bathhouses available to the Jewish population. It consisted of several male and female paramedics (who lacked qualifications). The sanitary commission commenced work together with the said "doctor" Lensky. He ordered the *mikvah* to be opened and thoroughly cleaned. After eating and drinking in the home of the Jewish Councillor, where he was living, he began bathing the Jews which he did with pleasure.

Women were to go in first. He ordered the Jewish police to deliver 500 women to him on 7 May.⁹⁴¹ I woke up on 7 May thinking about the *parówka*. I did not know that the day (16) would be so full of surprises. The Jewish police started to round up women as early as at 5 a.m. The police made so much noise that only a few women were escorted to the bath. Lensky was furious and he himself rushed to the town to search out more people. As I was living on the outskirts of the town, I heard highly contradictory news about the bath, that everybody had had their hair cut, that...

At 2 p.m. a bomb exploded! Posters announcing the establishment of ghettos in the entire Łowicz county were put up. "Jews from the entire Łowicz county are to move by 7 May 1940 into 12 assigned settlements."⁹⁴² Signed by the Łowicz *Landrat*, Dr. Schwender.

941 In the original, 7 April.

942 On 7 May 1940, the ordinance of the Łowicz county governor Heinz Schwender allowed Jews in the Łowicz County to settle only in Łowicz and Głowno. Jews from Głowno,

So, now we have a ghetto here, too? The first ghettos in the whole General Government? Nothing has worked, not even money! But the Christians' money did work. Only now, did we learn that initially the ghetto was to be established in Swoboda and Cichoraj[ka], but the Christians bought themselves out. We were assigned the summer resort Nowy Otwock. It was uninhabitable in winter. Our heads are spinning. What should we do first? Should we move our things into the ghetto or go for disinfecting? For the time, my father runs to Nowy Otwock to rent a flat. Thanks to our friends who owned a villa there, he manages to rent a room with a kitchen. Truly hectic days begin. We are neither here nor there. We begin to carry out things at 5 a.m., simultaneously thinking about the disinfection conducted by Dr. Lensky. Everybody has to be bathed before moving into the ghetto. As if it were not enough, we also fear searches conducted in the ghetto. We do not know which to fear more. Lensky organises round-ups and captures women for disinfection, while the gendarmerie is surrounding houses and conducting searches. They take away all kinds of raw products and sometimes money as well.

As soon as I arrive in the ghetto with some of our things and the mid-day meal for my father, our friends come running.

– They have surrounded the second house from ours. Yours is next – they say.

I quickly grab our more valuable things and I return, trying not to be seen. I suddenly hear shouts, *halt!*⁹⁴³ I do not look around. I just flee, hiding behind buildings. I hear shouts. I can see the gendarmes approaching and I recognise the silhouette of the gendarme, Szmul. I cannot figure out which building they are about to surround. I flee without a moment's delay, hiding behind trees. Before I can reach (17) a safe place I hear *halt!* again. Lensky is capturing women for disinfecting. It is all too much. I jump to the side, tear off my armband, and run to the side, toward the road. Finally...

I reach the road. My heart is pounding from running and anxiety. I am still thinking about the group of gendarmes, who are about to surround my home. I walk down the road in scorching heat, very uncomfortable, and

Bratoszewice, Dmosin, Domaniewice, Łyszkowice, Lubianków, and Bielawy communes were to move to Głowno by 12 May. J. K. Petelewicz, *Dzieje ludności żydowskiej w Łowiczu*, part I, p. 114.

943 (German) Stop!

I decide to go for disinfecting on my own. I am terrified by one thought only, that I need to march naked before Lensky. What the hell! Be that as it may!

My cousin comes running after the midday meal. He says that the gendarmerie skipped our villa and surrounded and searched the next one. We were lucky before so, who knows, maybe I will be lucky again in the bathhouse? I am on my way!

It has begun to rain and it is windy and cold. I stand outside the entrance in a long queue and I shudder with cold, anger, and trepidation. By order of that madman, we have to walk in front of him so that he can check our hair for lice. Barbers and Jewish policeman are bustling in the bathhouse. Helpless and angry, I grit my teeth. I finally have the honour to enter that colony of nudists. Wherever I look, I see naked women! Children are shouting and screaming. Water is running. There are clouds of steam... I feel revulsion. Not only will I not be washed here, but I will bring lice home from here. I strip naked in a sudden impulse and walk up to the post of "Mr Doctor". I see nothing. I am trying to be deaf and blind. I am trying to see neither the rude barbers nor the ulcers and pustules on the bodies of the women around me.

Lensky inspects my hair, carefully, with an electric flashlight. But I must admit that, when he was in a good mood and he had vodka and a pork chop, bought with Jewish money, in front of him on the table, he rarely cut people's hair.

I pass the inspection quickly, am sprinkled with several drops of water, and quickly put on my clothes. I take my certificate, for which I had to endure emotional torture, and I am gone. I had hated Lensky. But then I learned that he was just a harmless madman. He freaked out and worked until 1 a.m. He did not stop until 98 per cent of the Jewish population had been "bathed". Whenever he was in a bad mood and he cut too many women's hair, the Community sent vodka and cigarettes into the bathhouse and the situation returned to normal. (18) Soon, Lensky would become the lord of the ghetto. But more about this later. Let me focus on the ghetto for now.

The ghetto of the town of Głowno began to function on 12 May 1940. It was located outside of town in a summer resort. It consisted of 60 houses, mostly wooden and two-storied. The population of the ghetto increased by a few dozen families expelled into the Głowno ghetto from [the village of] Sobota. There were four parallel streets, as long as Karmelicka Street. The settlement was surrounded with wire mesh and there was one entrance

gate. There were two signs on the gate. The first one stated in red lettering, *Seuchengefahr – Zutritt streng verboten*.⁹⁴⁴ The other said, *Wohngebiet für Juden. Verlassen streng verboten*.⁹⁴⁵

The ghetto was guarded by the Jewish police. There was only one Polish policeman by the gate. He took no interest in anything and never interfered. Carts with all kinds of cargos went in and out of the ghetto through the gate. From time to time the gendarmerie *Meister*⁹⁴⁶ would come running to the Community and complain that the fence was full of holes and that half of the Jews were moving freely about the town. He shouted that he would place a machine gun by the wire mesh and that... He shouted and roared, like Germans often do. Naturally, he did nothing.

The legislative power in the ghetto was in the hands of the Community and its departments. The Council of the Elders, the so-called *Judenrat*, consisted of six Councillors led by the chairman.⁹⁴⁷ The chairman was the only relatively intelligent member and spoke German perfectly. The other Councillors were:

[1.] Deputy chairman – Mr B. Expelled from Germany, former leather trader.

2. Mr B. – former flour trader. He was fat and had red, [with] bloodshot cheeks. He was well fed, which was why he was always in a good mood. Main supplier of flour into the ghetto, in charge of provisions.

3. Mr B. – former haberdashery owner, is ever present but rarely having much to say.

4. Mr K. – former owner of a grocery, now the housing department director.

5. Mr F. – former owner of long-distance coaches, (19) infamous big-mouth, a bit of a social activist.

944 (German) Epidemic threat – No entry.

945 (German) District for Jews. No exit.

946 (German) Master; the highest enlisted rank in *Ordnungspolizei*, Orpo (Order Police)

947 Members of the *Judenrat* in Głowno: Abram Rosenberg (chairman); Leon (Lejb) Borensztajn (vice-chairman, trader, deportee from Germany); Chaim Bursztyn (before the war an employee of the Interest-Free Loans Bank (*Bank Pożyczek Bezprocentowych*) and a member of the Jewish Community Board); Maurycy Baumerder (trader), Fiszel Baum (electrician); Józef Klecki (trader); Juda Flamholz (trader, from 7 March 1941 also the chairman of the ŻSS branch/delegate office in Głowno). AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/674, pp. 37, 40, 70.

6. Mr B. – former owner of a bicycle shop, now the *Arbeitsamt* director.⁹⁴⁸

This was the composition of the *Judenrat*. Everybody shouted a lot, did little, and stuffed their own pockets and pantries. But it was the Jewish police, the *Jüdisches Ordnungsdienst bei Judenrat in Głowno*,⁹⁴⁹ who had the authority and the executive power. There were 45 policemen divided into three squads, each led by a commanding officer. The first commanding officer was a droshky driver, the second was a trader, and the third was the chairman's son. The police force was made up of people from various milieus and positions. The chairman and the Jewish police began to be called Abram the Terrible and the 40 thieves.

At first, the police had no specified duties. They followed “doctor” Lensky everywhere, drank with him, captured people for forced labour, requisitioned furniture, bedding, tableware, [. . .] checked the number of people in flats at night [. . .] They did everything their master, Lensky, wanted.

The Sanitary Commission was another important body in the Community. At first, it consisted of 20 members, headed by inspector M. Miśkałowicz. Before the war, he had been an infamous embezzler and fraudster. He was a coward, who ran away at the tiniest sign of danger yet he knew how to collect money from Jews, even from paupers, and he stuck it all into his pocket. Lensky was the German director of the Sanitary Commission, while Dr. Smirgeld was the Jewish director of the Sanitary Commission and the hospital.

The Community also had an *Arbeitsamt*. It took care of all matters regarding Jewish labour outside the ghetto. The issue of Jewish labour on Christian landed estates was also taken care of by the agency of the *Arbeitsamt*.

The Community had a post office, which dealt with correspondence and parcels. There was also a Housing Department, which collected rent for flats in the ghetto. The rent for dwelling in Polish buildings in the ghetto was collected by a Polish commissioner.

In addition to the above, there was also a room that was bombastically called a prison.

Life in the ghetto went on. There was plenty of food. There were no differences in prices between the ghetto and the other side. (20) At the beginning,

948 (German) Labour Office. Probably a reference to the Department of Labour of the *Judenrat*.

949 (German) Jewish Order Service of the *Judenrat* in Głowno.

the only problem was that men and women were taken for forced labour and that there were requisitions, during which they seized everything, even straw mattresses. I will never forget the incident that took place at our place not long after the establishment of the ghetto. While I was approaching our house, I noticed two cars parked in front and soldiers standing nearby. I learned from the people that the soldiers came to requisition cots, straw mattresses, tables, and chairs for their quarters. Lensky was with them. He entered Jewish flats with the Jewish militia and conducted requisitions. The soldiers were standing by the lorry. They did not interfere. After a while, I hear shouts coming from the front of the house: my father's raised voice and Lensky's furious roar. I run home as fast as I can and what do I see? Lensky and my father are fighting in front of the house. My dad is pummelling Lensky and shouting, "I won't give you anything. You've taken enough already!"

We cannot separate my father from Lensky. When we finally manage and we drag him into a room, he breaks free and runs out to punch Lensky. Lensky takes out his revolver and points at my father. Our strength is failing, but we finally drag dad back into the room and we lock the door. Lensky is furious. He dashes for the door with the revolver in his hand. He would have fired, if it had not been for one of the Jewish militia men who approached him from behind and grabbed his hand.

Shouting furiously, "I'll let you have it!" he stormed out of the flat and gave an order to take away everything that was in there. They took our table, chairs, and straw mattresses, and nothing more, thank God. For the first couple of days we were worried what might follow, but nothing happened. It was interesting that the soldiers saw Lensky fighting with our father. They were laughing in the distance and they had no intention to approach or at least to help him. That fight had no consequences. It is possible that Lensky let it pass because he did not want the authorities to find out that a Jew was fighting with a German. Be that as it may, following that memorable day, "Dr." Lensky lost some of his prestige with the Jews. After his fight with my father, they no longer regarded him as all-powerful. Luckily, the storm passed quietly without doing us any harm.

How did the population of the ghetto survive? A large percentage of the Jews worked as craftsmen and traders, while the poorer strata (21) smuggled various food products from the countryside. Smuggling did not pose any danger during the times of the first gendarmerie after the establishment of the

ghetto, when Gruber was the *Oberwach[t]meister*. One simply crossed to the other side through a hole in the wire mesh and off one went to the countryside. The Jews were in constant contact with peasants. [The Jews] sold underwear, fur coats, gold, and furniture, virtually everything and bought food. Aside from dairy products, potatoes, and flour, the Jews bought goods that the peasants had smuggled from the Reich: fabrics, sugar, flour, stockings, etc. Money, gold, and fur coats went to the Reich.

A privileged stratum of the ghetto society were craftsmen. They lived in the largest building, where they also had their workshops. They enjoyed German protection and favouritism. The Germans had everything made by Jewish craftsmen, who had even a tailor's and carpenter's workshop where Jews worked for them, in town at the gendarmerie. The craftsmen also received passes to town.

The most active and the loudest stratum were butchers, always overwrought, always arguing, and fearless. They smuggled cows at night. There was a never-ending dispute about the damaged wire mesh. The police shouted, "Very well, you can smuggle cows and cut the wire! But for God's sake, mend it afterwards!"

The Jewish police collected 50 zlotys for each cow. The butchers then became more cunning and they refused to pay. At night, I often saw militia men hiding behind trees. What were they waiting for? For a cow! A butcher caught red-handed would pay 20 zlotys after long negotiations. After slaughtering a cow, a cortege of policemen would come to the butchers for the "promised" meat.

This "butcher" branch included fishmongers, too. Once a week, at night, a cart with fish cargo departed from the ghetto to Skierniewice. The wire mesh was cut open, the cart rolled out onto the road, and off it went! At first, the carts heading for Skierniewice departed through the ghetto gate, which was locked in the evening. After the last Polish policeman went home (there was no night duty), the Jewish police let the cart through in exchange for a fee. The smugglers then became more cunning. Why would they pay? They cut the wire themselves (22) and rolled the cart out onto a side road. Carts started to depart to Skierniewice on their own. Whenever the police learned that a cart was about to depart, they played cat-and-mouse; they went hunting. The Skierniewice residents hid to avoid paying a bribe. The police looked for them in the forest and in pubs. Everything was kept quiet and in secret.

When they were caught by the Jewish police, they negotiated their payments, but more often they managed to sneak out through the fence.

Once, the entire fish cargo drifted down the river! Fish were kept in chests in the river that flowed across the ghetto. That time, the chest burst and all the fish swam out.

Another stratum in the ghetto are the [soup] kitchen personnel. The kitchen and its customers are a separate chapter in the history of the ghetto.

At the beginning, the kitchen, supported by the Joint, was flourishing. It received money from Warsaw and large amounts of matzo at Easter time, as well as condensed milk, margarine, rice, powdered sour cream and milk, bouillon, and, once, even barrels of herring. From time to time, they would send clothing and footwear, too. Once, they sent layettes for babies.

The Councillors coveted those food supplies. There was an ongoing war between the kitchen personnel and the Community for control over the kitchen, or actually over the profits it brought. It was the Joint that set up that kitchen for the poor. It assigned funds, representatives from among the Jewish population, and the personnel. The kitchen was an autonomous unit independent of the Community. When the ghetto was established and the *Judenrat* took over the legislative and executive power, it also wanted control over the soup kitchen. The Councillors were powerless as long as the kitchen did not need financial aid from the Community. But July and August brought a decrease in the amount of aid for the kitchen sent over from Warsaw. From time to time, the kitchen stopped operating as it had no money to buy food. In September 1940, the representatives of the kitchen turned to the population for help. The population was taxed, but this was still not enough to support the soup kitchen, even though the Community aided it through provision of contingent potatoes and fuel. The moment when the Community started aiding the kitchen, (23) it also began to interfere in its business. In October, the Community took over the kitchen and it finally had the long-desired authority over it. The kitchen staff was reduced and changed; its funds and food supplies were now managed by the Community. The kitchen issued nourishing soup and midday meals from the beginning until the end of its operation. Soup consisted of peas, groats, and potatoes. Sometimes, one had flour dumplings or wheat-flour noodles. At other times, one had potatoes in one dish and beetroot soup or cabbage in another. Butter was added to the soup. The kitchen was always spotlessly clean. Everything was so clean that it shone.

The Germans visiting the ghetto almost always inspected the soup kitchen, be they commissioners, a group of officers visiting the ghetto, or German military commissions. They always found the ideal cleanliness.

Everything looked beautiful on the outside. The kitchen issued 1,300 mid-day meal rations. It sometimes issued clothing or food for the poor, as well. But the poor received only scraps. The lion's share of the supplies and products disappeared into the pantries of the Community Councillors or the personnel. The situation deteriorated significantly (to the disadvantage of the kitchen personnel) when the Community took control of the kitchen. Councillors' wives made *farfelki*⁹⁵⁰ from American flour, fried on American margarine, and marinated American herrings. Moreover, the Community sold some of the products to shops: cocoa, condensed milk, rice, clothing, and footwear, meant for the poor. The physician of the ghetto, a Pole, Dr Mierzejewski,⁹⁵¹ protested against that state of affairs. (He treated patients in the ghetto, the Community paid him 800 zlotys salary and oddly enough, he treated the Jews with the *Landkomissar's* consent).⁹⁵² One day, he went to the kitchen and kicked up a fuss over the fact that there was no milk, rice, or fat for the poor sick even though those products were purportedly in the Community. He examined the supplies and concluded that all those products were indeed there, but little was left. He demanded that patients with a written note from him be issued the things they needed.

In February 1941, the last transport from Warsaw arrived. It contained 15 sacks of wheat flour, boxes of fat, all kinds of clothing, and even layettes. As there was a resettlement at that time, there was disorder, all those goods (24) disappeared. The fine wheat flour was distributed among themselves. The same happened with the fat. The rest of the products were exchanged in a shop for peas, tea, or groats. Clothes and layettes were sold. They charged 20 zlotys apiece for tricot underwear and they wanted to sell layettes for 200 zlotys (that was the price offered to my father). And the kitchen was about to stop its operation, since there was no food! All the Councillors left Głowno with sacks filled with products sent for the kitchen!

950 Kind of noodles, perhaps from Italian: *farfalle* (butterflies).

951 Ludwik Mierzejewski, a surgeon, head of the Jewish Hospital in Głowno. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/338, p. 28.

952 See footnote XXX.

So much for the management. But what of the kitchen customers? The people that used its assistance were mostly the resettled. The local residents of Głowno who ate midday meals in the kitchen were mostly pre-war paupers. For 5 or 20 groszes, and often for free, they received a bowl of soup. Most of those who ate at the kitchen belonged not, for instance, to the intelligentsia or pre-war clerks. They were people who had vegetated already before the war. They were resettled craftsmen, petty traders, illegal vendors, who had constituted the poorest element in small towns before the war. It was interesting that the number of midday meal rations decreased significantly on Friday, the reason being that some customers cooked dinner (not infrequently chicken broth or chicken) at home for Friday and Saturday. The kitchen had its “favourites,” to whom it issued several soup rations, for instance “mad Sala,” who wandered about the ghetto for days on end, singing and dancing, or “Moyshe-hop,” who also wandered about the ghetto with a song on his lips.

The Sanitary Commission established by Lensky was to watch over the health of the ghetto population. Its head, who was also the director of the hospital, was at first Dr Smirgeld. The ghetto was divided into 10 districts, each with its own male and female paramedics. They were to ensure that flats, buildings, courtyards, and toilets were clean. They also had to report cases of infectious diseases. The Sanitary Commission conducted bathing and disinfections. During Dr Smirgeld’s time, the male and female paramedics were the only people to take care of patients in the hospital, where they worked day and night shifts.

The first epidemic that broke out was typhus. (25) It was carried in by a man who arrived from Łowicz in July 1940. He was hospitalised. Soon, three more people fell ill. The only physician for 5,000 inhabitants was Dr Smirgeld, a mental illness specialist, who had no idea about treatment, but dispatched people to the other world like a virtuoso. The hospital was a two-storied wooden building, a summer villa. The wards, the pharmacy, and the outpatients’ clinic were on the ground floor. The physician, the paramedic who supervised the pharmacy, and some private persons lived on the first floor. On the first floor was also the room of the secretary, who often invited guests in the evening and their laughter and singing made it impossible for the sick to sleep. Later on, Dr Mierzejewski forbade those jolly evening visits. During Dr Smirgeld’s time, the hospital had no beds, bedding, or medication. There were no kitchen

appliances in the hospital kitchen or fuel either. Dr Smirgeld often turned to the Community and described the situation, but his endeavours proved fruitless. The sick were dying due to lack of food and medical assistance. Four people died and then another two became ill. Those were the last victims of Dr Smirgeld, who was dismissed. The physician had become too troublesome for the Community, he had always quarrelled with the Councillors, whom he threatened to report to the Germans. He was dismissed but was to treat the patients until his successor's arrival. The sick were in bed with fever and their only caretakers were male and female paramedics, people from various milieus who had no training in nursing.

The arrival of the new physician changed the state of affairs. The new physician was appointed by the *Landkomissar*. He was Dr Mierzejewski, a Christian from the Poznań region. It is odd that they let a Christian, or more precisely, an Aryan, practice in the ghetto. The new physician was a brother-in-law of *Landkomissar* Ryt's secretary, and that was how he obtained that position in the ghetto. His monthly salary from the Community was 800 zlotys. The fees for doctor visits were paid by the Community. Mierzejewski collected no fees from private persons. He was the only physician with the right to practice in the ghetto. A physician from the town could be called in only by permission from Dr Mierzejewski. The new Polish physician had German backing. The Community and the Jewish population held him (26) in high esteem, which was very important. He immediately began organising the hospital. He ordered requisition of bedding, beds, and kitchen appliances. He also forced the Community to deliver food and he organised an outpatient clinic and a pharmacy. In fact, there was a provisional pharmacy in the ghetto, but it did not dispense drugs. The paramedic had to take prescriptions to a town pharmacy, which dispensed drugs. A large percentage of medicine was sent into the ghetto from Warsaw. Vaccination serums came from PZH,⁹⁵³ while the dressings and drugs were usually delivered by TOZ.

When Dr Mierzejewski became the leader of the struggle for health and hygiene for the Jewish population, the former "Doctor" Lensky lost his authority. He could no longer manage the population as he pleased, bath them, etc.

953 The abbreviation for *Państwowy Zakład Higieny* (State Hygiene Institute) established in 1918. Its responsibility was to identify, examine, and counteract infectious diseases. It was also to prevent disease through promotion of hygiene.

He was no longer a “doctor”. He went back to his occupation. He became a *Lotzer*,⁹⁵⁴ as people often called him. Dr Mierzejewski began to suppress the epidemic and treat the sick that Dr Smirgeld had left to their fate. Due to him, the source of the epidemic and the dangerous epidemic of typhus were suppressed. Until the end of the Jews’ stay in Głowno, in March 1941, there was not a single case of typhus. The entire population of the ghetto was vaccinated with serums against dysentery and typhus, as well as with “Sexta.”⁹⁵⁵ Children were vaccinated with anti-smallpox serum.

It was interesting that while Dr. Smirgeld was assisted by a paramedic during vaccination and the two men did the injections together, Dr. Mierzejewski vaccinated the entire population himself. After vaccinating 400 people during a two-and-a-half hour period, he was unable to move his right hand.

Most deaths resulted from old age, tuberculosis, and pneumonia. Aside from those who died of typhus, the few cases of dysentery and typhoid fever were not fatal.

Dr Mierzejewski was extremely diligent. Even though he was perhaps slightly anti-Semitic, like everybody else from the Poznań voivodship, and even though he shouted and flew into a temper, it happened that, without being called, he came from the town at midnight to visit his seriously ill patient whom he had examined the previous day.

He could not tolerate dirty people with lice. He lost his temper (27) when he visited such patients. But whenever he came to a poor yet clean home the inhabitants could not praise him enough. He did not force women, even those who had lice, to cut their hair. Even during the typhus epidemic, he cut sick women’s hair [only] at their request.

Somehow, life in the ghetto continued. Mostly, it was peaceful. From time to time, Germans stormed into the ghetto and captured people for forced labour. Once a lorry pulled up in front of the gate and some Germans got out and captured a few dozen Jews, who were taken to Bielawy⁹⁵⁶ where they were tortured. They were brought back into the ghetto in the evening. It was a real

954 A louse or a bum. Apparently from the German *Lauser*; on p. [30] of the notebook No. V it is spelled *latzer*.

955 Name of a liquid anti-typhus vaccine.

956 Bielawy (Łowicz County).

day of judgement⁹⁵⁷ in front of the Community. The families had been waiting for their relatives' return for the whole day. And when they saw in what state they returned, they could not stop crying. Of course, as always in such cases, there was also no end to the curses and threats aimed at the Community. The *Arbeitsamt* director immediately went to the town to the German labour department to find out the details of that unpleasant and painful incident. What did he find out? The local German authorities had no idea about that fact. They had neither sent any people nor needed any. They ordered the Community to immediately notify them if the Germans came again to take people for labour. They promised to arrest and punish them.

The next day, the whole ghetto was deserted as those strange Germans had said that they would return. At dawn, all men fled to a village or to the forests. The hour of yesterday's round-up was approaching. Suddenly, the news that a lorry has pulled in front of the gate goes around the ghetto in a flash. What now? The vehicle stops... Soldiers are getting out! "Fortunately, all the men have fled!" think the people in their homes.

As it turned out, the engine of the lorry had broken down and that was why it had pulled up. They were not yesterday's Germans! Our men who had hidden outside the ghetto returned in the evening. This was the "round-up to Bielawy". There were also two other round-ups for Jews, who had to take horses to Skierniewice. They returned on foot, half-dead.

Every day, the *Arbeitsamt* delivered as many labourers to work in the town as required by the Germans.

The attitude of the German authorities was quite acceptable. The first gendarmerie *Meister*, Gruber, was a kind man (28) and most of the gendarmes were Austrians, who are less strict.

The change of the *Landkomissar* in Głowno was to the Jews' advantage. Ryt became the new *Landkomissar*. The Community "got along" with him just fine. Lensky ceased to take interest in the ghetto. Whenever he got angry, they plied him with vodka.

On hot summer days, at 5 p.m., Lensky gathered all those wanting to have a swim in the river and he escorted them to the beach outside of town. But he did not take children, who ran next to him and followed the group, singing and not fearing him in the slightest. Once he became angry and ordered

957 Polish popular name for *Yom Kippur*.

the whole band of children to be put in the Community prison. He thought that they would at least be scared. But no, the small-town rascals were not afraid of Lensky! You should have seen them running to prison, shouting with joy! Suddenly, there were so many volunteers that the Jewish police did not know what to do with them. In the end, Lensky waved his hand, resigned, and ordered their release.

From time to time, Lensky ran along the wire [fence] and caught hens and turkey hens that had the cheek to walk into the ghetto. He handed them over for the patients of the Jewish hospital.

Whenever a case of an infectious disease was discovered or somebody suffering from an infectious disease found himself in the ghetto, the county physician Dr Dietrich, a German, would arrive. He was an extremely decent elderly man. During one of his visits in the hospital in autumn Dr Dietrich inquired if the hospital was prepared for winter, if it had a stove and fuel. When he found out that it did not, he gave an order to move the hospital into a brick building. He and Dr Mierzejewski were the ones who advised that the hospital be transferred to a warm, brick building.⁹⁵⁸

[Notebook No.] IV

[79] I will never forget one thing he did. In February 1941, right before the resettlement, there was an order from the municipality to bathe and disinfect the Jewish population. The supervisor was a Christian named Niewiadomski, a briber and a snoop. It was February, in the bathhouse was cold because there were no stoves. The people who were about to bathe might fall seriously ill. Despite that, the order was to bathe the Jews. Even though Dr Mierzejewski intervened with the municipality, his efforts proved completely fruitless. The first group of Jews was in the bathhouse when Dr. Dietrich arrived.

After having inspected the hospital in the company of Dr Mierzejewski, he went to the bathhouse. Seeing the people waiting in the cold for their turn, he called Niewiadomski.

“Do you want to [. . .] [80] people?! They will all get pneumonia! You cannot bathe anybody until you bring in a stove!”

Due to him, stoves were brought in and only then did the bathing begin.

958 Here ends the post-war copy.

The first Głowno mayor was a Christian.⁹⁵⁹ But in May 1940, a German Sztyller became the mayor.⁹⁶⁰ He was a citizen of Stryków and had been known before the war as a scammer and a thief. He had served a prison sentence before the war; I do not know why. He and the local Germans initiated the demolition of Jewish houses, some of which were disassembled, while others were searched from roof to cellar. Floors were removed and walls were drilled in search of hidden Jewish possessions. They drilled in the walls with a special drill until its end [reached the other] side. If [81] it did not, it meant that the wall had been bricked-up. That was how they found a lot of walled-up fabrics, leather, etc.

That was how Sztyller stole a lot of Jewish property worth exorbitant sums of money.

In September 1940, he disappeared from the town. People said that he had been arrested. The new mayor was M. Nikolaj, a former organist from Łowicz.

When I came to Warsaw, I was surprised that it had so little contact with the world. In the ghetto in Głowno, a tiny town, one could buy underground bulletins for 50 groszes a week. They were brought into the ghetto by Jews who went out of town, and often by Christians, too. Moreover, there was a radio in the town and almost [82] every day typed-up bulletins based on broadcasts of foreign radio stations were received.⁹⁶¹

Life in the ghetto somehow returned to normal. There was even a soccer team, which played against Christian teams once a week. On such occasions, the *Landkommissar* issued passes into the ghetto to Christians.

The first painful incident in the ghetto was the round-up to forced labour camps. The round-up had a few phases. It began on 14 August 1940. Early in the morning the German Labour Office director Knoll came to the Community and submitted a list of approximately 120 names to the Jewish Labour Office. At dawn, messengers from the Community delivered [83] the orders to the Jewish families. When I went out onto the street in the morning,

959 Until 1940 it was Henryk Rynkowski.

960 A local German and *Volksdeutscher*, Jan Stiller. See *Głowno, dzieje miasta*, p. 277.

961 This probably refers to the Polish Underground press. Such a situation was an exception, unless the author was exaggerating. The ordinance of 15 December 1939 forbade Poles and Jews in the General Government to own radios. In certain towns and cities radios were requisitioned earlier.

the ghetto was deserted. Here and there, I saw people moping about with forlorn faces. In almost every Jewish family, there was somebody who had been ordered to immediately come to the Community square. People did not know what to do. Should they go there? And what if they do not? People mope about the Community square. Young people are accompanied by their parents. Everybody is waiting impatiently to see what happens. The *Arbeitsamt* director arrives at noon. He slowly reads out the list of the names of the summoned people. He does not stop when somebody is absent; he reads on. He then orders the Jewish police to escort the people to the bathhouse in town. A medical commission is waiting for them in the bathhouse. Many people are dismissed.

A friend of mine, a boy [84] with an extraordinary musical talent, is among those dismissed. He was an excellent pianist so, during *Wach[t]meister* Gruber's time, gendarmes would come to the Community and call for him. They asked him very politely if he had time and would be willing to play for them for a while. They took him to the gendarmerie station, where they had an excellent instrument. He would play for hours. As he was walking with a group of people to the bathhouse in the town, he came across two gendarmes he knew. They recognised him among his companions, stopped him, and asked, *Aber Jung[e], bist du auch hier?*⁹⁶²

After the medical commission the summoned people were allowed to return to the ghetto on condition that their families guaranteed that they would not flee.

[85] The next morning they came for departure. Nobody else could enter the Community premises. The families were standing behind the wire fence separating the Community. Crying, they bade farewell to their relatives. Even though the men were all single, their families were devastated. The boys were arranged in fours and surrounded by gendarmes. The German machine guns were ready to fire. They escorted the boys to the gate. The gate opened... They marched through and disappeared from sight around the corner.

There was now some 50 young and healthy people less. Several days passed. I could not forget the first round-up when, all of a sudden, on 20 August during the day the Jewish militia conducted another round-up for a camp. Seeing what was going on, the young people began to flee over the

962 (German) But boy, are you here, too?

wires to the Christians. In the afternoon, the gendarmerie surrounded the ghetto; gunshots could be heard. [86] The Głowno ghetto was so small that a few gendarmes placed by the fence guaranteed that nobody could go out. At night, the militia still took men from their beds. At that time, only bachelors were taken; there were no summons.

On 21 August, the Jewish militia and the “blacks” (young *Volksdeutsche* in black uniforms) rode on bicycles to neighbouring villages in search of Jews. At night, the militia took people from their beds, only bachelors at the time. The captured men were all escorted to the provisions building, which they could not leave.

Knoll arrived again. He gathered all the captured men and gave a beautiful speech. He told them that they would perform light work, that they would be well fed, and other nonsense. [87] And another group departed. There was more crying and despair. The gendarmerie came again, its machine guns ready to fire... Another group of the healthiest men in their prime left...

From then on, round-ups for a camp happened all the time. The ghetto became deserted. All the young men fled to the countryside and there was no one left to capture.

Furious and shouting, Knoll stormed into the Community.

“The ghetto will be closed! You will eat bark off trees! You will beg to be sent to a labour camp!” he roared.

On 30 September at approximately 10 p.m. I was sitting outside the villa with some militia men I knew when I suddenly saw the bright light of electric flashlights by the wire mesh. The militia men went to see what was going on. They returned frightened as the ghetto was surrounded by Germans in black uniforms. [88] After less than 5 minutes, whistles sound in the forest. The militia has been alerted. I go to sleep with a heavy heart. I keep hearing piercing militia whistles in my sleep. At dawn, I find out that there was a round-up at night. The ghetto was surrounded for the first time by the *junaks*, called “blacks,” freshly arrived from Łowicz. Knoll himself, the Commissioner, and the gendarmerie walked from home to home and took all the men. The whole Community premises were packed with men captured during the night. They were both old and young, mostly married, because most of the youth had fled. They were to depart in several hours. The moaning of their wives, children, and mothers could be heard in the whole ghetto. Many of the departing men were the sole providers for their poor families.

The Community gave each man some cigarettes, bread, and several złoty for the journey.

The gendarmes that arrived arranged them into fours. [89]⁹⁶³

They set out...

I watched them, tears trickling down my face. Their wives' moaning and the cries of little, hungry children, *Tate! Tate!*⁹⁶⁴ echoed in the forest.

The departing men were weeping. Even the Germans could not watch the scene.

Lensky who happened to enter through the gate exactly when they were setting out and witnessed the farewell, looked as if he was about to burst in tears. He nervously slapped his whip on his boots. Finally, he ran off as he could not stand that sight any longer.

The families ran to the gate as they wanted to follow their loved ones onto the road. The children were cuddling up to their mothers, who were pulling their hair out from despair. I had enough; I ran off in tears. [90] The crying of the children and their screams, *Tate! Tate!* followed me long afterwards.

The ghetto population took a long time to recover. But gradually people went out onto the streets and the young people returned from the peasants. Life moved on.

Just as in any state, Głowno too was a scene of struggle for power in the Community. The opponents used various means. They snooped, made various accusations against the Community, and instigated popular dissatisfaction. In Głowno, Rosenberg had been competing against Fas and Szer for the position of the chairman from time immemorial. Fas and Szer were schemers and thieves. They made a reputation for themselves as snoopers during the [First] World War. They resorted to even the most preposterous means to overthrow the Community. Before the war, [91] Fas and Szer were the two greatest enemies in the struggle for power in the Community but, when it came to snooping, they were two friends. Before the establishment of the ghetto, [they had been] smugglers, responsible for taking away the property of many Jews passing through Głowno. They had also taken the property of the Jews for whom they were smuggling things over the border. There were rumours that they showed Szttyller the places where the Jews hid their merchandise

963 In the original, wrong page numbers from p. [89] to [100].

964 (Yiddish) Daddy! Daddy!; also a few lines below.

and that they divided the profit among themselves afterwards. Out of the blue, the gendarmerie would storm into the ghetto with a ready list of people hiding leather and other products. People used to say that at the beginning of the ghetto the searches had been conducted following their guidelines. It was interesting that the searches had taken place only in homes of those who used to own shops in the town before the war.

[92] Szer and Fas sent gendarmerie to us. At 9 a.m. in June [19]40, the door opens and two gendarmes come in.

- Does Mr X. live here? – they ask.
- Yes, – I reply.
- *Wo haben sie versteckt 100 paar Strümpfe?*⁹⁶⁵ the gendarme roars.
- What is it about? What stockings? We have no idea!
- Do you know Lensky? – they ask.
- We do.
- So, where have you hidden the stockings? Tell us, where they are – they roar
- Do search our home. We have no stockings – mama says.
- Open the wardrobes! We'll search the place!
- Please do – we say.

Seeing that we made such a fast decision, they debated for a while and left. [93] We had no idea what it is all about. Lensky came running to us several days earlier. He requisitioned some duvets for himself. He also went to the attic during his search. There was lots of bedding, new underwear, [table] sets, new brushes, and cotton filling for duvets. In a straw mattress he found several dozen cotton socks, which he took for himself. He also requisitioned the sets, lots of new shirts, silk duvets, and two baskets of new brushes. He took those things and left. He came across the *Landkommissar* by the gate. I can imagine Lensky's face when he had to give up the requisitioned items. Then there were rumours that Lensky and Ryt sold those items. But what did that have to do with the fact that the gendarmes came to our home in search of silk stockings?

After some time, the gendarmes [94] return. They order my parents to go to the gendarmerie station. We wait anxiously for a few hours. In the evening, our parents finally return. We shower them with questions.

965 (German) Where did you hide 100 pairs of stockings?

- What was it about? What did they want from you?
- It turned out that an accusation came from Łowicz that Lensky requisitioned silk stockings purportedly from our attic and that he then returned them to us. The accusation was made against us and Lensky, and it was signed by Fas and Szer. It was a completely overt denunciation. Oddly enough, by Jews against a German. It was also completely false.

After that accusation, the Commissioner and Lensky conducted a search at Fas and Szer's, took away their raw materials, and threw them out of their flats.

From that time, Fas and Szer started the fight with the Community, Lensky, and Commissioner Ryt. [95] Fas and Szer claimed, and they were partly correct, that the Community was doing business with the Commissioner. The two of them decided to drive the two Germans and Community out of office through intrigues.

September 1940 came. Having no fuel, the people cut down trees or, when they had no kindling, they stripped the bark off whole trees, which was an act of vandalism on the part of the Jews. Resin trickled down the naked tree trunks and the trees soon withered away. One could see the naked tree trunks from afar. Many bans were issued but it did not help at all. It remains unknown who informed the Germans. One day, the Łowicz deputy *Landrat* Menkiel and the new mayor Nikolaj and their retinue came for an inspection. Fas walked beside them, gesticulating and pointing at the trees.

Menkiel kicked up an awful fuss with the Community; [100 96] he blamed it for everything and accused it of insufficient vigilance. If anything like that happened ever again, everybody from Głowno would be resettled, etc. The main point of his accusations was that the Community was worthless. That was what Fas and Szer wanted to achieve.

In the meantime, the gendarmerie left and a new one arrived. The ones who left were mostly Austrian and generally decent men. Aside from "Szmul" and the like. The new gendarmes were not bad either, but they had a mad *Wach[t]meister* Szwarc. There were moments when you could do whatever you wanted with the new *Meister* as he agreed to anything. Those were the good moments. Whenever he was in a bad mood he came running into the ghetto, roared, captured people for labour, hit everybody within reach, kicked up a fuss in the Community, and ran away.

Around 20 September, Commissioner Ryt went on [97] holiday. Lensky left for Łowicz. Besides, he had taken no interest in the ghetto for some time. He had some business to attend to in Łowicz. He had somehow lost his influence in Głowno. Without its guardian, the ghetto was at the mercy of Szwarc and his whims.

At dawn on the memorable day of 27 September 1940, a fire broke out in the town. A whole row of buildings on Łowicka Street was on fire. It was significant that the burning buildings were the same that had been set ablaze by the Christians several years before the war. The thing was that the front Jewish tenements on fire separated the Christian annexes from the street. The latter had no access to the street so they could not be extended, and they had no connection with the street. The struggle for access to the street had been going on between the Jews and Poles from time immemorial. So on 27 September, the Jewish houses [98] in the town were on fire.

I woke up at 5 a.m. due to unusual commotion in our home. In my sleep, I had heard somebody say, "There's a fire? Who's going to town?"

At 6 a.m. I was wide awake after our neighbours had come and said, "There's a fire! The buildings have been burning since dawn."

Everybody ran to town to watch the fire, to see whose houses were burning, and to check if they were not theirs. Regardless, they sneaked out to the other side of the fence. About half of the Głowno ghetto went to town in the morning. Szwarc comes to the Community at 11 a.m. to kick up a fuss. He summons the militia. He shouts that he will arrest everybody and send them to camps.

– By what right were the Jews in the town in the morning? Who let them out? Where was the militia?

He leaves, furious.

[99] At 12 o'clock, the gate opens and two cars roll in. Deputy *Landrat* Menkiel alights from the first car. Szwarc and Mayor Nikolaj alighted from the other. They enter the Community guard room (as the room occupied by the militia used to be called). Szwarc demands a list of members of the Jewish militia. He then orders all militia men to gather outside the Community. In the meantime, he enters the *Arbeitsamt* and takes Councillor S. Flamholz⁹⁶⁶ with him. When he goes out again, all militia men are standing in two rows.

966 There was a Juda Flamholz among the *Judenrat* members. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/674, p. 28.

The gendarmerie has come in the meantime, in full readiness, in helmets and with guns and ammunition. We immediately understand that is bad; something is afoot.

In the meantime, Szwarc takes the list of the militia [men] and reads out two random names: B. Rozenchwajg and Szumiraj.⁹⁶⁷ He and the Councillor take the two men to the gendarmerie station. [100] He then orders the boarding up of the gate and he annuls all passes. Whoever leaves the ghetto will be shot. Even the Councillors cannot go out to the town.

Several hours later, the shock troops arrive in the ghetto from Łowicz. They enter flats at random and take away 17 people. 20 people in total are taken to the gendarmerie.

The [entire] ghetto was seized with fear. Something was afoot...

The ghetto ran out of bread after midday meal. Everybody was worried.

In the afternoon, we heard that those 20 arrested people had been taken to Łowicz.

The Jews are now suspected of setting fire to buildings in the town. 20 people were taken at random as hostages to Łowicz [101] on suspicion of having set fire to the buildings. One needs to understand how absurd this was. A Jew has gone to town to set his own house on fire! What Jew would set his own property, his own house in particular, ablaze? Where did that suspicion come from? Who gave the Germans such an idea? It might have been that the Christians suggested to the Germans that the Jews had set the fire in the town. Purportedly, at the crack of dawn a Pole saw a Jew walking with a can toward the houses that burned down. The goyim were saying that it was a can with petrol or kerosene. (Nonsense!) That shred of evidence was the pretext for capturing and charging 20 people with arson. "You are the ones who set the fire in town and that's it!"

It was interesting, or actually significant, that, unlike everybody else, Lajzer Fas did have permission to go out of town. [102] He went out several times. Where he went and what for, I do not know. He was probably trying to convince the Germans to dismiss the chairman A. Rosenberg and his clique. Fas wanted to take advantage of the confusion, which he might have

967 AJDC documents sent from Głowno include the following names: Beniamin Szumiraj (member of the Committee to Aid Refugees), Chaskiel and Icek Szumiraj, and Abram Rozenchwajg (refugee from Aleksandrów Kujawski). AŻIH, AJDC, 210/338, pp. 3-19.

caused himself, to become the *Judenrat* chairman. In any case, the names of Lajzer Fas and Abram Szer were connected with each other during many tragic moments in the ghetto. That duo was behind all tragedies, snooping, thefts, and arson.

It is bad. People know that there will be nobody to protect the Jews after Commissioner Ryt's departure.

It is shortly before 9 p.m. Minutes pass in fear and anxiety. Before us the dinner untouched... Nobody says a word... Mama sighs deeply... Suddenly, we hear a crack! A dull, powerful crack rings out very, very [103] close to us. Helpless, we cuddle up to one another... Suddenly, we hear another crack. I look around in terror. It is dark. It is the dead of night. The rustle of the forest, always so monotonous and peaceful, is as loud as a hurricane. I do not know if my fear intensifies the rustle or whether there is really a storm. Gunshots sound one after another. Nobody goes to sleep. All the residents of our villa gather in the hall. Everybody is speculating. How bad is it? The ghetto might be surrounded. I do not know what tomorrow will bring.

The sun is about to rise. The gunshots do not cease. It is Saturday. The sad Saturday of 28 September 1940. The prices in the town go up. The bakery has run out of flour. The rich still have food to eat, but in the homes of the poor there is no bread [. . .] [104] of the siege.

The "blacks" have surrounded the ghetto. We know they are there because we can hear the guns firing. Even so, despite the threat of death, the poor sneak into the countryside through the wire mesh. For they need to feed their hungry children! The situation does not improve. Nor does the atmosphere become any less tense. Menkiel and Szwarc refuse to talk to the Councillors.

"That fire was the Jews' doing!" they roar.

There are rumours in the town about the change of the Community, that Fas is to become the chairman. It is bad.

On the Sunday of 29 September, there is the first casualty, a 30-year-old woman. At dawn, a few women managed to convince one of the *junaks* to let them cross to the other side of the wire to get bread in the town. When they were leaving [. . .]

[105] "Come back by 8 a.m. The guards change at 8 a.m. and I cannot vouch for my colleagues."

All those women got back on time, except for one. The poor woman was late and she approached the wire not knowing that the guards had changed and that it was not the same guard. She was shot by a gun. The first shot wounded her. She collapsed and started begging the German to spare her life. Then the second bullet hit her. She was killed! Did she commit a crime? Did she kill anybody? No, she just went to town for a loaf of bread. She paid a high price for that bread she carried to feed her hungry children. It cost her life!

Dr. Mierzejewski was called to the site of the accident. *Oberwach[t]meister* Szwarc came, too. When he saw the corpse [. . .] [106] on the ground he addressed Braun, who had killed the woman: *Du gemeiner Kerl, was hast du gemacht?*⁹⁶⁸

He removed him from the post.

The dead woman was taken to the Community. She lay on the floor in a pool of blood. She could not be buried, because the cemetery was outside the ghetto.

It was almost evening. The death of the woman terrified the Jews. If Braun killed that woman, it might very well not be the first victim. If he was not punished, there is no law for us. On Sunday, the director of the German *Arbeitsamt* sent remuneration to the ghetto for labourers, as well as 150 loaves of bread. He knew that the labourers needed money. It was a beautiful gesture on the part of the German.

[Notebook No.] [V]⁹⁶⁹

[1] 30 September, Monday. We sighed with relief. The Commissioner [. . .] Ryt is here; it is already good. Indeed, [. . .] called the Councillors to a meeting [. . .] about the fire, about earlier [. . .] between Jews and Christians [. . .] setting the front houses ablaze. The Councillors told him about the fire that had taken place several years earlier. After the meeting of the Councillors and the Commissioner, a ray of hope appeared in our hearts. The ghetto was still surrounded by the “blacks.” There was no bread in the ghetto. But there was lots of meat. Some fearless butchers were now in cahoots with the “blacks” and they were smuggling cows with no obstacles.

968 (German) You rascal, what have you done?

969 On the cover, it seems to be number IV, corrected to V.

It was getting dark. I was walking back home accompanied by a militia man. Suddenly, I hear a rustle, some excited [2] people are running back and forth. Is there something going on? My companion switches on his torchlight, which casts a bright shaft of light.

– What [. . .] hell are you doing?! – the butchers whisper.

In the middle [. . .] a cow is pacing majestically, followed by a whole pack of butchers, their wives and children. But the ghetto is surrounded! God only knows how they managed to smuggle the cow into the ghetto. And God only knows when they became acquainted with the *junaks*. But the fact is that I can see a living cow. Besides, I can see only its tail now, and it will soon disappear in the forest. Later, three shots (one after another and then one more) woke me up at night. I knew that it was the cow being escorted into the ghetto. The *junaks* were firing to signal that the coast was clear. The cow, [3] forward, march! Into the ghetto!

Since the ghetto had an irregular shape, the wire mesh ran left, then right; that was why [. . .] the gendarmerie fenced in the ghetto in the shape of a rectangle. The four sides of the ghetto were to run in such a way that in one of its corners one would be able to see another corner. In that way, with only the help of a few people, they could keep an eye on the whole ghetto. They began the reshaping of the ghetto by removing, that is excluding, three buildings from the ghetto. They were the largest buildings, which had a few hundred residents. The gendarmerie came and ordered them to pack their possessions and leave within 10 minutes. The people had nowhere to go with their belongings. The sick were deprived of their beds and the roof over their head. Everybody [4] ran to help the evicted people. Relatives and friends took in some of the families. Some families [. . .] in closets, attics and staircases. The Community [. . .] some of them as best it could. That was the beginning of the reshaping of the ghetto. The wire mesh was moved, trees near the ghetto border were cut down so that they would neither obscure the view nor offer cover for smugglers. Some buildings were excluded; some were included, but more were excluded. In addition, the flats in the added buildings were granted to those who:

1. Gave more money.
2. Had more patrons, either with the Jews, or with the Germans.

Moreover, those who wanted to receive [5] a better flat and offered an appropriate sum of money could exchange their flat for [rooms?] in the newly added buildings designated for the resettled.

A special Commission headed by Councillor Klecki⁹⁷⁰ was in charge. Of course, there were operators swarming around that Commission, such as “Mr” inspector Michałowicz from the Sanitary Commission and “Mr” paramedic Kurc. They were the reason for the quarrels in the Sanitary Commission. The secretary could not tolerate that her colleagues were making money, while she was not getting even a grosz. She instigated the paramedics’ dissent and derided the inspector. But her efforts proved useless. Michałowicz was too cunning to share the money with her. Well, there had been times when he had been taking bribes and she had received [6] her share in secret. God forbid that anybody from the staff should have seen that. Back then she had kept silent. [. . .] she could not [. . .] he was taking the money, and what about her?

On Tuesday, the Councillors [came] from the town with good news. The Community had received passes into town again. Moreover, the ghetto had been promised potatoes, sugar, and cream of wheat for the children. We finally sighed with relief. That terrible suspicion of having set the town ablaze was lifted from our shoulders. And it might have been that that innocent woman had sacrificed her life for that. Her death might have prevented many tragedies, which were to come.

The 20 people detained on suspicion of arson are still in Łowicz, despite their [7] families’ endeavours.

The Rosh Hashanah holidays were approaching. The Germans let us establish prayer houses for the period of [. . .] and pray [. . .].⁹⁷¹ The holidays that year were beautiful. [. . .] the ghetto was less quiet and dignified than before. Indian summer cobwebs hovered in the air and the sunsets were blood red. The plaintive song of *Kol Nidre* was heard from almost every home and floated in the forest. I shall never forget that beautiful, quiet, autumn evening, when nature seemed to unite with the tones of that amazing song. The song echoed far in the distance, floating far, far away...

Around 28 October 1940, the first transports of potatoes started to arrive. Every family was free to take as much as they wanted. The potatoes were collected directly from the gate. The authorities [8] weighed them and the

970 Józef Klecki, *Judenrat* member.

971 In GG, the ban on religious practice of Jews was introduced in January 1940. The permission given in Głowno was an exception.

peasants then delivered them. The supply [section]⁹⁷² was in charge of delivering the rationed potatoes into the ghetto. From time to time, they [went] to Łowicz for rationed flour for bread baking. Taking advantage of the fact that there was ration card flour⁹⁷³ on the cart, they usually transported the same amount of wheaten flour. There was a bakery in the ghetto and it had a permit to bake bread out of graham flour. But one could always obtain white bread, *challah*, and rolls. From time to time, the Germans stormed into the bakery and saw white breadstuff, but the bakers had a perfect excuse. "It's for the hospital," they would say.

From time to time, the supply [section] received sugar for everybody and some cream of wheat for [9] children. The lion's share of it all went into the Community people's pockets. Several days before the resettlement, a transport of sugar for the ghetto arrived [. . .]. Nobody ever tasted it. Taking advantage of the chaos, the Community did not distribute it. It simply vanished.

During several days in October, one could obtain rationed coal. Some inhabitants did not manage to have a supply. Yet each Councillor had a cellar full of rationed coal and wood. Commissioner Ryt delivered potatoes, coal, and wood to the kitchen and hospital.

Everything was slowly returning to normal. We became used to the sight of *junaks*. From time to time, they surrounded the ghetto and fired. They became accustomed to taking bribes and they waited [10] by the roads leading to the village. They were waiting for Jews who smuggled themselves, whom they deprived of food and even cash. Several times they beat the Jews [. . .] that they had to go to the doctor.

The families of the Jews arrested during the fire were doing everything they could to release their relatives from the prison in Łowicz. They gave bribes and went to Łowicz and Warsaw. Two citizens' committees operated in the Community to that end. The first one collected money to release the 20 people from the Łowicz prison and the second one collected money to free residents of Głowno from labour camps. Even though, from time to time, some individual escapees returned from labour camps, the majority were still [11] there. In October Chairman Rozenberg went to the Lublin district to visit the labour camps where residents of Głowno were working. Did he help them

972 The section of the *Judenrat*.

973 Flour available for ration cards was usually of poor quality.

[. . .]? Very little, for sure. He tended to stay away from labour camps; he sent food and money for residents of Głowno working in the camps through third parties. That was why he came back unharmed. In contrast, Councillor Baumerder,⁹⁷⁴ who went representing the Community, came back seriously ill. There had been no news from him for a long time, and when he returned he lay in bed. Purportedly, the Głowno residents working in the camps set their German guards on him. Angry with the Community, they took their revenge on one of its members in that way. Be that as it may, Mr Baumerder [12] did not tell anybody about that embarrassing incident. When the Jews returned from the camps, they told us what was done to the Councillor.

Finally, after much difficulty, enough money was collected and a Jew from our ghetto went to the Lublin district. Groups of people from the camps began to arrive. Some were so seriously ill that they had to stay in the hospital. They were swollen and they had ulcerations and wounds on their legs from working in the mud. A small circle of women was organised by the soup kitchen to provide food to the sick from the camps.

On 8 December 1940, someone came from Łowicz with good news. Due to lack of evidence of guilt, the 20 hostages were released. Some people immediately went to Łowicz. Everyone was impatiently waiting for [13] the return of the detainees. Hours passed. It became dark... the families of the detainees were waiting in front of the gate with the rest of the ghetto population. Finally, at 8 p.m. we heard singing in the distance. Our hearts started to pound joyously. The singing intensified. The song "*Hatikvah*" could clearly be heard. The song sounded closer and closer in complete darkness. Are they here? The gate opened and let in the 20 Jews who had been suspected of arson of the town. After a joyful welcome the Councillors took them to the Community for vodka. That was how the story of the memorable fire in the town ended.

Still later, a commission proceeded; it had to buy five American desks for the gendarmerie on account of the release of [14] the Jewish prisoners. They had such a whim!

In December, there were rumours in the town that passes to leave the ghetto would be issued. Obviously, the Community obtained the right to issue the 600 passes to the other side. Craftsmen were given priority. At first, the Community demanded 500 zlotys for a pass. Later, however, it continuously

974 Maurycy Baumerder.

lowered the price. In the end, they issued them without charge. Each pass needed to state why the holder was going into the countryside, for example as a tailor, shoemaker, or carpenter. There were passes to collect debts in the village. Shop owners received passes, regardless if they were craftsmen or not. In the “occupation” space, one wrote [15] a fictitious occupation and one went to town.

The living conditions in the ghetto began to improve with the introduction of the passes. Jews went out to the village and had more contact with peasants and Christian [. . .]. Craftsmen had a lot of work. Tailors sewed for Christians. Tanners made sheepskin coats for peasants. At the same time, train passes were introduced. Able to go to cities, the Jews usually went to Warsaw. They bought leather accessories, underwear, fur coats, gold, and leather, and they sold these things to Christians. Jews who knew Warsaw Jews from whom they could make a cheap purchase brought to Głowno cheaper merchandise than any Christian trader, who could go to Warsaw whenever he pleased. Peasants delivered potatoes, meat, dairy produce, and other food to the ghetto. And they brought everything. Cottages were filled with fine furniture. Peasant women wore caracul [furs] and [. . .]. Peasants ate with knives and forks off Jewish dinner sets.

Jewish merchants always offered more, so a large portion of the merchandise smuggled from Łódź went into the ghetto. They even smuggled white bread, gigantic four-kilo loaves, from Stryków.

At the beginning, Poles were afraid to walk into the ghetto. Later, however, they ceased to be afraid to stay with us. They came with their wives and daughters to visit dressmakers and traders. From time to time, the “blacks” fired but it did not scare anybody. One can become used to everything. [17] Those who were caught were beaten. People no longer went out through the wire mesh, because almost everybody had a pass. The police by the gate rarely checked passes. [. . .] potatoes, vegetables, wood, as well as crops and flour hidden under wood were brought in through the gate.

Until early January the ghetto remained peaceful. And by peaceful, I mean that there were no fires, round-ups, etc. But the butchers fought each other, made accusations against one another, and called for the gendarmerie. One could write whole books about the butchers. Every couple of days, another company, a few gendarmes, walked through the ghetto with a pack of butchers beside them. The butchers are gesticulating, arguing. What was it

all about? Somebody had sent the gendarmes, who took the meat and arrested the butchers. [18] The butchers somehow always were unscathed. Yes, they were beaten at the gendarmerie station. They fought with their competition only to become friends [. . .] bought a cow. Moreover, they waged war on the Jewish militia. They simply would not pay bribes. The police had had enough of that. Enough is enough! We will not let them keep us under their thumb! One evening, all *shokhets* and butchers were arrested. The prison was full. I still do not know how it is possible that the “prison” was not smashed to pieces. The militia lashed out at them! They shouted and beat the butchers. All in all, they succeeded, the butchers promised to pay commission on each cow they killed.

[19] The butchers were one of the sensations in the ghetto; military sanitary commissions were another.

Once when they came to the ghetto all the members of the Jewish sanitary commission fled in fear. The German commission had no one to talk to. Inspector Michałowicz was the first to flee. The rest followed. The Germans needed to send the militia to bring a few brave paramedics. Eventually, the commission started the ghetto inspection without them. Later on, a few paramedics did appear.

The commission inspected the sanitary state of backyards, flats, buildings, sheds, rubbish bins, and latrines. It checked whether there were buckets in the well and if the women had clean hair and underwear. It had [20] the gendarmerie surround one house, which it then thoroughly inspected. They ordered half of the women to cut their hair. A Jewish barber accompanied them. They had no time to assist [. . .] so they ordered the commission to take care of it. After their departure, those who had no money to bribe Michałowicz did have their hair cut. They shouted, made threats, demanded to be paid a few hundred zlotys’ penalty, and left. They also warned that, if they saw such filth next time, the whole sanitary commission would be arrested. Indeed, the conditions in the ghetto had recently deteriorated.

It was December. The bins were more than full. Courtyards were strewn with rubbish. People poured all waste in front of the buildings. [21] Almost all latrines were closed because they were full. Straw from peasants’ wagons was scattered everywhere, and there was [. . .] scattered about in the streets. That was why the entire “Sanitary Commission” was praying for snow to fall and cover this dirt with its whiteness.

Many days after the German commission's departure, Michałowicz was teased about the fact that he fled the moment he saw the military uniforms. He explained himself, claiming that he was supervising the ghetto when the commission arrived. Unfortunately, whenever some responsibility was involved, inspector Michałowicz was the first to flee. It should not be forgotten that he was always the first to [22] take a bribe.

The German sanitary commission kept its promise and stormed into the ghetto two weeks later. As soon as the paramedics saw them enter through the ghetto gate, they ran to their wards through the Community's back door. That time, Michałowicz summoned all his courage and went with the Germans to inspect the ghetto. Fortunately, snow had fallen, covering the dumpsters, backyards, and streets. The Germans began to inspect shops. There were perhaps three groceries in the ghetto. They visited all of them and wrote about the filth in their reports. They managed to inspect our only bakery. When they saw how dirty it was, they raised hell with Michałowicz. [23] They threatened to arrest the whole Jewish "Sanitary Commission" if they saw such dirt during their next visit. They also inspected [. . .] flats. It was cold so when a paramedic went into the homes of paupers, he saw [them] lying on straw mattresses and on the floor. At the beginning, the military physician cut the hair of dirty, lice-infested paupers. But as the military physician moved on and saw more and more misery and lice-infested people, he despaired, helpless.

– *Was kann ich machen? Das sind arme Leute.*⁹⁷⁵

And he stopped cutting hair. The Commission left with several hundred zlotys of fines for filth in the ghetto. It did not fail to warn that it would return in two weeks' time and arrest four paramedics if the ghetto were still dirty. Having understood that the Germans [24] were coming only for money, the paramedics ceased to be scared. The ghetto stayed as dirty as it had been. Dr Mierzejewski threatened, pleaded, and flew into a rage, all for nothing. Moreover, it was so cold that instead of walking to a latrine, people relieved themselves wherever, in the forest, near their homes, in the backyard. Mierzejewski threatened that he would send gendarmerie over because of all the filth. He did not want the authorities to hold him responsible for that disorder. Once a paramedic came running to the Community.

– Listen, colleagues. Oh, it's bad. There shall be trouble.

975 (German) What can I do? These are poor people.

– Dr Dietrich came and on his way to the hospital he stepped into... Whose ward is it? Mierzejewski will be furious!

Indeed, Dr Mierzejewski came running in the evening. Furious, he started shouting.

– Do you really think that I will risk my neck for you? Even Dietrich [25] had stepped into shit! This is how shitty you run things! If you do not remove all this waste at once, I will send gendarmes after you! If you catch somebody relieving themselves in the forest, then, damn, throw him into whatever he did, beat him up, do whatever you like. I allow you to do as you please. Get to work!

That intervention helped. They began to walk at night and catch people relieving themselves near their homes. They fined them, beat them up, and put them in prison. Every day the *Arbeitsamt* sent workers with spades to remove the faeces. Somehow the ghetto became cleaner. The white snow ceased to be decorated with flowers in all shades of brown.

On 1 February 1941, people started talking about a general disinfecting of the ghetto. Several days later, a new disinfector, the Pole Niewiadomski, [26] came into the ghetto. I do not know why rumours about resettlement began to spread in connection with the disinfection process. Accustomed to rumours about resettlement, I care little about them.

What did our new disinfector, not Dr but rather Mr Niewiadomski look like? He looked like a typical Polish moron, pardon my language; he looked like a pimp. He wore a black English coat, white scarf, and grey hat. The devil knows what he was before the war; now it was important that he had a German aunt in Głowno, who brought him from as far as Warsaw, I guess so that he could take up that position. He was as useful as a fifth wheel of a cart. Dr Mierzejewski felt antipathy toward him immediately. A man [27] of high intelligence, he could not cooperate with the sort of individual that Niewiadomski was. Nonetheless, he called a meeting of the Sanitary Commission and introduced them to Niewiadomski. He said he would stand in for him in the bathhouse and that he would steam flats and would keep the ghetto clean.

Niewiadomski began to inspect flats. He started so meticulously that, instead of conducting just the announced sanitary inspection, he used that opportunity to conduct minor searches, too. In a certain flat, he found a kilogram of tea, in another a machine to make sweets, and meat in butchers'

homes. And Niewiadomski messed with the butchers! He ran to the gendarmerie and told them where he had found meat. The gendarmes came and requisitioned the meat. And the worst thing was that he accepted a bribe and [28] then informed on that person, who then had to relinquish the merchandise.

Niewiadomski did separate business in the bathhouse. As he [. . .] general bathing of the entire population, the following scenes took place in the bathhouse. Dressed in a white apron (as the boor saw fit), Niewiadomski inspects women's hair. He spots a more elegantly dressed woman. He inspects her hair.

– You have lice... – he says.

– Why, it can't be true! Look again. It's impossible!

– I know what I'm talking about! Barber! Cut this woman's hair!

What does that terrified woman fearing to lose her hair do? She offers the barber a bribe. The barber is Jewish. Besides, that was the whole point. He charges [29] as much as he can. The smarter the woman's clothes, the better. A better dressed woman will pay more. This business is done together with Niewiadomski. He gets half of the bribes. This is what Niewiadomski's earnings [. . .] came from.

We all had had enough of him. He pestered the Sanitary Commission. He wrote daily reports to Dr Mierzejewski about the filth in the flats and in the ghetto. The doctor could not bear to look at him. He shouted at the paramedics that they were not fulfilling their duties, but deep in his heart he wished him sudden death. You should have seen these reports, like chicken scribble with spelling mistakes. We could not stand him any longer. He was everywhere. He saw everything. At night, he drank in the ghetto in the company of Jewish girls. Drunk, he made a fuss. Finally, his [30] *sof*⁹⁷⁶ came.

Around mid-February he got really drunk. Barely walking, staggering, he went to Chairman A. Rozenberg's office. It was 10 p.m. Niewiadomski came in, sat back in an armchair, took out some leftovers from his pocket and tucked in. In the meantime, he shouted and made various demands from the chairman. He wanted to smash everything around him. They did not know what to do with him. In the end, the chairman called for the gendarmerie. In less than five minutes, the Jewish police brought gendarmes and *Hilfspolizei*. They approached him and asked what he was doing in the ghetto

976 (Hebrew) end.

at 10 p.m. They then beat him hard and kicked him down the stairs. Beaten and kicked, he was escorted out of the ghetto.

That was how the *latzer*⁹⁷⁷ Niewiadomski disappeared from the ghetto.

[31] The last plague in the ghetto before the resettlement was *Oberwach[t]-meister* Szwarc. He ran wild. He and the whole gendarmerie ran wild. [. . .] a gendarme came to the Community with the chairman and demanded a pair of shoelaces to be delivered to him immediately. What were they supposed to do? They brought him the shoelaces. If Szwarc needed a laundry basket he went to the Community. If a gendarme needed a chair or some underwear, they ran to the Community, too.

On 10 February, Szwarc came running and demanded all passes to leave the ghetto returned within two days.

The Jewish police were immediately sent to collect the passes from the Jews. But was it possible to collect 600 passes? Most of the people were outside the ghetto. [32] The police had to search for them in the village. What was the outcome? After two days, they were still some 35 passes short. Szwarc comes running. He counts, counts... He cannot reconcile the count. Some passes are missing. He is so furious that he takes the chairman and three Councillors with him. The Councillors have not returned yet. They were arrested in town.

The police rented bicycles and left to look for the pass holders in the countryside. After several hours, they collected almost all the missing passes, but they were still lacking a few. A Councillor went to the gendarmerie, his heart pounding. He was sure he would not come back. Why, did he not have all the passes? What happened? Szwarc put them aside without counting and released everybody. This is how the passes affair ended.

The contact with the village was broken. But actually, now peasants came into the ghetto. [33] Fearing resettlement, Jews sold their most indispensable possessions. And there was a lot of talk about resettlement.

We became anxious when the news from Żyrardów, Piaseczno, and the nearby towns reached Głowno. We consoled ourselves with the thought that there was no ghetto in those towns. But there were rumours that they would resettle the whole strip from the border with the Reich to Warsaw. That stretch was to be emptied of Jews.

977 See footnote XXX.

When Skierniewice learned of its resettlement date, we lost the illusion that they would let us be. Officially, the Community knew nothing. Unofficially, though, the Councillors went to Warsaw to rent flats and sent their parcels. The better-off did the same. The policemen set up a company, [34] which began to bring in lorries from Warsaw. The lorries collected sacks with possessions, naturally in return for a high fee. The possessions were then smuggled to Warsaw. Obviously, the Community became jealous of their profits and began to do the same. The ghetto plunged into anarchy. The Councillors argued with one another. The police did whatever they wanted. The devilish order ensued. Food supplies vanished and so did sugar and the supplies of the soup kitchen. The Councillors argued in the Community every day. Now, when all hypocrisy was gone and when they were about to lose their positions due to the resettlement, they reproached one another for theft and trickery. Anarchy ensued.

At night and then also during the day, [35] the lorries began to leave for Warsaw. Szwarc came running into the ghetto and took whatever he pleased: furniture, bedding, underwear, net curtains, and carpets.

The ghetto was swarming with Christians who bought everything for nothing. The Jews bought food to store.

On 28 February 1941, Szwarc came to the Community to announce that the resettlement was to start the next day. Each family was to be disinfected, their possessions would be steamed, and then they would be resettled to Warsaw by carts under escort.

That was the night I was leaving. It was dark and cloudy. The lorries were so loaded with the baggage that there was no space for people. We were packed like sardines. The farewell was the rustle of the forest and the screams of those who [36] did not manage to climb onto a cart.

After my departure, the ghetto in Głowno existed for one more month. The rich departed at their own expense, taking almost all their possessions. The poor were sent away by the Community and placed in refugee centres in Warsaw. Some of the craftsmen went to Łowicz, where they worked for Germans with some Łowicz craftsmen long after the resettlement.

Now from the border zone in Bratoszewice, via Głowno, Łowicz, Skierniewice, Sochaczew, Żyrardów, and all the way to Warsaw there are no Jews at all.

ARG I 743 (Ring. I/438)

Description: pages [1–26], [79–106], and [1–36]: original, handwritten, notebooks I, IV, V, ink, Polish, 150×192 mm, illegible fragments, small fragments missing, 60 sheets, 90 pages. On the cover of the notebook V, Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish (ink): "12 [standard] pages;" pages [27–78], probably originally in notebooks II and III (not preserved) were transcribed around 1950; of this duplicate, the first 8 pages are missing.

Edition based on the original, 60 sheets, 90 pages, completed with the post-war duplicate, typewritten, 210×297 mm, 19 sheets, 19 pages (numbered 9 to 28).

125 *After April 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account דער גלאָונוער "לוח" [The Głowno calendar]. Fate of the town's Jewish population from the entry of Germans on 3 September 1939 to the resettlement to the Warsaw ghetto on 5 April 1941.*

[1] The Głowno calendar

1939

3 September. They took Głowno. Called the deaf Jew Bentsion Borsht;⁹⁷⁸ he did not hear. He was shot. Searched a Christian; found a razor on him. They literally cut off his head with the razor.

13 September. Shot Yitskhok Rotenbach, as well as the Sochaczewskis, father and son.

15 September. Shot the Jews, the Cwajgenbojms, father and son, as well as a third Jew, whose name I do not know.⁹⁷⁹

Forbidden to pray collectively on Rosh Hashanah. A small number of older soldiers remained in the town. Relations with the Christian and Jewish populations are straightforward and friendly. The rabbi ran away. The community activists from before the war do not show up. Arrested a large number of Jewish and Polish youth for belonging to political organisations. Thanks to the intervention of the *Volksdeutscher* Wolpert,⁹⁸⁰ an owner of a brickyard, all

978 The name could be also spelled Barsht.

979 See also Doc. 123.

980 Ludwik Wolpert.

were released (later he became the initiator of the ghetto, and other afflictions. At that time, he was still not certain who would stay in Głowno). Mediation between the authorities and the Jewish population on the supply of Jews for forced labour and so on, carried out by a former community clerk Avrom Cwern, son of a tailor, a widower who also was once a tailor. It turned out to be to the advantage of the Jews.

Until the end of November, time passed quietly.

After the expulsion of Jews from the first few streets in Łódź,⁹⁸¹ thousands of refugees arrived.

6 December. An order was issued that within 48 hours all alien residents must leave Głowno. Newly arrived were not allowed to stay in Głowno. The army controlled the ways out. The frost was catastrophic. The richer part leaves Głowno. After various efforts, the order was suspended until 15 January 1940.

[2] From 18 December to 22 December, up to 8,000 refugees arrived in Głowno from towns cleared of Jews: Aleksandrów near Łódź, Konstantynów near Łódź, Zgierz, Stryków.⁹⁸² Jews fled to Głowno in the thousands: men, women, children, elderly, tired, sick, half-frozen. The frost was thick, unbearable. There is no sort of social aid.

K., a refugee from Łódź,⁹⁸³ went to Warsaw to the Joint to get help.

On 27 December 1939, the Aid Committee was formed with the help of emissaries of the Joint. The Committee serves 1,700 refugees, helps POWs who pass through, opens a kitchen and generally becomes the representative of the entire Jewish population.

1940

On 15 January, the order commanding the refugees to leave Głowno in three days is renewed. After four interventions of the emissaries of the Joint and the Aid-Committee at the local authority, and the *Kreishauptmann*,⁹⁸⁴

981 On 11 December 1939, the Germans resettled the first group of inhabitants of Łódź. The next resettlement took place on 31 December 1939. See *Accounts from the Territories Annexed to the Third Reich* (forthcoming).

982 Other testimonies do not confirm such a large number of refugees in Głowno. See footnote XXX.

983 Probably Shiye Kołton, later member of the ŻSS branch in Głowno. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1080, p. 2.

984 Heinz von Schwender.

the deadline is extended to 1 April 1940. During the first days of February, the authorities form the *Judenrat* consisting of 12 people.⁹⁸⁵ The *Judenrat* immediately wages a fight to dismantle the Aid-Committee. The army leaves Głowno and the gendarmerie arrives. The attitude of the authorities toward Jews constantly deteriorates. Jewish shops are closed down, searches are carried out, and as always in these cases robberies are very common. The Labour Department demands four hundred Jewish workers instead of twenty as has been the case until now, for permanent work 7 days a month. The *Volksdeutscher* Rogger leads the work. On their way to work Jews have to sing and shout that Jews wanted the war.

An order was released: Christian (Polish) men and women must undergo a medical examination. The healthy will be sent to work in Germany.⁹⁸⁶ At the same time the town is plastered with posters with the content: do not follow the Jewish agitation against going to work in Germany.

[3] On 1 March, the chairman of the *Judenrat* Rosenberg and Dr Smirgeld from Łódź ask the municipal authorities not to grant the Aid Committee the monthly permission to function legally, as they wish to have everything in their own hands.

At the beginning of April, a categorical order is issued: All refugees must leave Głowno. Every second day, 400 people must leave. The *Judenrat* decides that the first to leave should be those who benefitted from the Aid Committee. None of the local men of the *Judenrat* or members of the Aid Committee wants to undertake any measures to intervene. Two representatives for the refugees travel to Warsaw to intervene. With the help of the Joint representatives, they succeed in stopping the order. The joy of the refugees was enormous. Ten days later, rumours about the establishment of a ghetto circulated. Unfortunately, the rumours come true. Halting the enforcement of the order costs a bribe of 15,000 zlotys.

Two days before Passover,⁹⁸⁷ comes a new misfortune. The day before at 10 p.m. an order is issued that at 7 a.m. on the following day all refugees are

985 For the composition of the *Judenrat* in Głowno, see footnote XXX.

986 Polish volunteers to work in Germany were recruited since the beginning of the occupation. Forced deportations began in the spring of 1940. Young people were issued orders to work in Germany, or were seized in round-ups.

987 On 20 April 1940.

requested to appear in front of the municipality building. All will be transported to the places from where they came. It was permitted to go out all night, and the police delivered the announcement to everyone. Any intervention was out of the question because Führer's birthday fell on this day.⁹⁸⁸ 2,600 refugees were assembled by force; at the same time 3 hostages were taken, and led away to Stryków. Units especially brought from Warsaw guarded the crowd. A mass of people spent the night in the schoolyard. In the morning, the guard changed and guards from Łódź replaced the guards from Warsaw. The whole mass of people was driven out, back to Głowno (Stryków was already within the territory of the Reich). In Głowno, they were all locked in a factory and within several days the way back became terrible. The entire luggage that people took with them was burnt. They were fiercely beaten. One was shot and many were viciously beaten up. Some later died from the blows.

On 8 May, an order was issued that a ghetto for the Jews will be established and that on 12 May all Jews must be inside the ghetto. On the evening of 12 May, searches were carried out in the ghetto and a lot was taken from the Jews. The authorities appointed Lenski, a *Volksdeutscher*, called a "hygienist," as the commissioner of the ghetto. Several days later, Jews, men, women and children, were taken for delousing. The inspection at the delousing was supervised by the "hygienist," who at that time displayed his sadistic feelings. Lenski's power over the ghetto was unlimited. He carried out house searches, took away various things, stole constantly, punished the Jews for not leaving the ghetto legally, etc. He and his two deputies ruled for five months.

On 16 May 1940, the composition of the *Judenrat* changed. From then on, it consisted of 8 persons. The Jewish police was formed and the chairman of the *Judenrat* became its chief. The police behaved brutally towards the population. Bribery was a common phenomenon. The *Judenrat* consisted entirely of merchants, joined by a German Jew, Leyb Borensztajn, a well-known activist in the workers' movement in 1905, who went by the name of Yankl Kaiser. The *Judenrat* was exceptionally hated by the Jewish population.

Two days before Rosh Hashanah a fire broke out in the town of Głowno, which (by that time) was *Judenrein*. The following day, the Jews from the ghetto were accused of being the arsonists, and [5] the ghetto was sealed as a punishment. Guards consisting of *Volksdeutsche* (the so-called "blacks")

988 20 April was a national holiday in the Third Reich.

were deployed. In revenge, three of the biggest houses were excluded from the ghetto; over a hundred families were thrown out into the street. The quota was not delivered and there was absolutely no possibility of provisions. 20 Jews were arrested. People were shot all the time. A young woman was shot. Frequent beatings caused bleeding. The situation lasted around two weeks. The arrested persons were detained for 7 weeks and the accusations were withdrawn. When released, they had to commit to supplying 3 new desks, which was duly carried out.

As for the entire [General] Government, people from Głowno were also taken to labour camps. Three hundred men were taken. Two were tormented to death in the camp. Many became ill in the camps. After great efforts, some have returned.

The mortality-rate in the ghetto is high. A large percentage of the older generation dies of hardship, cold, and hunger. There are almost no cases of infectious diseases.

On 1 March 1941, it was announced that all Jews must leave the ghetto, and Głowno must become *Judenrein* by 5 April 1941. In recent days, a fight broke out in the *Judenrat*. Two groups have formed which fight each other and accuse each other of abuse. A committee is formed to help the poor with the departure. The funds are raised by charging fees from the rich who are leaving. The committee consisted of Leyzer Nadel⁹⁸⁹ from Łódź, Moyshe Lewkowicz from Głowno,⁹⁹⁰ F. Rozenbojm from Łódź, Mote Rawer, F. Bojm, Wajntraub, Leyb Borensztajn (Yankl Kaiser), and others. The committee extracted money from the poorest and did not provide them with anything. Great abuses took place, which should be described separately. Jews, who had been sent to Warsaw, were left in the street without the means to live.

ARG I 742 (Ring. I/804)

Description: duplicate (2 carbon paper copies), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 10 sheets, 10 pages. In the margins, the letter "M" (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 5 sheets, 5 pages.

989 Leyzer Nadel, merchant, before the war an employee of charitable organisations, secretary of the Głowno Committee for Aid to Refugees (*Komitet Pomocy Uchodźcom w Głownie*), and ŻSS branch member. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/674, p. 37; AŻIH, AJDC, 210/338, p. 34.

990 Moszek Lewkowicz, secretary of the Committee to Aid Refugees in Głowno. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/338, p. 34.

126 *Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto. Certificate for Dawid Bornstein, issued by the gendarmerie station in Rogów on 25 February 1941.*

Gendarmerie station in Rogów

Rogów, 25 February 1941

Certificate

This is to affirm that the holder of this document, Dawid Bornstein, former resident of Rogów, was the chairman of the Committee to Aid Jews in Rogów and had over 8,200 zlotys from the Aid Committee's⁹⁹¹ purse at his disposal. Bornstein has this sum on him in order to cover the costs of living for poor Jews who relocated from Rogów to Warsaw.

[illegible signature]

Gendarmerie station
in Rogów

Second lieutenant of the gendarmerie

ARG I 986 (Ring. I/328/3)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (Np*), pencil, German, Yiddish, 148×160 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Letter or sign "v" in the margins (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

991 The ŻSS branch in Rogów had 100 people in its care and it distributed goods and food. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/28, p. 16.

127 *Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto. Certificate for Dawid Bornstein, issued on 27 February 1941 by the Rogów gendarmerie station, regarding his work as the chairman of the Judenrat in Rogów.*

Certificate

This is to certify upon the request of Dawid Bornstein, the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Rogów, that he has performed his function beyond reproach. All Jews of Rogów have trusted him and he has taken particularly good care of poor Jews and has tried to treat every Jew justly.

In addition, he did bring his Jews designated to work at the railway, at customs, or in agriculture, or to carry out forestry works or any other kind of labour.

This winter, the Jews have been obliged to be particularly active at shovelling snow. That was where Bornstein has greatly contributed to the Jews' reporting to those works performed by order of the gendarmerie, which supervised the shovelling.

Generally speaking, Bornstein has also tried to persuade his Jews to abide by the police regulations.

Rogów, 27 February 1941

‏round seal‏⁹⁹²
Gendarmerie station

ARG I 987 (Ring. I/328/4)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (Np*), pencil, German, Yiddish, 148×160 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Letter or sign “v” in the margins (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

992 ‏Written in Yiddish.

128 *After April 1942, Warsaw ghetto, [Dora Bornstein (Borensztajn) and family]. Correspondence on family matters; mention of Rejowiec, apparently after the Aktion.*

[1] ^{993p}Wednesday [. . .] /4 1942

[. . .]orensztajn to your husband in Warsaw, [delegate] from Rogów, Warsaw Gęsia 17/51

[. . .] I and Józio and Oleś [. . .] from Rejowiec) Dawid (delegate) with Lusja [family?] are traveling somewhere else. [. . .] In Krychów (post office Hańsk). If [. . .] Meanwhile I have stayed [. . .] have not received. Who knows [. . .] greetings, Dora.

[Częstochowa?], wife with [small son?] [. . .] probably in the direction of [. . .]^p

[2] ^yReceived in very good order. Put it [. . .] we received $\frac{1}{4}$ then it went [. . .] remainder 2 packets we [. . .] asked the dear God that we should [. . .] learned from the latest[?] news [. . .] no Jews at all, only isolated individuals who [. . .] until now we have lived here [. . .] we are relieved that Rejowiec [. . .] place [. . .] a little more cheerfully.

[B]ornsztajn to his brother-in-law Windhajm in Warsaw [. . .]^y

^pDear Szmulek

Had matzo for the festivals 1,80 kilo of [. . .] kilo potatoes. Meat here [. . .] brown loaf 15 zlotys. Potatoes [. . .]^p

^y[. . .] from Ms Windhaj[m] her husband sent away to an unknown [. . .]^y

[3]^{994 p}Rejowiec^p

^y12 April met [. . .] who [told?] me [. . .] are located in [. . .] among [. . .] exchanged letters with^y Aleks[ander?] Borensztajn *Gazeta Żyd[owska]*⁹⁹⁵

993 In the document, sentences or phrases written in Polish and Yiddish are intertwined; they are marked ^p and ^y, respectively.

994 Page [3] is transferred from ARG I 414 (Ring. I/895).

995 Aleksander Borensztajn, a journalist of "Gazeta Żydowska" (Jewish Gazette), official Polish language periodical published in Kraków from 23 July 1940 to 28 August 1942.

^yOn 7 February, a certain resident of Rejowiec sent through the post a business telegram, which arrived on 9 February. On 10 February, my uncle wanted to reply on the phone to his son, but the post office there explained:^y ^pthere are no more Jews here.^p

ARG I 985 (Ring. I/598/7); ARG I 414 (Ring. I/29, I/96, I/264, I/895, I/1060, I/1220/87) (fragment)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (JG*), pencil, Polish, Yiddish, 129×285 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages. Paper damaged, fragments missing. The document contains duplicates of several letters or one letter with additions of several persons.

SKIERNIEWICE

129 *After March 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “סקערניעוויץ” [Skierniewice]. Situation of the Jewish population after the entry of the Germans on 9 September 1939 until the deportation from the town, beginning in January 1941: robberies, anti-Jewish ordinances, round-ups for forced labour, labour camps, the ghetto.*

[1] Skierniewice

Already on the second day of the war, 2 September 1939, Skierniewice was bombed. The bombardment lasted until the evening of Wednesday, 6 September. The heaviest bombarded spot was the eastern part of town. The Jewish population abandoned the town en masse and took off into the villages and on the roads to Warsaw. 31 Jews died in the bombardments, 12 houses belonging to Jews were entirely ruined, and 125 Jewish families lost their belongings. The German army occupied the town on 9 September, and the Jewish population gradually returned to town. While on their way back, several dozens of Jews were taken captive by the German army, including the *rebbe* Yitskhok Kalisz,⁹⁹⁶ and the *moreh hora'ah*, Moyshe

996 Leader of the Kalisz Hasidic dynasty in Skierniewice, whose most eminent leader had been Shimon Kalisz (1867–1926).

Perkal.⁹⁹⁷ On 12 September 1939, the municipality announced with drumrolls [. . .] to the population [. . .] quite laconically that the merchandise in Jewish shops was free to be taken, in the name of the German army. To the disgrace of the Poles (it was not made clear who made this mistake), the words “for the German army” were missing in the announcement. The shady types immediately took advantage of the announcement and attacked and robbed the remaining Jewish shops.

From 15 September 1939 until almost 1 August 1940, when an official decree was issued that Jewish labour must be paid and that no one, except for the *Arbeitsamt*, is allowed to select Jews for work. Jewish men regardless of their age, and young women also, were caught daily for various jobs by the military. [2] Those who were caught were forced to do various jobs, at which they were physically and psychologically tormented by being ordered to clean latrines with bare hands. Very often, they were badly beaten. However, there were also soldiers, who not only protected the Jews from the blows, but also gave them food. At first, several tens of elderly Jews with beards were deployed daily to sweep the market square, which was previously done by two town street sweepers. It is worth noting that very soon the Poles took over making a mockery of Jews from the Germans.

In the summer of 1940, the municipality sent several tens of Jewish women to sweep the streets. From 20 September onwards, the Jewish population, following an order of the municipality, provided 150 men and 50 women daily to work. The administration of the Jewish community did not show itself in public; on the contrary, they [. . .] closed down, and the overseeing of selecting Jews for work was taken over by a private person with a murky past. He made his livelihood from Jewish sorrows by taking money from the rich in exchange for releasing them from work, whereas he sent the poor to work without any pay. Even though every day many presented themselves for work, the round-up of Jews in the streets or from homes did not stop. From the first days of December 1939 until the end of January, masses of refugees were continually coming to Skierniewice from Włocławek and the area, and from Łódź and the area. The refugees had been expelled, and had themselves escaped, in order to avoid being sent away and to save some of their belongings.

997 Moyshe Perkal was later a member of the Skierniewice Committee for Aid to Refugees. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/635, p. 25.

On 15 December 1939, [3] a committee was established to support the refugees.⁹⁹⁸ The committee dealt with providing the poor refugees with housing and food.

On 30 September, following a hastily put together written decree from the authority, the *Judenrat* was formed, which consisted of 24 persons, elected from a handful of people in feigned elections.⁹⁹⁹ The task of the *Judenrat* at the beginning consisted solely of taking furniture, bed linen, and clothing from the Jews, according to the orders of various German authorities.

In January 1940, the military used to mercilessly beat every Jew who did not greet them courteously, then arrest him and demand payment of a large fine. If the arrested person was poor, they sent for the rabbi, beating him and ordering the *Judenrat* to pay a 1,000 zloty fine. In order to release the rabbi, the *Judenrat* paid the demanded sum.

The arrival of over 2,000 refugees¹⁰⁰⁰ in the winter in the biggest frosts, [. . .], frozen, with colds, and the subsequent life in harsh conditions, triggered a typhus epidemic among the Jewish population. In the course of December, January, and February, 60 persons developed typhus, 10 of whom died. The municipality exploited the influx of the refugees, imposing in January a registration fee of 50 zlotys per head, regardless of age. In accordance with the municipality's decree, the Polish police controlled whether all the refugees had registered. The evil decree took its toll on the poor refugees, as the rich had already registered before it was imposed.

On 19 March, the *Arbeitsamt* handed over the task of providing Jews for work to the *Judenrat*. At the same time, day after day, [4] it increased the demand for work, so that it was almost impossible to provide such a number of workers. This forced the *Judenrat* to take a ransom from the well-to-do, and

998 The founding meeting of the Skierniewice Committee for Aid to Refugees took place on 24 December 1939. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/635, p. 1.

999 Members of the Skierniewice *Judenrat* were Herman Guzik (chairman), Abram Rozenblum (deputy chairman), Meylekh Kisenberg, Chil Wajnacht, Ezriel Kuczyński, and others. Letter of 23 July 1940 to the AJDC Headquarters. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/635, p. 25.

1000 The lists drawn up by the Committee for Aid to Refugees show the number of refugees as 1,080, from Aleksandrów Łódzki, Łódź, Lipno, Aleksandrów Kujawski, Stryków, Dobrzyń, Zgierz, Sochaczew, Konstantynów, Włocławek, Mszczonów, and Brzeziny. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/635, p. 3.

with this money to buy gifts for the clerks from the *Arbeitsamt*. Only then was the demand decreased. On 1 April, the *Arbeitsamt* introduced a labour camp 20 km from the town specifically for the Jews of Skierniewice, and promised that the work would be paid. It turned out that the salary was so small that it was not enough for the most minimal nourishment. The *Judenrat* had to feed the people in the camp. Although the work itself was hard, the Jews were also fiercely beaten by the *Volksdeutsche*, who supervised the work. These conditions again gave rise to a system, in which the rich could buy themselves out, while the poor were tormented. This lasted until 1 August 1940, and the camp ended when 12 youths, who abandoned the camp without the *Arbeitsamt*'s permission and went to work for a *Volksdeutsche* farmer, were arrested, and until today they are in prison under the charge of sabotage. The camp was called "Wola Pękoszewska"¹⁰⁰¹ and the *lageristn*¹⁰⁰² created special songs about the life there.

On 10 June, the *Kreishauptmann*¹⁰⁰³ requested that the municipality establish within a short time a plan for a ghetto for the Jewish population. The clerks from the county authorities unofficially informed the *Judenrat* that the ghetto will be established on 15 July. The *Judenrat* collected from among the Jews a sum of 18,000 zlotys for a bribe to cancel the evil decree. They succeeded in delaying the establishment of the ghetto until 15 December 1940. It is worth noting that, among others, the mayor of the town, the former Member of Parliament Franciszek Filipiński,¹⁰⁰⁴ also took a bribe of 1,000 zlotys so that he would not initiate the establishment of the ghetto. On 1 August 1940, [5] the *Arbeitsamt* informed the *Judenrat* that no one, except for them, was allowed to seize Jews for work. Furthermore, the Jewish labour would be paid. Simultaneously, the Jewish youth were required for work in the labour camps in the Lublin area. Yet again the same misery: the well-to-do buy

1001 Wola Pękoszewska (Łowicz County), a village 20 km east of Skierniewice.

1002 (Yiddish) literally, campers, probably patterned on Polish *obozowicze*, which usually refers to scouts at a summer camp. However, the same word is used in many testimonies for the forced labourers in the Nazi camps. The editors decided to leave the original Yiddish and Polish terms, to avoid the confusion. See also footnote 1132.

1003 Heinz von Schwender.

1004 Franciszek Hipolit Filipiński (1893–1944), mayor of Skierniewice from 1931–1944; co-founder of the Union of Communes of the Republic of Poland (*Związek Gmin Rzeczypospolitej*); politician of the centre-right; 1938–1939 member of the *Sejm*.

themselves out, and the poor have to go to labour camps for starvation, beatings, and deathly fear.

On 10 October, the question of a ghetto became the topic once again. On 15 October, the county authorities held a meeting, at which two representatives of the *Judenrat*, the mayor and his deputy, were present. During the meeting, the area of the ghetto was determined. Against the will of the mayor and as a result of a bribe, the area was determined favourably for the Jews, in such a way that every Jewish family was to get the same flat they had occupied until then. On the following day, it was made publicly known that from 15 November the Jewish ghetto would be established, and that the housing allocation would be handed over to the mayor, who also drew the entire plan of the ghetto. Soon the exchange of dwellings between the Jewish and Polish populations began, authorised by the municipality. The mayor F. Filipski [wondered] why Jews received a bigger area, and he did not get any bribe for this. He could not rest until he persuaded the *Kreishauptmann* that [he as] the mayor had been given the right to diminish the territory of the ghetto at his own discretion. On 25 October, it became known that a triangle formed by three streets would be separated from the ghetto. The deadline for setting up the ghetto was postponed until 15 December.

Because of all of this, heart-wrenching scenes took place among the Jews, whereas in the municipality a real bacchanalia took place: Many Jewish families, occupying dwellings in the excluded triangle in accordance with the authorised exchange, [6] were mercilessly thrown out of their flats onto the streets by the Christian homeowners and by the previous tenants. The municipality, in turn, moved all the Jews to the diminished territory and gave the Jews, who were forced to abandon their flats, vouchers for housing that had already been occupied for a long time by other Jews, or had been taken a few days earlier in accordance with a written permit of the municipality. Furthermore, the municipality sent the police with the Jew who was just about to move into a flat, in order to throw out the previous tenant. Both would cry: the one who was thrown out and the one who was throwing him out. On the following day, the one who had thrown out the previous tenant was in turn thrown out by a new tenant, to whom the flat was allocated by the municipality. All of the housing allocations were carried out for money taken by the mayor and [clerks]. Whoever gave more [money] remained in a better dwelling, or was allocated the flat by the mayor himself in return for money.

On 15 December, the enclosed ghetto was established, with walls along its entire boundary,¹⁰⁰⁵ from which Jews were forbidden to leave. In early January 1941, rumours spread in the ghetto that all Jews would be driven out of the town. In return for a bribe of 2,000 zlotys, the *Judenrat* managed to read a secret circular received by the *Kreishauptmann*. The circular letter indicated a series of towns on the left bank of Vistula River with exact dates when the Jews should be removed. For Skierniewice, the date was set from between 8 and 13 March. Later, the deadline was changed to an earlier time. [7] It is hard to imagine the panic of the Jewish population. The entire ghetto was full of groaning and crying. People were walking in the streets like madmen, asking what shall we do? Where can we go? A sum of 40,000 zlotys was collected to repeal the decree.

On 15 February, it was clear that the entire money was lost, nothing was attained, and the Jews began to leave the town en masse, fearing to be sent by convoy. As always, the misery hit the poor the hardest. The well-to-do paid big money to hire wagons and acquire passes to go wherever they liked. They could also take everything with them. The poor were left abandoned. The pain of the remaining Jewish population was so great that many weak and elderly did not endure it. Among others who died as soon as the announcement about the ghetto was made, were the rabbi Menachem Binder and his wife. The poor, not having any resources, had to wander to Warsaw, selling their last things to cover expenses. Some of them were put onto the wagons of the well-to-do by force, and some received money for expenses from the *Judenrat*. On 1 March, Skierniewice was cleared of Jews. There remained literally two Jews: a glazier with a shady past and a student, son of a Zionist leader. The role of the *Judenrat* in the current historical time is another story.

ARG I 1005 (Ring. I/908)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, many instances of minor damage and fragments missing, 14 sheets, 14 pages. Letter “c” in the margins (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 7 sheets, 7 pages.

1005 In fact it was a strong wooden fence, approximately 3 metres high, topped with barbed wire.

MIŃSK MAZOWIECKI COUNTY

KAŁUSZYN

130 *Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony לאם ל*
“*(קאלושיין) ... יגיד [If he does not utter it¹⁰⁰⁶ ... (Kałuszyn)]. First days of the*
war (1–11 September 1939), panic, wandering refugees, bombardments.

[1] If he does not utter it ... (Kałuszyn)

Oh, hard, very hard! Tears choke; the hand trembles. Why? What for? Remembering, even though it has not and will not leave the memory until one's last breath. But why and for what should children be present at *hazkarat-neshamot*,¹⁰⁰⁷ for parents, and why should Job be studied with them? Orphans themselves look for the Book of Job and themselves seek how to say the remembrance prayers, whilst [they] themselves look like seventy-years-old, like their father and mother at 120 years of age. Why poison the beakers of wine of the contented, who think that everyone lives like that, and why reveal to people a chapter, for which, I believe, there exists no such definition in the terminology, and yet, millions, to a greater or lesser degree, have already felt it on their own skin. Why should the clever ones say: Who asked you to be such an unlucky person and live precisely in that town, and fools will fail to understand it at all, but “if he does not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity”. It is my sacred duty. Speak! Tears may choke, the heart may go cold, but a human deed must not be lost, whether it is good or bad, whether it will enliven or stall human society, not to conceal, express everything, and may paper and ink not be used solely for orders and judgements. It may be used a little to reveal human emotions.

On 1 September, we get up very early and assemble by the radio. The sad news is here. No! I do not believe it. In the course of a few minutes, reports

¹⁰⁰⁶ Leviticus 5:1: “And if any one sin, in that he heareth the voice of adjuration, he being a witness, whether he hath seen or known, if he does not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.”

¹⁰⁰⁷ (Hebrew) prayers for the dead.

come from the battlefield, and I do not believe: Is it possible that there should be anyone who would take such a historic responsibility upon one's conscience, no! Reports keep coming. I do not believe them. I continue like that, incredulous, until Tuesday, the 5th, and I am drawn into the civilian militia. I must be on the street by day and by night, light military vehicles go along the Warsaw-Brześć¹⁰⁰⁸ road, but not to Brześć... Entire nights... Many enemy aeroplanes fly around from 5 a.m. until night time, every day without a break. Yes! I do believe now and forget that I am a human. No [. . .] drink, no sleep, not even wearing my everyday clothes, now [. . .] a civilian militia man: no possessions, no reflections. In the street, hardly anything happens, but one must be in the street.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the 6th and the 7th – the road does not rest for a minute, people are fleeing! Some in a limousine, some with a rucksack on the shoulders, some with already bandaged feet, some in a car, full of expensive furs and other valuable things, some on foot with their wives, pushing a hand cart with several children inside. Some no longer run, no longer walk, but simply lie on the ground, every step a great achievement. The road is not covered with stones, but with human bodies, some awake, some half asleep, some asleep on the move. On Friday, the 8th, in the evening, the first 5 casualties among those wandering out of town, killed by a bomb, are brought into town. Saturday, the 9th, in the evening, terrible news: The writer, Horończyk,¹⁰⁰⁹ cut his throat because he had failed to find his missing son.

Early on Sunday, I join the wagon to pull the dead to a Jewish burial, but we must interrupt our work several times because the enemy's aeroplanes accompanied us all the way and we must protect ourselves.

The poet Horończyk took his own life in Mr Czernicki's *sukkah*.

When I arrived at the cemetery and approached the grave, a young man, exhausted, comes up to me and whispers in a barely audible voice, "Do you know who the victims are? Have you at least seen their clothes? I sat my child on a wagon and followed it. My wife rested a little and she wore such and such clothes."

1008 In the original, Brisk, the Jewish name of the town.

1009 Szymon Horończyk (1889–1939), Yiddish writer, author of the collection of poems *Feldblumen* (Wild flowers, 1921) and several novels, e.g. *Farplonerte vegn* (Entangled roads, 1924), *Shtarke mentchn* (Strong men, 1936). He committed suicide and was buried in Kałuszyn, probably at the new Jewish cemetery, destroyed in WWII.

“No, my dear man, I only helped from the road up to the cemetery, I don’t know anything about appearance.”

Going back to town – a terrible stampede. What is the matter? In town, two people were seen as if they had jumped out from above [2] and no one can know where they are. A terrible upset! A neighbour of mine shouts to me, as if not with her own voice, “I was just walking near the yard and saw two men as if falling from the skies. [This is as true as] I should lead my children to the wedding canopy. And in a minute, it was as if they vanished into thin air.”

For that reason, for the two days, Saturday and Sunday, no one ran, but it does not mean that the road was empty. No! Masses of people drifting back and forth; we saw the same faces several times. We arrived on the outskirts of Siedlce and saw a group of returning wanderers: Some went to look for their lost family members, some did not know at all where they were going; we joined them and also went back. Upon arrival on the outskirts of Mińsk-Mazowiecki, I met a group of people who had fled; I turned around and went back with them. It was simply a mass psychosis of wandering without a definite direction, where people wanted to hide from the horror that lay ahead.

Sunday noon: a terrible sound. I am out in the streets, cleared of people, on the edge of the market. Near my flat, the 12-year-old boy Gelbard is standing with his back as if nailed to the wall of the butcher shops and covers his eyes with both hands, as if cast in iron, as if he was a 100-year-old man, who after having gone through so much in life, finally allowed himself to protest and stop walking and look at the world. He was convulsing without stop. I take him by both hands and try to take them away from his face, he is stronger than I am. I start to shake him and shout, “What happened?” At last, he calms down and replies innocently, in tears, “All the windows have been knocked out of our room.”

I cast a glance in the direction of the market, and it looks quite normal to me because there is not a single window pane. The attention is especially drawn to the corner where there is a terrible smoke. I run to the corner [. . .] several people are lying on the way, and I did not believe they are dead because I had not seen anything like that until then. In the corner, there was a row of collapsed houses and underneath, entire families, namely: Frucht, Judyta, 55 years old, a married daughter Rivka, 25 years old with a 3-year-old

child in her arms; 2) Teplic,¹⁰¹⁰ Yoyné, 55 years old, with his two unmarried daughters, one 22 and the other 16 years old, a grandchild, a boy, 2 years old; 3) from the Obrączka family, an unmarried young man of 18 years old and an unknown woman of 60 years old; 4) Gorzałka, Leyzer, 48 years old, his wife, 45 years old, a married daughter, 24 years old, a girl 13 years old, a boy 5 years old, a grandchild 2 years old. A certain Hirsh, Dovid, a son of 24 years old, a girl of 22 years old, an unmarried young man of 16 years old and many of those lying in the street, bathing in their own blood and calling with their hands to me for help out of the thick smoke, while I myself am helpless, to save 42 dead.

[3] I run back from the unfortunate place and shout as if not with my own voice, “Help, Jews! Grab water and run to the rescue!” It is terrible. I run, shouting, to my friend, a dentist, his flat is always packed with fleeing doctors. I come in with the same scream. I hang around like this in a very depressed and hopeless mood until around 11 at night, when the wife of someone, who became my factory partner a few weeks ago, comes in and turns to my almost sleeping wife (she has not slept since 2 September), “Listen, I don’t know why I’m so attached to you, more so than to my sisters. My husband has now harnessed the wagon, and people are driving out of town. I’m going with my children; we don’t know where we are going. Listen to me and take your children, come with us. I don’t want a grosz from you, although people would give all that they possess. I know you, you are a frail one. Save yourself.”

My wife, after the experience of the afternoon, upon hearing the words “save yourself,” turns to me, “I’m not saving myself without you.” I give her to understand that I still have to stay here. For this reason, I had to give her my word that I join her, although she did not know where she was going. I dressed the children, took along the worst (it was a pity to take the good stuff), and saw her off on the unknown journey. Stealing back in the terrible darkness, through the dense artillery regiment going by, I stop at my aforementioned friend, the dentist. The flat is full of people; they have been sitting like that for days and nights. There is a knock on the shutter of the closed window. “Please, the door is open.” It is already past midnight. An artillery officer from the passing regiment comes in and asks if anyone perhaps has a map; he does not know where to drive. He got it and left immediately.

1010 In the original, Telipic, most probably by mistake.

On Monday, the 11th, at 5 a.m., we, that is, my mother-in-law, sister-in-law and my three guests from Warsaw, decided to leave the flat. The three guests had been with me since Wednesday, the 6th. The reason for their staying with me was the Kałuszyn experience of 1920.¹⁰¹¹ Although I was not in Kałuszyn at the time, I heard of the terrible Kałuszyn experiences of 1920. I advised against running since, after every attempt to get away, we came back. This time, we decided to leave the flat situated next to the road, and go to the edge of the town near water and swamps, where if a bomb drops it will not explode.

We get up very early, before the morning stars appear. We carry linen and goods down to the cellar, take a hand basket, a piece of bread, lock the flat and go to the appointed place. Upon coming there, we see only water and swamps, there is no road, not even a path. The town has moved to this place as if it was organised. Everyone came to protect their own life. All the Jews are silent, do not pray together, and say *selichot*. After several hours in this new part of town, not a single aeroplane appeared. As if from beneath the earth, several soldiers appeared on foot, in disarray, even their jackets unbuttoned. I ask one of them who happened to be a Jew, "Where are you coming from in such silence?"

"Yes," was his reply. "No more bombs will be dropped. It will only last a few minutes." I am surprised at what he says about minutes and ask, "But there is no road here, no path?"

We stand deep in our thoughts: too bad, a surprise, and that's that! Let it be... And then, Polish artillery drives from the swamps and, without thinking twice, [they] position the cannons along the entire breadth of our new town. I give a shout: Back to town, because the gunfire will go over us, [4] but it turned out that we passed through the artillery so that the officer turned to me, *Nie plątać się*.¹⁰¹² It soon became clear to me that people were fighting for land, and that human beings had no part to play.

1011 In August 1920, Kałuszyn was captured for eight days by Bolshevik troops, whom the local Jews greeted with enthusiasm. There were a few Jews among the members of the Revolutionary Committee which took power in the town. After the Bolsheviks' retreat, a group of about 30 Jews tried to flee from Kałuszyn. They were murdered by peasants in the nearby village of Bojmie. The members of the Revolutionary Committee were executed for treason. See Marian Wocial, "Wspomnienia z wojny 1920 roku," recorded by Andrzej Wocial, *Rocznik Kałuszyński*, 2 (2002), pp. 91–92; Chmil Ajzensztejn, "8 dni pod władzą radziecką," *Rocznik Kałuszyński*, 2 (2002), pp. 93–94.

1012 (Polish) Don't loiter here.

Upon my return to town, I walk past my flat, open the door, and leave the basket and the piece of bread. After all, this will only last for a few more minutes and we go to protect ourselves at my friend's place. I had figured out that the cannons are positioned by the last buildings of half a town and it is safer here. After a few minutes at my friend's flat, we hear mighty cannon fire, so we remove everything from the walls, the cupboards; everyone should sit down on the floor until the wrath passes, and we await our fate. The gunfire, a deafening storm, does not end. We control our nerves, calm down, and wait. The one-storey high, strong wall is shaking. This lasts for about half an hour. Someone is pulling violently at the iron-clad doors. We do not answer, believing them to be robbers, but they shout to us, "Murderers, why have you locked yourselves in, the entire town is burning! You will be burnt alive in there!"

Even though I thought hard about whether to open up or whether it would be a better plan to be burnt alive, I did nevertheless open a back door and looked out. Because of the incessant gunfire, going out through the gate was out of the question. We exchange glances. Because there was no question of agreeing on what to do next, without any prospect of being able to clarify anything, I marvelled, resigned, at people slinking along like shadows in the little streets which were to be found near us, carrying the most essential things like bed linen, clothing [. . .]. Many lost their lives while doing this sacred work. Feeling shamed by the heroes doing all the carrying, I stole away from my companions, slowly went inside my flat, took two feather duvets, and came safely back to our nest. Upon seeing me with these possessions, everyone asked me, "Where have you been?" I did not say a word and went out again, grabbed several pillows, and returned safely.

ARG I 792 a (Ring. I/823)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 8 sheets, 8 pages. The text is divided into two parts with separate pagination. Hebrew letter "פ" in the margins (ink); „+“ on p. 1 (red pencil).

The document was kept in a binder.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony regarding the fate of the Jewish population in Kałuszyn during September 1939: fighting for the town, capture of the town by the Germans on 11 September, and detainment of hostages in a church from 14 to 16 September.

[1] Friday, 8 September, 1939, 8 a.m., a commotion. There are rumours that someone has committed suicide. A writer for the “*Moment*,” Shimen Horończyk,¹⁰¹³ has cut his throat. It makes an extraordinarily powerful impact. But the people’s state of agitation and the taut nerves give no time to mourn the loss that the “*Moment*” has suffered. All Saturday, one lives in great fear that something may happen. Everyone has their different presentiments. On Sunday, 10 September, at 12 noon, a great panic ensues: A bomb has dropped and buried 45 people. Everyone is overwhelmed by great fear, the situation gets more tense by the minute, one sees a position being prepared.

On Monday, at half past one, the first German outpost appears; the terror intensifies. Everyone feels defenceless. Soon incendiary devices set certain locations in the town on fire. Soon the entire town is enveloped in flames. The noise and jostling closes in; everyone runs from the town, taking something with them. But the majority has nothing to take; everything has gone up in smoke. The shooting intensifies, fire bombs fall like hail, it is impossible to go through. The people lie outside the town, where they accompany every shot with the sound of *Shema Yisroel*.

Late in [2] the evening, a call is heard, “Rise!” The outpost troops inspect the public and assemble them in specific places, men and women separately. When the elder¹⁰¹⁴ sees the people being led, he asks the leader, “Where are you taking the oxen?” “To town, tomorrow you will all lie together,” comes the reply. Late at night, a Polish military division breaks off, and a proper position is established. It continues like this until morning. When it quiets down a little, each person sees who is missing, but there is no time to mourn the victim.

1013 The name was originally written or copied *Horenshteyn*, and corrected to “Horończyk” only in the first copy; perhaps Horenshteyn was his earlier name, however, so far, it could not be confirmed.

1014 A chairman of the Jewish community.

In the meantime, the German military returns with tanks and armoured vehicles. The people are driven out into the street, anyone who cannot run out quickly enough is shot. Fires burn on all sides. The tanks stand nearby and the people are driven in between. On the ground, one sees only the redness of blood; the entire ground is red with blood, flowing from the people without them realising that they are actually wounded. The group approaches the square – everyone thinks he is being led into hellfire. When the lieutenant sees the rabbi, an old patriarchal Jew, who is being led by his son, the young rabbi; he immediately knocks off his hat and says to him, “You will take responsibility for our military whose throats have been cut.”

The people are [3] forced into a church where there is not enough room to stand; not even a little water is permitted. A very difficult time follows, more than is bearable; the people sit on the ground and weep for themselves and for the disaster. In the morning, it is announced that those older than 60 years of age will be released. A line is formed. The people stand until they get very tired standing. When the guard sees the rabbi, he immediately takes him by the arm and helps lead him out into the yard, not letting the son, the young rabbi, lead him; he should walk by himself. The order is that the son is to remain in the camp. When the lieutenant sees him, he immediately recognises him and says to him, “It seems to me that you are the rabbi.” He promptly interrogates him about his rabbinic activity. He releases him and tells him to go home. Soon shouts are heard: “Where is the rabbi?”

It is rumoured that he has gone home. When the rabbi has barely managed to enter one of the remaining houses, a gendarme immediately comes with an order that he is being summoned to the commandant. Seeing his weakness, he brings him a *taksówka*¹⁰¹⁵ and takes him to the commandant. The rabbi bids farewell to his family [4] since the women were not taken to the camp. He says that of course they will not carry out the death sentence here on the spot, so he is taking him out of town. They weep. It is impossible to grasp, but he must not cry, he says, one must be joyful, accept everything with love, even at a moment like this.

When the commandant sees him, he immediately calls out that it is a wrong address, he does not mean him, but the young rabbi who led him. Meanwhile, he carries out the same investigation into his activity. He frees

1015 (Polish) taxi-cab.

him on condition that he presents his son, the young rabbi. The rabbi weeps that he does not know where his son is; he must be in the camp. He orders that the rabbi be returned home.

The night approaches. The people grow nervous, the night passes slowly. The priest addresses them with an appeal not to desecrate the church, not to smoke, not to dirty the floor; they should be aware of where they are. It is, he says, a divine act that there has remained at least one place where the entire several thousand-strong crowd is able to have a place to stay. In the morning, the women started to bring whatever they could, but unfortunately there was nothing because everything had burnt. The people recall that today is the eve of Rosh Hashanah. Perhaps at night they will be freed, but the people see that at night they will not be released either. Everyone can be heard sighing, today [5] is Rosh Hashanah, Jews, where are we? The night is terrible. Various comments are heard. The church with everyone in it will be set on fire. Someone says, the tanks are all around, from which we will soon be shot at and everything will go up in the air. This was communicated by the doctor, the one [now] in charge instead of the old rabbi. When the doctor asks the commandant what he needs the rabbi for, he tells him he wants to put him in charge. If anything happens, he should leave everything in the air. The doctor says, "*Herr Lieutenant*, I, in my capacity as doctor, confirm that the rabbi is ill and weak and old; I am young and strong, so *Herr Lieutenant* can do with me as he pleases, and free the rabbi."

"What are you," he asks him, "a Jew?"

"No," he replies and shows him that he is not a Jew.

"Yet you want to take responsibility for the Jew."

"He is very dear to me."

He immediately gets a responsibility certificate that he is in charge of everything, but on condition that he delivers the young rabbi to him. He promises to find him. In the meantime, the [lieutenant] receives an order to leave. In this way, the son of the old rabbi was saved.

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, the people are freed. Again, everyone sees who they have lost. Shot, burnt bodies lie on the ground; it is barely possible [6] to pass through the street. The authorities order that everyone should be buried at once, otherwise they will all be burned. Despite it being Rosh Hashanah, despite bullets still flying over their heads, the people begin moving the victims. In the meantime, new victims fall, their number reaching

several hundred. People remain sitting under the open skies, without anywhere to be. People set out into the fields: whatever one gets, a potato, a beet-root, ignoring the fact that it is raw, as long as there is something to eat. In the street, people put together a few bricks and cook in charred utensils, which they take out from beneath the ruins.

ARG I 792 b (Ring. I/823)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×208 mm, 12 sheets, 12 pages. In the margins, Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish on p. 1 (first copy) (ink): "Kałuszyn."

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 6 sheets, 6 pages.

132 *After 12 May 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony "קאַלושין" [Kałuszyn]. Burning of the town on 11 September 1939, detainment of hostages on 14 September 1939, instances of flight from the town, deportation of 1,000 Jews to Warsaw in February–March 1941.*

[1] Kałuszyn.

Kałuszyn had a Jewish population of approximately 1,500 families.¹⁰¹⁶ On 10 September 1939, a bomb killed 32 people, on 11 September the city was burned. Only 175 Jewish families remained, who had not been affected by the fire.¹⁰¹⁷ From the evening of the 11th, after the first [German] entry into the town, until the afternoon of the 12th, when the city was definitively occupied [there were] approximately 1,000 Jewish civilian casualties. The exact number could not be established because of the mass escape from the town. As well, after the occupation of the town the entire civilian population and 95 per cent of the Jews were incarcerated in the church until 6 o'clock Thursday morning, on the 14th, that is, until Thursday the 1st day of Rosh Hashanah at 6 in the morning without air, without food.

The Jewish escapes last until the summer of 1940. Approximately beginning July 1940, the Jewish refugees begin to return, above all because of

1016 It was 6,500 people. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada," table IX.

1017 90 per cent of the town was burned down. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/507, p. 2.

the ban to live in the neighbouring towns such as Mińsk Mazowiecki and others. Hence, the Jewish population at the end of 1940 already numbered 4,000 people.

Around February 1941, a cleansing decree [was issued], to get rid of the poor. The numbers and eligibility was tasked to the *Judenrat*,¹⁰¹⁸ the nationalist hero Janiak, and the Jewish Health and Security service... It goes without saying that those who could or would not pay the demanded sums were destined to be taken from the street as well as from dwellings, even naked children [were taken] from the beds during the frosts and quarantined for 14 days.¹⁰¹⁹ The opening of the quarantine took place ceremoniously. Many wealthy men and women were caught. All were asked to undress completely and ordered to scratch themselves and were thus photographed.

The first group of 550 souls was sent [2] to Warsaw without any means to live. A second group of 450 souls [was] sent out 15 days later.¹⁰²⁰ In the meantime, a woman from the first group, a mother of 6 small children, suffered stomach pains while in quarantine. She was cured by a bullet through her heart. And, from the second group, a young father of small children, although a wealthy man, became completely blind on the evening when he was on his way to Warsaw. The reason was that he had asked for an amount of money to be returned to him. As revenge, he was caught and sent away. Because of the terror that nobody knew one's fate and also because of frequent denunciations by those pretending to be members of the *Judenrat*, the town by itself¹⁰²¹ became almost entirely *judenrein*. At the end of March, Jews start to return.

12 May 1941

1018 In March 1940, the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Kałuszyn was Reuven Michelson, while in August 1940 it was Abraham Gamza, dentist by profession. Michelson also was a deputy chairman of the ŻSS branch. Other members of the *Judenrat* were Moshek Berman, Leyb Lis, Hersch Feldman, Mordkhe Rymwot, and Leyzer Bronsztajn. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/392; ŻSS, 211/508.

1019 It refers to the delousing campaign. In connection with this event, Z. Janiak is named an "antisemitic Pole," see Yosef Kermish, *Martirologie, vidershtand un umkum fun der yidisher kehile in Kalushin*, in *Sefer Kalushin; gehaylikt der khorev gevorener kehile / dedicated to the destructed and annihilated community of Kalushin*, ed. Arye Shamri, Sholem Soroka et al. (Tel Aviv, 1961), p. 325.

1020 In March 1941, a transport of 832 deportees from Kałuszyn reached Warsaw. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada," table IX.

1021 Owing to the escape of its inhabitants.

ARG I 791 (Ring. I/822)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, minor damage and fragments missing, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Letter “c” in the margins (ink), “+” on p. 1 (first copy) (red pencil).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

SIENNICA

133 *After 22 April 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony on the fate of Jews from Siennica; events of 14 September 1939: arrest of all the residents, searches, shooting of 9 Jews, males sent to Jadów, expulsion of the Jewish population from the village.*

The delegate from Siennica communicates the following:

The Germans entered our small town on 13 September. On 14 September, they locked all the Jewish and Christian inhabitants in the Catholic church. There, they were searched and everything was taken from them. The entire town was then set on fire and 9 Jews were shot. 24 hours later, all the men were sent to Jadów. Around 50 families from Siennica came to Warsaw and the remainder settled in the surrounding villages, where they live in great poverty.¹⁰²²

Warsaw, 22 April 1941

ARG I 998 (Ring. I/912)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 110×148 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. On p. 1, a symbol (red pencil): “+.”

¹⁰²² The author suggests that all Jews were resettled from Siennica in 1939, but in fact in September 1941 there were 515 Jewish residents. On 18 October 1942, all of them were deported to Treblinka. See AŻIH, ŻSS (appendix), 211/8, p. 18; T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” table IX.

OSTRÓW MAZOWIECKA COUNTY

WYSZKÓW

134 *Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto, [Chana Reichman]. "Rozmowa z 15-letnią panienką wygnaną z Wyszkwów" [Conversation with a 15-year-old girl expelled from Wyszkwów], recorded by Yekhiel Górny. Evaluation of the contacts with Poles, account of the deportation of Jews from Wyszkwów.*

[1] Conversation with a 15-year-old girl expelled from Wyszkwów

Until the outbreak of the war the Poles lived quite friendly with the Jews, even though from time to time there were some anti-Semitic incidents incited by the *endeks*. Jews constituted a majority in Wyszkwów; there were approximately 5,000 of them, while the number of Poles was 2,000 (but the vicinity around the town was exclusively Polish).

During the bombing in September 1939, the Poles and Jews kept together. They sheltered in cellars together. After the Germans seized Wyszkwów on 10 September 1939, the Poles distanced themselves from the Jews and kept away from them.

The Germans began to persecute the Jews the moment they marched into the town. They captured them to forced labour, robbed them, and took away their money and valuables. The first thing they did was to set ablaze the synagogue, which had survived the bombing [2] intact. The young boy who took out the Torah scrolls to save them was severely beaten up. All of the sacred books and the Torah scrolls were burned. Those who hid in cellars in fear of the Germans were shot regardless of age and sex. Among them was a woman with two children (one was six months old and the other a year and a half). The German who was to kill her said that he sympathised with her, but must carry out his order. He shot her in the leg so as not to kill her. But another soldier finished her off. All old men were shot. Many Jews were gathered in the public bathhouse, which they used as a shelter. The Germans ordered everybody to leave and threatened to shoot those on whom they would find money, dollars, or gold. The men were ordered [3] to form groups

of a hundred odd. The father and brother of the girl were in one of those groups, which consisted of 160 people. The men were escorted somewhere. Nobody knows where. Women and children were ordered to march off separately. After they walked some distance, they were shot at, but fortunately almost nobody got hit as they had entered a dense forest. They have had no news from their father and brother since that memorable day. They learned that all the men from that group had been killed.¹⁰²³

This is how the Jews were resettled from Wyszaków.¹⁰²⁴ The Poles did not escape either. They had to stand in line, too. They kept away [1] from the Jews, trying to ingratiate themselves with the Germans and turning the Germans against the Jews. They said that the Jews wanted the war. They also told of how the Jews rushed to a German aircraft, which crash landed in Wyszaków, in order to kill the pilots. (In fact, it was the other way round: The Poles rushed to that aircraft, but they did not find anybody, because the pilots had escaped.) The women were beating the Jews in front of the Germans. They did not want to go with the Jews.

The name of the testifying girl: Chana Rajchman.

Killed: Mordka Rajchman,	age 52 – father
” Icchok,	” 17 – brother
” Jankiel-Majer,	” 49 – uncle (father’s brother)

The Holcman family: father, mother, and daughter (the father [was killed] for being a Hasid; he wore Hassidic clothing and a hat; the mother and daughter because they started to shout, begging the Germans to spare their father and husband).

ARG I 1056 (Ring. I/928)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), handwritten (CC*), pencil, Polish, 148×210 mm, 12 sheets, 12 pages. Attached is a note by Hersh Wasser in Polish: “Wyszaków.

Testimony of 15-year old Chana Reichman. Recorded by Chil Górny.”

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

1023 In September 1939, in Wyszaków, the German troops massacred 300 Jews; in October, around 1,000 were murdered in the town and its vicinity. See B. Engelking, *Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach*, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 129.

1024 The Jews were expelled from Wyszaków on 11 November 1939. Many of them reached the territories under the Soviet occupation. 75 refugees from Wyszaków arrived in Węgrów. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/708, pp. 12–23; T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” table VII.

135

31 January 1941, Sochaczew-Błonie, County Governor. "Anordnung betreffend Freimachung des Kreises Sochaczew-Blonie von Juden" [Ordinance regarding freeing the Sochaczew-Błonie county of Jews]. Resettlement of the Jews to the Warsaw ghetto.

1. Ordinance regarding cleansing the Sochaczew-Błonie County of Jews.

Pursuant to the ordinance of 13 September 1940 regarding restriction of place of residence in the General Government (G.G. Ordinance Journal I, p. 288) I order what follows:

Article 1

Jews living in the Sochaczew-Błonie County are to move their place of residence to the Jewish residential district established in Warsaw.

Article 2

The resettlement of the Jews is to take place, after they have been deloused, in sealed railway transports between 1 and 20 February 1941 in the following order:

Żyrardów, Wiskitki ¹⁰²⁵ and Mszczonów	between 1 and 9 February
Grodzisk Mazowiecki	between 10 and 14 February
Sochaczew	15–16 February
Błonie	17, 18, 19 February.

Every Jew is allowed to take 25 kilos of baggage and rations for two days marching.

[Article 3]¹⁰²⁶

It is forbidden to take live horses or beef cattle, which should be turned over to the local mayor by 12 o'clock on 2 February 1941.

Article 4

Each list of people for railway transports is to be compiled by the *Judenrat*. Compliance with the *Judenrat*'s ordinances is compulsory.

¹⁰²⁵ Wiskitki (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

¹⁰²⁶ Skipped apparently by mistake.

Article 5

From now on, the Jews are forbidden to leave their allocated place of residence.

Article 6

The flats vacated by the Jews are to be left clean and locked. The keys to the flats must be turned over to the mayor by the agency of the *Judenrat*.

Article 7

The vacated flats will be confiscated together with the abandoned furniture.

All warehouses must be turned over with a list of stock to the local mayor, who is to ensure their securing.

Article 8

It is forbidden to enter the vacated Jewish homes. Removal of objects from these flats without permission shall be punishable as looting.

The police are entitled to act against looters with the use of firearms.

Article 9

Violations of this ordinance shall be punished with imprisonment.

Sochaczew, 31 January 1941

General Government
Warsaw District
Sochaczew-Błonie County Governor¹⁰²⁷
-/Reimann
Assessor on behalf of

ARG I 1009 (Ring. I/352)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, German, 210×295 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page.

¹⁰²⁷ Karl Adolf Pott (1906–1943), lawyer, NSDAP member since 1931, clerk in the Reich Interior Ministry, *Landrat* in Zielenzig; between October 1939 and March 1942, the Sochaczew-Błonie County governor. Died on the front line. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, pp. 494–495.

136

After March 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author(s) unknown. Collection of testimonies regarding trips for food from the Warsaw ghetto to the provinces. Experiences of children and young people aided by the Poles and Volksdeutsche in the localities of the Sochaczew-Błonie County.

[1] Sochaczew-Błonie County

Escapes of the resettled from the Warsaw ghetto. Their stay in the countryside. The Polish countryside in the Sochaczew-Błonie County was mostly anti-Semitic before the war. A Jewish trader had difficulty breaking the anti-Semitic blockade [x]¹⁰²⁸ erected in the countryside by a priest and tradition. But after a trader succeeded, a peasant became accustomed to his Jew and rolled into his backyard while in town, and regarded him as his trusted man. A trader benefited from that. Having money, he bought produce from a peasant or acted as a middleman. Even the strong ONR agitation before the war did not change that state of affairs. A peasant hid and visited a Jew in secret.

So, a peasant had his middleman, a Jewish trader, but he cared little about Jews in general. He sometimes criticised them while drinking vodka as he regarded them his enemies.

Following the recent resettlement of Jews from many counties,¹⁰²⁹ the attitude of the Mazovia and Kujavia peasants toward Jews improved significantly. The peasant soul underwent a radical change as a result of the shared suffering, misery, and oppression. The peasant has become sympathetic toward the Jewish suffering. He imagines being removed from his patrimony, which was the case with the Poles in the Poznań region and in the other Polish territories incorporated into the Reich. His soul softens. The sight of a Jewish martyr is enough for him to invite him into his cottage, even though the Jew is a stranger and the peasant has never seen him before. There are instances of former *endeks* becoming highly compassionate at the sight of a poor Jewish wanderer. Many a *Volksdeutscher* does not refuse to help either.

¹⁰²⁸ [x] implanted.

¹⁰²⁹ Jewish residents of the counties Łowicz, Sochaczew-Błonie, and Grójec, as well as of the western part of the Warsaw County were resettled to the Warsaw ghetto during January–April 1941.

The events presented below took place in the villages of Izdebno, Kozery, Kuklówka, Gawartowa Wola, Milanówek, Chrzanów, and Grudów.¹⁰³⁰

[2] Z e l d u s i a

She is 12 years old, she has been resettled to Warsaw with her mother and elder sister. During the first couple of weeks, they were living in a cold, rented room. They sold everything they had. They fell ill one by one; they suffered at home, in secret, to avoid being taken to the hospital, for typhoid fever, hunger typhus, or typhus. They do not even know which one it was – God sent it to them. Having no money to pay rent, they went to the refugee centre. But even there they had to pay for soup. They ran out of things to sell. Zeldusia says: “So many children go to the other side. I’ll go too.” She happened on a good gendarme by the gate on Żelazna Street and she asked, “*Brot bei Polen*,¹⁰³¹ orphan.” He said, “*los*” and she went through the police post.

She boarded a train with her last two złotys and went to her town. On her way home, she recalled her father’s death – he was run over by a train on the loading platform in Błonie. Her mother sued the management of the railways and won 15,000 złotys of compensation. She bought half a house and they lived off the rent. Zeldusia is approaching her home. All the windows are dark, with the exception of the *Volksdeutcher’s* widow. Zeldusia knocked quietly and entered. Mrs Kusch was happy to see her. Zeldusia ate her fill. She even had a bed to sleep in. The next day, Mrs Kusch asked Zeldusia to stay, but the girl refused. She received 2 kilos of bread for the road and for her family and money for tickets. She returned safe and sound. She set out again after a week. That time, too, she received potatoes and groats, but Mrs Kusch did not let her spend the night, because some Germans were visiting her.

From then on whenever there is no food at home, Zeldusia climbs the fence on Rynkowa Street, jumps off the wall and walks to Podkowa Leśna.¹⁰³² She walks from villa to villa. People give her a piece of bread or a few potatoes. She then goes from Podkowa Leśna to the neighbouring villages. Nobody refuses her. She says she is a Jew from the Warsaw ghetto. Only a few people

1030 Izdebno, Kozery, Kuklówka, Gawartowa Wola, Milanówek, Chrzanów, Grudów (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1031 (German) bread at the Poles.

1032 Podkowa Leśna (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

make accusations: “There are rich Jews in the ghetto, but they are wicked and refuse to support you.” The people order Polish women to work, but Zeldusia receives food without having to work, as there is a ban on employment of Jews. The head of village keeps an eye on it.

[3] She goes home through a police post. She shows the gendarme her treasures and he kicks her and [then] lets her in, or sometimes even lets her in without the kicking. And when she comes back everybody at home gets excited. They all rush to the bag to admire what she has gathered and how much.

Zeldusia says: “Today I will be the one to divide it. We cannot eat too much, because bread is expensive and difficult to obtain.”

Pinio

Before the war, his parents were rich but now their financial situation has deteriorated. There are 10 of them at home: Little children; he is the eldest, 22 years old. He is slowly swelling from malnutrition. A strange thing: only the upper part of his face is swelling up, whereas it is usually the legs. You can see that his eyes are swollen.

He boarded the No. 3 tram¹⁰³³ on the corner of Nowiniarska and Franciszkańska Streets and paid 5 zlotys to the ticket inspector. He covers up his armband and crosses to the Aryan district for the first time in several months. He reaches the village of Izdebnia without any problems. He walks into the first farmstead he sees. He tells briefly where he is coming from, what for, and whose son he is. The peasant recalls that he used to stop by their shop before the war. He nods his head. He puts bread, butter, and even vodka on the table and tells Pinio to drink and eat. Pinio reaches for bread but does not drink the vodka. The landlord pours himself half a glass of vodka, drinks it, spits, and complains about the Germans. The landlords brought straw into the room and gave him a pillow. Pinio lay down and slept rather peacefully all through the night in his new lodgings.

They fed Pinio for 10 days with bread, meat, coffee with milk, potatoes, and noodles so that he can regain his strength. They allowed him to perform only the lightest work: he swept the yard and fetched water. When he

1033 The transit tram ran along Franciszkańska and Nowiniarska Streets. It did not stop in the ghetto and only non-Jews could use it. B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, pp. 110–113.

felt strong again, he volunteered to work. He fed horses, cut chaff, raked hay, and drove cows onto the pasture. He worked for only 4 days. The peasant was satisfied with his work. The head of village ordered him to dismiss the Jew and threatened him with prison, setting his farm ablaze, and resettlement. [4] The peasant gave Pinio bread, butter, and a bottle of milk for the road and sent him home.

He starved for 4 weeks at home waiting for bread card. He went to the countryside again, that time to Kozery. He was unable to stay there, because the peasants were afraid of the Germans: the mansion was German. He spent 2 to 3 days in each home. All of the peasants kept his stay a secret. He slept in barns. He helped them at work and in the barn and removed manure. During the period of 13 days, he was on six different farms; he put on some weight and returned to his starving home.

He went to the countryside several times after that. Unfortunately, they no longer let him in and sent him off with a piece of bread or alms.

T e a c h e r

Before the war, she was regarded as a helpless creature. Nowadays, she forces herself to be heroic. There have been no Jews whatsoever in the town for a long time. She is the only one who stayed at her Christian girlfriend's in the suburbs who feeds her and sleeps in one room with her. When her neighbours threaten her, she hides her in her barn. The Jew is helped to sell her clothes. She sends her Christian friend to sell her clothes, the friend negotiates a good price and brings her the money. In the evenings, she goes to town on her own to see her parents' large house, which is now managed by an appointed administrator who collects rent and does not give her parents even one grosz. Mr Bumzler, a former county governor, made promises to her father when he became the Jewish real estate administrator. It was very important for him that Jews thought of him favourably, because he used to say: "It is important for me that even Jews after my death have a good opinion of me." He is an old man. Now, when there are no Jews in the town, he himself examines all the applications of the poor home owners who live in the ghetto. He turns them down without sending them to the district authorities.

Once [when] she went to her tenants', some urchins recognised her and pointed her out to a gendarme, who followed her, but she managed to escape. Having learned that she was being pursued, she ran out through the back door.

She lives like hunted game. She let them know that she was coming back home.

[5] A b r a m e k

His mother died when he was a year old. Soon afterwards his father left for Brazil and there has been no news from him. Abramek's aunt, who had no children of her own, took care of him and raised him. He learned tailoring at home. Later on, he helped his relatives to repay [them] for their efforts. He is 20 years old now. He shared the fate of his foster family until the resettlement to Warsaw. They were brought to a refugee centre. One night, Abramek was taken from his cot to the camp in Dąbrowa near Skierniewice.¹⁰³⁴ He could not put up with the regime as he had to work hard as well as endure beatings and hunger. He fled after 16 days of torment. He took shelter in the village of Skoliszew.¹⁰³⁵ He stayed 8 days at a peasant's. He did not lack for anything. From there, he returned to the refugee centre in Warsaw, where he suffered from starvation for some time. He then learned that some of his friends were living a rather comfortable life at peasants' in villages. He paid 2 zlotys to a porter, who escorted him over the wall on Ceglana Street, from where Abramek marched straight to the village of Kuklówka.¹⁰³⁶ He stayed at farmer Perzyna, who had a 20 *morgen*¹⁰³⁷ farm. Even though the peasant had a big family and did not suffer from a labour shortage, he took Abramek in because he remembered that, when Abramek's mother was alive, he often stopped by their place for tea. Back then, Perzyna was doing badly. Now, having become a wealthy farmer he had a chance to return the favour.

Abramек lived on that farm for 4 months. That period was the best time for him since the beginning of the war. He helped plough the fields and transport manure. Whenever he was assigned heavy labour, he received help from the peasant's 15-year-old son. He ate as much as other members of the household, 5 times per day.

1034 A reference to the camp in Dąbrowice (Łowicz County). It was a water management (*Wasserwirtschaft*) labour camp for Jews. It functioned from April 1941 until 1944. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 141.

1035 Not identified, perhaps Skorosze (Warsaw County).

1036 Kuklówka (Żyrardów County).

1037 See footnote 327; 20 *morgen* is approximately 28 acres.

After some time, Perzyna's neighbours began to criticise Perzyna for keeping Jews at his place. They said he was changing the village into a ghetto. The farmer paid them no heed. Once the head of village notified Perzyna about a meeting in Żyrardów and said that his presence was compulsory. He went. The Sochaczew *Kreishauptmann*¹⁰³⁸ spoke to those present and flatly announced that he would kill every [6] peasant and Jew if he saw them in the village.¹⁰³⁹

The saddened farmer returned home. Willy-nilly, he ordered Abramek to pack his things. Abramek received 3 kilos of sugar, 15 kilos of rye flour, 15 kilos of potatoes, and 3 kilos of bread. He departed to Warsaw with a group of the resettled.¹⁰⁴⁰ A Polish policeman escorted them into the ghetto, charging 10 zlotys per person. Abramek carried the food products into the ghetto without any problems. He sold some and shared the rest with his aunt. He spent several weeks in the ghetto. When he began to starve again, he was forced to go to the porters again. He returned to "his" Kukłówka. That time he stayed away from his peasant benefactor. He spent only 2 days on each farm. In the end, he walked from farm to farm, begging for potatoes or a piece of bread. Nobody refused. When he collected 10 kilos, he took it home to Warsaw.

He encountered only one anti-Semite, Niedziński's son. Old Niedziński's mill had been set ablaze for his selling flour to Jews. His son swore revenge on Jews.

Abramek often goes to the countryside to beg for food. At the same time, he tries to convince his father, who is in Brazil, to send him a parcel with valuable contents. His father has not replied yet. If help does not come, Abramek will lay his swollen skin and bones in a mass grave on Gęsia Street. Why would his fate be better than the fate of other resettled folks?

ARG I 1013 (Ring. I/915).

Description: original (typewritten, handwritten annotations (E*), ink, 212×298 mm); duplicate (3 copies, handwritten (CC*), pencil, 148×210 mm);

Polish, 51 sheets, 54 pages.

Edition based on the original, 3 sheets, 6 pages.

1038 Karl Adolf Pott.

1039 See footnote XXXX.

1040 A reference to people who decided to return to the ghetto, when they learned that punishment for staying outside the ghetto would become more severe.

[After June 1941], Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher.¹⁰⁴¹ Study “Sochaczew. Cmentarz żydowski” [Sochaczew. Jewish cemetery].

[1] Sochaczew. Jewish cemetery

If you must write about Sochaczew, you can focus almost entirely on the local cemetery, which is still intact.¹⁰⁴² All that is left of the local Jewish life is one big cemetery... the houses, recently rebuilt after the Great World War, and the Jewish workshops, properties, storehouses, appliances, and other wealth – all that has been burned or destroyed. The ruins of buildings with strong walls and foundations... everything has been levelled to the ground.

The anti-Jewish mayor, *Volksdeutscher* Prause¹⁰⁴³ who in the Polish State worked as a minor secretary of the municipality and pretended to be a Polish patriot, sitting quietly like a mouse, nowadays he behaves like a mighty lord and destroys Jewish property. He gives orders to demolish Jewish houses, which could be rebuilt, claiming that it is an “urban planning” requirement,

1041 Bernard (Beyrish) Kampelmacher (?–1942), born in Galicia, officer of the Austrian army in WWI; after 1918 settled with his family in Sochaczew. From 1928, he was headmaster of an elementary school No. 4 in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Chairman of the Housing Cooperative, of the Jewish Youth Circles (*Żydowskie Koła Młodzieży*), and chairman of the Jewish Circle of the Polish Red Cross (*Żydowskie Koło Polskiego Czerwonego Krzyża*). During WWII, he became a member and briefly chairman of the *Judenrat* in Grodzisk Mazowiecki (perhaps he replaced Jakubowicz after the latter’s arrest on 10 November 1939), while continuing to work as the elementary school headmaster. He was also the Polish Red Cross delegate for the Sochaczew-Błonie Region, and the chairman of the ŻSS Delegation Office in Grodzisk Mazowiecki beginning on 18 January 1941. In the Warsaw ghetto, he was chairman of the Grodzisk Mazowiecki *Landsmanshaft* and an associate of *Oyneg Shabes*, author of studies on the history of Jews in the Sochaczew County towns, especially in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. He died of typhus in the Warsaw ghetto in early 1942. See Docs. 145–153 and AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, p. 13; 211/124, p. 94.

1042 The Jewish cemetery in Sochaczew was established around 1780; destroyed probably in late 1941. The Germans used part of the tombstones to build the airfield in Bielice. The cemetery was partly renovated in 1989–1991.

1043 Julius Prause, Sochaczew mayor during the occupation.

and he confiscates bricks on behalf of the town. He tolerates only one Jew, the contractor Balas.¹⁰⁴⁴ When the war with the Soviets broke out, fearing for his own neck, he ordered Balas to organise a team of Jewish labourers and return to ungrateful Sochaczew. And this is the source of these two gentlemen's profits. And if the municipality car could speak, it would tell us about the large-scale fraudulent smuggling conducted by these two gentlemen for their own profit.

That such affairs cannot last, the graves of two partners, Marienfeld and Szelc, recently dug in the Jewish cemetery, are proof. These two men maintained broad trade and smuggling contacts with the Sochaczew SS-men. In the end, those choice members of Hitler's guard became tired of meeting and doing business with the Jews. Moreover, the Jews knew too much about their ignoble machinations. Therefore, the Germans decided to kill them. They summoned Marienfeld and Szelc from a party to the county hospital and murdered them in an inhuman way. *Kreishauptmann's* announcements were posted on all the walls in the county to inform that the two biggest smugglers in the county had been caught red-handed and shot during an escape attempt. The announcement referred to Marienfeld and Szelc.

Near the road leading into Sochaczew, on the side of Boryszewska (now Traugutta) Street, approximately 70 metres from the road leading to Wiskitki, there is the cemetery on a high bank of the River Bzura and very close to the Catholic cemetery. Racial differences do not stop the Polish citizens from resting peacefully together, at least after death, even though some of them are Jews, while others are ethnic Poles, Mazurians. Once upon a time, some of the land for the old Jewish cemetery as well as for the synagogue, bathhouse, and slaughterhouse were leased to the Jewish community for a period of one hundred years by a Mazovian prince. After the limitation period the land became property of the Jewish community. After the space had been exhausted, the owner of the neighbouring landed estate Czerwonka¹⁰⁴⁵ was asked to sell his land for the purpose of enlarging the cemetery. The owner refused as he was known for his anti-Semitic views. His son would not allow groups of Jewish children to use the road going by his palace. Jewish and PPS municipality jurors forced him to sell his land, saying that otherwise they would not

1044 Judel Balas was a member of the *Judenrat* in Sochaczew. See Doc. 138.

1045 Czerwonka (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

consent to the plan to plot the land of Czerwonka which he had to do in order to avoid the risk of being ousted.¹⁰⁴⁶ The owner obtained the consent only after he had resold the plot. [3] He then decided to take revenge on the Jews in a different way. He closed the access road to the cemetery, so the corpses had to be transported around Sochaczew via the village of Rozłazłów¹⁰⁴⁷ on the other side of the town and across the River Bzura, which was four metres deep at that spot and whose bank was very steep there, too. The matter was brought before the voivodship authorities, which assigned a 14-metre-wide strip of land instead of the 4-metre entrance. Several years later, that arrogant man died of a stroke. The Jews explained his death in their favour.

Among the members of the Jewish Community there was a superstition that whoever fences in the cemetery shall die. Therefore, no Jewish Community chairman who valued his life would even consent to passing such an investment approval. The chairmen limited themselves to digging a ditch to mark the border of the cemetery. Finally, 32 years ago,¹⁰⁴⁸ when old Rabbi Borensztajn¹⁰⁴⁹ died and many rabbis arrived for his funeral, the Góra Kalwaria rabbi¹⁰⁵⁰ jeered at the whole affair when asked about it and gave an order to fence in the cemetery. Even though the said rabbi enjoyed great respect, the-then Community chairman was so cautious during the first year, that only 5 metres of the wall were erected. When the chairman finally saw that he was getting away with it, the construction of the wall sped up.

Let us take a look at the centre of the cemetery. In the old cemetery section bordering on the Catholic cemetery are neglected graves and tilted or collapsed tombstones. It seems as if the tombstones themselves testify to their old age. Not only ordinary mortals are buried here and in the left section of the cemetery, in the little houses,¹⁰⁵¹ but also rabbis Alter Moszek,

1046 The land reform of 1925 allowed one person a maximum of 180 hectares (444 acres) of land, and one third of that in suburban areas.

1047 Rozłazłów (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1048 In the text, 42 years ago; see below – he died in 1910.

1049 Probably Abraham ben Zeew Nachum Borenstein (1839–1910), founder of the Sochaczew Hasidic court and the Sochaczew yeshiva. He was dismissed from the position of rabbi in 1894.

1050 Abraham Mordecai Alter.

1051 Such a little house is called *ohel* (tent, in Hebrew) and is usually built above a grave of an important person.

Abram Borensztajn, Szmul Borensztajn, and Luzer Kohn, who was a religious scribe, too.

The centre and the left side of the cemetery belong to the younger generation. The tombstones here are taller and numbered. One can see golden lettering on dark surfaces or black lettering on light-coloured sandstone. All inscriptions are in Hebrew or Yiddish. Several tombstones on the graves of younger people feature not only Jewish inscriptions, but also Polish ones. During this war, many victims of resettlement and Jewish soldiers who perished in the area have been buried here. One should bear in mind that there was very heavy fighting on the Bzura River and that it took the lives of many people, including Jews.¹⁰⁵² Moreover, the Sochaczew [county] included Młodzieszyn, Iłów, Chodaków, Kampinos, Szymanów, and Tułowice.¹⁰⁵³

At the beginning of the war, a few bodies were brought to the local cemetery from Kampinos. Those were men from the Rozenperl family from Sochaczew and from the Biner family from Grodzisk. They were victims of brutal German soldiers, who killed them to incite fear.¹⁰⁵⁴

From the cemetery hill, from the high, steep bank of the Bzura, there is a beautiful view of the local landscape, while the murmur and splash of the water and the rustle of the leaves of the tall 150-year-old cemetery poplars is soothing to the ear.

On the bank of the Bzura, close to our cemetery there, there is a Byzantine-style tower. It is a relic of the olden days when Poland waged war against the Turks. The ruins of a nearby castle of the Mazovian princes and the remains of former chambers indicate that this part of the town was once positively teeming with the life of the Polish knighthood.

The silence is interrupted by noises coming from beyond the wall that surrounds the county assembly junior high school – it is the students frolicking during breaks. Sometimes one of them grabs a stone and throws it at

1052 The Battle of the Bzura River, the biggest battle of the German-Polish war, lasted from 9 to 18 September 1939.

1053 Młodzieszyn, Iłów, Chodaków, Kampinos, Szymanów, Tułowice (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1054 Fragment handwritten on the margin, inserted as marked by the author with the red pencil.

a rocking *shammes* saying *kaddish*¹⁰⁵⁵ for the soul of some deceased person on the anniversary of his death. The bell sounds. The students return to the classrooms after the break. The graves are alone again. Only the chirping of birds disrupts the sombre, peaceful atmosphere.

When I write these words, the memory of the Sochaczew cemetery is an ever-bleeding wound because aside from my close friends and students I have also buried my 13-year-old son, a student of the adjacent junior high school, in this most beautiful, provincial Jewish cemetery. The dove with a leaf in its beak, which has been hammered out on his truncated tombstone reminds me of his ever gentle disposition during his life, which was taken prematurely.

ARG I 1014 (Ring. I/914)

Description: original, typewritten (with handwritten supplements, ink), duplicate (3 copies, the third copy lacks pp. 1 and 3); Polish, 207×293 mm, 11 sheets, 12 pages. On p. 1 (duplicate of the first copy) Hersch Wasser's note in Polish and Yiddish: "Kampel, 109. 1942/1 January. No. 6."

Edition based on the original, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

138 *After February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account "א קליין בלימעלע פֿון דער פֿאַרעטערשער טעטיקייט פֿון סאַכאַטשעווער יידנראַט" [A trifle of the treacherous activities of the Sochaczew Judenrat]. Changes in the membership and corruption on the new Judenrat board.*

[1] A trifle of the treacherous activities of the Sochaczew *Judenrat*
Approximately 4 months ago, 2 officials of the Sochaczew *Judenrat*¹⁰⁵⁶ incited the labour inspector, with whom they were in cahoots, to overthrow the

1055 (Aramaic) Holy; one of the oldest, most important and frequently repeated prayers, praising God, his greatness and holiness; traditionally considered a prayer for the dead.

1056 The chairman was Yankev Biderman (owner of a timber business); members were Yankev Borensztajn (merchant), Yosl Lukszyk (tailor), Til (merchant), Nokhem Grundwag, Shmuel Libert, Moniek Libert, Yudel Balas, Itshe Gelbstein, Yosl Munej, Shloyme Lewin,

Judenrat, arrest the chairman, and in their stead made them ride the poor mare.¹⁰⁵⁷ And so it was. On a certain Tuesday the commissioner[?] sent for 12 people, obviously selected by these 2 young officials, and told them that from this day on they were the *Judenrat*. The position of *Obermann*¹⁰⁵⁸ was given to a former junk trader and miserable tailor who used to sit at his machine sewing buttonholes in trousers, and as a junk trader had no idea about community work, even of the sense of the word. The *Arbeitsleiter*¹⁰⁵⁹ position was given to the other young official, a complete idiot, to whom nobody talked before the war. No one would have believed that such a “nobody”, a stupid, idiotic youth of 28, would torment the Jews, his own brothers, so much. The two youths picked a set of another 10 men, among whom you could have searched high and low for an honest community worker. The gang began their dirty, despicable work for the benefit of their own pockets, as follows:

1. There began a registration of men aged 14 to 60. These community guardians said the healthy would be assigned to hard work, the [. .] easy work, and the sick would be exempted. Obviously, many of those who registered were sick, and the wallets of the members of the *Judenrat* [. .]
2. Following the registration these aforementioned guardians started to spread rumours that a partial *wysiedlenie* from Sochaczew would take place. [. .] fit for work would remain, i.e. the healthy. The *Judenrat* would draw up the list of those, who [. .]. [One] can imagine what hard work these wretches [. .] so many sick [. .] wallets were [. .] they extracted, taking advantage of the opportunity [. .] Sh[muel] Libert, who received patients in his room, helped by his wife, who made herself very useful in the business and made everyone healthy.
3. From 40 to 60 people a day were needed for work at the sites. There were up to 700 registered Jewish workers. Each would have needed to work 1 day every two weeks. However, 200 summonses to work were issued daily; 70–80 per cent paid off the *Judenrat* instead of working, and the rest went to work. The work alone brought in 600 zlotys a day. Those [who did not

Velvl Pińczewski, Pinkhes Rosenkopf, Dovid Izraelski, Mendl Eisenstein. See B. Engelking, *Życie codzienne Żydów w miasteczkach*, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 210.

1057 See footnote 346.

1058 (German) chairman.

1059 (German) labour chief.

pay] had to work two days a week. [The *Judenrat*] received pay-offs especially for work at the sites [and] did a really good business.

4. 6 weeks ago, the Sochaczew *Landrat* issued a decree that a certain number of the residents must leave town and would be resettled to Żyrardów.¹⁰⁶⁰ Then began the truly treacherous work of the *Judenrat* wretches, who really bathed in Jewish blood, worse than the greatest anti-Semites of all times. They sent out the *wysiedlenie* cards and then haggled with each individual – how much would he pay in order to remain in Sochaczew. Everyone wanted to stay, so they not only skinned people, but “tore their flesh.” Each worked on his own account and pocketed the money. [2] For staying in Sochaczew, they took 1,500 to 1,700 zlotys, even 2,000, and as much as 2,700 (from a certain Mayteles). Competition among these wretches was fierce, their family members were sent as agents into the streets and approached people to convince them to save themselves by staying in town, and to pay large amounts of money [to be allowed] to stay. They added that a certain member of the *Judenrat* should be contacted, since he would accept less money. Obviously, everyone tried to save themselves as best they could. People who had no more money brought jewellery, gold, diamonds, even suits. They took everything. The one who worked hardest was the old fraudster Sh[muel] Libert, who grabbed around a hundred thousand zlotys and ran off to Warsaw a few weeks ago.¹⁰⁶¹ It was frightful to see how they trampled on everyone who had no money to pay, and expelled the sick, the weak, and the poor, some of whom died on the way. They treated their brethren mercilessly, loutishly, bloodthirstily. The Jews of Sochaczew will not forget their behaviour.
5. Officially, following the *wysiedlenie*, 1,200 people were supposed to remain in the town, but after the money business, 2,300 people remained. According to an unofficial estimate, the wretches made around three [hundred] thousand zlotys out of it.
6. Now those who remained had to be crammed into the ghetto. They were allocated just 2 narrow streets with [. . .] small broken-down houses.

1060 On 18 January 1941, around 900 Jews were deported from Sochaczew to Żyrardów; see T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” table VI.

1061 A few weeks before the deportation of the Jews from Sochaczew to the Warsaw ghetto, which took place on 15 February 1941; see *ibidem*.

For the wretches, a new business began. They took money for flats. Above all, they took the nicest flats for themselves, either [. . .] rooms with a kitchen, or single rooms with a kitchen. The overcrowding was extraordinary. 4 to 5 families were crammed into a tiny [. . .]. Whoever gave money could still get a decent flat, while many poorer people were left lying in the street until they left Sochaczew.

7. All this was still not enough. The sophisticated old fraudster Sh[muel] Libert found another way to wring money out of the Jews. He had “white vouchers” printed and put up big posters in the streets announcing that anyone who wanted to remain in Sochaczew had to possess a white voucher, otherwise they [the *Judenrat*] would not be responsible... The terrified Jews were hooked once again and spent their very last bit of money on the white vouchers, which Sh[muel] Libert kept to himself with no supervision, stuffed them in his breast pocket, and let nobody else near them. Every day, he went home with full pockets.
8. On top of everything, when the old fraudster smelled that there were a few sacks of fine American flour in the soup kitchen and that more products would be arriving, he seized possession of the kitchen without a moment’s thought. The old man and the whole gang of scoundrels burst into the kitchen during a meeting of the Aid Committee,¹⁰⁶² threatened them with the “blacks,” threw the Committee out, and took over the kitchen. Over the next few days, they distributed the flour among themselves.
9. The intimidation of the entire Jewish population is a chapter in itself. It was announced that whoever – God forbid! – insulted even the *Judenrat*’ *woźny*,¹⁰⁶³ let alone a member of the *Judenrat* itself, would immediately be expelled from the town. [3] All must obey the *Obermann*, the shoddy little tailor [Itshe] Gelbstein. Thus, everyone was kept in fear. And everyone also had to keep quiet about the ugly deeds committed in the past, because no one wanted to risk his life.
10. It was worse with the foodstuffs which the *Judenrat* had received for distribution to the Jewish population. They gave out a few grams of sugar, flour, and other [products] per person. The remaining tens of kilograms

¹⁰⁶² A Committee for Aid to the Jewish Poor (*Komitet Pomocy Ubogiej Ludności Żydowskiej*) was active in Sochaczew. AŻIH, AJDC, 210/30, p. 9.

¹⁰⁶³ (Polish) janitor.

they shared among themselves. The Jewish population was cheated at every step.

11. For every intervention and intercession, the immature boys demanded large sums of money, regardless of whether they achieved anything or not. They pulled in money, all into their own pockets, and without receipts. This is only a trifle of their thievery; there are many more injustices that cry out to heaven.

ARG I 1012 (Ring. I/909)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, damage and fragments missing, 6 sheets, 6 pages. In the margins, the letter “D” (ink). The document was kept in a binder.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 3 sheets, 3 pages.

139 *After 11 May 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Torture of a group of Jews near Sochaczew on 1 March 1941.*

On Saturday, 1 March 1941, on the way from Łowicz to Warsaw, 3 km before reaching Sochaczew, an automobile came driving in the opposite direction and, when he saw that Jews were travelling, he stopped and started beating [them] to death. The Jew Yudl A. Wołkowicz, 52 years old, was killed. The rest of the Jews were beaten until they bled and the little children had to lie down in a ditch full of water with their faces in the water.

11 May 1941

ARG I 877 (Ring. I/849)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 97×148 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Information in Yiddish in the margin, “Łowicz”, and „+” on p. 1 of the first copy (red pencil).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

140 *After 14 January 1941, Sochaczew, Sochaczew-Błonie County Governor and county schools inspector Kramer. Letters of 16 December 1940 and 14 January 1941 to the headmaster of a Jewish school in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, regarding dressmaking courses in the ghetto and ban on teaching and use of the German, Polish, and Ukrainian languages in Jewish schools.*

[1] General Government, Warsaw District
Sochaczew-Błonie County Governor
Schools Department
No. IV-986/40

Sochaczew, 16 December 1940.

To the Headmaster of the private Jewish school in Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

In reply to your application on 8 December 1940 No. 3/40, I inform you that the issue of the dressmaking course will be settled only after the settling of the issue of the Jewish ghetto.

Deputy
Kramer /-/
County Schools Inspector¹⁰⁶⁴

[2] General Government, Warsaw District
Sochaczew-Błonie County Governor
Schools Department
No. IV-58/41

Sochaczew, 14 January 1941.

To the private Jewish school in Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Kreisschulrat* in the German original.

Pursuant to the RO/we Schul. 260 E. 4236/40 document of the Office of the Head of the Warsaw District on 27 December 1940, I announce as follows:

The German language can never be the language of instruction in Jewish schools. Ukrainian and Polish are not admissible as languages of instruction either. The only language, which can be the language of instruction in Jewish schools, is the Jewish language, either in the form of Modern Hebrew, which is commonly used for instance in Palestine, or Yiddish, which incorporates elements of the Franconian dialect and is widespread in the General Government.

Therefore, I expect an immediate report on the language of instruction in the local school.

Deputy
Kramer /-/
Schools Inspector

ARG I 751 (Ring. I/327)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), typewritten, German, 195×110, 180×128 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

141

After 9 March 1940, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Council of Elders of the Jewish Community in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Duplicates of meetings' minutes:

- (1) 31 December 1939;
- (2) 27 January 1940;
- (3) 9 March 1940.

[1] Duplicate of the first minutes of a meeting of the Kitchen Committee of the Council of Elders of the Jews in Grodzisk Mazowiecki held on 31 December 1939, in the presence of Płachta,¹⁰⁶⁵ Sierpski, Kalisiak,

¹⁰⁶⁵ Fiszal Płachta, member of the Welfare Committee (*Komitet Pomocy Społecznej*) of the *Judenrat* in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, and later of the ŻSS delegate office. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, pp. 8 and 11.

Alefrant,¹⁰⁶⁶ Najman, Hopensztand, Krygsman, Kampelmacher, Gol[d]farb, and Miss Czerwonek.

Agenda: 1) accommodation for the refugees,¹⁰⁶⁷ 2) food provision, 3) other matters.

1) The following issues were discussed in connection with the opening of the kitchen for the resettled from the Poznań voivodship and for other [deportees] and with their accommodation in private premises: care for the elderly, establishment of an infirmary, efforts to obtain beds, straw mattresses, fuel, electricity, iron stoves, clothes and underwear. After a rather long and exhaustive discussion, a decision was made to establish the following commissions from among the resettled and members of the Committee: a) Housing Commission, including Benda, Lejb Alefrant, Szulman,¹⁰⁶⁸ Zacman, Goldfarb and Tyber, to take care of further reservations of flats for the resettled, even with the help from the local authorities (the police); b) Ladies' Commission, including Miss Czerwonek as the chair, Hopensztand, Zakon, Szmulewicz, Waserbart, Miss Bąk, Mrs Najman, Mrs Alefrant, Miss Wajcer, to establish and maintain sanitary care of the elderly and the sick, as well as to conduct a collection of underwear among the members' relatives and friends.

2) As for the food provision, a decision was made regarding the contents of meals for the resettled: meat soups served two or three times per week, containing 50 grams of meat per person as well as legumes, groats, flour, and various oils. All matters connected with kitchen management were handed over to the elected Ladies' Committee.

3a) As for other matters, there was a discussion regarding delivery of coal and iron stoves to the resettled people's flats. A decision was made to approach the municipality with a request for several tons of coal to be divided between the resettled. A commission consisting of Messrs Czerwonek, Kac,

1066 Lejb Alefrant, chairman of the board of supervisors of a building cooperative before the war; member of the Grodzisk Mazowiecki *Judenrat* and of the Kitchen Committee. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, p. 13.

1067 Refugees from the Poznań and Łódź regions, arrived in Grodzisk Mazowiecki in December 1939.

1068 Abram Szulman, chairman of the Union of Jewish Craftsmen (*Związek Rzemieślników Żydów*) (in Grodzisk?) before the war; cashier of an Interest-free Provident Society (*Kasa Bezprocentowa*); and member of the Grodzisk Mazowiecki Town Council. During the war, member of the *Judenrat*. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, p. 13.

Szmulewicz, and Zacman was established to purchase iron stoves or to fit brick stoves, with preference given to flats with 8 to 10 inhabitants.

3b) A delegation of 29 resettled from Konstantynów was received to request aid and it was decided that they would be issued midday meals regularly.

Grodzisk Mazowiecki, 31 December 1939

Chairman: F[isz] Płachta, Secretary: B[ernard] Kampelmacher

[2] Duplicate of the minutes of a meeting of the *Judenrat* in Grodzisk Mazowiecki and the Kitchen Committee held on January 27, 1940 in the presence of Messrs Płachta, Kampelmacher, Michrowski, Benda, Rajnberg, Miss Czerwonek, Mrs Perelmutter, Szulman, Goldfarb, Dr Appel, Mrs Dr Appel,¹⁰⁶⁹ Najman, Krygsman, Kalisiak, Hott,¹⁰⁷⁰ Zysman, Glicensztajn, Alefrant, and Sierpski.

Agenda: 1) reports: a) report on the general activity, b) report on the activity of the Kitchen Committee, c) financial report, d) sanitary-medical report, e) fuel report, f) clothing report; 2) future undertakings; 3) conclusions.

1[a]) In his opening address, the chairman welcomes the attendees, presents the activity of the Council of Eldest of the Jews, and outlines the work it has done in connection with the running of the kitchen for the resettled staying in Grodzisk and for the poorest local population. It provided fuel, clothes as well as bread and midday meals due to the financial aid from the Joint in Warsaw, the Grodzisk municipality, and the Polish Red Cross.

1b) After a more detailed report on the activity of the kitchen, during which Mr Glicensztajn, a representative of the resettled from the Poznań voivodship, Mrs Perelmutter on behalf of the Old Age Shelter, and others spoke. A decision was made to fit two more stoves, issue 250 grams of bread per person,

¹⁰⁶⁹ Probably Cecylia Appel, director of the CENTOS centre in Grodzisk. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/351, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Maks Hutt, member of the Jewish Community and chairman of the Union of Zionists Revisionists (*Związek Syjonistów-Rewizjonistów*) in Grodzisk before the war. During the war, member of the Welfare Committee of the Grodzisk *Judenrat*, the Kitchen Committee, the Department of Schools, and CENTOS; later became deputy chairman and then chairman of the *Judenrat*. After the war, he was active in the Ichud Zionist party and the director of the State Wood Works in Jelenia Góra. He applied for permission to go to the United States. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, p. 8; AJDC post-war, 350/1192, p. 47. Cf. Doc. 152.

and to turn to the *Kreishauptmann*¹⁰⁷¹ with regard to purchase of food products following Mr Benda's motion, and to increase bread rations for the elderly.

1c) The treasurer Mr Michrowski presented the financial report, which stated the following data: 1) income: a) Warsaw Joint: 5,300 zlotys, b) Polish Red Cross: 100 zlotys, *Judenrat*: 800 zlotys, Grodzisk municipality: 1,803 zlotys and 25 groszes; other sources: 272 zlotys and 50 groszes. Total: 8,275 zlotys and 75 groszes. Unpaid debt according to the balance: 2,877 zlotys and 50 groszes. Total: 11,153 zlotys and 25 groszes. 2) Expense: a) bread: 2,935 zlotys and 55 groszes, b) food products: 5,753 zlotys and 51 groszes, c) fuel and electricity: 1,111 zlotys, d) kitchen appliances: 289 zlotys and 80 groszes, g) [e]) out-patients' clinic: 120 zlotys 79 groszes, g) [f]) office and employees' salaries: 354 zlotys, h) [g]) accommodation: 75 zlotys and 10 groszes, i) [h]) funerals: 310 zlotys and 30 groszes, j)[i]) other expenses: 203 zlotys and 20 groszes. Total: 11,153 zlotys and 25 groszes.

1d) Dr Appel, the representative of the sanitary-medical section presents the organised operation of the out-patients' clinic for the local population and of the Old Age Shelter, where a separate kitchen has been organised. He discusses the pitiful condition of the elderly. Considering that their average age is 70–95, one should not be surprised by the high mortality rate. He also discusses the issue of the ongoing organisation of a children's feeding programme and the endeavours to allocate an isolation ward for the suspected and confirmed cases of infectious diseases.

1e) The issue of fuel for the kitchen, the Old Age Shelter, the outpatients' clinic, and the refugees caused a heated discussion. A decision was made to purchase about 18 tons¹⁰⁷² of fuel directly from the suppliers, to turn to the Grodzisk mayor regarding free issue of coal to the refugees, and to pay the maximum price to the suppliers Messrs Gothard and Bąk.

After the discussion regarding coal, Mr Alefrant resigned from the position of Kitchen Committee member, with those present taking cognizance of that.

1e) [f]) Mr Benda and Miss Czerwonek reported on the clothing issue. They discussed the distribution of 250 items of clothing sent by the Warsaw

1071 Karl Adolf Pott.

1072 In the original, 150 *korców*; 1 *korzec* is an obsolete measure, equals approximately 120 kilograms.

Joint and proof of the issuing of those clothes with receipts signed by the resettled and the poor.

2) Future work. It was decided that: 1) the number of kitchen customers would be increased, with the Joint's consent, by both the resettled and poor inhabitants of Grodzisk, 2) a feeding programme would be organised among 100 children with help from the TOZ, 3) the housing commission would be activated, Mr Alefrant quit, with Mr Zysman taking his place.

3) The paramedic Mrs Rychter shall be given 50 zlotys of monthly salary if the Joint and the TOZ provide the money, 2) Mrs Wittenberg shall be given back the deceased [Mrs] Kaspary's file. The meeting was then adjourned.

Grodzisk Mazowiecki, 2 March 1940.

Chairman of the meeting, B[ernard] Kampelmacher. Attendees: Sz[ulim] Żurkowski,¹⁰⁷³ M[aks] Hutt, J. Flint, A[bram] Kalisiak, M. Gothard, J[ehuda] Glicensztejn, I[zak] Appel, E. Szwebelblit, Michrowski, Libhaber, F. Gancer, and Abram Nyson Imber.

(3)

Duplicate of minutes No. 6 of the meeting of the Council of the Elders of the Jewish Community in Grodzisk Mazowiecki held on 9 March 1940 in the presence of Messrs: Grodzisk Mayor Mr Fobe,¹⁰⁷⁴ Kampelmacher, Michrowski, Lewkowicz,¹⁰⁷⁵ Żurkowski, Josek Libhaber, Krygsman, Moszek Goldfarb, Kalisiak, Imber, Gancer, Szwebelblit, Najman, Glicensztejn, Abram Zy[s]man, Fiszel Goldfarb, Alefrant, Abram Zyman, Dr Appel and Izak Appel.

Agenda: 1) reading of the minutes of 2 March 1940, 2) provision of labourers to perform public works, 3) renting out furniture to German clerks, 4) other business: a) census of the Jewish population, b) correspondence, 5) conclusions.

1) Before starting the agenda, the chairman of the meeting Mr Kampelmacher greeted the Grodzisk mayor Mr Fobe. Mr Płachta's request for a two months' leave was read. Due to current pressing matters, the Council

1073 Szulim Żurkowski, chairman of the board of supervisors of a building cooperative before the war; member of the *Judenrat* in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, p. 13.

1074 Paweł Fobe, a *Volksdeutscher*, deputy mayor of Grodzisk Mazowiecki during the Occupation.

1075 Samuel Lewkowicz, deported from Germany in 1938, *Judenrat* member. According to Kampelmacher's testimony, he was a collaborator, scammer, embezzler, and an actual dictator in the Council. See Doc. 152.

agreed to grant him only four weeks' leave. Due to the resignation of two board members, a new five-member executive department was elected. Kampelmacher was voted the chairman, Lewkowicz was voted the deputy chairman, and Michrowski became the treasurer; Płachta and Hutt became board members. The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March were read and approved.

2) As for the second point in the agenda, Mr Kampelmacher presented the need to reform the labour section in such a way that all members of the Jewish Community, aged 16–60, must participate in forced public works. Only the poor and sick would be excluded from those works by way of exception. Those who wish to evade this obligation shall submit an equivalent in cash to hire unemployed Jews to perform their work. The proposal that the Councillors also participate in those works was turned down with Mayor's consent, as the Councillors are busy in various sections of the Council. After a long discussion, a three-person Labour Committee was elected. Its members are: Żurkowski, Zysman, and Zurych Rajnberg. The deputies are Messrs Fiszal-Mendel Goldfarb, and Kalisiak. The daily wage for the unemployed was set at 3 zlotys, while those who choose to not participate would have to pay 4 zlotys for a replacement. The surplus was allocated for the purchase of equipment needed for public works. A decision was made to send requests to the Police Department and the Labour Office for Jewish labour to be submitted to the Council office at Sienkiewicza Street 12, always a day in advance.

3) As for the giving out furniture to the German clerks, a commission was elected to obtain it in the upcoming days. The members of the Commission are Messrs: Lewkowicz, Michrowski, Najman and Alefrant.

4a) A decision was made to carry out a census of the local Jewish population to facilitate a detailed record of the local Jews and their movement, so the town was divided into the following areas: 1) Mrs Glicensztejn and Mr Krygsmann: Limanowskiego and 11 Listopada Streets; 2) Mr Jozef Libhaber: Sienkiewicza, Składowa, and Spółdzielcza Streets; 3) Mr Jankiel Libhaber: Krótka, Kozerkowska, Kościuszki, Kraśnicza, and Wólczyńska Streets; 4) Nysen Imber: Nadarzyńska, Pierackiego, Piłsudskiego, and POW Streets; 5) Szulim Żurkowski: Harcerska and Berka Joselewicza Streets, 6) Abram Kalisiak: Legionów Square. The Councillors who conduct the census do not receive remuneration.

4 b) The letter from the former secretary of the Jewish Community, Mr Gothard, regarding the unpaid salary was rejected and postponed until after the war. A decision was made to deny a benefit to Mrs Moddel, a resettled person from the Poznań voivodship, and to reimburse Mr Hollender, also resettled from the Poznań voivodship, for half of the cost of his mother's funeral to the sum of 40 zlotys.

5) Following Mr Imber's proposal, it was decided that a bathhouse for the resettled and locals will be organized, if it is possible to buy the necessary coal.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Grodzisk Mazowiecki, 9 March 1940

Chairman of the meeting B[ernard] Kampelmacher, Secretary:
L. Knopmacher

Followed by signatures of the aforementioned persons and a stamp reading: "Council of the Eldest of the Jews in Grodzisk Mazowiecki".

ARG I 752 (Ring. I/21/2)

Description: original, typewritten, Polish, 202×296 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

142 *After 9 February 1941, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Judenrat in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Minutes No. 50 of the meeting held on 9 February 1941.*

Minutes No. 50

of the meeting of the Council held on 9 February 1941¹⁰⁷⁶ in the presence of Messrs: 1) Hutt, 2) Lewkowicz, 3) Płachta, 4) Michrowski, 5) Alefrant, 6) Lipszyc, 7) Glicensztajn, 8) Dytman, and 9) Libhaber.

Agenda:

1. Liquidation of the office
2. Establishment of a transfer commission

¹⁰⁷⁶ The Jews from Grodzisk were resettled to the Warsaw ghetto during 10–14 February 1941. See Doc. 135.

1.

It was stated that there is a positive balance of 720 zlotys in the purse. The cash shall be paid by the cashier onto the hands of the transfer commission, which is being organised, with the exception of the 120 zlotys to be distributed among those who are about to be resettled.

2.

The resettlement commission to which belongs the order service, shall include: Mr Glicens[z]tajn (chairman), Mr Dytman, Mr Libhaber, as well as non-Councillors Mr Ajzyk Appel, Mr Cymerman, and Mr Zygmunt Lewkowicz.

The transfer commission is to take care of the liquidation of the Council's and the kitchen's stock.

The meeting was then adjourned.

/-/ Michrowski

/-/ Glicens[z]tajn L. Alefrant /-/

/-/ Lewkowicz

/-/ Dytman Lewkowicz /-/

/-/ Lipszyc Council's stamp

/-/ Cymerman

/-/ Płachta /-/ M. Hutt

Council's stamp

ARG I 755 (Ring. I/1078)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, Polish, 207×293 mm, minor damages and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page.

Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Polish and Yiddish: "Grodzisk Maz. A protocol of the *Judenrat* meeting of 9 February 1941. Submitted by Glicensztajn Yehuda from Poznań."

After 3 February 1941, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Council of the Elders of the Jewish Community in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Letters sent to Jehuda Glicensztejn:

- (1) 6 July [1940], invitation for a meeting of an Arbitration Court on 28 July 1940;
- (2) 17 November 1940, notification about being elected a member of the Council;
- (3) No date, notification about his being elected a member of the Council;
- (4) 3 February 1941, certificate for Jehuda Glicensztejn and Lejb Alefrant the Labour Office in Warsaw.

(1)

Council of the Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Grodzisk Mazowiecki
No. S 6 VII

Grodzisk Mazowiecki, date...194 ...

To Mr Jehuda Glicensztejn,
Member of the *Judenrat*
in situ

You are kindly invited to a meeting of the Arbitration Court in the capacity of a Court member regarding the Wajnsztok vs Wolanowski¹⁰⁷⁷ case scheduled for July 28 this year at Wólczyńska Street 16a.

The meeting begins at 4 p.m.

On behalf of the Council
[illegible signature]

Council of the Elders of the Jews in Grodzisk Mazowiecki¹⁰⁷⁸

¹⁰⁷⁷ This could be a reference to Abram Wolanowski, member of the Provisional Welfare Committee in Grodzisk Mazowiecki (*Tymczasowy Komitet Pomocy Społecznej*) in November 1940. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/431, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Round seal on all four letters.

(2)

Council of the Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Grodzisk Mazowiecki
No 915/40/VI

Grodzisk Mazowiecki, 17 November 1940

Mr Jehuda Glicensztejn
member of the *Judenrat*
in situ

We inform you that today you were elected a member of the *Judenrat* in Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

You shall be informed you about your share of duties and the date of the meeting.

On behalf of the Council
[two illegible signatures]

(3)

Council of the Elders
of the Jewish Community
in Grodzisk Mazowiecki
No 378/40/411

Grodzisk Mazowiecki, date...194 ...

To Mr Glicensztejn
Wólczyńska Street 16

I hereby inform you that today you have been elected as a member of the Council of the Eldest in Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

On behalf of the Chairman
[illegible signature]

(4)

Council of the Elders Grodzisk Mazowiecki, 3 February 1941
of the Jewish Community
in Grodzisk Mazowiecki
Nr 763/41

Certificate

The *Judenrat* members Jehuda Glicensztejn and Lejb Alefrant are authorised to appear and receive information in the Labour Office in Warsaw and to travel by the EKD suburban train.¹⁰⁷⁹

/-/ Kampelmacher
Chairman

ARG I 753 (Ring. I/21/3)

Description: original on printed *Judenrat* forms: letters (1) and (3) handwritten (ink), letters (2) and (4) typewritten; all with handwritten signatures and a round seal; German, Polish, 216×145, 216×200, 215×145, 215×174 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

144 *After 7 December [1940], Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Judenrat in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Correspondence (copies):*

- (1) *No date, a telegram to Glicensztejn in Dębica[?];*
- (2) *Of 27 November 1940, a telegram to Rainsztajn and Glicensztejn in Tomaszów Lubelski;*
- (3) *Of 7 December 1940, a telegram to Zelfrowicz in Hrubieszów.*

[1] Telegram

From: Grodzisk Mazowiecki 106 8 12.00

Sent: [. . .] at 14:10 via [. . .]

Glicensztejn, Dębica[?]

We are sending the requested cash wait there.

Feid

[2] Telegram

From: Grodzisk Mazowiecki 93 13 27 November 10:15[?]

Sent: 27 November at 11 via Lublin[?]

Rainsztajn, Krzemionki[?] 5, Glicensztejn, Tomaszów Lubelski

¹⁰⁷⁹ Electric Commuter Train (*Elektryczna Kolej Dojazdowa*, EKD) from Warsaw to Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

Landsztok¹⁰⁸⁰ is [in] Nowy Dzików.¹⁰⁸¹ Further instructions tomorrow.
Council

[3] Telegram

From: Grodzisk Mazowiecki 23 16 7 December 11:35

Sent: 7 December 13.05

Zelfrowicz Rejnek[?], Hrubieszów

Bun[. .] was supposed to be at the Dołhobyczów *Lager* 2.¹⁰⁸² Otherwise return and [. .].

Judenrat

ARG I 754 (Ring. I/1086)

Description: original, handwritten on forms, three styles of handwriting, pencil, Polish, 147×208 mm, 3 sheets, 3 pages. The documents were stored in a binder.

145 *After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Zarys historii Żydów w Grodzisku w okresie międzywojennym i w czasie okupacji" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. An outline of the history of the Jews in Grodzisk during the interwar period and the occupation].*

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

Before the war the town had approximately 17,600 inhabitants, of whom up to 2,800 were Jewish, the rest were Polish. The economic situation of the Jews during the interwar period was mostly satisfactory. There were many

1080 Perhaps a surname.

1081 Correctly Dzików Nowy (Biłgoraj County), the labour camp for Jews began to function in 1940. It was a part of the system of camps with the centre in Bełżec, whose prisoners were doing fortification works. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 117.

1082 Dołhobyczów (Hrubieszów County), labour camp on the line of the construction of the road Mircze–Uhrynów, established in June 1940, administered by the Road Construction Group at the office of the Lublin District Head. *Ibidem*, p. 62.

craftsmen who worked using small manually-operated machines, usually as cottage workers manufacturing for major Warsaw entrepreneurs. The work-at-home tailors (who specialised in trousers, jackets, etc.) also delivered finished items of clothing to Warsaw storehouses.

The largest factories were: Hajdenkruk's tannery, known for high-quality sole leather, the ether and ethereal oil factory, the "Sztancmetal" factory (metal goods) employing 400 workers, the carpentry workshops (farming machine parts), the nail factory, three sweets factories, two box factories, the leather accessories workshops, and the "Mastewal" factory of wood-and-cement boards. Moreover, there were several larger yards with building materials and fuel. Hosiers, tailors, shoemakers, and petty traders were the most numerous.

The attitude of the Polish population toward the Jewish population before the war was usually proper. During the last three years there was, as everywhere else, a boycott of Jewish traders (an influence of the local and non-local ONR).

The political authorities (county governor's office), as always, supported the reactionary administration of the Jewish Community. As for KKO,¹⁰⁸³ the Jews took credits from there and they also had a representative in the management, who assessed the creditworthiness and solvency of Jewish borrowers. But there was one case when the Jews assumed collective responsibility for a Jew who had failed to pay back the sum of 4,000 zlotys.

During the last decade, most mayors had a proper attitude toward the Jewish population. The municipality even contributed 40 per cent of the costs of the school for Jewish children erected by a Jewish cooperative.

The war started.

During the first couple of days, 40 people died from bombs and three Jewish houses were destroyed. During 6–10 September, almost all the Jewish population left their homes and went to Warsaw on the electric commuter train, by carts, or on foot. Only a small percentage hid in nearby villages only to return several days later. Both the former and the latter left all their property at the mercy of fate and some of the remaining Poles. All the shops were plundered and all the furniture was stolen from flats, as departures were in panic, some left their property without proper protection. As always,

1083 Abbreviation of Polish *Komunalna Kasa Oszczędności* (Communal Savings Bank).

the servants and janitors stole plenty of Jewish property. A dozen Jewish families stayed in Grodzisk and looted flats as well. They were nicknamed “cousins” because they kept pretending to be the refugees’ cousins who came to watch their property, yet they stole like crows.

[2] Members of the Polish Citizens’ Committee¹⁰⁸⁴ were not particularly honest either and the Jewish property was not sacred to them. The lucky ones who did not die in Warsaw from bullets nor were buried in cellars returned between 20 September and 1 October, exhausted from hunger and lack of sleep, found their homes completely empty. The German authorities were already in the town, but the food provision for the inhabitants was unsatisfactory. Moreover, the Polish mob did not let the Jews stand in queues to buy the necessities. Many families, with too little cash, were starving, as at the beginning the workshops were closed.

The *Judenrat* was finally established as the authorities had ordered at the end of the month. In a poor translation from German into Polish, it was called the “Council of Jewish Eldest.” The Grodzisk mayor¹⁰⁸⁵ nominated the Council members, endorsing the list proposed by the former Jewish Community chairman Mr Jakubowicz. For the time being, the 8-person group was to carry out a census of the Jewish population. The Councillors accepted their appointments reluctantly. In the meantime, the Council took care of the Jewish population who received contingent sugar and salt on a par with the Polish population. The sale of these two products was assigned to 20 Jewish traders, who for the first time sold these articles exclusively to the Jewish consumer. The bread for all the residents regardless of their nationality was baked by 11 Jewish bakers, while the Christian bakers were baking only for the Polish population.

As per the Sochaczew *Landrat*’s¹⁰⁸⁶ ordinance from 8 November 1939, the signs *Jude*, in red letters on a white sheet, appeared on the Jewish shops. At first, however, even many military men bought various products in the Jewish shops despite that ordinance.

1084 *Komitet Obywatelski*, functioning during September 1939 by the Grodzisk mayor, a substitute for the dissolved Municipality. *Dzieje Grodziska Mazowieckiego*, ed. Jerzy Kazimierski, Warszawa 1989, p. 197.

1085 Edward Radgowski.

1086 Reference to the Sochaczew-Błonie rural district.

On 10 November 1939,¹⁰⁸⁷ several dozen hostages were deported from Grodzisk Mazowiecki to Radogoszcz near Łódź, among them the Council chairman Mr Jakubowicz and two members of the Council. Panic swept through the town. None of the Councillors would come to a meeting. The Council was finally assembled, at that time consisting of only 6 members, as everybody else had refused. The needs of the Jewish Community are increasing. The Council's income comes from the taxation of the Jews, at 1–5 zlotys per month. They do not want to pay. The Jewish food ration cards are taxed by 30 groszes per card on behalf of the Council. The collected money is used to pay emergency bonuses to the poorest and to subsidise the labour department. In late November, there was an order obliging all Jews aged 16–60 to perform forced labour. The poor and the sick were the only ones exempted. The authorities demand more labourers.

Winter is coming. Poverty worsens. They intervene with the mayor, who grants 6 tons¹⁰⁸⁸ of coal. He endorses a list of community taxes, but the citizens largely disregard it.

In late December 1939, the Council is notified that 600 Jews from the Poznań voivodship are to settle in Grodzisk. A Committee to Aid the Resettled is established. They are accommodated in Jewish homes free of charge, and some Christians take these [3] poor souls in, too. A kitchen and an out-patients' clinic are organised. A Jewish physician is hired and an infirmary for the old and sick is opened. As the resettled from the Poznań voivodship have been somehow established in Grodzisk, more resettled from other parts of Poland stream in. The municipality is trying to avoid a flood of "Jewry".

In mid-January 1940, a new Council is established, this time it has 24 members. The Councillors are eager to work. The municipality and the Polish Red Cross are helping. Midday meals, bread, clothes, and benefits are issued. 100 children receive extra food due to the help from the Warsaw TOZ. Later on, an entire CENTOS centre is established. The Warsaw Joint provides the lion's share of the benefits. Later, however, when the benefits are gradually reduced, the *Judenrat* must take over the burden of supporting the resettled and the poor. Although the mentioned institutions – the soup kitchen, the out-patients' clinic, the infirmary for the old and sick – are a novelty to

¹⁰⁸⁷ In the original, 1940, by mistake.

¹⁰⁸⁸ In the original, 50 *korców*; see footnote XXX.

the Jews in town, they operate fairly smoothly. Nowadays, there is a group of activists who, before the war due to their views, were not admitted into the Jewish institutions, where the Orthodox Mizrachi clique cared only about their own aims and parties. The Jewish Community, with significant sums of money from communal taxes and ritual slaughter fees, paid only the rabbis and *shohets*. It did not contribute to sanitation expenses, schools, and public libraries in the slightest, and it even counteracted private initiative.

There were 3 financial institutions in Grodzisk before the war: 1) the joint-stock bank under the influence of the Mizrachi; 2) the Credit Cooperative (Zionist); 3. the Savings Bank (*Agudah*), as well as *Gemilut Chesed* and the CKB¹⁰⁸⁹ headed by the infamous swindler Majlech Grynberg. Loans were extended exclusively to fellow party members and money was spent on interparty conflicts. Those institutions' potential was wasted, their operation pointless. In the end, some of their shareholders had to pay large sums of money, while the Joint and the CKB in Warsaw took note of substantial losses in Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

On the other hand, the Union of Jewish Craftsmen¹⁰⁹⁰ which had approximately 200 members, developed its broad self-help and legal [aid] programmes. It extended interest-free loans. Sadly, its means were limited, yet they were its own. Of the 4 Jewish Councillors in the Town Council, 2 were members of the Craftsmen's Union.

Other economic organisations, such as the Traders' Union,¹⁰⁹¹ were not particularly active.

Before the war in Grodzisk, there were 2 Jewish physicians, 3 dentists, 1 *feldsher*, 2 attorneys, 1 engineer, and 6 teachers. During the war, there were only 1 physician and 2 dentists.

[4] The hosiery industry, which supported several hundred people before the war, almost ceased to exist. Using a convenient railway connection, the unemployed transported produce to Warsaw by EKD electric commuter train.

1089 Known rather as CEKABE, (Polish, *Centrala Kas Bezprocentowych*) Interest-free Provident Societies Centre, established in 1926, financed by the AJDC and coordinating the extension of loans and credits to the Jews.

1090 See footnote XXX.

1091 Probably a reference to the Central Office of Small Jewish Retailers (*Centrala Drobnych Kupców Żydowskich*).

The establishment and closure of the Jewish district of Warsaw¹⁰⁹² prevented that forbidden trade. Deprived of income, large crowds of people are again a burden for the Jewish Community and customers of the soup kitchen.

ARG I 757 a (Ring. I/9)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten amendments, ink, Polish, 200×296 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Attached are two almost identical notes by Hersch Wasser, in Polish and Yiddish: “Provinces. Grodzisk Maz[owiecki], Warsaw county. Chapters of the war-time history by comrade Bernard Kampelmacher.”

146 *After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study “Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Synagoga i Bejs Hamedrosz” [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. The synagogue and bet hamidrash].*

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

The synagogue and *bet hamidrash*

Approximately 90 years ago, Gutgield Lejwa, then a member of the Jewish Community, built a large, wooden synagogue “so that people do not say that he did any harm to the Jewish Community.” He owned the nearby forests. As he grew rich from forest trade, he tried to obtain the best building materials for the synagogue. Some thirty odd years later, the wife of Mąka, a rich Grodzisk resident, wanting to thank God for giving her a son after a long period of infertility, extended the wooden building with a brick annex for women.

From then on, the synagogue had 300 seats for men and the same number for women on the balcony of the wooden synagogue and in the annex. Next to the synagogue (where there are lawns today, made by order of Mayor Borkowski for the Jews’ contribution to his election) was a wooden alms-house with three rooms. Two *shammeses* lived there and there was a morgue, too. Poor Jewish wanderers stopped on their way in that building, filling one of its rooms, which sometimes accommodated as many as 25 people.

1092 15 November 1940.

The synagogue was furnished, and the wealthier Jews or Jewish groups donated their Torah scrolls and it survived this way until the Great World War, when the Jews were ordered to leave the town for “strategic” reasons. After their return, they found the furniture missing and the floors, doors, and windows damaged. After an intervention with the current German authorities, the horses were removed, the furnishings were supplemented, and the synagogue served its purpose for another 25 years.

September 1939 came. The first missiles fell on the town, levelling to the ground the wooden *Talmud Torah*¹⁰⁹³ building, 20 metres from the synagogue. A different fate was in store for the synagogue. After the Jews returned from besieged Warsaw and settled down again in Grodzisk, nobody paid any attention to various scum walking along Berka Joselewicza Street and tearing off pieces of the synagogue’s walls and sashes. When it became cold and there was no fuel, they used that source of expensive fuel, increasingly often, tearing up the floorboards and whatever else they could find. From afar, the synagogue was flashing its empty eye sockets. When the troops ran out of fuel, too, they began to remove dry logs and planks for their own use. Finally, “fearing that the building could collapse,” the *Ortskommandantur* ordered the municipality to dismantle the synagogue under supervision of the town technician. The Jews worked for weeks at the dismantling. The recovered materials were taken to the municipal and private warehouses. One Jewish labourer died at the dismantling and a few others were badly hurt.

No trace remained of this building, only foundations, the cornerstone, and the stone slabs [2] by the entrance. They shall be a testament to the synagogue’s former grand dimensions.

A better fate befell the brick building of *bet hamidrash* built 60 years ago by Laybl Mąka, a tailor by profession who became rich from trading forests. A Grodzisk citizen, David Frajerman, funded the Torah ark¹⁰⁹⁴ and the railing. That building too would have shared the synagogue’s fate had it not been made of bricks. Nonetheless, it lost its floorboards, doors, and sashes during this war. Due to the spreading diseases, the authorities decided to use the building as a quarantine centre. With the funds collected to that end, the offices

1093 (Hebrew) teaching Torah; religious school at the primary level, typically for children from poor families.

1094 See footnote XXX.

of the *Judenrat* and the soup kitchen were placed there, as the spacious premises in Zylberberg's house at Sienkiewicza Street 12 had been taken over by "Rolnik"¹⁰⁹⁵ as its warehouse. The new building was not enjoyed for long.

Then came an ordinance on resettlement of the Jews. Messrs Hutt and Lewkowicz¹⁰⁹⁶ leased or sold the *bet hamidrash* building to the *Heeresunterkunftsverwaltung*, to accommodate a Jewish labour battalion, and later for a mechanised carpentry workshop. The Jews were moved away from there in late July.

Mąka's building with a small commemorative plaque high on the front wall has been granted a tremendous honour: It is surrounded with lawns and a German armed with a gun and a helmet guards it and does not allow civilians (neither Jews nor Poles) to approach it.

ARG I 757 b (Ring. I/8)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten amendments, ink, Polish, 202×295 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. On top of p. 1, Hersch Wasser's note in Yiddish (ink): "109-1942 / 1 January. No. 19."

147 *After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Kąpielisko-Mykwa" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki Bathhouse – mikvah].*

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

Bathhouse – *mikvah*

The *mikvah* is an element of *Shilgas*,¹⁰⁹⁷ that is Berka Joselewicza Street, called *Mittelgasse*¹⁰⁹⁸ by the Germans. It is clear why the Town Council named it after Joselewicz, as the dirtiest and ugliest streets in Polish towns and cities bear the names of eminent Jews. But there are no grounds for the name *Mittelstrasse* as

1095 Probably a reference to the Regional Farming Association (*Okręgowe Towarzystwo Rolnicze*).

1096 Maks Hutt and Samuel Lewkowicz.

1097 (Yiddish) Synagogue Street or School Street. Literal translation of *shil* or *shul* is school, as synagogue is often called.

1098 (German) Middle Street.

Grodzisk is vast and this Jewish street is not located in its centre. It would be better to call it *Judengasse*,¹⁰⁹⁹ as Jews have lived here since time immemorial.

Long ago, the whole area from the Market Square to as far as today's Żwirki and Wigury Street used to be one big swamp, where even horses drowned. The place where Krygsman has his dairy now was once a primitive Jewish cattle slaughterhouse and, by the former Kraśnicza Street (nowadays Prażmowskiego Street), there were wooden houses big and small. Unbearable stench spread from there into the whole eastern side of the town. Near the bathhouse building were six 4-metre deep outhouses for the use of all the Jews in the town. There were no latrines near individual private homes at that time.

Luckily, once a "Russian governor" arrived and became terribly irritated at the sight and smell of the mess in the centre of the town. He called the neighbours together and promised to grant this part of town to whomever drained and put it in order. Wajnberg, a carpenter, undertook the task and, after some time at great expenditure, the puddles were filled, and the ground was levelled. The governor kept his promise and gave that land to Wajnberg. He built a small house there, in which his descendants still lived not so long ago.

In the beginning and for some time, there was a wooden, elongated *mikvah* building with steam and even as many as two *mikvahs* side by side: one with warm water and the other with cold water. It was open every day for women, and the whole day on Fridays and free of charge until 10 a.m. on Saturdays for men. The entry fees varied from 20 groszes to 3 zlotys. The community board members collected the fees and set their amount individually. One Friday, the *mikvah* burned down. It was rebuilt several times, but always in a faulty way. Recently some of its walls were up to 2 ells¹¹⁰⁰ thick; its two chimneys often belched out the smoke not into the air but into the attic to the flat of the janitor's widow Strulak and her child, whose dead father was purportedly born to mixed parents.¹¹⁰¹

Before the war, a self-respecting person would not visit the bathhouse, because its five bathtubs were in one small room, where you had to undress in front of naked companions. And still worse, you had to wait for Mrs Strulak to fetch the ferruginous water. The amount and temperature of the water depended on your tip and her whim.

1099 (German) Jewish Street.

1100 Obsolete measure; one ell equals 45 inches.

1101 Christian and Jewish.

[2] At times, after such a bath you were no cleaner than before. The bath-house was always bustling. They say that there was a time when there was running water, but the pipes often malfunctioned, and one had to return to the Strulaks' services.

Thus, it lasted until the war [began] in 1939. The Germans purportedly forbade the Jews to obey their rituals, so the *mikvahs* were closed down.¹¹⁰² A very cunning Grodzisk inhabitant, Lejwa Koper, objected to that state of affairs and decided to open a *mikvah* at his own expense and to become a benefactor to all women. As Grodzisk had once helped the Jews from Wola¹¹⁰³ by including them into the Community, taking their fees, and burying them in its cemetery, our benefactor now wanted to help the women of Warsaw. He reached an agreement with his fellow party friends, who sent their unclean creatures to Grodzisk on Thursdays and Fridays by electric commuter train.¹¹⁰⁴ Mr Lejwa sent the women back home "kosher," for their husbands to receive them, hoping that this social activity of his would win him "God's grace." He lined his own pockets, as the fees were high and adjusted to the [users'] weight, age, and marital status.

As always happens in such cases some people become envious. As the Council chairman,¹¹⁰⁵ I was urged to interrupt Mr Lejwa's enterprise or to make him share his profits with the Community. In the meantime, Pruszków came up with the same idea and women heading for Grodzisk were stopped at the Pruszków train station and invited into the more kosher local *mikvah*, even with the "result" granted. Therefore, the number of foreign [sic!] women coming to Grodzisk is decreasing and our *mikvah* has limited its operation to the locals.

To be continued.

ARG I 757 c (Ring. I/8)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten amendments, ink, Polish, 204×295 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Top of p. 1, Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish (ink): "109-1942 / 1 January. No. 21." The text partly covers a drawing of a (Jewish?) policeman.

1102 The ban on Jewish religious practices was introduced by the Germans in January 1940.

1103 Once a separate estate, now the Western district of Warsaw. Jews from there were buried in Grodzisk before the establishment of the Jewish cemetery in Warsaw, i.e. before 1806.

1104 See Sh. Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. XXXX

1105 He was replaced on 17 August 1940 at latest by Maks Hutt. See Doc. 152.

148

After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Cmentarz żydowski" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Jewish cemetery].

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

Jewish cemetery

In the western part of the town, on the right side of the road to Błonie on Traugutta Street, one can see from afar the brick wall of the Jewish cemetery ([approximately] two-and-a-half *morgen* of land¹¹⁰⁶). In the first section, the graves are close to one another; this is the old cemetery. When the space to bury the corpses ran out – the Jewish Community's reach was vast, as not only Jews from Grodzisk were buried here, but also Jews from Błonie and even Wola who paid the community fee to Grodzisk and had the right to be buried here – 65 years ago the new adjacent cemetery was established.

A converted Jew, Wederman did not wish to sell the land adjacent to the old cemetery, but Rabbi Majlech Szapiro¹¹⁰⁷ forced him to. Szapiro ordered all the Jews to go to that field; he took it by force and assigned the extension of the cemetery. The first corpses buried there were guarded day and night for a long time. Then the price was agreed upon with the previous owner.

Aside from the ordinary mortals, several members of the family of the Szapiro rabbis were buried there too, but in a separate little house.¹¹⁰⁸

During this war, the new small cemetery was established in the southern section of the cemetery. This is where the resettled 700¹¹⁰⁹ Poznań Jews living in Grodzisk bury their dead, decorating their graves with flowers and German inscriptions (30 graves).¹¹¹⁰

After their new resettlement from Grodzisk to Warsaw, they bury their subsequent war victims in the collective graves on Gęsia Street, without asking whom they are lying next to.

1106 See footnote 327; it is approximately 3.5 acres.

1107 Elimelech Szapiro (1823–1892), rabbi and *tzaddik*, founder of the Grodzisk Hasidic dynasty, father of Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Szapiro (1889–1943).

1108 See footnote 1053.

1109 In Doc. 145, p. [2], the number is 600.

1110 Orthodox Jews, predominantly in central Poland, never placed anything on graves but stones, and engraved inscriptions only in Hebrew on gravestones.

During this war, this was the resting place of Jewish knights, soldiers of the Polish Army. The Brwinów parson required identification of Jewish soldiers from among the 24 soldiers of the Polish Army buried in the collective grave near Brwinów. The senior member of our *chevra kadisha* identified corpses of three Jewish soldiers and brought them to the cemetery in Grodzisk. The sons of Grodzisk who died during the defence of Warsaw were buried here. The last of them, Izaak Bąk, broke free from his parents' embrace on the day of the armistice even though both they and his siblings asked him not to. He went to his post, and died in the Młociny fields. The Polish helmet did not protect his head from a shell. He was buried in army uniform with hand grenades by his belt. None of the Poles will ask him why he died for Poland. During his lifetime, however, they often reproached him for eating Polish bread.

The last guests of the Jewish cemetery were the numerous victims of the epidemic of typhus. Even though they were resettled from Grodzisk in February 1941, the local Jews came to Grodzisk from the Jewish district in Warsaw to eat their fill at their peasant neighbours' homes. Others walked in large numbers to Rawa Mazowiecka or Tomaszów in search of bread or cheap potatoes. Exhausted, they lay down in Rejnberg's fields or in the adjacent fields, devoid of help, and succumbed to that terrible disease. Many [2] of those victims were buried in the local Jewish cemetery. One memorable day, on 16 July, 7 corpses, victims of typhus, were laid to eternal rest here.

After the first resettlement in February 1941, the next one took place on 20 July. The workers employed legally in the labour battalion, and other people, the gendarmerie and the Polish police woke up at 4 a.m., gave them 30 minutes, then packed them into the commuter train carriages and lorries and escorted them to the ghetto in Warsaw.

The Jewish cemetery is silent again.

The one-eyed cemetery guardian complains about underemployment and waits in vain for her guests. Only the pines and weeping willow trees growing there tell one another, through the rustle of their branches and leaves, about the former [x]¹¹¹¹ glory of the cemetery.

1111 [x] past.

ARG I 757 d (Ring. I/8)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten amendments, ink, Polish, 203×297 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. On top of p. 1, Hersch Wasser's note in Yiddish (ink): "109-1942 / 1 January. No. 18."

149 *After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Przemysł pończosznicy i bereciarski" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. The hosiery and beret industry].*

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

Hosiery and beret industry

For the past 50 years, a substantial number of the Jewish population of Grodzisk have earned their living in the hosiery industry. Using over 100 hand-operated machines, initially with the 100 or 84 needles of Szymański's system (Szymański from Łódź being the inventor of these machines), they made various kinds of stockings as well as men's, women's, and children's socks of varied thickness and quality, depending on the season. It was a cottage industry. The production continued almost all year long.

Famous Warsaw manufacturers, such as the Rozentals, the Brauns, Zajler, and others provided machines and materials to the Grodzisk Mazowiecki cottage workers, who worked all day long as reelers, cutters, and finishers, earning their daily bread, sometimes with the help from their closest relatives and children. The Warsaw manufacturers became rich, maintaining constant contact with the exporters in Baku, Kiev, Kharkiv, and Nizhy Novgorod. The hosiers earned from 3 to 4 silver rubles per week. The reelers and cutters made 2 silver rubles, and the finishers (women) 1 silver ruble.

The strikes in 1904 did not significantly improve the situation of these workers and the newly introduced machines with 150 needles for men's and women's [stockings] and those with 15 needles for children's [stockings] only made their work more efficient.

In 1910, the electric-powered machines were introduced. The wages increased, as some of the cottage workers earned up to 10 silver rubles per week. The system of the motor machines originated from Chemnitz.

In 1915 [x]¹¹¹² the entire Jewish population of Grodzisk was evacuated to Warsaw. The hosiers took their machines with them and their Warsaw manufacturers opened factories for them. Each of the manufacturers employed 20–25 people. After Poland regained her independence, the standard of living of our hosiers, who commuted to Warsaw by electric commuter train or by regular train, improved. The Polish government supported this industry. Our products were exported to Romania, France, Estonia and Palestine.

In 1928, the beret industry began. The local locksmiths, Dłużyński and Ślęczkowski, made beret machines in their workshops, while in Warsaw [they were made by] the Messenger Company. Our berets were exported to distant overseas countries. As the machines were easy to operate, even children were used for that kind of work. The competition at home was fierce. Machines worked day and night in almost every home, so the wages were very low, and the children helped their parents in their struggle to earn their daily bread. The beret manufacturing helped the Grodzisk Jews survive the harsh times that begin in 1929, when the heavy Cotton [2] machines made in Saxony by the Schubert & Salz Company began to be used to manufacture stockings. The competition on the part of Polish hosiers in Warsaw intensified. They did not let the Jews have access the workshops, while the Jewish manufacturers did not object to that at all. The Jewish workers of this industry in Warsaw were removed from their workplaces. The Ettingon Company in Łódź was the only victorious one and it employed both Jewish and Polish workers despite various strikes.

Harsh times were coming for our hosiers. Some of them returned to Grodzisk from Warsaw and worked in their earlier occupation, operating small hand-powered machines. They made subsistence wages. In the end, when Japan flooded us with its own very cheap products, our hosiers and beret makers ceased to work. Only our locksmiths exported the beret machines to other countries, to which our products were exported not long ago. From then on until the war, there was only a big demand for the beret machines.

With the outbreak of the war this industry ceased to exist for the Jews due to the lack of materials and the fact that the factories were taken over by “Aryan” entrepreneurs.

1112 [x] almost.

A few hundred families, some of which used to make an average living operating their hand-powered machines or motor machines but are now starving, fill the centres for the resettled in Warsaw. Among the war victims buried on the cemetery of the Jewish district in Warsaw, they are a greater percentage of the population than any other class.

ARG I 757 e (Ring. I/8)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten amendments, ink, Polish, 203×295 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Top of p. 1, Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish (ink): "109-1942 / 1 January. No. 20."

150 *After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Szkolnictwo dla młodzieży żydowskiej" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Schools for Jewish youth]. Attached is an excerpt of the minutes of the meeting of the Judenrat held on 6 January 1940, on the establishment and activity of a school.*

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

Schools for Jewish youth

In 1900, Grodzisk was a commune with approximately 1,000 Jews. The county town was Błonie. There was only one school for Christian children here. Six Jewish children attended it as exceptions to the rule.

Mrs Wilner from Łowicz established a private two-class school here. There were several *cheders*, too, and during the following years *Tarbut* and *Mizrachi* organised some courses, but their activity was limited because they were rather exclusive. Besides, the organisations that organised those courses were in conflict, which had a negative influence on their activity.

In 1919, the later inspector [. . .] came to Grodzisk. He established a growing initially four-grade school with [. . .] as the language of instruction and he engaged one more teacher. For two years, the school [. . .] run by the two [ladies]. [. . .] Some local Catholic children joined [the school], particularly its higher grades. We were able to deal both with the Polish teachers and pupils,

which is proof that, with the right attitude toward the coexistence of teachers and children of various nationalities and denominations does not impose any major obstacles.

The level of teaching in that school was on par with the other four schools for Christian children in Grodzisk. Moreover, during the 1937 county singing contest, our school won first prize from among the 25 performing choirs from the Błonie county. It has two choirs, one for school students and one for other youths,¹¹¹³ as well as a brass band.

[2] In the last years preceding the war, the board and the teachers made significant efforts to develop the Jewish Youth Circle. The Circle ran a library, which had 1,000 Polish and Jewish books, and a periodicals' reading room for large public. That was how the Jews were drawn away from the anti-Semitic Polish library of the People's House. Many a Christian also used the library of Jewish school No. 4. The dances organised by our school's Youth Circle were also attended by Christians, and a tradition of peaceful coexistence of the young, despite class and origin differences, originated here, even though Grodzisk was also in a state of anti-Semitic turmoil. And after the war, this tradition will be [. .] to an even greater extent.

At the turn of 1937 and 1938, the school board and the School Care [. .] the [demands?] of the Jewish [and Polish?] public were met. [. .] that that change [would] influ[ence?] [. .] further school development [. .] but the new headmaster came [. .] for a couple of weeks, while the things stayed the way they had been.

In 1928, the school had as many as 300 students. It became a seven-grade school and Bernard Kampelmacher won a competition for the school headmaster. The school's housing conditions were unbearable. It was located in two buildings at opposite ends of the town. The walls of the building on Limanowskiego Street were damp from floor to ceiling, while the two classrooms in Mrs Dutkiewicz's building on Kilińskiego Street were not furnished at all.

The new school board decided that it would furnish the school with the help of the parents. Previously uninvolved in the school matters, the parents now tried to furnish the school using [3] their own funds and to obtain financial help from the municipality for the poor pupils. The poor students were

1113 Here and in the last paragraph of the text the author refers to Jewish youth who did not attend the school.

fed and efforts were made to provide them with clothing, footwear, books, and other necessities. The School Care and Parents' Council was established. In 1932, a cooperative of parents, teachers, and the Grodzisk municipality was established to erect its own school building for the Jewish children. Having only 300 zlotys of savings, it bought a plot for 5,000 zlotys. The involvement of the interested parties increased. The first two classrooms were built in 1933. New classrooms or floors were built every year during summer holidays, and the 300-square-metre gym was ready in 1938. All the expenses were covered from meagre [. . .] of parents and profits from events and children's performances. It is [. . .] state school in Poland that is Jewish property [. . .] for which even during the current regime [. . .] was charged [. . .] rent, some of which [. . .] Yiddish and Hebrew were included in the daily lesson plan.

The school had a practical approach. A lot of time was devoted to classes in the carpentry workshop and bookbinding as well as to courses of sewing, embroidery, home economics, etc., for girls. In the school vegetable and flower garden, a dozen fruit trees, each of a different species, about a dozen gooseberry, currant, and raspberry bushes, as well as choice vines and apricot trees, were cultivated. They also kept bees in two beehives, white Angora rabbits, and Polish race pigeons. Six years ago approximately 40 mulberries were planted in the garden. They would have provided food for silkworms by now.

[4] The war halted those fine, exemplary efforts praised by society and the school authorities.

Today, the SS occupies the former school building converted into barracks, while the building where the headmaster and the teachers used to live houses company offices and flats for officers. There is no greenery in the school garden; the soldiers' feet tread there. But according to eye witnesses, the pear tree has borne abundant fruit this year. The Clapp pears are ripening, waiting to be picked. This time the Germans will be the ones to do so.

[5] Excerpt

from the minutes of the meeting of the Grodzisk *Judenrat*

held on 6 January 1941

2 e)

The headmaster Bernard Kampelmacher reported the following:

The school was opened on 9 October 1940, initially as courses and then as a seven-grade elementary school with a kindergarten for the Jewish children.

The children were divided into nine groups, while the sixth and seventh¹¹¹⁴ forms studied together due to the small number of students in these two classes. 3 teachers of Judaism as well as 5 teachers of other subjects were engaged. There were 53 school days during the three-month report period. The lay school subjects [were taught] following the 1937 curriculum, while Yiddish was taught from TSYSHO textbooks [. . .] Tarbut. German as a school subject is taught in [. . .] girls from forms six and seven [are taught] home economics [. . .] there are plans to start [. . .] and dressmaking for [. . .].

The school funds come from the parents' fees, [. . .] subsidies from the municipality (rent for the school building [. . .]. The parents pay from 2 to 10 zlotys per month, while 180 poor children are exempt from the payment.

Financial balance sheet for the period since 1 January 1941:

Entry fees and parents' monthly fees	4,252.50	zlotys
Municipality subsidy	1,181.50	zlotys
Total:	5,434	zlotys

Rent	434
Repairs	159.8
School furnishings	470.12
Teachers' salary	3,425
Janitor's salary	370
Office	42.85
Administration lump sum	95.80
Fuel	196
Miscellaneous	161.92
Total:	5,253.59 zlotys

[6] During the current war, the Jewish children were deprived of education and school for quite some time. In October 1940, we finally received permission to organise courses and then to open it as a school with seven grades.¹¹¹⁵

¹¹¹⁴ In the original, VI and VI (sixth and sixth), apparently a mistake; could be also: fifth and sixth.

¹¹¹⁵ On 15 November 1939, all schools in the occupied Polish territories were closed. Elementary and vocational schools for Poles were opened on 7 December 1939, while operation of Jewish schools was in the hands of school departments of the county governors' offices.

The report attached below shows that the teachers were resourceful even during those harsh times, since the elementary school in Grodzisk was the second one, after Rzeszów, to be opened in all of the General Government.

Unfortunately, we were only able to conduct our noble activity for 5 months. The school was also trying to obtain permission to organise dress-making and carpentry courses. The attached extracts of the *Schulrat*¹¹¹⁶ document showed that if it had not been for the resettlement [. . .] to organise those.¹¹¹⁷

[. . .] thrown mercilessly [. . .] onto the street [. . .] of Warsaw, of whom approximately 100 have already died [. . .] and the school guardians who should return [. . .] we will fill the school building with life again. The three barracks erected by the Germans in the school playing field will house carpentry and dressmaking workshops for our young people as well as a dormitory for the students of the agricultural school, even those not from Grodzisk, which we are planning to open. The post-war period will be the best time ever to implement these plans.

ARG I 758 (Ring. I/10)

Description: original or duplicate (2 copies), typewritten, Polish, 190×275 mm, damaged and missing fragments, 12 sheets, 12 pages. Hersch Wasser's notes on p. 1 of the study, "Kappel," on p. 1 of the excerpt of the minutes: "Kampel. 105/1 [. . .]."

Edition based on the first copy of the original, 6 sheets, 6 pages, supplemented with the text from the other copy.

1116 (German) school council or school counsellor. The attachment is not preserved.

1117 See Doc. 140.

After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Sekcja Pracy Rady Żydowskiej" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Labour Section of the Judenrat]. Organisation of forced labour for the Jewish population, in camps of the Lublin district.

Attached are "Wyjątki z protokołów zebrań Rady Żydowskiej w Grodzisku" [Excerpts of the minutes of the meetings of the Grodzisk Judenrat] concerning the Labour Section.

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

The Labour Section of the Judenrat

The beginning was very innocent. A German soldier asked a pedestrian, a Jew, to help him load a cart. The next day about a dozen Jews were taken to clean a school building for the army. The Jews were forced to work not only by the military authorities and not only for the army. The municipality functionaries had the Jews clean the streets, while the County Department¹¹¹⁸ ordered them to work on the roads. The *Volksdeutsche* and various janitors engaged the Jews whenever they wanted, removing them from the street, from their homes, shops, and workplaces. A craftsman could not start his work because he could be taken away at any moment, and, of course, beaten, too.

The *Judenrat* had already been established,¹¹¹⁹ but according to general opinion interventions to protect Jews were not allowed. We mustered our courage and we promised to provide any number of Jewish labourers as long as the authorities specified it a day in advance.¹¹²⁰ Some institutions abided by that informal agreement, while others preferred to use violence and rounded up Jews on the street. So, we received the yellow *Arbeitsbefehl*¹¹²¹ documents a day in advance. They specified the number of labourers, time and place of work, the tools, and the three Councillors responsible for effecting the arrangements of the work.

1118 Polish local self-government headed by a county governor.

1119 In late September 1939.

1120 See Doc. 141.

1121 (German) work order.

Groups of 10-20 labourers worked in *Ortskommendantur*, *Regiments-kommandantur*, *Heeresunterkunftsverwaltung*, *Offizierskasino*,¹¹²² and in the school buildings converted into barracks, among others in the building of Jewish School No. 4 where the same Jews worked who had not long ago administered the building as members of the School Care. Their work there brought them various reflections and memories of the recent past.

On certain work details, the work was very hard, as at the railway station unloading heavy cargo or in the Kobylański Brothers' auto parts factory¹¹²³ supervised by military authorities.

We used to send notices to the labourers a day in advance. At first, they were allowed to send replacements, but there were certain irregularities in that sphere because they sent minors, who could not cope with the heavy requirements [x].¹¹²⁴ Thus, a Labour Section was created at the expense of the Council. Those who did not work paid for a replacement.

The Council also provided various tools, such as spades, shovels, rakes, pickaxes, axes, saws, and carpenter's tools. In most cases, the labourers did not bring the tools back. They remained on the work detail and the formations confiscated them upon departure. That was why the tool purchase position in the Council budget increased progressively.

[2] Similarly, each command of the officers' mess turned to us to obtain kitchen furnishings and dinner services, which we bought from the Council's purse. When the troops left, they usually took the items with them instead of leaving them in the *Ortskommendantur* for their successors.

They also demanded women labourers, who had to bring brushes, cloths, buckets, etc.

The labourers did not work regularly; they changed every day, they received no remuneration for their work. But when the authorities grew particularly fond of a certain labourer due to his professionalism, Aryan appearance, language skills, or, in the case of a woman, good looks and fond feelings, they kept such a labourer for good, ordering the Council to pay the wage set by the *Arbeitsamt* in Sochaczew. This was often a source of trouble as it

1122 (German) local military command, regiment's command, military quarters management, officers' mess.

1123 The plant could not be identified.

1124 [x] [of] labour.

was enough for the labourer to complain to the authorities (*Gefreiter*¹¹²⁵ or *U.O.*¹¹²⁶) to make the latter come running to the Council's office and threaten to dismiss all the Councillors unless his favourite received her weekly wage every Saturday.

With the increase of the number of regular labourers, it became increasingly difficult for us to pay them on time, so I turned to the *Arbeitsamt* director Mr Kusch (a rather agreeable man), who said that the institutions employing Jewish labourers must pay them themselves. Only the *Ortskommendantur* continued to disregard these binding legal rules until the end, while other institutions paid remuneration for work through the agency of the Council.

The municipality was the first institution for which we were no longer obliged to provide labourers, because when we demanded the remuneration, they then said that they would hire unemployed Poles. Several weeks later, we stopped sending labourers to the County Department for the same reason. The German authorities also limited the number of Jewish labourers when it became necessary to pay for their work.

With the coming of spring and summer in 1940, the *Arbeitsamt* demanded labourers to perform farm work near Grodzisk, Izdebnó, Kłudno, Gawartowa Wola¹¹²⁷ and other nearby granges. As the duration of service was longer, from 4 to 8 weeks, the young citizens did everything to avoid being sent to work. Nowadays in the Jewish district in Warsaw, they think it a blessing. They even visit the *Landsmanschaft*¹¹²⁸ office to ask if any farm hands are needed on a landed estate; many pay 300–400 zlotys per person to middlemen. A year ago, they regarded it a divine retribution. Back then complaints, interventions, and connections did not work; if a physician deemed one to be healthy, one had to go. The conditions, particularly those in Gawartowa Wola near Szymanów, were unacceptable to our groups due to the poor housing and insufficient board.

We also received demands for small groups of Jewish farm labourers directly from land owners in the *Judenrat* office. Their representatives came

1125 (German) lance corporal.

1126 (German) abbreviation for *Unteroffizier*, non-commissioned officer.

1127 Izdebnó, Kłudno, Gawartowa Wola (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1128 The Grodzisk Mazowiecki *Landsmanschaft* in the Warsaw ghetto was established on 6 February 1941. Its chairman was Bernard Kampelmacher.

to the office, took male or female labourers, signed contracts, and paid the due sum into the Council's purse.

[3] The Jewish society was very much shocked when the *Arbeitsamt* demanded the first 50 people to be sent to a labour camp in the Lublin district. A list of people qualified by the Council physician was drafted and all those on the list reported for duty. Nobody was released in return for money, which was the case in Warsaw, or for any other reason. But some of the more resourceful prospective prisoners bought themselves out in Warsaw from the main gathering point or were dismissed by physicians. Three days later, the *Arbeitsamt* demanded another transport of 50 labourers, of whom only 42 reported for duty. In the meantime, unfounded rumours started circulating that the train with our *obozowicze*¹¹²⁹ had derailed. The mothers attacked the Council, demanding their sons back. The same day we received information from the *Judenrat* in Lublin that we should send a delegation and financial aid for our *obozowicze*. Representatives of the Grodzisk *Judenrat* left for Lublin with parcels and money. The rumours about the *obozowicze* worsened, bad news began to come directly from them. Therefore, another delegation was sent (one Council member plus four representatives of the parents).

In Lublin the delegation managed to find only 15 people from Grodzisk working in workshops under SS supervision. Even the Lublin *Judenrat* did not know anything about the fate of the rest of our *obozowicze*. Jewish labourers were in 7 camps of the Warsaw District in Bełżec, while those from Grodzisk were in the camp in Płazów 17 km from Bełżec, in Lipsk, and in Cieszanów.¹¹³⁰ Luckily, they were healthy, they ate food from the parcels, received cash from their parents, and sent reassuring letters home in return. The *obozowicze* were delighted when they saw the delegates.

Finally, the *Arbeitsamt* demanded a third group (50 people). Not knowing what had happened to the previous two groups, the Council refused to send more labourers. The *Arbeitsamt* head demanded a dossier and a list of all men. The round-up was carried out at night but, because they had known about it

1129 (Polish) literally, campers. See footnote 1004.

1130 This could be a reference to the system of seven forced labour camps in Bełżec, Lipsk, Narol, Płazów, Cieszanów, Dzików Stary and Dzików Nowy, located around the one in Bełżec. Their prisoners worked at construction of fortifications on the border with the Soviet Union. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 117–118. Among the prisoners were Jews from the Warsaw District.

in advance, all fled from the town and hid in nearby villages. The Polish police managed to capture only 8 people, who were sent to the camp in Zamość.¹¹³¹

When the second delegation arrived in the camp, 8 prisoners were already seriously ill from dysentery and other diseases. With great difficulty and at great expense, 3 of the sick were taken to the hospital in Tomaszów [Lubelski]. Here our *obozowicze* working conditions were very bad. They woke at 3 a.m. and marched out at 4:30. Their workplace was 6 km from the camp. They ate thin soup for meal at 2 p.m. plus 200 grams of bread per person, not even every day. There was a barbed wire fence around and they slept in an attic with no straw. A few peasants had been wounded with a shot for handing over food and approaching the wires. The parents sent parcels, which did not always reach the proper recipients due to the poor organisation of the *Lagerrat*,¹¹³² whose members took advantage of the chaos and stole the best food products. The conditions were worsening. The *Lagerschutz*¹¹³³ and the SS committed numerous atrocities against the *obozowicze* under Major Dolf's¹¹³⁴ supervision.

[4] Efforts were then made to release the *obozowicze*, some of whom were indeed released in return for money and gifts. Three of the 27 *obozowicze* who were returned died from various diseases.

By early November almost all *obozowicze* had either escaped or returned home after release. Two Councillors stayed during that entire time near the camp. The cost of release was approximately 20,000 zlotys.

The last group of 8 people worked on drainage in Hrubieszów and Białobrzegi¹¹³⁵ in better conditions and with better board. They returned safe and sound in late November.

[5] That was how a significant number of the young people, approximately 300, began to work in the countryside, complaining at first, particularly when

1131 See Doc. 53.

1132 (German) camp council. In Bełżec there was a Central Camp Council. It consisted of prisoners, but its activities remained limited. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 119.

1133 (German) camp guard.

1134 The Bełżec labour camp commandant was *SS-Sturmbannfuhrer* Hermann Dolp. The prisoners called him Major Dolp. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 119.

1135 The labour camp for Jews in Białobrzegi (Radzyń Podlaski County) was established in 1940. Its prisoners undertook drainage work on arable land on the River Łabuńka. *Ibidem*, p. 42.

they had to work with Polish labourers as they could not keep up with the pace, particularly during harvest. Some willing ones, however, needed only 4–6 weeks of practice and good board to meet the requirements.

In early April 1940, I was called to the *Arbeitsamt* and, in the presence of the Polish police commandant, I was obliged to deliver 30 female labourers every day to Laski (3 km from Grodzisk) to do farm and garden work in the forest inspectorate estate managed by receivership. At first, we sent different labourers every day, though due to a demand and complaint filed with the *Landkomissar*,¹¹³⁶ we had to provide the same labourers for a period of 14–28 days plus a regular group commander. The labourers received no remuneration for their work. We coped in the following way: We sent well-off girls who could buy food with their own funds. They complained that the poor were privileged. Some wealthy daughters regarded it as harassment. Personally, I believed that each, even the richest Jewish daughter, could and should do that 4-week sort of farming course. Groups of labourers marched to work every day and returned tanned, healthier, and with a new experience of working on a farm. We intervened several times to force the *Oberförstmeisterin*¹¹³⁷ to provide at least midday meals to the poorer labourers, but she refused even though that agricultural estate brought good profits. Significantly, for her two children (grandchildren) she had a Jewish governess assigned by the *Judenrat*. Except for food, the governess was not remunerated, on the basis that *Die Juden sind Sklaven und müssen unentgeltlich arbeiten*.¹¹³⁸ At the same time, however, she did not care that the “Jewish slave” was bringing up her grandchildren, of pure, Nordic, blue blood in their veins. The *Labour Office* intervened, but to no avail. The girls worked there until late autumn. Some of them were even happy [x],¹¹³⁹ but they could not accept that the enemy was making a profit on their work.

1136 The Sochaczew-Błonie county governor’s office had two delegate offices, in Żyrardów and Grodzisk, each headed by a commissioner (*Landkomissar*). The *Landkommissar* in Grodzisk in 1940 was Richard Lissberg. See Max Freiherr du Prel, *Das Deutsche Generalgouvernement Polen. Ein Überblick über Gebiet Gestaltung und Geschichte* (Krakau, 1940), p. 207.

1137 (German) female forest inspector.

1138 (German) Jews are slaves and they must work without remuneration.

1139 [x] [with] that work.

[6] Excerpts from minutes of the Grodzisk *Judenrat* meetings.

Minutes No. 11. The Labour Section chairman Mr Zysman stated in his report for the period from 12 March to 1 April 1941 that there are about 800 men and 500 women able to work,

242 people paid 4 zlotys per person for work replacement968 zlotys
321 people were paid 3 zlotys each 963

Minutes No. 19 During 1–25 April, 299 people paid 4 zlotys per

person..... 1,196
386 people at that time were paid 3 zlotys each per day
for replacement work 1,158

Minutes No. 23. In June, the income of the Labour Section was .. 2,836

Expenditure 2,634

Minutes No. 32. This July, the income was 2,806

Expenditure 3,348

Aside from the steady work they perform for the army and in offices, they also work as seasonal farm labourers (men and women) in Amalienhof, Gawartowa Wola, Izdebno, Zabłotnia, Świerki, Osiny, and Opypy.¹¹⁴⁰

Minutes No. 38. Balance for the month of October 1940

Work details pay 5,865.80 paid out 3,641.90

Donations for *obozowicze* 7,132.50 paid out 8,818.04

Total12,998.30 12,459.94

Minutes No. 42. Income of the Labour Section in November

1940 8,490.20

Expenditure 8,813.35

¹¹⁴⁰ There were forced labour camps in Gawartowa Wola and Izdebno. Zabłotnia (Pass commune), Osiny (Kaski commune), Opypy (Grodzisk Mazowiecki commune) are in the Sochaczew-Błonie County. Świerki, Amalienhof – unidentified localities. See Marta Janczewska, *Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów na terenie dystryktu warszawskiego*, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 318.

Minutes No. 47. Income of the Labour Section in December

1940 8,436.90

Expenditure 6,727.20

In December, the permanent labourers were paid 1,835 in daily wages. Forced labour without remuneration was performed by up to 605 people. 50 persons paid a fixed monthly fee for work replacement from 20 zlotys up.

ARG I 757 f (Ring. I/15)

Description: original in 3 parts, typewritten with handwritten amendments, ink, Polish, 203×297 mm, 4 sheets, 6 pages; duplicate in 3 parts (3 copies, without the attachment), handwritten (BB*), pencil, Polish, 150×208 mm, damaged and missing fragments, 57 sheets, 57 pages; Hersch Wasser's note in ink on the margin of p. 1 of the second copy of each part: "Kampel." Attached is also Wasser's note in Polish and Yiddish: "Camps. Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Warsaw county. Submitted by comrade Kampelmacher (died from typhus in the Warsaw ghetto in early 1942)." Edition based on the original, 4 sheets, 6 pages.

152 *After July 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Sylwetka Lewkowicza Samuela, wiceprezesa Rady Żydowskiej w Grodzisku" [Profile of the Grodzisk Judenrat deputy chairman Samuel Lewkowicz].*

[1] Profile of the Grodzisk *Judenrat* deputy chairman Samuel Lewkowicz Resettled from Dresden as a Polish citizen, he arrives in Grodzisk in 1937. He is almost illiterate; he speaks little Polish and his writing skills are even worse. He works as an attendant in his father's shabby café. The Criminal Police arrested him in Warsaw in 1939 for theft on an international train and for putting passengers to sleep with opium. He leaves prison with the outbreak of the war. He is called up and he ends his military career with the capitulation of Warsaw.¹¹⁴¹

He returns to Grodzisk and wangles himself into the milieux of Germans and *Volksdeutsche*. He denounces peasants who trade poultry and dairy products

1141 28 September 1939.

on the market in Grodzisk. He comes to the market with soldiers and they requisition the produce, which he takes to his café. The café's supplies increase, while the Poles regard it as a nest of the economic fight against Polish peasants.

His success and good looks (he is tall, strong, and broad-shouldered) encourage him to court the pretty and rich daughter of the *Judenrat* chairman.¹¹⁴² At first, the girl is attracted to him, but her father, a stalwart man, forbids him to enter his home. This is the beginning of the hate and desire for revenge.

[Lewkowicz] makes friends with the German deputy mayor, who, being a gardener, sold him lots of expensive flowers for "his" [daughter] Halusia. The German deposes the Council chairman and introduces Mr L. onto the board. He begins to terrorise the Jewish population. He starts extorting money, clothing, leather, etc. He draws thousands of zlotys from the Council's purse, writing them off as "transitive sums" or "expenses for the authorities." A boor and stupid cad, he treats the Councillors in a roguish way. Fearing that they would fall into his disfavour, the Councillors pay him and his detective off. The latter was to make sure that Miss Halusia did not betray him and did not bestow his rivals with her charms.

He held revelries in his café all the time and he engaged the Councillors, who had to settle enormous bills, for which he promised deliveries of bread and food products to the kitchen, which cost the Council dearly.

The Council chairman, to whom Lewkowicz made direct and indirect proposals to become his partner, refused to be involved in that machination and, seeing the state of things, announced his resignation. But those present at the meeting, including all Council members, were not willing to accept his decision. The Council functioned without a chairman for a month. There was hope that that slap on the face would force the usurper to resign, but his actions became even bolder now that he was the boss. He soon found a worthy collaborator in the person of his fellow board member Mr Hutt. That well-matched duo often acts harmoniously but from time to time it does argue publicly. One points out to the other how much he has "earned" on their collaboration and the two of them call each other swindlers and thieves, bound to go to prison in handcuffs. Such scenes take place even during the Council meetings. At times, the German authorities make attempts to reconcile them as they need them both.

1142 It is most probably a reference to Jakubowicz, the first Grodzisk *Judenrat* chairman.

The inconvenient *feldsher* and representative of the people resettled from the Poznań voivodship has been in prison for a year, because the latter dared demand the leather L. had promised for the resettled and because he purportedly [made] other accusations as well.

Chosen by Mr L., Mr Hutt accepts the position of the Council chairman.

In order to obtain as much money as possible a special tax for sanitary appliances is collected from the tax payers. The 15,000 złotych collected for the disinfectors goes into the said men's private pockets. The Warsaw *Sanitätschef*¹¹⁴³ unsuccessfully continues to demand the said appliances until the resettlement of the Jews.

On 17 August, the gendarmerie took Lewkowicz from the Council office along with his family and fiancée to the Łowicz prison. They were charged with theft or purchase of products for civilians in the army canteen. The search conducted in their home resulted in a requisition of a large amount of alcohol and chocolate. A large amount of sole leather was removed from the home of Lewkowicz's fiancée.

The Jews sighed with relief, but their joy lasted only a week. The father took the blame, and the brother, who was charged with pimping girls to military men, remained in prison. The two men were sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment.

With the spread of the rumours about the establishment of a ghetto in the Warsaw District and about the resettlement of the Jews from Grodzisk to Żyrardów, the two men established a Citizens' Committee to collect a substantial sum of money. The situation was tough. The people felt obliged to help Mr L. Everybody donated money to avoid the resettlement. More than 30,000 złotych were collected, of which most was spent on expensive fur coats for Miss Halusia, Mrs Hutt, and another woman. Substantial sums were spent on jewellery, too. They pretended to go to Sochaczew as an official delegation, but Mr L. was not even admitted. Yet, the Committee kept paying. Upon his return, Lewkowicz assured that due to him there would be no resettlement, that a district would be established on the spot, and that even the Jews from

1143 (German) chief for sanitary affairs. Probably a reference to the head of the Department of Health and Healthcare at the Office of the Warsaw District Head. In 1940, it was Dr Kaminski. See B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, p. XXX; M.F. du Prel, *Das Deutsche Generalgouvernement Polen*, p. 200.

the area would arrive there. All the scammers rolled up their sleeves. The religious Jews from *Agudah* collected money, despite the Sabbath, for only those [3] who paid a large sum would be allowed to stay, as “gaon”¹¹⁴⁴ Lewkowicz stated. (The *Mizrachi* chairman called him that during a public meeting.)

Another delegation set out, this time the trio including the infamous Gutglass, who spent several months in Bereza for various blackmails.

In mid-January, when all that nonsense came to an end, the Jews were forced to pay exorbitant sums of money for invalid passes to Warsaw. Purportedly, the money was to cover the cost of the resettlement of the poorest; in fact it filled the pockets of the trio.

It seemed that after the resettlement from Grodzisk to Warsaw the Jews would be rid of those “activists guardians”. They tried to obtain positions in the local ŻSS. Seeing that they were exposed, they returned to their earlier area of activity, this time as organisers of a mechanised Jewish carpentry workshop working for the army. The *Landwirt*¹¹⁴⁵ granted them permission to transport food products for the Jewish population resettled to Warsaw. They bought those products in Grodzisk at official prices and sold them in Warsaw at profiteering prices. They then organised a labour battalion in Grodzisk and charged each labourer 3,000 złotys, purportedly for handling charges and to purchase food for the poor Jewish labourers.

After several weeks, they moved on to the area of their earlier activity for good.

By means of various denunciations, they caused the Sochaczew *Landrat* to liquidate Mr Rajnberg’s Jewish work detail and to requisition the machinery. He is another victim of “disobedience” toward Mr L.

Lewkowicz began to organise the district in Grodzisk. He himself gave an order to fence it in with wire and forbid anybody to enter that “paradise” without payment.

His influence reached even further. The Jewish families willing to settle down in the local estates need to pay a fee into the ghetto purse even though many of them must sell their last shirt to obtain the money. The trio and their

1144 (Hebrew) genius; title given to an illustrious rabbinical scholar and authority; here ironical.

1145 Probably a reference to a clerk of the Department of Nutrition and Economy (*Ernährung und Landwirtschaft Abteilung*) at the Office of the Warsaw District Head.

families put on weight, while the labourers from the battalion die of hunger and the newcomers from Rawa and Biała do not even get a glass of water, for Mr L. has ordered the ghetto guard¹¹⁴⁶ not to let them in.

Due to the squeeze, failure to organise a centre [?], lack of food, and the most primitive sanitary conditions an epidemic of typhus broke out. When the nurse demanded food [4] for the sick and straw for the mattresses, Mr L. replied that he can only offer planks for their coffins.

The great epic gradually came to an end.

The Polish mayor of Grodzisk,¹¹⁴⁷ who has long hated that denunciator and scammer, turned to the Grodzisk *Landsmanshaft* in Warsaw with a request to send a sanitary commission and people of goodwill to stop the evil state of affairs.

But nothing can be done for these poor victims. There were approximately 30 bedridden people in the ghetto buildings and during one day 7 people died. The anti-Semites pointed to the Jews as the source of the epidemic, which claimed victims among the Polish population as well. Finally, the District sanitary commission¹¹⁴⁸ arrived and gave an order to liquidate the Jewish battalion and even to burn some of the buildings.

On 20 July at 4 a.m. the gendarmerie and police awakened all the Jews and gave them 30 minutes to pack. The Jews were put on lorries and the electric commuter train. The Jews entrusted their property to God's providence.

The Jewish caravan left from Grodzisk, but this time Mr Lewkowicz was in the car, sad and depressed. This time, the paupers who surrounded him did not prostrate themselves before him. Hurling abuse on him, they demanded their money back. And at home, they threatened him with the local "Thirteen," while he hid away or promised them that they would soon return to Grodzisk for the third time.

ARG I 759 (Ring. I/21/1)

Description: original, typewritten, with handwritten corrections, Polish, 202×296 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Sign "(–)" at top of every page.

1146 In the original, *szojmer* (Yiddish, in Polish transliteration, from Hebrew *shomer*).

1147 Edward Radgowski.

1148 From the Office of the Warsaw District Head.

153

After July 1941 , Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Powroty Żydów do Grodziska po wysiedleniu" [Grodzisk Mazowiecki. The returns of the Jews to Grodzisk after the resettlement].

[1] GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI

The returns of the Jews to Grodzisk after the resettlement

The resettlement of all Jews from Grodzisk, who before had been brought from the nearby localities, such as Brwinów, Nadarzyn, Podkowa Leśna, the Grodzisk commune, and Milanówek,¹¹⁴⁹ took place on 20 February 1941. Some of the smarter ones stayed in the new place in Warsaw for only several days. They managed to return to Grodzisk under various pretexts and with help from the Polish police and gendarmerie. They maintained contacts with the Christian population and smuggled food products to Warsaw, buying them for cash or exchanging them for clothing.

Moreover, two groups of operators were formed who sought permanent settlement: 1) Hutt, Lewkowicz, and Gutglas, who came into contact with the political and military authorities. Under the pretext of organising a new labour battalion, they enable a number of smugglers to return in exchange for large sums of money. 2) The Rajnberg's group,¹¹⁵⁰ which brings in about a dozen carpenters in order to open a mechanised carpentry workshop working for the army. Following that, other people are settling down here as well and some of them return to their regular work as before the resettlement.

Around 1 April 1941, Hutt and Lewkowicz left with a group of 11 labourers and 9 other people. The former and the latter paid dearly to leave, except for the three poor labourers sent by the Grodzisk *Landsmanschaft*. The very next day, the group of 11 men began to work in *Heeresunterkunftsverwaltung*, where they were pushed and even beaten. The postman, whom they had tipped for delivery of letters not long ago, was particularly cruel to them. For several weeks the labourers received neither remuneration nor food for their

1149 Brwinów, Nadarzyn, Podkowa Leśna, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Milanówek (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1150 Zurych Rajnberg, see Doc. 141.

work. They had no food ration cards, so they were living in poverty except for those who had taken cash with them or those who begged or made some money in the countryside after work. When they complained about these conditions, they were threatened with the prospect of being sent back to the Warsaw ghetto.

The labourers working in Rajnberg's carpentry workshop fared better, as the appointed administrator managed to obtain food ration cards for them; so they received 500 grams of bread and 100 grams of fat per day. Their daily wage was 3.2 zlotys, while some more qualified specialists were making a sum of up to 6 zlotys per day for more efficient work. Later, there was some friction between the entrepreneurs from the two groups. They defamed each other before the authorities, but there was a few days' armistice, when they drank vodka in reconciliation. However, fearing that Hutt and Lewkowicz, who had more contacts with the authorities, would eventually take over his carpenters, Rajnberg did not consent to a compromise.

The *Landrat* from Sochaczew¹¹⁵¹ arrived when he learned of that and announced that in four weeks the carpentry workshops would be closed and that the machinery would be transported to Sochaczew.

The carpenters came to the entrepreneurs from the first group to humbly ask them to legalise their stay in Grodzisk; this was a fiction as the authorities did not interfere in the internal affairs of the Jews. It was yet another occasion to extort money. A new carpentry workshop was organised, this time under the aegis of *Heeresunterkunft*.

[2] Despite the efforts and purchase of some carpentry tools, that workshop never materialised.

The labourers from the labour battalion, which was enlarged, continued to live in poor financial conditions. HUV sent their remuneration to the *Transferstelle* in Warsaw, from where it eventually reached Grodzisk. So far, however, the labourers have received only documents confirming their employment in Grodzisk. The entrepreneurs do not inquire about the fate of their slaves, using whom they managed to return to Grodzisk. They continue to make a lot of money and they bring in even their distant relatives. They have plenty of everything at home.

1151 The Sochaczew County governor Karl Adolf Pott had the official title of *Landrat*.

With the coming of the warmer season, the living conditions in the Jewish district in Warsaw deteriorate. The crowds of Grodzisk residents go to Grodzisk and to their former friends in the neighbouring villages. They trade and some of them do farm work. They squat. There are no flats. Dozens of people are squeezing in small, dirty rooms. Moreover, both the newcomers and those who have been working in the battalion suffer from hunger. As a result, diseases spread, with typhus being the most common. The entrepreneurs are at a loss. They failed to provide accommodation and they are too stingy to pay for efforts to counteract the epidemic. They drive the illegals out of Grodzisk, even with the help from the Polish police. The disease is not selective, it has spread among legals, too. Police round-ups are useless. Those resettled to Warsaw for the second time leave only to return after several days. The police charge 10 zlotys or more per person. They do it eagerly as each such trip to Warsaw brings them up to 1,000 zlotys.

The seriously ill are put in Blajfeder's separate house. The thus created typhus hospital takes care of up to 30 patients. They lie on straw, unchanged since the beginning. A Red Cross nurse takes care of them, but soon she succumbs to typhus, too. The sick eat groats twice every day, purchased by the carpentry workshop labourers. After the workshop was closed the sick often starve. Dr Wodzyński sometimes visits the little hospital. Having no means [to help], he limits himself to words of consolation. The county physician, Dr Klamrzyński, came here twice but only to find out if the hospital was ready to be closed down.

The epidemic of typhus is spreading, they say it reaches the town and even the village, where the Jews go sometimes. The municipality turns to our *Landsmanschaft* to send a Jewish sanitary commission with a Jewish physician to Grodzisk, but all in vain. The situation of the Jewish population is worsening. The people avoid the Jews and forbid them to enter any home in the town or in the countryside. Street urchins point at them shouting, "Typhus is coming!" Finally, the *Sanitätschef* arrives from Warsaw and orders liquidation of the Jewish work detail and resettlement of all legally and illegally settled Jews. Both the healthy and the sick are loaded onto lorries and sent away as a gift to the Jewish district in Warsaw. Having left approximately 30 victims of typhus in the Jewish cemetery in Grodzisk, the operators returned to Warsaw to look for new sources of profit.

[3] The Grodzisk Mazowiecki Municipality GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI
No. I-47-24
27 June 1941

To Mr B. Kampelmacher
in Warsaw

In consultation with the county physician and Mr Fobbe,¹¹⁵² we are sending as attachment an official letter regarding the Commission. Please submit it to appropriate authorities in order for them to send a Commission to Grodzisk.

The issue of accommodating the members of the Commission could be settled with the appointed administrator of Jewish real estate after the Commission's arrival in Grodzisk.

duplicate¹¹⁵³ Mayor of Grodzisk Mazowiecki
/-/ Edward Radgowski

Attachment to: "The return of the Jews after the first¹¹⁵⁴ resettlement."

ARG I 757g (Ring. I/9)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten supplements., ink, Polish, 201×295 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages (including the attachment); duplicate (3 copies without the attachment, handwritten [BB*]), pencil, Polish, 146×205 mm, damages and fragments missing, 30 sheets, 30 pages; attachment, duplicate, typewritten, Polish, 203×148 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. Hersh Wasser's note in ink on p. 1 of the second copy of the duplicate: "Kampel."

Edition based on the original, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

1152 Paweł Fobe, deputy mayor of Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

1153 Probably retyped by B. Kampelmacher, in order to attach to this study. The original is not preserved.

1154 There is no word "first" in the title of the document, see above.

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After 3 May 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony concerning the resettlement of Jews from Grodzisk Mazowiecki.

[1] On 25 January of the current year, the former *Judenrat* in our town received an order to receive exiles from the surrounding towns such as Brwinów, Podkowa Leśna, Nadarzyn, Milanówek, etc., in total 1,200 people who had to leave their homes by the 31 January of the current year.

For this purpose, a special Housing Committee was created by the *Judenrat*, at the head of which was installed the current chairman of the *Landsmanschaft*, Kampelmacher. The committee, with its chairman at the helm, worked tirelessly and devotedly, and as an example made its own cramped flats (which already a year ago had been partially occupied by refugees from Pomerania¹¹⁵⁵) available for the newly arrived exiles.

In the course of this week, our town was turned into a genuine valley of tears. There were whole lines of carts carrying the Jewish poor; some with a bit of bed linen, others with pieces of furniture chopped up for firewood, and others with old sick fathers, mothers, or wives and small children. The panic in the town is beyond description. Hundreds of people, each of whom considered himself as something of a rich man if he had a roof over his head and some provisions such as potatoes and heating, have been turned into pariahs overnight and left to God's mercy.

And according to Jewish nature, we partly made peace with this thought, and our only desire was to stay where we were. But then [2] the full cruelty of the tragedy was revealed. On 1 February of the current year, we received official information that we are all being sent to Warsaw. Together with [natives of] Grodzisk, there were 5,400 people. Suddenly all the daily worries disappeared; pursuit of a piece of bread was substituted by the only concern, how to get into Warsaw with the survivors. For this purpose, 10–12-year-old children

1155 In Grodzisk Mazowiecki, there were people resettled from the Poznań and Łódź voivodships, including Grodzisk Wielkopolski, Aleksandrów, Szamotuły, Konstantynów, Łódź, and Wronki. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada," table VI. The information about refugees from Pomerania does not appear in other documents from this locality.

were spontaneously drawn in. Since they would not be noticed by the authorities, they could systematically transport small hand luggage to Warsaw.¹¹⁵⁶ A terrible image revealed itself: parents accompanying their saviours, [and] yearning to see them again safe as soon as possible, in order to further risk the freedom of their nearest. There were cases where such expeditions were revealed and, besides the confiscation [of items], the children paid for transgressing the regulations with merciless beating. These children are: Hering, Rosenzweig, Miller, and others. Those, on the other hand, who tried to transfer their belongings to Warsaw on carts or other means of transport, were assaulted on the way by dark elements and robbed of almost everything. Thus, they came to Warsaw naked and deprived of everything. And this for those who left the town voluntarily.

Here, unfortunately, one should mention the activity of the *Judenrat* in the last days of its existence, a sad page in Jewish history. 75 per cent of the members of our *Judenrat*, seeing that the ground burns beneath their feet, and that the old mare, on which they had been riding [3] and sucked its blood for almost a year-and-a-half, is going away, still did not give up their dirty work. These members of the council are Hutt, Lewkowicz, Kalisiak, Fajg, Michrowski, and others. Overnight, they formed a group of mediators who continued to raise larger sums of money, supposedly to extend the resettlement deadline, and at the same time to distract the attention of the population from their disappearance from the town. Only a few members of the *Judenrat* remained with the Jews, those who had not previously had a say. Aware that the word “expulsion” is the most tragic in life, they at least provided the unfortunate with help and advice during these moments. A liquidation committee was formed for the *Judenrat* with Mr Yehuda Glicensztajn as the chairman, one of the most hard-working and sober individuals hard to find in the present time. During the forced transportation, no one was beaten thanks to the above-mentioned chairman. For the local Jews, he was a true saviour.

A separate chapter began with the forced expulsion. Within 15 minutes, everyone stood on the main square (having been only allowed to take luggage of 25 kilos) at the disposition of the authorities, which locked people up in sealed freight cars and transported them under escort to Warsaw. They had

1156 Children below the age of 12 did not have to wear armbands with the Star of David.

to undergo quarantine in Warsaw and currently they are at the centres for refugees without the basic necessities to live. Some of them are simply swollen from hunger and cold. One does not need to wait long for consequences of such conditions. There are lots of sick people, and there have even been several instances of deaths: Sheyndl Birnboym, Joanna Bendeva, Apel, Menashe Kirshenboym, Tsadok Rumelsburg, Joanna Rumelsburg, Nosn Zarodnik. People roam in the streets without a place to rest their heads, and quite a lot of people go about with thoughts of suicide.

3 May 1941

ARG I 756 (Ring. I/806)

Description: duplicate (2 copies; 4 copies of p. 3), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 8 sheets, 8 pages. Letter “F” in the margins (green ink). Note in the margin of p. 1 in Yiddish in different handwriting: “Grodzisk.” Attached is a post-war note in Yiddish: “Grodzisk. (A fragment). 4 pages. 2 copies. Legible. Duplicate. Transcribed on 3 May 1941.” Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 4 sheets, 4 pages.

MSZCZONÓW

155 *After 2 May 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “אַמשינאָוו”¹¹⁵⁷ [Mszczonów], written as a letter from a son to a father, on persecutions of the Jewish population at the beginning of the German occupation; bombardment and burning of the town, executions of Jews and Poles.*

[1] Mszczonów

Dear Father, I am informing you that we are very well and wish to hear the same from you. Now I am turning to you with a request.

1157 In the original, Amshinov, the town name used by the Jews

In a town of 450 Jewish families, on 1 September 1939, before the first bomb fell on our town, the Jews from Łódź, Tomaszów, and so on, started wandering through our town. This lasted a few days until the 6th. On 6 September, the bombing of the town began, during which 10 Jews [and] 8 Christians fell. The Jews began to flee en masse from the town to the villages, cemetery, and so on. At the same time, they fled from all the other towns. On Friday, another small push from both sides took place; and *Yom Kippur*, that is on Saturday,¹¹⁵⁸ our enemy entered the town. As the Jews were hidden in the *bet hamidrash* and the cemetery, first of all they went to the cemetery and [then] into the *rebbe's bet hamidrash*. All the men were taken out, led by the rabbi,¹¹⁵⁹ over a hundred men, and all of them had to take off their hats and clothes, throw them into the trenches, and were then ordered to fill the trenches with their hands. The rabbi had to throw in his *shtrayml* and a silk *kapote*. While filling the trenches, all received blows and were thoroughly beaten, and then all had beards cut off. That lasted the entire *Yom Kippur*, until night-time. And then, they made the rabbi responsible for everybody presenting themselves for work the following day; otherwise they would be shot. Then they began to set fire to the town, because a Pole had fired.¹¹⁶⁰ People were forbidden to save themselves. In the home of Dovid Kaufman, Yosef Nusbaum was burnt, Yosef Wajnrajch, and his son, Hershl, aside from 20 men from Łódź [who were] passing through. Yosef Wajnrajch was shot because he wanted to save himself from the fire.

On Monday, the Jews came to work, where they were fiercely beaten, and further forced to fill the trenches with their hands. On Sunday evening, [2] the grandson of the miller, Itshe Zasławski, was forced to set fire to the synagogue and the *bet hamidrash*. Before that, he had to take out the Torah scrolls, placed them in a pile, and set them on fire; and as they did not burn, they doused them with petrol, and told the grandson to ignite it.

1158 The date here is Saturday 9 September 1939, *Yom Kippur* was two weeks later; perhaps used as a metaphor.

1159 Probably a reference to Yaakov Dovid Kalisz (1906–1942), the *tzaddik* of the Mszczonów dynasty.

1160 An accidental fusillade ensued on the night of 9–10 September, probably between drunken German soldiers, one of whom died. The Germans put the blame on the town inhabitants and in retaliation they executed several families and set fire on houses, one by one.

In the fire, inside the *bet hamidrash*, a pregnant woman [named] Gelbard and three children were burned, their[?] father Zajnwel, and Mrs Perkal and a child who were not permitted to leave the *bet hamidrash*. At the same time, Sholem Warszawski, Yeshayahu Sztrajberg, [and] Meir Ber Szuster were shot. This [quiet] lasted until Tuesday morning, when they shot 20 Jews together; also they shot the mayor, 2 priests, the doctor,¹¹⁶¹ and many more Jews.

Then, they continued to take Jews for hard labour, such as dismantling walls; at work, they beat them, as well as tore at their hair, and beat them with their rifle butts.

And 2 weeks later, at night, they ordered young girls and women to undress naked under the pretext of searches, and then forced them to surrender; and after these shameful acts, they confiscated money, jewellery.

After that, Jews gradually left the town, many out of fear, many due to destitution, not having where to live, since the entire town had been burnt, aside from a few little houses.

2 May 1941

ARG I 931 (Ring. I/790)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Hebrew letter “י” in the margins (ink).
Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

1161 On 11 September 1939, the Germans executed the Mszczonów mayor, Aleksander Tański, the parson Father Józef Wierzejski, Father Władysław Gołędowski, and a physician Dr Stanisław Zacharowicz.

156 [1941], Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account “נאדרזשין”¹¹⁶² [Nadarzyn]. Situation of the Jews from the first bombardment on 6 September 1939 until their expulsion to Grodzisk in winter 1941, then to Warsaw; execution in September 1939, composition of the Judenrat.

[1] Nadarzyn

The Jewish community in the said town is one of the oldest communities in Poland. The Jewish cemetery is about 500 years old.¹¹⁶³ There was an old stone synagogue there; 40 years ago, during the great fire in the shtetl, the old historic synagogue burnt down. The old *bet hamidrash* also burnt down during the fire.

After the fire, the community built a *bet hamidrash*, a *mikvah*, the rabbi's house, and a *hachnasat-orchim*.¹¹⁶⁴ A start was also made on building the walls of the synagogue; 4 walls were put up, and this skeleton stood until the outbreak of the war with Germany because there were no financial means to complete the building. The small communities of Raszyn, Podkowa Leśna, Młochów, and Helenówek also belonged to the Nadarzyn community.

On Wednesday, 6 September 1939, Nadarzyn was heavily bombarded. There were 2 Jewish casualties. The houses in the shtetl were destroyed by nearly 50 per cent.

All the Jews fled from there, and only 10 Jews stayed behind in the shtetl. All the Nadarzyn Jews fled to Warsaw and remained there until the *Sukkot chol hamoed*¹¹⁶⁵ when Warsaw was taken by the German army; then they got an opportunity to return to their previous place.

1162 In the original, the name is spelled Nadrazhin, probably instead of Nadarzhin, as it was pronounced.

1163 The community most probably dated back to mid-18th century, and the cemetery to mid-19th century.

1164 (Hebrew) admission to guests; a Sabbath shelter for impecunious travelers.

1165 (Hebrew) intermediate five days during which only the most necessary work is permitted.

They entered Nadarzyn on Friday, 8 September 1939. Shortly after their entry, they shot a young Jewish man, Moyshe Hochman. Hochman had not wanted to flee from the shtetl during the bombardment [2] because he did not want to abandon his old mother. The martyr was horrendously and brutally tortured and then put into a rubbish crate and shot in it. Later, they shot the old 85-year old tailor Shakhne Ber with his mute, mentally retarded son.

In an orchard behind Nadarzyn, they discovered a Jewish couple, Avrom Yechiel Skurnik and his wife. Poles informed the Germans about the Jewish couple. They went to the orchard, beat the Jews up, then took them into town and shot them both. Then, they shot a Jew, Yankev Moyshe Goldsztajn. Poles disclosed where a Jew, Yechiel, was hiding. When they approached him, they found him praying in his *tales* and *tefilin*.¹¹⁶⁶ They beat *Reb* Yechiel badly, told him to take a spade and come with them. Yechiel took his *tales* with him. Behind town, they told the Jew to dig out a grave. When the grave was ready, *Reb* Yechiel wrapped himself in his *tales*, stood in the grave, and thus he was shot.

Staying with Mrs Jas was a rabbi from another town and several other refugees from different towns, who fled to Nadarzyn and hid at [the home of] Mrs Jas. The rabbi and the refugees were also shot, before Mrs Jas was able to find out who the rabbi and the refugees were.

[3] When Warsaw fell, the Nadarzyn Jews returned to the shtetl; they found their homes completely looted, not the smallest thing left behind.

The Poles, neighbours of the Jews for generations, had taken all the household items: bed linen, furniture, clothes, kitchen utensils, absolutely everything. They even ripped out the flooring and windows, the jambs of the Jewish flats.

Poles moved into other Jewish flats, as instructed by the German authorities.

The returning Jews found the traces of the burnt down *bet hamidrash*, which the Germans had set on fire during their absence. The walls of the synagogue had been taken apart. All the Jews who had stayed in Nadarzyn and not fled to Warsaw were shot. Only 3 Jews survived who, having realised what

¹¹⁶⁶ (Hebrew, from *tefila*, prayer) two small leather boxes containing selected quotes from Torah handwritten on parchment. Adult males attach the respective boxes to their forearm and forehead during the morning service.

awaited them, fled and hid in a nearby village. This is how Shabse Cymerman, Leybush Hamersztajn, and Isroel Moyshe Żychliński survived.

When the Jews returned from Warsaw and found their homes destroyed, and not having any underwear, clothes, furniture and utensils, [still] they did not become desperate and helpless. [Since] it was still before the establishment of ghettos[and] Jews were still allowed to travel by train, the Nadarzyn Jews [4] began to develop trade with Warsaw. They brought various goods into Warsaw and started to bring from there one by one a stool, a cabinet, a table, clothes.

The trade was run mostly by Jewish women because it was more difficult for Jewish men to travel by train, and in general, men were hiding and did not emerge in the light of day to avoid being caught for work. In the beginning, seizures for work assumed terrible forms; the working Jews were savagely beaten and humiliated in the most horrendous way. The cutting and shaving of beards assumed a cruel form. A Nadarzyn Jew, Feldman,¹¹⁶⁷ who lived in the nearby shtetl of Podkowa Leśna, was quite cosy with the Germans and an agent of theirs. Feldman put together a *Judenrat* from his relatives and his people. He made his brother-in-law Meyer Hering president, and his brother Yuda Moyshe Feldman, brothers-in-law Dovid Manhajt, Pinches Dovid Zylberberg and other acquaintances members of the Council.

Ritual Jewish slaughter was forbidden in Nadarzyn. The Jewish butchers carried out illegal slaughtering and sold the slaughtered meat locally, as well as to Warsaw. Feldman used this to his advantage: He threatened the Jewish butchers that the Germans had found out about their secret slaughtering, forcing them to pay a larger sum of money weekly so that things [5] “remained quiet.” In this way, Feldman extorted large weekly sums from them.

Feldman also extorted a levy of 2,000 zlotys from the poor Jewish population.

In the middle of winter 1941, it became clear that the Jewish population of Nadarzyn was on the verge of an expulsion. The *Judenrat* with Feldman at the head announced that for 10,000 zlotys it might be possible to repeal the discriminatory edict. All the Jews gave away their last grosz in order to collect the sum and save themselves from the expulsion. The sum was collected.

¹¹⁶⁷ Mieczysław Feldman, member of the *Judenrat* in Podkowa Leśna, later in the Warsaw ghetto an employee of the Housing Department of the Warsaw *Judenrat*. See Doc. 157.

However, it did not help and in the winter of 1941 all the Nadarzyn Jews were driven to Grodzisk; they were allowed to take everything with them.

During the expulsion from Grodzisk a month later, the Nadarzyn Jews, together with those from Grodzisk, were driven to Warsaw, where they are gradually dying out.

ARG I 932 (Ring. I/868)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), handwritten (NN*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 15 sheets, 15 pages. On p. 1 (second copy) is a note by Hersh Wasser in Yiddish (ink): “Hoher”. In the margins (first and third copies), the Hebrew letter “n” (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 5 sheets, 5 pages.

PODKOWA LEŚNA

157

[1941], Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study “*Rekwizycja mebli dla wojskowości*” [Requisition of furniture for the army]. Profile and activity of Mieczysław Feldman in Podkowa Leśna, his role in requisition of household appliances from Jewish homes.

[1] Podkowa Leśna

Sochaczew-Błonie County

Requisition of furniture for the army

All the German work detail commandants and heads of institutions always wanted their furniture and comfort to match their pre-war standard of living, even if they stayed in the occupied territory for a short time. They usually looked for fully furnished premises for their offices and flats, but if they could not find any, they looked for furniture in other places. In exceptional cases, they bought furniture, always claiming that their funds were limited. They had the *Judenrat* help them look for depots of Jewish furniture, buying it dirt cheap. They always demanded a receipt of the cash paid. A signature and

a stamp were often enough; they filled in the receipts themselves. The reasons for this are known.

The *Ortskommendanturs* needed the most furniture. Sections of buildings or entire Polish or Jewish buildings were requisitioned by their orders, with little time (sometimes only a few hours) to vacate them. They provided military assistance for the furniture requisitions, which were conducted almost exclusively in Jewish homes and depots, while the Council provided the labourers. If a requisition proved to be particularly successful, they rewarded the labourers themselves. Here is an example.

A phone call from the *Ortskommendantur*. Captain Wahl calling the Council to inform them that there is a need for furniture for officers' rooms and dishes for the *Offizierskasino*. He states that the next day at 9 a.m. a non-commissioned officer shall come by car to the Council building. The party, consisting of 2 Councillors, 4 labourers, and the non-commissioned officer, leaves for Podkowa Leśna at the fixed hour. It picks up the representative of the local Jews, Mieczysław Feldman.

He is known for taking a lot of bribes from the local Jews, converted Jews, and Poles (who even wanted to kill him) for leaving their furniture intact. He was simply growing fat on Jewish and Polish blood. He extorted money from people from Podkowa Leśna, Brwinów and Nadarzyn under various pretexts, purportedly for interventions with the German authorities. In fact, he did not help [2] anybody. In one exceptional case, when a pauper wanted back a few items he smuggled, Feldman did pull some strings to have them returned. There were instances when the said Mr Feldman waited on the Sochaczew-Warsaw road with the gendarmerie ready to steal merchandise from the passing cars and to divide it between himself and the gendarmes. When the loot was too large and the owner opposed the seizure, they went to the *Landkommissariat* and the merchandise was sequestered. It was never returned to the original owner. But the *Landkommissar* gave Mr F. an order for the tannery, obliging it [the tannery] to sell about a dozen or several dozen kilos of leather at a minimal price for his service. Feldman knew how to get things done and to whom to turn. He received passes from the *Landkommissar*, which he sold at a high price. He obtained cereal, flour, and groats from the *Landwirtas* as well as various concessions from the Sochaczew *Kreishauptmann's* secretary. And now he is in Warsaw and he has a good job in the housing office at Krochmalna Street 22 despite his shameful past.

The German authorities trusted him so they turned to him in Podkowa Leśna to show them where *die reiche Juden*¹¹⁶⁸ lived. He was not at home, so the authorities turned to the local reeve instead.

The first victim was the Attorney Landau. A baptised Jew and an infamous Jew-hater, he would not sit next to a Jew on the electric commuter train which often started arguments with the Jews. The first thing his daughter did in his absence was to point at the picture of Virgin Mary on the wall and at the eternal light, and present documents confirming that the family had been baptised since 1822. The non-commissioned officer said: *Getaufter Jude ist auch Jude*.¹¹⁶⁹ As he liked Ladau's office furniture very much, nothing could dissuade him: neither the intervention of the local village head nor the statements of witnesses confirming that the Landau family was Polish. A desk, 6 armchairs, a sofa, a pier mirror, and a wardrobe were taken. The woman was sobbing, making threats, and promising to take revenge on the Jews. The vein of a Jewish denunciator woke up [3] in her as she revealed the addresses of other converted Jews living in Podkowa Leśna, though nobody asked her.

From there, they took a local gamekeeper, who was familiar with the local situation. The man led them to another convert, the Attorney Ginsburg. Again, the unwelcome guests were greeted by a daughter, who looked 100 per cent Semitic. This one too showed them a medallion with a saint on her necklace. She assured them that she was Polish, and said that they had no right to take her furniture. She gave them more addresses, too. She was aggressive toward the *Judenrat* representatives and she demanded that they fetch the Jewish deputy from Podkowa Leśna, Feldman, whom she had often paid off. Nonetheless, her desk, a file cabinet, and armchairs were taken away. The most expensive china and silver tableware was removed from the cupboard, purportedly for the officers' mess. Table cloths, carpets, and kilims worth thousands of zlotys were requisitioned too. The sight of such riches whetted the non-commissioned officer's appetite. Only after the Council representatives had pointed out that they could not strip that flat of all furniture, did the officer agree to go to a third place. He was taken to the homes of a few poorer Jews. He shouted that they were *arme Juden*¹¹⁷⁰ and was satisfied only

1168 (German) the rich Jews.

1169 (German) A baptised Jew is a Jew too.

1170 (German) Poor Jews.

when he noticed two rich men in the building. The Community representative did not explain to him that the two men were American and Swedish citizens, respectively. The two men were scared, as they thought they would be arrested. They voluntarily gave their possessions away, in order to remain at home. They lost their expensive tableware and crystal.

In the meantime, Feldman arrived, perhaps upon the injured parties' request. He shouted that nobody except for him had the right to make requisitions in his *Gemeinde*.¹¹⁷¹ He called the *Landkommissar*, too. When that did not work either, he did what the others had done and he provided the addresses of converted Jews living in Milanówek. That last offer was ignored. On their way back, they made a stop in Brwinów and stopped by the dentist Wilner, another converted Jew. His wife was Polish and she taught in an elementary school. She was correct in claiming that she was not Jewish and that the furniture was her property. Their answer was: *Wer einen Juden heiratet ist Jüdin*.¹¹⁷² The living room furniture fell victim to German greed, as the German had obtained more furniture than he needed and more than he had counted on.

The Gestapo came for that Wilner, who was accused of being a POW¹¹⁷³ member. It was said that he was warned about that and that he had fled. The Gestapo found only his mother-in-law and his child. His Polish mother-in-law refused to go with them, so they took her and the child by force. They kept her in gaol for some time, as they were convinced that Wilner's wife would relent but the woman refused to reveal her husband's hideout and offered her mother instead. After some time, they released the mother-in-law and the grandson. Wilner has been in hiding ever since.

The wronged foreigners filed a complaint to the District and to their consulates. Consequently, a letter came with an order to return their possessions to them. The *Commandantur* fetched the representatives of the Council, who shifted the responsibility, claiming that the village head had known that the wronged men were foreigners. A promise was made to return their possessions, but the Germans only returned some trifles, taking the more important and expensive items with them "as a souvenir" upon their departure. Before

1171 (German) commune, community.

1172 (German) The woman who marries a Jew is a Jewess.

1173 Abbreviation of Polish: *Polska Organizacja Wojskowa* (Polish Military Organisation), established by Józef Piłsudski, active illegally during 1914–1919.

the departure, an officer from the officers' mess stopped by the *Judenrat* and sent somebody to fetch some trifles like ashtrays and brushes, saying *Wir machen keinen Schweinereien, wir bleiben immer feine Leute, wie im Jahre 1914*.¹¹⁷⁴

ARG I 840 (Ring. I/254)

Description: original [?] (typewritten, 208×295 mm), duplicate (2 copies, handwritten – CC*, pencil 147×208 mm), Polish, 24 sheets, 26 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Polish: "Bernard Kampelmacher".

Edition based on the original, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

WISKITKI

158 *After February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, Bernard Kampelmacher. Study "Wiskitki. Landkomisariat Żyrardów, Kreishauptman sochaczewski" [Wiskitki. Żyrardów Landkommissariat, Sochaczew Kreishauptmann]. Profile of the Jewish population before the war, the beginning of the German occupation, levies, round-ups, the Judenrat, deportees, the activity of the Welfare Committee, the deportation to the Warsaw ghetto on 3 February 1941.*

[1] Wiskitki

Sochaczew-Błonie county

[2] WISKITKI

Żyrardów Landkommissariat, Sochaczew Kreishauptmann

Wiskitki is located on the Łowicz-Sochaczew-Żyrardów railway line. It has 6,000 residents, of whom 1,500 are Jewish. Wiskitki survived the 1939 military operations almost intact. Up to 300 Jews fled to Warsaw at the beginning of September, while the rest stayed in town.

1174 (German) We never play dirty. We remain good people at all times, as in 1914.

It is a farming locality. The Christians are farmers and petty craftsmen, while the Jews are traders, usually grain traders, or craftsmen, of whom 40 per cent are cottage industry hosiers. During the war, the hosiery industry almost ceased to exist here. It was replaced by small-scale smuggling of produce to Skierniewice, Sochaczew, and Warsaw.

As for the Community buildings, there is the synagogue, which became a centre for the resettled,¹¹⁷⁵ and the *mikvah*, which is open from time to time, also during the war. The Jewish Community covered the maintenance costs. Before the war there was a “Yabne”¹¹⁷⁶ school in a Community building. It had approximately 50 pupils. The remaining 100 students attended the public school together with the Polish children.

The coexistence of the Jewish population with the Polish one has usually been fair. The few performances of visiting ONR members had no substantial influence on Jewish trade and crafts.

Several days after the arrival of the Germans, an army commandant ordered all the Wiskitki population to gather on a large area of land out of town and kept the people there for the whole day until late evening. He gave a speech on loyalty and made a plea for non-resistance to the authorities and submission of weapons. In the end, he dismissed everybody except for four hostages: 2 Christians including a priest, and 2 Jews including a rabbi. They were released after five days. Four weeks later, there was an order to conduct a census of the Jewish population. One day, a German came from Żyrardów and painted the word “JUDE” on all the Jewish shop windows [2], charging one zloty per pane. The flats of the Jewish craftsmen were marked in the same way.

In November 1939, two high-rank officers came from Żyrardów. They went into the flat of the Jewish Community chairman and gave him several days to pay a 20,000 zloty levy and to deliver furniture. The sum was divided between the Jews, who had to pay from 50 to 1,000 zlotys.

Only 15,000 zlotys was collected and the Community representative took it to Żyrardów and promised to pay the rest in the future, but the remaining money was never demanded. Some of the furniture was delivered, too. It was bought for cash or requisitioned from the Jewish inhabitants.

1175 A transport of deportees from *Wartheland* reached Wiskitki in December 1939.

1176 Also spelt Yavne, place of an ancient Talmudic academy; a network of schools affiliated to the Mizrahi party.

The *Judenrat*

At first and during the war, the Jewish Community was led by the former Council¹¹⁷⁷ composed of 8 members. During the first weeks, it delivered labourers to various work details. Aside from that, Jews were seized on the streets [and ordered] to clean, wash cars, and serve the soldiers; at that time there were up to several thousand of them; 50-100 people were delivered every day. The wealthier Jews sent replacements. The Wiskitki Council had its permanent delegate office in the Żyrardów *Arbeitsamt's Nebenstelle*.¹¹⁷⁸ That was where they set the number of labourers to be delivered to perform forced labour, also on the roads. Women had to perform forced labour, too. Aside from labourers who did farm work, none of them received remuneration for their work despite frequent promises. 40 labourers worked permanently in Guzów.¹¹⁷⁹

In August 1940, 50 people were sent to a labour camp in the Lublin district. After several weeks of torture, cash was gathered to release them.

The *Judenrat* paid the Żyrardów Labour Office to relieve the labourers' lot. It even stayed in contact with the main representative of the Labour Office in Sochaczew by the agency of the infamous middlemen and future chairmen of the Sochaczew Council: Gelbsztajn and Libert.¹¹⁸⁰ [3] A large portion of the Wiskitki Council budget was transferred there for various bribes, which went mostly into the pockets of the said "bosses."

The Wiskitki Council did not change as a result of the *Kreishauptmann's* ordinance on the establishment of *Judenräte*. It was only enlarged by four members for a total of 12.

Monthly fees in the amount of 5-50 zlotys were introduced. The Jewish citizens brought the fees to the Council's cash-desk themselves. Those unwilling to pay were forced, supposedly by the agency of the Inland Revenue. A sequestrator and his assistant hired by the Council collected the fees, for which they received remuneration.

The Inland Revenue also requested that the Council collect due taxes in the amount of 32,000 zlotys from the citizens. Requests to pay the due taxes were

1177 That is, the pre-war Jewish Community board. Members of the *Judenrat* in Wiskitki were among others: Moyshe Beker, Chaim Wiślicki, and Israel Itzek Zand. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/720, p. 19.

1178 (German) branch office.

1179 Guzów (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1180 Itche Gelbstein and Shmuel Libert. See Doc. 138.

sent. 2,000 zlotys was paid by the agency of the Council. It proved impossible to collect 20,000 zlotys on account of death, departure, etc., while the remaining 10,000 [zlotys] was paid directly into the Purse, sometimes in instalments.

Community Board

It was dissolved when the German authorities took over. They appointed a mayor who was a *Volksdeutscher* and a rich brickyard owner. Unlike before the war, now he was an anti-Semite. Despite the bribes paid by the Jews he never found the courage to come to their defence. Another *Volksdeutscher*, Spreng, a bricklayer by profession, often spoke in favour of Jews.

The Jews rarely used food ration cards. Sugar was rarely rationed, also to the Jews in the Christian cooperative. Initially, the Jewish bakers baked bread for the Poles; later it was prohibited. The Jews were not assigned any meat. Slaughter went on in secret. [4] Kosher meat was transported to Żyrardów, too. Sometimes, when the Jews denounced other Jews guilty of secret slaughter, the police from Żyrardów would come and [find] the meat and even live cattle.

Aid Committee

In late December 1939, the resettled Jews from the vicinity of Włocławek, Lubień and Kowal as well as from Łódź, Aleksandrów, and Konstantynów arrived to Wiskitki.¹¹⁸¹ Inspector Żychliński¹¹⁸² came from the Joint in Warsaw and established a Committee to aid the resettled and the poor.¹¹⁸³ A soup kitchen was soon opened. It issued over six hundred midday meals every day and a quarter of a kilo of bread every day. The Committee had five members, the Council's secretary being also secretary of the Committee. The resettled people were located in the synagogue and vacant flats. There were instances that the Committee paid rent for the indigent resettled. A Polish lady doctor took care of the sick and weak, in return for modest remuneration. Medicines

1181 According to the AJDC list of 1 June 1940, there were 490 refugees in Wiskitki at that time. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/28, p. 6.

1182 Aba Żychliński (1891–?) became a clerk of the Committee to Help Refugees from Germany (*Komitet Pomocy Uchodźcom z Niemiec*) in 1938. In January 1940, he became an AJDC inspector for the Warsaw District. He died during the war. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/18, p. 2.

1183 The Committee to Help the Resettled Jews (*Komitet Pomocy Żydom Wysiedlonym*) in Wiskitki began to operate in December 1939. Its members were, among others: Moyshe Beker, Chaim Wiślicki, Yechiel Rozner, and Shimon Rajchert. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/720, pp. 2–5.

arrived from the Warsaw TOZ, among others, but despite the efforts the financial aid from TOZ was never received. The Committee looked after the poor children; it gave them milk and rolls every day. Due to the lack of funds for that purpose and the CENTOS's refusal to subsidise the campaign, that charitable institution had to be liquidated.

Most of the time the Committee relied upon the subsidies from the Joint, up to 4,000 zlotys per month. When the Joint stopped subsidising the kitchen, the Council itself paid for its operation. The customers of the kitchen paid 5 groszes per day. During Passover, everybody received 1 kilo of *matzo* and five zlotys. The kitchen operated until the resettlement.

Resettlement

In late January there were rumours about the approaching resettlement from Wiskitki. A Committee of the *Judenrat* was established to [5] to collect a substantial amount of cash in order to buy Wiskitki out of that decree¹¹⁸⁴ and to make sure that the inhabitants would remain. The fees were a minimum of six hundred zlotys per family. The efforts were made by the agency of the representative of the *Arbeitsamt* in Sochaczew. Gelbsztajn and Libert had their dirty hands in that affair, taking money to buy bedroom furniture worth three thousand zlotys and other furniture for the clerks. Some of the cash went to the Wiskitki mayor to enable the resettled Jews to take their possessions with them. In the end, it was not achieved despite the promises.

On 1 February 1941, it became known that, just like in Żyrardów, settlement would take place despite the expenses and efforts. The mayor and the newly sequestered Polish police hampered the sale of furniture to buyers who arrived from nearby villages. On the third day, the Germans arrived, surrounded the town, and threatened to shoot every Jew who would not leave the town. The mayor gave an order to take only parcels weighing a maximum of 25 kilos, but the people disregarded that and took whatever they could carry. The *Judenrat* rented peasants' carts on its own expense. The sick, women, and children were put on the carts, while the men trailed behind. The procession was heading towards Żyrardów, accompanied by the peasants' great sympathy. Some of the resettled Jews had no buyers for their furniture and no Christians they could entrust it to, so they left their possessions for God's mercy.

1184 In the original, in Polish transliteration *gyzajre*.

They arrived in Żyrardów under escort, but the Żyrardów Jews were no longer there; they had been deported to Warsaw. The women and children were put in carriages, while the men were loaded into freight cars. They arrived in Warsaw five hours later.

Those who had a place to stay could go directly to their new flat, while the rest had to go through quarantine before they began the harsh life in the refugee centres.

[6] After the departure of the Jews from Wiskitki, the Commune Office began to demolish the wooden Jewish houses. Christians moved into the brick ones and paid rent to the Commune Office.

From time to time, the Wiskitki Jews come here from the Warsaw ghetto. The local peasants host them however best they can; they let them stay overnight. The Jews look at Wiskitki as on some paradise lost.

ARG I 1047 (Ring. I/941)

Description: original (typewritten, handwritten supplements, ink, 206×295 mm, minor damages and missing fragments); duplicate (3 copies, typewritten, 206×295 mm), Polish, minor damages and missing fragments, 22 sheets, 25 pages. Hersch Wasser's note in ink on p. 1 of all copies: "Kampel."

Edition based on the original, 3 sheets, 6 pages.

159 *After November 1941, Warsaw ghetto, [Zimler]. Testimony "Wrażenia z pobytu w okolicach Wiskitek" [Impressions of my stay in the vicinity of Wiskitki], recorded by Yekhiel Górny. Account of three forbidden sojourns near Wiskitki, where the author worked for the peasants as a barber.*

[1] Impressions of my stay in the vicinity of Wiskitki
Before Pentecost¹¹⁸⁵ 1941, being unable to provide for myself and my wife, I went with her to my homeland in the vicinity of Wiskitki. I went as a barber to the neighbouring villages of Oryszew, Drzewicze Stare-Nowe and

1185 Probably a reference to the *Shavuot* festival.

Kozłowice.¹¹⁸⁶ I worked for the farmers, who paid me 2-3 zlotys for a shave and a haircut and treated me and my wife to sumptuous meals. The farmers' attitude toward us was remarkably good. In the village of Drzewicze, I worked and slept on the farms of the following farmers: Jodłowski, Bodych, and Paluch. I slept two nights at Jodłowski's home. In Oryszew, I usually ate at Znamirowski's, a village head, and we slept at the farmer Dokaszewski's home. Each time I stayed at the village head's place, I earned 8-10 zlotys plus food. After 4 weeks, my wife and I returned to Warsaw, where I worked in the barber shop for refugees from Łódź at Nowolipki Street 2. After several (3 to 4) weeks spent in Warsaw, my wife and I returned to my homeland. It was the height of summer. Peasants have less time then, and they take less care about their appearance. I was earning less as a barber, so I began to help them in the field, mostly on Kiełbowicz's farm in the village of Bindrówka.¹¹⁸⁷ We usually slept and ate on his farm. I need to stress [2] that whenever we had nowhere to sleep we went to Kiełbowicz, even if we had to walk back for several kilometers.

In Kolonia Oryszewska, I slept at Raczkowski's, who received me and my wife very well. My wife was even able to wash my underwear there, not to mention that we were able to wash ourselves, too. The following incident took place in that locality. A farmer of German origin, who had a second wife, put us up and fed us. Thereafter, he slipped me three eggs in secret so that his wife would not see that. Even though he was German, he was a good man. Again, after several weeks of wandering from village to village (staying in one place was out of the question), I returned to Warsaw

In October 1941, I went there (Drzewicze) again. After I cut the farmer's hair and shaved him, his wife treated us (there was one more woman with us) to breakfast and then to a very sumptuous meal. I would like to stress that his wife also took off my wet shoes and gave me her son's shoes for a while. She put my shoes on the stove, dried them, and then handed them back to me. It was at farmer Witkowski's home. In the neighbouring village of Drybus,¹¹⁸⁸ we slept at the Krzyts' home. Once, it was on Friday after we got up, we were treated to noodles with milk [3] for breakfast and potatoes with

1186 Throughout the text, the second name is spelled Drzewice. Oryszew, Stary Drzewicz, Nowy Drzewicz, Kozłowice (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1187 Bindrówka (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1188 Drybus (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

gravy. Equipped for the road, we set out. I cut another farmer's hair and we ate our fill again. It was 11 o'clock when I shaved another farmer, for which we were treated to some very tasty pea soup. We set out again and we arrived in Drzewicz Stary at meal time, at 3 p.m., we were treated to beetroot soup and potatoes. Even though we were full, we ate that meal, too. In short, we had food galore. In Bindrówka, we slept in a house all the time, while in other villages we slept on hay in barns.

Once on the crossroads of the Oryszew-Bindrówka road, two gendarmes drove by. I was walking along that road, too. They were cycling. I was afraid they would stop me. And even though one of them saw I was a Jew, I managed to walk past them. I often visited the village of Buszyce, where I usually stayed at the farmer Sitorz's, who lived on the route to the village of Wyczółki.¹¹⁸⁹ I often ate and slept on his farm. In Wyczółki, I often stayed at Zieliński's, who lives near a cross.¹¹⁹⁰ (Other Zielińskis live there as well.) The peasant, his wife, and children are all good people. They let the Jews in, that is us, even though the farmer's mother very much objected to that and despite the fact that he lived on the crossroads where the gendarmerie and the police often drove by. He gave no heed to that and he even said that he had good contacts with the "police". Once I met Zieliński's daughter [4] at their place. She used to be my neighbour in Wiskitki. I used to cut her child's hair free of charge in my shop. She told her parents about that. It so happened that I was unwell that day. I had a cough. The daughter asked her parents to give me milk after supper. I got half a litre of hot milk with 50 grams of butter.

I also used to visit the village of Janówka,¹¹⁹¹ where I usually stayed at farmer Janicki's. I felt at home there. After a sumptuous supper (1½ litre of milk and 1 kilo of bread with butter), we would play the gramophone. In Janówka, I attended the Zawistowskis' wedding. A few peasants refused to allow us to stay for the night. They preferred to give us a sumptuous meal, but not to put us up, but there were not many of those. There were also those who asked whether Jews would welcome them, if the Poles were the ones forced to wander.

We returned to Warsaw again after several weeks.

1189 Buszyce, Wyczółki (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

1190 Possibly a reference to a crucifix, often placed on a crossroads or by a road.

1191 Possibly a reference to Janówek near Oryszew (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

The third time, I spent about a month in those places. I stayed there approximately four months altogether.

My last return was on 17 November 1941 on the memorable day when 8 Jews were executed for crossing into the Aryan district.¹¹⁹² I resumed my employment in the shop at Nowolipki Street 2. I had been forced to return to Warsaw [5] due to very strict observance of the ban on staying anywhere outside the Jewish district. I would like to state that, had I been able to return, I would have literally flown there, even at night. There were also peasants who gave food, but would steal the things that were left with them for a moment.

The other interesting incident took place in the home of the housewife, who had dried my shoes. My wife and I visited her once. We saw a Pole, whom we did not know, waiting for dinner. Seeing us, the housewife did not give that poor Pole anything to eat. But I shared my dinner, her treat to us, with that man. The farmers were very happy about that. Once, a farmer gave me 3 kilos of flour, 1 kilo of peas and 1 kilo of sugar.

One Sunday evening, a fine snow fell. It was not the first snowfall that year, though. We had no place to sleep. My wife and I went into the first farmstead we saw and I suggested that I would cut the landlord's hair. The housewife tried to weasel out of it, saying that she had no money. With a place to sleep in mind, I paid her no heed and I got down to work. And even though there was the last loaf of bread in the house, the housewife gave us a piece each plus warm milk. We spent the night there.

The Jews, who were wandering about [6] in the area, lived mostly in Buszyce and Duni[n]pol.¹¹⁹³ Even those who did not work had food to eat.

The attitude of the peasants toward the Germans was coerced, which means that they gave in to the authorities when there was no alternative. Generally speaking, their attitude toward them was very icy.

ARG I 1046 (Ring. I/942)

Description: duplicate (3 copies), handwritten (JG*), pencil, Polish, 148×206 mm, minor damages and missing fragments, 18 sheets, 18 pages. Hersch Wasser's note on p. 1 of copies 1 and 2 in ink in Yiddish: "Zimmler, barber from Wiskitki, 31 years old, by Górný. No. 10. 109-1942/January 1."

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 6 sheets, 6 pages.

1192 See Sh. Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem*, p. XXX

1193 Duninopol (Sochaczew-Błonie County).

160

11 December 1940, Sochaczew, Reimann, Assessor to the Sochaczew-Błonie County Governor. Letter to Jakub Baron, chairman of the Judenrat in Żyrardów. Attached is “Anordnung über die Bildung eines jüdischen Wohnbezirk in der Stadt Żyrardow” [Ordinance regarding establishment of a Jewish residential district in the town of Żyrardów].

[1] *Der Kreishauptmann*
of the Sochaczew-Błonie county

Sochaczew, 11 December 1940

To the Eldest of the Jews
Baron¹¹⁹⁴
Żyrardów

Attached Ordinance I, regarding establishment of the residential district for Jews in Żyrardów is sent for you to execute it and to comply with it.

I appoint you, the Eldest of the Jews and the leader of the residential district in Żyrardów, and I hold you accountable for the proper implementation of my ordinances.

In order to perform your duties, you are to organise the Order Service subordinated to you, consisting of 50 men. Members of the Order Service are to wear additional armbands with an inscription “Ordnungsdienst.” The names of the Order Service members are to be reported in writing to me, the *Landkomissar* in Żyrardów,¹¹⁹⁵ and the Żyrardów mayor.

You are to immediately submit to the *Landkomissar* in Żyrardów and to the mayor of the town of Żyrardów a detailed register with the number and

1194 Jakub Baron, chairman of the *Judenrat* in Żyrardów. Members of the board were Mayer Henoch Grynbaum, Shlama Szulman, Symcha Binem Zyskind, Chaim Brzeziński. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1190, p. 14.

1195 In 1940, the *Landkommissar* was Wilhelm Denk. M.F. Du Prel, *Das Deutsche Generalgouvernement Polen*, p. 207.

location of dwellings vacated, as a result of the Jews' resettlement to the residential district, in the remaining part of the town.

The allocation of flats in the Jewish residential district shall be your responsibility.

Moreover, you are to comply with my ordinances as rigorously as possible.

In replacement

Reimann¹¹⁹⁶

Assessor

[2] Ordinance I. regarding establishment of the Jewish residential district in the town of Żyrardów

1. Pursuant to the ordinance of 13 September 1940, regarding restrictions on residence in the General Government (G.G. Ordinance Journal I, p. 288), a Jewish residential district is hereby established in Żyrardów to accommodate Jews from Żyrardów and those arriving in the town.

2. The residential district consists of the streets within the following borders:

Familienstrasse, 1 Maistr[asse], Bahnhofstr[asse], except for the buildings in the direction of Bahnhofstr[asse], Taubenstr[asse], Tischlerstr[asse], and the water ditch stretching north-south between Familienstr[asse] and Tischlerstr[asse]¹¹⁹⁷

3. The Jews living beyond these borders are to move to the residential district by 15 December 1940.

4. The Jews are permitted to take all their furniture with them.

5. Those who fail to move to the residential district within the specified deadline shall be resettled by force within one hour with a right to take 25 kilograms of baggage.

6. The allocation of a flat in the residential district is carried out by the appointed superior of the Jews, Jew Baron.

7. The flats, vacated as a result of the moving out of the Jews, shall be confiscated. It is forbidden to enter them or appropriate their furnishings without permission.

¹¹⁹⁶ Handwritten signature.

¹¹⁹⁷ The Sochaczew ghetto border ran along the streets Mireckiego, 1 Maja, and Okrzei.

Violation of this ban shall be punished most severely, in accordance with the valid special laws.

8. After 15 December 1940, Jews in Żyrardów are forbidden to leave the residential district demarcated for them.

Those who break this ban shall suffer a most severe punishment.

Sochaczew, 11 December 1940.

Der Kreishauptmann
of the Sochaczew-Błonie county
/-/ Pott

ARG I 1010 (Ring. I/353)

Description: p. [1] original, typewritten, German, 208×296 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page; p. [2] duplicate, typewritten, German, 208×296 mm, minor missing fragment, 1 sheet, 1 page.

161

Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto. Ordinance issued by the Sochaczew-Błonie County Governor, Żyrardów County Commissioner, on 20 January 1941, for the Judenrat in Żyrardów, regarding flats of the Jews resettled to Sochaczew.

[1] *Der Kreishauptmann*
of the Sochaczew-Błonie county
Landkommissar Żyrardów

Żyrardów, 20 January 1941

During the resettlement of the Jewish families to Sochaczew, it is absolutely necessary to utilise all available vacant flats in the Jewish district.

The chairman of the Jewish community, Jakub Baron, is hereby authorised to receive from the owners all keys to the houses and flats in such houses. Should the keys not be handed over, the gendarmerie shall open such flats by force.

round seal
Der Kreishauptmann
of the Sochaczew-Błonie county

illegible signature¹¹⁹⁸
Landkommissar

ARG I 1073 (Ring. I/328/1)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (Np*), pencil, German, Yiddish, 148×160 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Sign or letter “v” in the margins (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

162 *Date unknown, Warsaw ghetto. Authorisation issued on 3 February 1941 by Labour Office Sochaczew, Żyrardów branch, to Anders, an employee of the Labour Office, to pick up a washbasin from the Jewish district.*

Labour Office Sochaczew
Żyrardów Branch

Żyrardów, 3 February 1941

Certificate

Mr Anders, an employee of the Żyrardów branch of the Labour Office in Sochaczew, is authorised to pick up a washbasin, which has been at the *Judenrat* for repair.

round seal
Branch director Labour Office
illegible signature¹¹⁹⁹

I attest to the authenticity of the above data.

round seal
illegible signature^y

1198 ^y Written in Yiddish.

1199 ^y Written in Yiddish, also below.

ARG I 1074 (Ring. I/328/2)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (Np*), pencil, German, Yiddish, 148×160 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. “v” in the margins (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

163 *After February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “ושייראָדאָוו” [Żyrardów]. Situation of the Jewish population from September 1939 (economic life, social and professional structure, contacts with Poles, Jewish community) until the expulsion in February 1941.*

[1] Żyrardów

Żyrardów, an industrial town with up to 28,000 inhabitants before the war, included up to 3,000 Jews. From other nations, up to 5,000 *Volksdeutsche* lived in Żyrardów. As in other towns, also in ours, the Jews engaged mostly in trade and crafts, craftsmen such as tailors, shoemakers, milliners, gaiter makers, furriers, watchmakers, carpenters, saddlers, bakers, etc. Certain professions, such as millinery, furriery, and gaiter making, in our town, lay completely in Jewish hands. Tailoring, watchmaking, and saddlery were dominated by Jews. More or less, all the specialists earned their living and rarely kept apprentices. The wealth of the craftsmen was average; one could find many who were quite poor, but there also were quite rich house owners.

The Jews lived under quite good relations with the local, mostly working population, until the time of *owszem*,¹²⁰⁰ Prystorowa,¹²⁰¹ etc., came. Also, here pickets were set up in front of Jewish shops and the situation became tense. At night Jewish pedestrians were beaten and the police turned a blind eye. There was a part of the population, which did not follow the agitators

1200 See footnote XXXX.

1201 Janina Prystor (1881–1975), social activist and politician, activist of the *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna* (Polish Socialist Party), member of the lower chamber of the *Sejm* (Polish parliament) in 1935–1938, known for her 1936 draft act prohibiting ritual slaughter.

and secretly maintained relationships with the Jews, but rarely did anyone have the courage [to do this] openly. There is no point in mentioning relations with the Polish population [2] because few peasants live in the surroundings of Żyrardów and they travel for trade mostly to the neighbouring towns of Wiskitki and Mszczonów.

The relations with the state and communal administration were the same as with the population. Earlier quite loyal, and later anti-Semitic. “The ‘loyalty’ of the administration towards the Jews in the best times was only superficial. This can be illustrated by the following fact: in Żyrardów Jewish and non-Jewish children used to learn together, and this disturbed the leading personalities of the town administration and allowed for the construction of a special building for the Jewish school and [was thus] arranged. The Jews were persuaded that the purpose was to their benefit, but the true meaning of it was segregation.

Several weeks after the outbreak of the war, relations began to normalize. Merchants gradually started to trade; craftsmen gradually began working. Rarely could anyone earn his entire living, so one lived off what was still left. Jews did not acquire new sources of income. There were also no particular sources of income, which had completely stopped; everyone, to a certain extent, occupied himself with the same as before the war.¹²⁰² This was the situation until the beginning of 1939, when it began to deteriorate. The relations between the Christians and Jews were not particularly hostile at that time, but also not particularly friendly.

The board of the Jewish community of Żyrardów consisted of 7 people. The community was a place of never-ending fights. The supporters of the rabbi conducted a war against the supporters of the *moreh hora'ah*. As usual, one denunciation followed another, and there was no shortage of ill blood. In such an atmosphere, the community board did not think much about aid work, did not carry out any constructive help, and was satisfied with [merely] supporting a poor wanderer.

The aid work was carried out on a small scale by the *gemilut chesed* fund, which lent small sums to craftsmen and petty merchants, to be paid back in small instalments, and *Linat Hatzedek* which distributed medical aid to poor, sick people.

1202 ^c Fragment moved from p. [4], as marked by the author with letters xx.

At the moment of the outbreak of the war, a great turmoil broke out in the town and in general. A huge wave of refugees, mostly Jews, started streaming through the town. Old Jews with long beards, with a *tales* and *tefi-lin* under the arm, barely dragging their feet, wandered aimlessly. The wave of refugees and the bombardment of the town started to take their toll [3] so the Jewish inhabitants of the town also began to leave their homes and wander off, wherever their eyes and their legs took them.

The young people said goodbye to their mothers, fathers, to wife and children, took a bundle under the arm and off they went! Many of them died on the way, many found themselves on the other side of the border,¹²⁰³ and the largest part later returned to the town. In the meantime, however, Jewish belongings were stolen. This nice bit of work was mostly carried out by the local Polish population. Clearly, the circumstances had an immediate effect on Jewish livelihood; some shops were taken over by non-Jews, some were closed, and some closed down on their own. No one thought of aid work at that time. It was also not urgent as everyone had more or less stocked up on food for a few weeks; and at the time no one thought about anything other than food.

One must mention the help which the Jews of Żyrardów provided for the refugees, mostly from Łódź, who did not manage to reach a destination and remained stuck along the way. They were all brought together on a sports field outside town, where they were kept for two weeks under the open sky. And it rained continually. The local Jews ceaselessly collected food and clothes; Jewish girls risked their lives and kept bringing food to the hungry. One did everything possible and impossible to save [4] [. . .] from a certain death. The Jewish refugees, who at that time were on the sports field and still came home alive, have mostly the Jews of Żyrardów to thank.

7/4¹²⁰⁴ The question of dwellings

On the question of dwellings, the local Jews underwent 4 phases. A few months after the outbreak of the war, many Jews were removed from bigger and nicer

1203 In the territory occupied by the USSR.

1204 In the original, starting from here the chapters are numbered with the Arabic number 7, followed by subsequent letters/numbers in the Hebrew alphabet: ז, ח, ט, י, יא. We replaced it with 7/4, 7/5, 7/6, 7/7 and 7/8, respectively. This fragment of the testimony follows the questionnaire concerning the fate of Jewish population in small towns, prepared by Emanuel Ringelblum. See *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, Doc. 16.

furnished flats, and these flats were given to non-Jews. Those who were removed [from their homes] rented smaller and worse [5] flats; some moved in with their relatives.

The second phase took place when several hundred refugees from Lubień and Kowal¹²⁰⁵ arrived during the greatest cold and they had to be settled. The *Judenrat* did not have any new flats for this purpose, so they took some from the inhabitants of larger residences and settled the refugees there. The refugees were even attached to small families, whose flats consisted of only one room. There were many instances of resistance; people did [not] want to allow refugees into their flats. However, the *Judenrat* applied all resources, even force, and settled the refugees. Later, constant quarrels arose on account of co-habiting, which the arbitration court at the *Judenrat* had to reconcile. In the winter of 1940, a decree was ordered, settling the Jews in a ghetto,¹²⁰⁶ and at this point the Jewish population were crowded together. In the course of 24 hours, Jews had to move out of the streets outside the ghetto, whereas non-Jews did not have to abandon flats within the ghetto. And again the people had to be packed into very cramped flats. And this time it was much more difficult, because everyone wanted to put their household items somewhere, and there was no space, so the items in fact lay in the courtyards, and whoever wanted could steal [anything]. If all of this was not enough, 900 new refugees were sent from Sochaczew and this also in the biggest frosts.¹²⁰⁷ Small children, old people, the sick, could not be allowed to remain on the streets in the cold. And yet again the new refugees were pushed into cramped flats. Nonetheless, the *Judenrat* completely controlled the situation and not [6] a single person was left on the street in the cold even for an hour.

It is worth noting that in spite of the immense overcrowding, there was not a single case of epidemic disease the entire time and the mortality rate was quite low. It did not exceed the number from before the war.

The situation did not last long. Two weeks later, all the Jews from Żyrardów, both locals and refugees, were resettled to Warsaw.

1205 On 18 February 1940, the 280 resettled from Lubień [Kujawski], Kowal, Aleksandrów Łódzki, and Mszczonów reached Żyrardów. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, "Deportacje i zagłada," table VI.

1206 December 1940.

1207 Deportees from Sochaczew reached Żyrardów on 18 January 1941.

7/5 The judicial system

An arbitration court was created by the *Judenrat* in Żyrardów and existed for a long time. It started with people coming to the *Judenrat* to solve conflicts. The number of such cases grew steadily, as did the need to create a permanent commission at the *Judenrat*.

The arbitration court evolved in time into an almost official court and the Jewish population stopped going to the town court and sorted out all conflicts in the “Jewish court,” as they called it. The verdicts of the arbitration court were almost always accepted by the [conflicting] sides and were also respected by the town court if one of the sides appealed. The arbitration court did not have any written laws, and one was judged according to current relations and living conditions of the sides. The poor side was always [7] preferred; mostly attention was paid so that there would be no eviction from any dwelling. The material was very interesting, in particular the complaints; unfortunately, all was lost during the resettlement.

7/6 Economic help

No activity was carried out during the war in this area. Those who had the possibility to earn money, could do it without help. Those who were in need of help, were supported with money, food products, meals, etc.

7/7 Vocational schools

There were no vocational schools in Żyrardów during the war.

7/8 What happened to the aid-funds.

After the outbreak of the war, the *gemilut chesed* fund did not renew its activity. The money remained with the people, who borrowed it before the war.

ARG I 1075 (Ring. I/947)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (U*), pencil, Yiddish, 146×204 mm, 14 sheets, 14 pages. Hebrew letter “ח” in the margins (first copy) (ink).

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 7 sheets, 7 pages.

SOKOŁÓW PODLASKI COUNTY

BACZKI

164 9 August 1941, Baczki, Srul Wajnberg. Letter of appeal to the Special Court in Warsaw.

[1] *Sondergericht Warschau*
in Warsaw, the Brühl Palace

Wajnberg Srul
domiciled in Baczki-Fabryka, Łochów commune
Węgrów County¹²⁰⁸

Appeal

against the penal sentence passed on 1 February 1941 by the Special Court in Warsaw – 1 Js. 145/41 – SG 1/Cs 12/41.

I appeal against the said penal sentence and kindly ask for a decision.

I take the liberty to clarify that I do not feel guilty with regard to this matter.

I have worked for 38 years nonstop as a metalworker or turner at the Baczki foundry, which is in receivership. On the critical day, I was also working in the factory but it was too hot for me to work in my jacket. This is why I took it off and hung it on a peg. The required armband with the Star of David was on the right sleeve of that jacket.

As I was working on the critical day in my department of the Baczki foundry, the gendarmerie came over and asked me about my armband with the Star of David. The gendarmerie was able to confirm that it was indeed on the right sleeve of the jacket hanging on the peg, as I said. I did not realise

¹²⁰⁸ Baczki belonged to the Sokołów Podlaski County; the office of the *Stadtkommissar* was in Węgrów.

at all that it was also a violation of the ordinance on branding of Jewish men and women in the General Government.

Of course, whenever I am out, and even when I am at home or in the factory and I am dressed, I always wear the armband with the Star of David too.

The metal foundry wage is my only source of income, on which I support not only myself, but also my wife and children. Should I serve the two months' prison term, my wife would surely find herself without means of subsistence. What is more, I could never work in the foundry again. It is my objective though to receive just remuneration for my hard work.

As I did not act with premeditation, I believe myself to be innocent. In the worst case scenario, the prison sentence is too harsh.

This is why I take the liberty to respectfully ask the Special Court to acquit me in this criminal case.

Should full acquittal be impossible, I would like to ask for the prison sentence to be changed into a modest penalty payment, proportional to my financial capacity, as I am a hired hand, and for the case to be closed.

[2] I ask for the hearing to be held even in my absence.

B a c z k i, 9 August 1941.

1 attachment:

Certificate issued by the Baczki metal foundry¹²⁰⁹

ARG I 688 (Ring. I/258)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), typewritten, German, 205×285 mm, minor damage and missing fragments (second copy), 2 sheets, 4 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Yiddish: "Complete. Duplicate of an appeal of an inhabitant of the town of Baczki to the Special Court."

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

¹²⁰⁹ The attachment is not preserved.

165

April 1942, Kosów Lacki, Section for the Children's Feeding Programme of the Department of Social Welfare in Kosów Lacki. A leaflet with an appeal to the local ghetto residents to aid the children.

Mother! Father!

The Children's Feeding Programme Section¹²¹⁰ is turning to you with an urgent appeal. Increase your effort to help the children!

We lay all our hopes in children, who are our future. We should devote more attention to children and do everything we can to protect them from illnesses occasioned by war, death by starvation, and depravity.

Such is the objective of the Section. During the first year of its operation, following physician's instructions, the Section issued 2,129 food parcels worth 12,944.55 zlotys. Of this sum, only 2,367.95 zlotys, that is only 18 per cent, came from weekly donations of the population.

Last November we organised a morning distribution of coffee among the poorest children, aged 4–10. This month we also managed to obtain bread for breakfast for the children. Our activity is clearly growing, but our expenses are rising, too. During the first quarter of this year we issued 543 food parcels and 12,600 coffee rations. The expenses amounted to 8,193.25 [zlotys], of which the town provided only 614.75 [zlotys] (7.5 per cent!).

The figures speak for themselves! Nonetheless, feeding the children is not our only objective. We wish to give them moral and educational values, and we translate words into action as much as we can.

The children spend an hour every day on educational talks, singing, and playing under the supervision of a Counsellor. They have an hour of respite from the surrounding poverty and hunger. Their eyes flashing with joy and

¹²¹⁰ The Children's Feeding Programme Section of the *Judenrat* in Kosów Lacki was established in January 1941. Initially, it issued only food parcels; later, it organised breakfasts, a common room, and schooling. The section was headed by Judyta Lewkowicz and Mała Jedwabnik. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/573, p. 50.

smiling faces show that our purpose is being achieved. We also plan to take even more care of the children. We are preparing a special playground, where children will be able to learn and play in the open air.

We need funding!

This is why we appeal to you, Mother and Father!

Think about what we have told you, empathise with our words and actions, and rush to the aid of children, who are the future of our nation.

Children's Feeding Section
of the Department of Social Welfare
in Kosów

Kosów, April 1942

ARG I 807 (Ring. I/638)

Description: original, handwritten, mimeographed, Polish, 255×373 mm, minor damages and pieces missing, 1 sheet, 1 page. The leaflet is decorated with a drawing of two children's heads.

166 *After October 1941, Kosów Lacki [?], Warsaw ghetto, Hanna Lewkowicz. "Notatki o życiu wysiedleńców z Kalisza w Kosowie Lackim 1939–1941" [Notes on the life of the resettled from Kalisz in Kosów Lacki during 1939–1941]. Arrival and stay of the resettled Jews, contacts with the locals, housing conflicts, self-help organisations, aid from Warsaw, resettlement of some of the former Kalisz residents to Sterdyń on 7 March 1940.*

[1] ^{sb}Hanna Lewkowicz

Notes on the life of the resettled from Kalisz in Kosów Lacki during 1939–1941^{sb1211}

1211 ^{sb-sb} Here and below, inserts made probably by Shmuel Bresław, perhaps indicated by the author (marked in the same way throughout the document). Hanna Lewkowicz is also the author of a testimony "Podróż do Rosji" [Journey to Russia] about an unsuccessful

On 13 December 1939, 750 Jews from Kalisz¹²¹² were brought by train to Kosów Lacki. Several days earlier in Kalisz they had been notified about the departure but they did not know the direction. In the morning these people had been escorted to the railway station and packed into cattle cars. They had travelled for over two days in very difficult and very crowded conditions. The train had a longer stop in Mińsk Mazowiecki, where it was supposed to be “unloaded.” The Jews from Mińsk had cordially invited the Jews from Kalisz and empathised a lot with their misfortune. The decision had been changed for unknown reasons and the journey continued as far as Kosów.

The Kalisz Jews stopped at the snow-covered Kosów railway station on Wednesday at noon. As the railway station is outside the town and surrounded with fields, all the resettled Jews suspected that they are [2] in the open, far from any houses. Soon, however, they found out that there were people around who lent them a helping hand. They drove to the station by cart and transported the Kaliszers and their possessions to town. Even though the Jews of Kosów were poor and their flats were small and cramped, they took in the Jews from Kalisz. The local rabbi, a noble and wise man, helped to accommodate the families. The Jews of Kosów provided the Kaliszers not only with a roof over their heads, but also, in many cases, bread. The resettled from Kalisz who came to Kosów were from the poorest strata. They arrived without money (not more than 10 per cent of them had meagre capital), their only property being their clothes, [x]¹²¹³ and bedding (some had lost that too due to theft or loss). Uprooted, they were unable to start a normal life [3] on their own. The local Jews helped them a lot. First of all, a “Sabbath Committee” was established here during the first week. That Committee, through a ‘contribution from Icie Liberman from Kosów,’¹²¹⁴ assigned a family of refugees to each Kosów family, to be fed on Friday evenings and Saturdays. It was a great

attempt to cross into the Soviet territory in 1939. See *Accounts from the Borderlands*, Doc. 2. See also footnote XXXX, perhaps Judyta was her relative.

1212 In this document it is assumed that the terms Kaliszers, residents of Kalisz, Kalisz refugees, and the resettled from Kalisz all refer to the Jews of Kalisz, rather than to the town’s Christian population.

1213 [x] things.

1214 “Here and below, the text in different handwriting, inserted between the lines (marked in the same way throughout the document). Icie Liberman was the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Kosów Lacki.

help to the Jews from Kalisz. The Committee functioned for approximately three months, but many Kosów families continued to sustain the assigned families long after.

Several days after the arrival of the Jews from Kalisz in Kosów, it became apparent that an internal social organisation was lacking. The Kaliszers called a meeting in the synagogue and a Refugees' Committee was elected under supervision of the rabbi and several of the local esteemed citizens. It consisted of 7 Kaliszers, 'Mr Perle (chairman)' and 1 Wyszkwower.¹²¹⁵ The Committee members were not social activists before the war. They were elected because everybody trusted them. One [4] of the first acts of the Committee was to send a delegate, 'Mr Engel,' to the Joint in Warsaw with a request for help. Approximately 50 straw mattresses were then delivered. Several more delegates were sent to Warsaw for help and the total of approximately 50,000 zlotys as well as some clothes, underwear, and footwear was received. The clothes were distributed among the poorest, with the first [obtained] money allocated to bread purchase. It should be stated here that until the first financial aid from the Joint, the Kosów citizens bought bread themselves and distributed it among the poorest resettled Kaliszers. The bread campaign, [begun by] 'Mr Klimerski,¹²¹⁶ developed very effectively and it was a real help. Almost all refugees, not only those from Kalisz, received ½ kilo of bread a day, free of charge per person. Even though the Joint urged the Committee to introduce a modest fee, the Committee did not do that, knowing how difficult the local situation was.

The soup kitchen was [5] also free of charge, [organised by] 'Mr Staszewski, Mr Grüner.¹²¹⁷ In early January 1940, a cauldron was ordered and the soup kitchen was built for the money from the Joint in *Hashomer Hatza'ir's* own premises. In the kitchen, 800 meals were cooked twice a day. The resettled from Kalisz constituted over 70 per cent of its customers and the beneficiaries of the bread [campaign], the rest were those from Wyszkwow and Kosów. Due to lack of money, the soup kitchen did not function regularly; there were days when it did not cook at all or just once. In early March 1940,

1215 All Wyszkwów Jews were expelled on 11 September 1939.

1216 B. Klimerski was the chairman of the Committee to Aid the Refugees (*Komitet Opieki nad Uchodźcami*) in Kosów Lacki. See AŻIH, AJDC, 210/422, p. 1.

1217 Shmul Staszewski was the secretary of the Committee to Aid the Refugees, *ibidem*.

a fire broke out and the kitchen cauldron burned down. From then on, the kitchen was closed for a long period of time. Even though a new cauldron was brought from Warsaw and there were even bricks, there was a shortage of several hundred złotys, and, most importantly, energy to finish the work.

About the time when the fire broke out in the kitchen, the life of the Kosów Kaliszers underwent [. . .] changes. On 7 March 1940, [6] 150 Kalisz Jews were resettled to Sterdyń, a nearby small town, which had had no refugees until then.

That sad day became engraved in the memory of all resettled Jews. Not to mention the fear everybody felt and the anxiety aroused by the hunts and searches conducted by the authorities. It was enough to take a look at those carts loaded with bundles and the people sitting beside them, depressed and shrunken from cold, to make one grieve. One could see the despair in the faces of the departing. It looked as if they had settled down in Kosów and that their lives were returning to normal, when the wound resulting from their departure from Kalisz would perhaps begin to heal, they had to set out into the unknown again, not knowing who would take them in, how they would be treated, or how their new life would be.

^{sb}Several days in advance, after the announcement of the order regarding the resettlement of the Jews from Kalisz, the Jews from Kosów went on their own initiative to the Kosów commandant to ask for the plan to be abandoned. They used all their influence to limit the resettlement campaign to a minimum even though they knew that it meant that they would have to continue carrying the heavy burden of providing for the refugees or of aiding them. The result was that only 150 souls were resettled (of whom several families soon returned).^{sb}

Life in Kosów went on as it had before. Only a handful of the Kalisz refugees were earning money, most of the employed being [7] craftsmen who found employment immediately. The rest lived either off their meagre capital, or, first and foremost, off the funds they obtained selling their possessions. Therefore, they benefited greatly from the care provided by the Kalisz Committee.

^{sb}The Committee did everything it could to normalise the life of the Kaliszers. Despite the activity of its vital sections, it was unable to provide the kind of help provided by the Jews of Kosów. The soup kitchen and the bread campaign were meagre efforts in comparison with the efforts of the Kosowers.

The latter's major contribution was that they protected the Jews from Kalisz from cold and hunger throughout the first winter. The Kaliszers warmed themselves beside their hearths and ate at their tables. Many Kosowers were trying to encourage their guests and show them, using their own example, that there were still good people in the world.^{sb}

The medical assistance campaign was one of the highly important activities of the Committee. The Committee started it from the first days. People transferred into new, even worse conditions, living in unthinkable small spaces, often fell ill. The medical assistance did not allow diseases to spread and epidemics to break out. The Committee issued coupons for doctor's visits. The sick were charged only a minimal fee. In March 1940, that assistance developed to such an extent that an out-patients' clinic was opened. The doctor, 'Mr Rotenberg,' saw patients twice a week for 2 hours in a small private flat. The conditions were deplorable and the work was indeed hard and usually unpleasant, but it brought great benefits. The fee the sick had to pay was so small that even the poorest could afford visits and consultations [8] regarding the most trivial matters. During that period, the Committee also financed purchase of medicine, but only sporadically. A great deal of medications, like pills, drops, and bandages, came from the TOZ in Warsaw. In April 1940, the Committee received help from Warsaw for the last time, but the activity of the Committee continued [x]¹²¹⁸ despite limited funds. The provision of medical assistance continued and the drug supplies from the TOZ lasted for a long time. The bread campaign continued to issue ½ kilo of bread per day, to a total of 470 kilos; 70 per cent of the beneficiaries were the Jews from Kalisz.

Soon, however, the funds ran out. After Easter,¹²¹⁹ a one-off collection was organised among the Kosów citizens. Approximately 3,000 zlotys were collected and it lasted for 6 weeks. During those 6 weeks, bread was issued weekly depending on the financial condition of the supported families. Approximately 500 kilos were issued weekly. The Kosów Lacki Bread Committee was established after those 6 weeks. It obtained its funds from weekly collections [. . .]. 400–500 kilos were issued. [. . .] [9] lasted until December 1940.

1218 [x] and that was when the Committee had to limit its activity. As I have said, the soup kitchen was closed.

1219 That is, after Passover.

In August 1940, steady paid work for the authorities began. Initially, the demand was rather small, 10 people per day. At that time, only those from Kalisz worked. After the funds ran out, the others, too, had to find whatever employment they could. Most of the Kaliszers who came to Kosów were labourers. Then came craftsmen (5 per cent of the families), petty traders, and people without an occupation. Most of those people began to trade sweets and cigarettes. The richest of those paupers could afford to bring small “tables” to the market, while the rest carried all their merchandise – several sweets, cigarettes, some threads, etc. – in their arms. Some women wandered about the villages and bartered there, but it was still rather unpopular during that period. With the passing of time, the demand for labourers increased; 50 Kaliszers were working, which brought earnings of 3 zlotys to 7–8 per cent of the families.

In the autumn of 1940, some of the young Jews went to a camp, including 20–30 Kaliszers. The conditions in the camp were not bad, because [. . .] bigger bread rations and [10] bigger soup rations. There was no remuneration for work. At the same time, when the men were in the camp, the women worked in the field [x].¹²²⁰ ‘Aside from food, they also received additionally for their work’ ½ litre of milk and 3 kilos of potatoes every day, but the payment was highly irregular. At that time, 50 Kalisz women were working, which shows that during that period the paid work for the authorities was a source of income for most Kalisz families. It should also be mentioned that several people worked in the army battalion and provided ample support for their families.

In December 1940, the care for the refugees and the poorest was extended. The Kalisz Committee had been liquidated earlier and all its prerogatives (the bread campaign and the medical assistance) were taken over by the *Judenrat*. The Council did not try to broaden that activity. It was the Department of Social Welfare and Sanitary Supervision, organised in an exemplary fashion by Mr Szyja Liberman, that took more care of [11] its wards.

One of the first acts of the Department was to broaden the scope of the sanitary campaign. First and foremost, the Department signed an agreement with the local pharmacist. The pharmacy sold medications to the Department by doctor’s prescription at lower prices, because the

1220 [x] in return for food.

Department covers a substantial part of the cost of the drugs for the poorest. For some time, the Department of Labour also covered the cost of medications and doctor's visits for the benefit of the poorest labourers. In late December 1940, due to a larger number of cases of infectious diseases, the need to organise a local hospital became apparent, as sending the sick to a nearby town proved difficult. Initially, the local hospital was organised in two small rooms and it had 8 cots. It employed two paramedics, one of whom was a Kalisz woman. Though small, her salary was an important contribution to her family's budget. The hospital developed with time. An entire building was rented, more cots were bought (20 in total), and a few more paramedics underwent professional training (Kalisz women [12] again). The hospital provides great help, particularly to the Kalisz Jews, for treatment is free of charge and the hospital provides board, too. There is a kitchen in the hospital and the paramedic cooks for everybody. The food is not sophisticated, but it is satisfactory in every respect. Moreover, the relatives usually provide extra food for the sick. The Children's Feeding Section plays a role of such a "relative" in the case of the poorest refugees. This section is a young, but vigorously developing child of the Department of Social Welfare and Sanitary Supervision. Food or small sums of money (20 groszes=1 zloty) are collected every week from the Kosów housewives. The food (much of it is bought) is divided among the weak, sick, and poor children. The children aided by the Section (including the sick, too) received weekly $\frac{1}{4}$ kg of groats or flour, 30 grams of butter, 150 grams of sugar, 2 rolls, $\frac{1}{2}$ litre of milk, 1 egg, and sometimes also honey, fat drippings, oil, carrots, beetroots, cucumbers, and potatoes, and once more a week $\frac{1}{2}$ litre [15]¹²²¹ of milk and 2 rolls. Later on, when the prices went up, smaller rations began to be issued. They have remained the same, that is: 100–150 grams of groats, 30 grams butter, 100 grams of sugar, an egg, and $\frac{1}{2}$ litre of milk. Rolls are not distributed any longer. The Kosów housewives are aware of how important the campaign is and they make regular donations; only a small percentage refuses. Twenty odd people (up to 40 in May and June) received one time help from the Section, 90 per cent of them Kalisz Jews. The total of a hundred odd children received help until August 1941. The figure seems small but these

1221 Pages [13] and [14] contain only inserts, included in the text, marked ^{sb-sb}, see footnote 1214.

children are the poorest, which is why the children receiving help are almost always the same.

In the winter of 1941, the Clothing Section was also organised. It encountered serious difficulties though. Clothes and underwear are so expensive now that few people buy anything new and everybody wears out their old clothes. After many difficult endeavours, the Section ceased its operation, which was a complete fiasco. As for the winter aid provided to the refugees and the poorest, I should mention the fuel campaign, which began [16] in February during the worst cold weather. That month approximately 170 people received wood for fuel, which saved them from the freeze. Closed for a longer period of time, the soup kitchen was reopened. Meals were cooked twice a day as before, but their number decreased to 600. That state of affairs lasted until April, when the kitchen began to cook 300 meals, once a day. That whole time, the Kaliszers constituted 70 per cent of its customers. In May and June, the demand for labourers was the greatest and that was why the Department of Labour took care of the labourers whose only income was for the work rendered for the authorities. During that period, the soup kitchen cooked twice a day and the number of meals increased to 750. The Department of Social Welfare and Sanitary Supervision cooked the first cauldron, while the Department of Labour cooked the other. The poorest and the refugees unable to work ate from the first one, while the labourers and their families ate from the other. Minimal fees for the meals were collected from January until 22 June, when the kitchen was closed after the cauldron was damaged during a bombing. Most of the meals, however, were [17] half [the cost] or completely free of charge.

The bread campaign continued its vital activity. The Kaliszers constitute a smaller percentage of its beneficiaries, as many native Kosowers now joined. During the period from January until March, there were approximately 600 beneficiaries, who received 3–4 kilos of bread per family per week. In April on the occasion of Easter, not only bread but also potatoes were distributed. Of the 2,000 beneficiaries of that operation, 500 received only potatoes. The Kaliszers constituted only 40–50 per cent of the beneficiaries as many Kosowers received help, too. As soon as in the next month only 300 people received bread, while in June the number increased to 500, to exceed 1,000 (?) in July. But the number of beneficiaries from Kalisz increased only slightly, while in June and July the percentage of all

beneficiaries constituted by Kaliszers amounted to approximately 60 per cent. Smaller rations were issued, with each family receiving 2–3 kilos of bread per week.

The income of the Kalisz refugees has not increased. Even though many of them trade, work for the authorities, etc., their standard of living is deteriorating due to [18] the high prices. As soon as it became warmer, many women began to wander about the villages and trade, despite the strict ban. That business became highly popular. The women took kerchiefs, buttons, press studs, salt, saccharine, and soda and exchanged that for potatoes, butter, cheese, and eggs – products more suitable for trading in town. In late April, the demand for male labourers increased significantly. A road and a bridge were being built near Kosów, and the construction required many labourers. 60 per cent of all the labourers were those from Kalisz. That rather hard labour brought approximately 5 zlotys per day and ½ kilo of bread (first from the Community, and in July from the company), which was worth 3 zlotys. In late July, approximately 50 Kaliszers, including many volunteers, departed to the labour camp in Szczyleszczyn,¹²²² where the discipline is not as strict and the work conditions are not as bad. The labourers receive from the Kosów *Judenrat* 5–10 zlotys per day depending on their financial status, as well as 1 kilo of bread and a midday meal (including 200 grams of bread provided by the company).

^{sb}Theft is a very deplorable symptom observable in Kosów. It is with a heavy heart and sense of shame that I state that a number of Kaliszers steal and act as informants. The Kaliszers organise all the thefts, even among the poorest Jews. They show the appropriate “elements” the places where the Kosowers store their merchandise. Finally, they are the ones who familiarised Kosów with the “Black Hand” band and other thieving unions.^{sb}

Now a few words about the housing conditions of the Kaliszers. As I have said [19] above, the Jews of Kalisz were accommodated in the tiny flats of the Kosowers. Often several Kalisz families live with one Kosów family. On average, 7 people live in one room. Few families have their own rooms. Approximately 20 per cent of the Kaliszers, most of whom live in Christian

1222 Probably the water management camp in Szczegłacin (Sokołów County). Its prisoners drained farming land on the River Bug. The camp operated in 1941–1942, employing approximately 400 Jews. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, pp. 48–49, 153.

homes, pay rent. The rest have not been paying. The Jewish homes were placed in receivership in June 1941 and all the residents are obliged to pay rent. But the Council will pay rent for the poorest (the issue had not been settled before). The sanitary condition of the Kalisz families was no better than the sanitary condition of the Kosów families; that is, it was poor. With the passing of time, due to the strenuous and onerous work of the paramedics, the level was substantially raised, though the housing conditions deteriorated, day by day. The Kaliszers and their landlords do not live in harmony.^{sb} Many of the former think themselves rightful owners of the flats, where they feel almost completely at home. In certain cases, the *Judenrat* had to intervene to prevent the Kosowers from being thrown out of their own flats.^{sb} The newcomers are from the lowest social strata. They are unable to appreciate the great good the Kosowers are doing for them. Having forgotten the warm and friendly welcome they received, they remember only the bad things. They keep dreaming about returning to Kalisz and they curse [20] the Kosowers. Unfortunately, in the arguments and quarrels that keep breaking out, it is the Kosowers who are usually in the right. The Kaliszers in Kosów are an ungrateful and intolerant element. The local synagogue is a refugee centre. Initially, all its inhabitants were from Kalisz, now there are many other refugees from other towns. The Kaliszers are 70 souls, which amounts to some 15 families. All of the synagogue residents provide for themselves, but most of them would not be able to get by without the help from the Department of Social Welfare and Sanitary Supervision. It should be stressed that the Kalisz Jews who live in the synagogue, do not argue among themselves. On the contrary, they constitute one, unified front in the conflict with the refugees from other towns, with whom they cannot come to terms.

The Kalisz Jews arrived in Kosów with a transport of the resettled and they are all registered in the Jewish Community. In February 1941 they received temporary residence cards (and so did the native inhabitants of Kosów Lacki). Hence their legal status is completely regulated.

^{sb}Generally speaking, the Kaliszers have fully acclimatised and there is little difference between the Kosowers and the Kaliszers. The latter know the vicinity of Kosów like the back of their hand, they are friends with the rural population, and they know how to use it when in need (during the bombing on 22 June 1941). They act as if they had been born and raised here. They regard themselves entitled or, should I say, privileged (they are poor refugees,

after all), to trade with the peasants and they often forbid the native residents access to that as well as to other better work details.^{sb}

There are up to 20 Jews from Kalisz without residence cards. They came to their relatives from other cities and towns, often from Warsaw. They [21] work hard to earn their modest living. The Kaliszers without residence cards receive no aid from the *Judenrat* and they are completely devoid of its protection. Only the sick use the hospital on a par with the locals, and their families take advantage of the quarantine centre. I say “take advantage of the quarantine centre” because the quarantine often benefits the poor. Those in quarantine receive daily 330 grams of bread, 10 grams of potatoes, and ½ litre of milk per family. Moreover, the Department of Social Welfare and Sanitary Supervision delivers a sufficient amount of groats, salt, saccharine, etc.

The situation of most Kalisz Jews staying in Kosów is good. The housing and financial conditions are bad but not much worse than the ones they were used to in Kalisz. They are better off here, because at least the Council takes care of them and helps them however it can. It should also be said that up to 10 Kalisz families survive by working in and for the Department of Social Welfare and Sanitary Supervision. They are town guards, road sweepers, and janitors in the hospital or quarantine centre, or they help with disinfection. The relations with the authorities are not bad either. There is total freedom in the town and the Jews wander about and trade even out of town, despite the ban. There are no cases of death by starvation and it needs to be stated that, unlike the other refugees, no Kaliszers [22] beg for a living.

Inhabitants of a big cultural town, the Kaliszers have not brought any cultural values to Kosów. Only a handful of families, which stand out from the rest of the Kaliszers, have associated themselves with the Kosów intelligentsia and have given it a lot. The Polish language, which was not used at all, has been introduced. Certain rules of social behaviour have been taught, too. During the one-and-a-half year stay of the Kaliszers, three violin concerts were organised on the initiative of those families. Those concerts were the only cultural form of entertainment that we were able to afford.

The children from Kalisz stand out among the other children. They tend to have cleaner clothes, they speak better, and they have a kinder attitude toward their elders. Unfortunately, they are totally devoid of a chance to pursue their education as there are no schools in Kosów and only some of them study a bit with their parents. The adolescents too are totally devoid of any

instruction whatsoever. Most boys and girls as young as 13–14 are forced to find gainful employment.

^{sb}Hanna Lewkowicz, Kosów Lacki, October 1941.^{sb}

ARG I 808 (Ring. I/479)

Description: original (handwritten, a few hands, the main text: HL*, ink, Polish, 155×195 mm, illegible pieces); duplicate (3 copies, typewritten, 206×295 mm, minor damages and missing fragments); 47 sheets, 58 pages. In the duplicate version, the annotations are introduced into the main text, while the surnames are omitted. Hersh Wasser's information in Yiddish on p. 1 of the second copy of the duplicate: "109-1942/1 January. No. 16." Attached are 2 notes by H. Wasser in Polish: "1939–1941. Manuscript. Notes on the life of the resettled from Kalisz in Kosów Lacki 1939–1941. Written by Hanna Lewkowicz" and in Yiddish: "Fragment. See: Lewkowicz. Kaliszers in Kosów."

Edition based on the original, 22 sheets, 22 pages, supplemented with the text of the duplicate.

WĘGRÓW

167 13 April 1942, Węgrów, Idl Laufer (Lajfer). Letter to A. Blumsztajn in the Warsaw ghetto.

[1] I. Laufer
Bóźniczny Square 8¹²²³
Węgrów Podlaski
Please reply immediately

Mr A. Blumsztajn¹²²⁴
Nowolipie Street 23, flat 13
Warsaw

1223 The original text is full of spelling mistakes, which is not reflected in the translation.

1224 Abram Blumsztajn, who lived in Warsaw at Nowolipie Street 23 and had a family of three, appears on the list of people who received an extra food card from the *Judenrat* in Warsaw. See ARG I 288 (Ring. I/1092).

[2] Dear friends, I am able to write to you for the first time that we are healthy [and] we wish to hear the same from you. There is nothing new here, we are working. This week 500 men went to Mordy for forced labour in Mordy,¹²²⁶ and my sons were[?] going to go there. They are still at home. We are working for the municipality, we received *Ausweisen*.¹²²⁷ Dear friends, the thing you asked concerning the table, if you could give it to Szwarcbard. I write to you that you have as much right to it as me, it would be best if you have it on you, because we can still live in Warsaw. When we meet some time again I will repay you for everything. Write me how things are going, what's up with Wainblat and do you know where and what happened with Jaga [?], if he lives with his wife and children? Regards to Berliński, Szwarcbard and Wasser, regards to Zagan,¹²²⁸ regards to all friends. Regards to you from the red-haired Eli Szurek from Łódź, he got married in Węgrów. Regards from my family to your wife and little daughter. We would like to meet with you and work together in good health.

Your friend who never forgets,
Idl Lajfer

ARG I 1032 (Ring. I/582)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark and *Judenrat* seal, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Note on p. 1 in a different handwriting in Polish and Yiddish (pencil): "Keizig[?], Franc[iszkowska Street] 20 [flat] 17, Gęsia [Street] 29, distribution[?], Śliwiak[?]"

1225 In the original, 1941.

1226 The labour camp in Mordy (Siedlce County) was established in 1941. Its prisoners, Poles and Jews, worked at the construction of the Mińsk Mazowiecki-Janów Podlaski road. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 67.

1227 It exempted them from being sent to a labour camp.

1228 Leaders of the Left Poalei Tsiyon in the Warsaw ghetto. On Wasser, see the Introduction. Hersch Berliński (1908–1944), active in the party both before WWII and in the underground in the ghetto; fought in the April 1943 uprising in the ghetto, fell in the general Warsaw uprising in 1944.

Shakhno Zagan (Sagan) (1892–1942), writer; in the ghetto he edited the underground periodicals of his party; he was one of the organisers of the Anti-Fascist Bloc.

Mordkhe Szwarcbard (Mordecai Schwartzbard) (1896–1942), one of the pre-war leaders of the party in Łódź; one of the hardest-working members of Oyneg Shabes, he left the largest number of documents, including his own texts and duplicates of various materials.

WARSAW COUNTY

JEZIORNA

168 *After 25 January 1941, Warsaw ghetto, B. Janowski. Testimony “Wysiedlenie z Jeziorny” [Resettlement from Jeziorna]. The course of the resettlement to the Warsaw ghetto.*

[1] Resettlement from Jeziorna.

The first news about our imminent resettlement to Warsaw were brought by the head of our village on 20 January. It was a shock to us because the day before we had received a circular letter from the *Kreishauptmann*¹²²⁹ ordering total closure of our district by fencing it in and surrounding it with barbed wire. The works were to commence soon; the measurements were just being taken. We did not suspect that such a recent ordinance could be written off so soon. Initially, we treated that news as yet another rumour, which we had often heard. But the situation proved more serious as that night the police commandant mobilised the police from all the neighbouring localities and put guards on the border of the Jewish district. The answer to our enquiry was that it was connected with the first ordinance and that the purpose was to completely isolate us until completion of the fence. He had not heard about the purported oncoming resettlement, but he had very strict instructions regarding the closure of the ghetto.

[1a] I need to mention here that during the period preceding those events, that is in the second half of December, we were isolated for 3 weeks due to a case of typhus in our district. Even though it was benign, the isolation caused everybody difficulties for a time. The trade with the Aryans came to a complete halt. Visits to the Aryan district were a little risky, even though the people used passes issued by the *Arbeitsamt*. Now, in connection with the

1229 The *Kreishauptmann* was Hermann Ruprecht (1905–1985), lawyer, administration clerk, in NSDAP from 1937. Warsaw County governor from October 1939 to January 1945. Sentenced to 15 years in prison. From 1958, member of the government of Swabia. See M. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, p. 449.

new ordinance, all passes were revoked and leaving the Jewish district was strictly forbidden to everybody without exception. Only the members of the *Judenrat*¹²³⁰ were to receive passes issued by the *Kreishauptmann*.

That day, we sent a suitable application to Warsaw by the agency of the village head, but it was sent back to us unexamined. The townspeople immediately sensed how serious the situation was and, disregarding the bans, they spent the entire night on the streets. The anxiety was passed on to everybody, so everybody immediately started packing their things. Here and there, you could see people taking parcels to [2] their Aryan neighbours, but it was all done in secret. Nobody confessed to it and the people calmed one another down.

The next day the newly appointed commandant (the gendarmerie *Hauptwachtmeister*) came to town. Judging from his words, his only duty was to supervise the closure of the ghetto. He would stay 14 days to that end. We soon contacted him. He turned out a rather decent German. He assured us that there was no resettlement order. Should he get one, he would surely warn us in advance. In the meantime, he was taking measurements, which only strengthened our conviction that the matter would end in surrounding the ghetto with barbed wire.

The danger became more imminent on 22 January, when all the officers of the Third Tax Office of the County Department came to town with a clear order to remove all the most precious objects from the Jewish flats, regardless of whether the Jews they visited were entrepreneurs and whether they were in arrears with taxes. Body searches were conducted in all flats. Even the smallest [2a] sums of money (a few zlotys) were taken away (against receipt). Appealed to regarding this matter, the commandant intervened. We witnessed his intervention come to nothing.

The anxiety was reaching its zenith. Our fate seemed predetermined. We heard alarming news from Piaseczno that the evacuation of the Jews had begun.¹²³¹ The news was often contradictory. Some said that the resettlement affected only the 1,500 people who had once been resettled in Piaseczno. Others talked about evacuation of all the Jews. Some hinted at an escape, as it was unknown where the evacuated people were being sent, and whether entire

1230 Members of the *Judenrat* in Jeziorna: Dawid Szumacher, Grinstein, and Działowski. See AŻIH, Holocaust testimonies, 301/2980, Feiga Rotstein's testimony, p. 1.

1231 The deportation of the Jews from Piaseczno to Warsaw began on 22 January 1941.

families were being sent together or men and women separately. We also listened attentively about other unusual symptoms: The wealthy had immediately taken care of their poorer neighbours, for whom they brought food products and fuel. At night, the following news spread with lightning speed: The rabbi and the religious community chairman suddenly felt so [3] seriously ill that an ambulance was called for them and they were taken to Warsaw.¹²³² Panic spread everywhere and everybody focused on how to get out. No money was spared (I am talking about the rich, of course) and, during a few night hours, an ambulance was called several times.

On the night of 23–24 January, the gendarmerie commandant was awaiting news from Warsaw. The next morning (it was Friday) at 9:30 a.m. he announced, *Ich hafte Ihnen persönlich, dass Sie für die nächsten 8 Tage ruhig bleiben können.*¹²³³ We hurried to inform all the Jews. The deputy *Kreishauptmann* (as it later turned out) came by car from Warsaw at 11 o'clock that day and he began to re-inspect the borders of our district in the company of the gendarmes. That strengthened our conviction that there had been no order yet. We were all the more shocked when an hour later he sent for the Councillors and gave us the following order, there, on the street: On Monday morning a bathhouse had to be ready for the steaming¹²³⁴ of [3a] all the Jews, as the evacuation to Warsaw would begin that day. He then explained that everybody was free to take all the money they had, while the craftsmen's machinery and appliances had to be gathered in one place, from where it would be transported to Warsaw in several days and handed to their rightful owners. As for food products, we should not take any as *Kartoffel und Brot haben wir in Warschau für Euch vorbereitet.*¹²³⁵ He then asked us about the

1232 Warned by the Polish police commandant Weclaw, Rabbi Rozencweig and Community chairman Abram Konigstein left earlier for Warsaw by ambulance, taking the Torah scrolls from the synagogue in Jeziorna. Konigstein's daughter survived the war and left a testimony about those events. See AŻIH, Holocaust testimonies, Feiga Rotstein's testimony, 301/2980, pp. 1–2.

1233 (German) I personally vouch that for the next 8 days you can stay where you are.

1234 In Polish, the term is *parowanie* or *parówka*, literally steam bath. In the Warsaw ghetto it was forced disinfection and delousing, supposed to reduce spread of typhus. It did not stop the epidemic but became one of the methods of destroying the ghetto residents and their belongings. Here it seems to be a local "invention" meant as additional sufferance, and then the resettled had to repeat the experience upon their arrival in Warsaw.

1235 (German) we have prepared potatoes and bread for you in Warsaw.

number of old people, babies, and sick people. When he got the answer, he stated that he could allow us to go by cars and that he would deliver those cars provided that he got 4,500 zlotys by Saturday at 9 a.m. We eagerly accepted that condition, even though we were aware that the wealthier Jews had already departed. Nonetheless, we did not want our group to walk all that way by foot. When we gave him our consent, he also allowed the people to take their personal belongings but only as much as they could carry. Having finished the conversation, that clerk left, [4] but after just several hours new orders began to arrive, all of them contradictory. In the evening, the Community notified us that we would be resettled as soon as on Saturday. As it seemed contradictory with the earlier order, we wanted to make sure about that. We waited the whole night for the gendarme, who came to notify us about that change. He did but not until 6 a.m. About a dozen minutes later a company of “skulls”¹²³⁶ arrived to supervise our evacuation. Having examined the bathhouse, which had already been heated in line with the order, and having done a series of drills with the members of the Council and the Order Service, they dispersed in the town. About a dozen minutes later, all the inhabitants were driven in for steaming. In that haste, under the stream of abuse, shouts, and often even blows as well, the people were unable to take all the bundles they had packed.

All night long on Friday, the Councillors walked from home to home to collect the necessary sum of money. The collection proceeded very slowly, as the richest ones were already gone, and despite the efforts, [4a] little money was squeezed out of the poor. At 9 a.m., it turned out that we were nearly 1,000 zlotys short of the 4,500 zlotys. The German who came to collect the money was generous enough to extend the deadline until midday, but at the expense of a further 500 zlotys. Another condition was that the Councillors and the Order Service functionaries could only leave in the last car.

It is difficult to describe the scenes, which took place during the further collection of the missing sum of money. All the town gathered in one place and when the Councillors' appeals came to nothing the women began to do it themselves. They spared neither their own husbands nor children. All those who had taken a few zlotys for the journey had to take it out. Finally, the demanded sum was collected.

1236 The SS. That colloquial expression refers to the skulls on the functionaries' caps.

The journey to Warsaw proceeded fast. We were worried that our oppressors were following us. We arrived in the Municipal Bathhouse on Spokojna Street. We were ordered to unload our baggage and to quickly carry it to the square. Finally, we also had to do [5] a few drills.

That came to an end, too, and everybody hurried to reunite with their wives and children, who had departed earlier by buses. The baggage remained on the square without supervision or protection. Only later, did we remind ourselves that the bundles should be marked or signed. When we saw the attendants, they assured us that there were no thieves there.

We had to go through steaming (a second time during 24 hours) and we started waiting outside even though it was 10 [grades] below zero.

Our group was ready as early as at 10 p.m. We were sent to a barrack on that street, where thousands of people had been squeezed in a very large, windowless hall. We were in luck because we were escorted into the open as only an hour later. We began our long walk to the quarantine.

The march took over an hour. It was dead silent all around us. Noisy and quarrelsome during the day, the women grew silent. You could hear moans and grumbling from time to time. Every now and then, [5a] somebody fainted and had to be removed from the street. The procession stopped every couple of minutes to take a rest. It should be stressed that the (Polish) policemen who escorted us showed us a lot of heart. They calmed the tired and kept saying that it was not far away. They took the bundles from those with the heaviest ones and ordered the younger to carry them. We finally reached our destination. Just in the door, I heard one of the policemen say, "You've arrived, but I wouldn't like to be in your shoes now." We were to find out how very true his words were.

But I will discuss this in the next report.¹²³⁷

B. Janowski

ARG I 780 (Ring. I/821)

Description: original (handwritten, ink, 200×200 mm), duplicate (3 copies, handwritten – JG*, pencil, 146×207 mm, minor damages and missing fragments), Polish, 22 sheets, 27 pages. The last page is missing from the third copy. This testimony was translated into Yiddish (by Hersh Wasser?), only its p. 1 is preserved, see ARG I 781 (Ring. I/980).

Edition based on the original, 5 sheets, 10 pages.

1237 See *Warsaw Ghetto. Everyday Life*, Doc. 12.

169 *After 12 February 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony “גירוש לֶאֱמִיאָנְקִי בִּי וואַרשע” [Expulsion from Łomianki near Warsaw]. Establishment of the ghetto; deportation of Jews to Legionowo and Warsaw in November 1940.*

Expulsion from Łomianki near Warsaw

In September 1940, it became known to the Jewish administrative body in Łomianki from a secret source that there was the threat of expulsion of the Jewish population. We immediately approached the *Ortsleiter*,¹²³⁸ *Sturmoffizier*¹²³⁹ K. about a relief. He received 1,200 zlotys for the trouble. After great efforts, he succeeded in changing the edict to a ghetto. When they started to create the ghetto, such a small number of houses was allocated for the Jews that they could in no way accommodate the entire Jewish population. One was therefore forced to give the same *Ortsleiter* another thousand zlotys for a few more houses to be added. The last deadline for the resettlement was 15 September 1940.

Jews from the surrounding areas were also forced into this small ghetto. This lasted until 3 November 1940. At that time, an order came that all Jews must leave Łomianki by 10 October and go to [Fort] Solipse¹²⁴⁰ to settle in military strongholds. From the third until the tenth, we turned to the *Ortsleiter* again about intervening so that we could remain in place. He demanded three thousand zlotys and, if he did not succeed, he would get five hundred zlotys. We agreed. His efforts had no effect and we had to pay the five hundred zlotys.

In recent days, several *Volksdeutsche* secretly informed us that we should not go to Solipse, but [go] straight to Warsaw instead. The ghetto in Warsaw already existed by then, and up to 300 souls sold items and food which they

1238 (German) local leader. The official in question has not been identified.

1239 (German) here probably an SS officer.

1240 A component of the late 19th century fortifications around Warsaw; now part of the Włochy district of Warsaw.

had collected for the winter on the assumption that there would be a sealed ghetto in Łomianki. They sold [their goods] at the cheapest prices and paid from five hundred to two thousand zlotys for the possibility of entering Warsaw. About 60 souls left for Solipse, and about 25 souls for Legionowo, where they are until today. At the end of January [19]41, the Jews who lived in Solipse were put into cars within half an hour and taken to Warsaw, not having been allowed to take anything with them except a small amount of bedding. The entire Łomianki community, both those who were in Warsaw and those who were sent from Solipse to Warsaw and who had left everything behind, live in terrible need and poverty.

12 February 1941

ARG I 874 (Ring. I/847)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (MS*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Three dots in a vertical line and a sign (letter?) “+” in the margin (red pencil). The document was kept in a binder.

Edition based on the first copy of the duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

MŁOCINY

170 *2 December 1940, Warsaw, Warsaw County Governor. Order for the chairman of the Młociny commune on resettlement of Jews to Fort Solipse.*

Der Kreishauptmann
Warsaw County

Warsaw, 2 December 1940.

To the Commune Chairman
Młociny

1. All Jewish inhabitants of the Młociny commune are to move to Fort Solipse in the Włochy municipal commune by 10 December 1940 at the latest.

2. The Jews are allowed to take objects of everyday use, but they are forbidden to go beyond the Warsaw city limits during the transport of the objects and the resettlement of the people.

3. Before the Jews leave Łomianki a detailed list of names of all the Jews is to be made and submitted to me by 10 December 1940.

4. After 10 December 1940, the Jews are forbidden to stay, even temporarily, in the Młociny commune.

5. If Poles are to be quartered in the dwellings vacated by the Jews, the dwellings must be disinfected before they move in. This is the responsibility of the official physician of the given sanitary centre.

6. The Jewish homes are to be taken over from the commune into receivership. I remind about my Ref. II ordinance of 18 November 1940.

7. A copy of this ordinance is to be delivered to the local *Judenrat* upon receipt. The receipt is to be delivered to me at once.

8. The implementation of the resettlement of the Jews is to be reported to me in writing by 12 December 1940.

Copies for:

Department II,
Gendarmerie Pruszków,
Włochy Mayor,
Dr. Dorczyński,
Łomianki Police Station,
Młociny Police Station,
The *Judenrat*.

ARG I 940 (Ring. I/354; I/97)

Description:

Ring. I/354: Duplicate, typewritten, German, 207×293 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page;

Ring. I/97: Duplicate, handwritten (MS*), pencil, German in Hebrew transliteration, 147×208 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. The document was stored in a binder. Hersch Wasser's note in Yiddish on top (ink): "Document."

Edition based on the typewritten duplicate, 1 sheet, 1 page.

171

After 26 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Berek Proza. Testimony on expulsion of the Jews from Okuniew and the course of the deportation to the Warsaw ghetto on 26 March 1942; names of the numerous casualties.

Berek Proza, 27 years old, trader. Okuniew.

We did not expect anything. We traded with Poles. My father, my mother, two brothers, and my sister with her child. He brought the merchandise. I sent my partner the day before. On Thursday¹²⁴¹ at four o'clock, they stormed in and threw us out without letting us take anything. They beat up my father and me. They drove us to the group of Jews on the square. They rushed us to remove things from the homes of the Okuniew inhabitants. They selected 10 strong men for that. A gendarme took our neighbour, Srul Majer Naszewski, after work and shot him in the head three times. We were taking out the furniture and the Poles were chopping it. Not voluntarily, but because of the order. I saw him [?] approach a wardrobe with a mirror and kick it with his boot. He entered [my?] grandmother's [room]; she was lying in bed, so he shot her. A Budnik¹²⁴² from Kalisz, provided for by the town, stepped on a German's foot through carelessness, so he shot him. He left 4 or 5 orphans. Szlama Gurfinkiel was left on the way: he collapsed, so they shot him because he was unable to keep up. They drove us across mud and water. They rode their horses into us. 18-year-old Matys Powsinoga was pushed into a ditch and shot there.¹²⁴³ Szyja Zysman, aged 20, was shot on the way. [. . .] children on the way; Dawid Stanisławski,¹²⁴⁴ aged 12, Fajga Stanisławska, aged 15, Szlama Bursztyn, aged 14. Laja Rotsztajn, paralysed, aged 55, killed at home; so was Dwojra Rubin. Jakub Uszer Rzetelny, aged 70, [. . .] near Rembertów [. . .] they rushed [him]; he could not keep up and was shot. Zysman's wife Ryfka was

1241 26 March 1942.

1242 In Doc. 174, his name is given as Budny.

1243 See Doc. 174, testimony of Matys Powsinoga's parents.

1244 In Doc. 174, this family name is given as Stanisławowski.

shot. [She was] pregnant and [the gendarme?] ordered her to walk and then get up and down; he did not like her gait and he shot her. We reached the tram stop in Gocławek, and from there to the quarantine.

ARG I 938 a (Ring. I/501)

Description: duplicate, handwritten, pencil, Polish, 214×300 mm, fragments illegible, 1 sheet, 1 page. Attached is a note in Polish, pertaining to Docs. 171, 172, 173, by Hersch Wasser: "Okuniew and Wawer. Province and resettlement. Testimonies of the resettled. 1941. Proza Berek, aged 27; Okuniew; Puterman Manes, aged 41; Wawer; Edelman Maria, aged 25; Miłosna." Note in a different handwriting: "Testimonies on the resettlement and terrorist actions."

172 *After 26 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Manes Puterman. Testimony on the deportation of the Jews from Wawer to the Warsaw ghetto.*

Manes Puterman, 41 years old, labourer, Wawer.

The move to the ghetto was on 10 November 1941. We were notified 10 days in advance. At the same time, we learned about the location and the borders of the Jewish district. The move proceeded peacefully. At first, it was good. We had enough to eat, the shoemakers were working, so were the tailors. The supplies ran out after half a year and it became bad. The ghetto was closed; we were forbidden to go out. Despite the ban we went out every day, did some shopping, and traded in or outside the ghetto.

On Thursday, 26 March,¹²⁴⁵ we learnt from the Poles that we would be resettled. We packed our things during the entire night. The Poles came to buy. There was cart transport for the children and the sick. Cybulski went into hiding. A *Lieutenant* then arrived and began to ask how many Jews had already been shot. He commenced a search, casting aside [?] some of the parcels. We then left. They hit us on the way. One of the gendarmes threw up

1245 The date inserted in a different handwriting (Hersch Wasser's?). The Wawer Jews were deported to the Warsaw ghetto on that day.

some parcels [. . .] lost. He shouted loudly: “Hurry up!” The Jews were crying; the Poles were laughing. Some of the Poles were crying, too. This was how we reached the tram stop in Gocławek. We waited an hour and a half and we arrived at the quarantine.

ARG I 938 b (Ring. I/501)

Description: duplicate, handwritten, pencil, Polish, 205×293 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

Hersh Wasser’s note on top of the page (ink): “Wawer.” See also the description of Doc. 171.

173 *After 27 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Maria Edelman. Testimony on the deportation of the Jews from Miłosna to the Warsaw ghetto.*

[1] Maria Edelman, 25 years old, Miłosna.

[. . .] flowed peacefully. There was no ghetto. The Jews and the Poles only lived in separate buildings. The Rembertów gendarmerie recently began to arrive and conduct constant requisitions. They arrived suddenly, again and again demanding money from the *Judenrat*, which in turn demanded [it] from the population. That exhausted us financially.

On 27 March 1942, we woke up anxious about the resettlement, which was to take place during the next couple of days. We were nervous. By then, we had received the news about the incidents during the resettlement from Okuniew.¹²⁴⁶ Prepared, we waited the entire night for them to come for us. At 6 o’clock, the *Judenrat* secretary calmly told us to leave. We took our baggage and silently went to the *Judenrat* square. There were 3 groups: men, women, and children. The Germans conducted a segregation. The representatives of the authorities read out a list of, purportedly, the richest Jews. When they failed to appear, they decided to [. . .] those present. They conducted body searches, taking the more valuable [. . .] money. The women then had to [. . .] the same [. . .] the price was going up [. . .] a full suitcase into the yard [. . .] that

1246 The deportation from Okuniew to the Warsaw ghetto took place a day earlier.

the women, who gave away the money [. . .] take as much as they could carry in their hand. During [. . .] money and everybody was taking [. . .] a list of the rich Jews was read out [. . .] [2] We stopped in Gocławek. A tall gendarme gave some money to a Polish policeman to [buy] bread, sausage, sweets, and gingerbread cookies, which he then distributed. [. . .] poor children from Gocławek. [. . .] arrived [. . .] from Warsaw.

ARG I 938 c (Ring. I/501)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (KK*), ink, Polish, 154×200 mm, fragments legible, 1 sheet, 2 pages. See also the description of Doc. 171.

174 *After 27 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, Sara and Shimen Powsinoga, and Mala Wiśnia, accounts recorded by Nekhemia Tytelman. Deportation of Jews from Okuniew and Miłosna to the Warsaw ghetto.*

[1] 27 March 1942

Sara and Shimen Powsinoga from Okuniew relate:

Okuniew, a small town, 18 km outside of Warsaw, numbered 84 Jewish families, and almost the same number of Polish [families]. With the newcomers from various burnt *kehillahs* and refugees, the Jews recently numbered 400 people.¹²⁴⁷

During the entire time of the war and occupation, we knew of the great slaughter and evil only from the accounts of those passing through, fleeing Jews whom we warmed up and fed, in their great desolation, in the Jewish homes. It often happened that for entire nights we went about among the broken and desperate Jews. Cooked food for them. Saw to it that they have a bed [on which] to sleep through the night, so that on the following day they would have strength to go on further.

¹²⁴⁷ According to Okuniew Committee for Aid to Jews, on 14 January 1941, Okuniew had approximately 450 Jewish inhabitants, including many refugees. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/750, p. 1.

We only saw the German military and gendarmes driving through. Once a month a gendarme would come down from Rembertów to the *Judenrat*, brought his orders, which always ended with money, and we [Jews] continued to work and live in peace. Being a shoemaker by profession, I had a lot of work, both from the town and from the neighbouring peasants. My 17-year-old son, Mattes-Boruch, helped me; thus, I supported my family of 4 souls (I also have a daughter of 15 years) and believed [that we would] survive the bitter war.

The Jews of the entire town consisted of craftsmen and traders; a special trade with meat was established. The ritual slaughterers and butchers would slaughter in the kosher manner, and it would be smuggled by *goyim* into the Warsaw ghetto.

[2] We had no ghetto. The only ghetto law consisted of not allowing any Jew to live under one roof with a Christian, that is in one house, but the houses, not only the few small streets, were intermingled, and we, as it happened, lived peacefully with our Christian neighbours.

Suddenly, the neighbouring peasants began to spread rumours that we were to be driven out of the town. The same rumours started to circulate in Miłosna, which is located just 3 km from us. We enquired in Rembertów (12 km from us). They knew nothing of this.

On Saturday, the 21 [March], 3 gendarmes arrived from Rembertów. But out of great fear, it turned out that they were demanding a levy of 3,500 zlotys from the *Judenrat*, and besides that, a washboard (to wash clothes), a grater, and a grinder to grind coffee. We immediately supplied all of this and started to calm down, and began to prepare for Passover, believing that the decree was over. We tried to prepare even more than usual, in case, heaven forbid, we should need to take in other Jews driven out of towns.

But on Tuesday and Wednesday, the persistent rumours that they would be uprooting us once again grew stronger. The head of the village council began to officially warn the Jews that they should prepare themselves to leave in good time. On Wednesday, 25 March, there suddenly appeared a larger group of police. We also found out that the gendarmes who had been with us on Saturday, [3] had left on the same day for Miłosna. There, they also demanded the same sum and the same things, as well as ordering a Jewish shoemaker to make 2 pairs of shoes for them and to bring the shoes before Tuesday to Rembertów, giving him a special permit. The Jews

of Miłosna packed and told us to be ready too. The night of Wednesday was for us a *leyl shimurim*. A bitter premonition told us that it could happen on this night.

At 5 o'clock in the morning, we heard the noise of automobile motors. Some passenger cars and trucks stopped by the Jewish community, from which alighted gendarmes of brown-uniformed soldiers, as well as a large group of Polish police. A larger group of gendarmes on horses also arrived.

We learned of the order: At 8 o'clock we must leave Okuniew. At 5 past 8, no living Jew would be found any longer in Okuniew.

The head of the village council provided *podwody*,¹²⁴⁸ that is, 5 wagons to transport the children, [and] the luggage, if there was [enough] room.

All had to assemble at the marketplace. The men separately, the women separately, the children up to the age of 10 years, on the wagons. We ourselves had to carry all the belongings from the Jewish homes. The head of the village council ordered the peasants to take out everything, which they did on the spot, and set it on fire.

[4] Calmly and leisurely the gendarmes started stealing whatever they could. The Polish police assisted; whenever a valuable item was found, they shoved [it] into their pockets or placed the item in the trucks, whether it was bottles of spirits, wine, or socks and good clothing which one had not managed to put on.

The Polish police specifically pointed out homes to the gendarmes where one could find various good things and objects, so that they would have their hands free in other homes.

Whatever they could not steal, they destroyed. The gendarmes with sabres cut open the bedding that some women had packed into bundles to take with them. They took with them kitchen items that have value, such as wringers!!

Once all were assembled in the market, a lieutenant came out and asked if we had gold, diamonds, or other jewels; nobody responded. A woman showed her engagement ring, but that, he said, one does not need to give away.

Precisely at 8 [o'clock], they started to chase us out. Those who were not at the site were shot on the spot. Thus, Shiye and Rivka Zysman, an old couple, were shot; Leye Rotsztajn, over 40 years [of age], while lying in

1248 (Polish) means of transportation with staff.

bed; [5] Yakov Asher Rzetelny, an old man, who was able to walk well, but was late in getting to the square. A few other Jews were also killed whose names I do not recall (I am still confused by my own misfortune with my dear son).

Also shot was Israel Meyer [Naszewski],¹²⁴⁹ the butcher, 42 years [of age], to whom the Polish commissioner “bore a grudge” and pointed out that he dealt in meat.

They started to chase us with whips and switches as well as riding crops. The gendarmes rode on horses, rode quickly, and told us to run after them. Each of us still attempted to put on whatever possible, nevertheless carrying one’s various parcels with underwear and clothes, in order to have it to sell at a [subsequent] tough time. After going a few kilometres further, they started to beat us mercilessly so we should walk more quickly, and began to shoot those who trailed behind along the way.

The first to fall was Dovid Budny,¹²⁵⁰ about 50 years old, a refugee from Kalisz. He was the owner of a mill there; among us he lived very poorly. He frightened me along the way: Thinking that a child was falling out of the wagon, he left the line, [6] wanting to support the child. The tall gendarme, who stood out for his cruelty, ran over and fired at him. Apparently, the bullet did not hit the right spot, but got stuck in the revolver, and the Jew began to run further. The gendarme fired a second time. The Jew did not fall and ran further; so he pursued him and fired a further two bullets.

We started to throw away the bundles and parcels, threw off the extra clothes, in order to run as fast as possible. One did not dare help the other, because the helper and the helped could be jointly shot.

On the road, Shlomo Bursztyn, 15 years old, and Shlomo Gurfinkiel, 42 years [old], a boot-maker, were shot.

In Rembertów, Rivka and Dovid Stanisławowski¹²⁵¹ were shot, a brother and a sister, 17 and 18 years old, [the] children of a shoemaker, who held each other’s hands. Near Wesola, Grynszpan was shot; an old man who fell behind; Nakhmen Szarfshajn, Sztern Rivka, and several other Jews.

[7] This is also where the tragedy occurred with my son Mattes-Boruch.

1249 Last name identified with reference from Doc. 171.

1250 In Doc. 171, his name is given as Budnik.

1251 In Doc. 171, their name is given as Stanisławski.

He was barely 17 years [old], but looked like [he was] over 20. A year ago, he spent a full half a year in an *obóz*,¹²⁵² returned home sick, yet managed to recover and worked well.

On that unfortunate night, he put on 8 shirts that he owned, and his 2 suits and overcoat. I gave him two thousand zlotys to conceal. Being a robust young man, he also [took] a bundle of additional clothing upon his shoulders.

Before he left home, being very thirsty from the night vigil, he drank up a glass of strong *wiśniak*.¹²⁵³ On the way, he started to murmur: "Daddy, I am falling behind." Whether the *wiśniak* harmed him, or whether in fact, the time that he had lived through in *obóz* was recurring in him, he started to scream that he was fainting and that his head was spinning. I told him to throw away the bundle, take off his overcoat, and throw away everything, and just run. Suddenly, he disappeared from before my eyes. The horsemen-gendarmes constantly slashed at people's heads. [8] One heard the bang of the revolvers and the cursing of the gendarmes. And I, my wife and [our] little daughter did not even see the misfortune which I found out about on the tram in Gocławek: My Mattes lagged behind [by] one metre. Here, a gendarme ran up and struck him in the head with a whip. He fell over and immediately tried to stand up, but here, another one ran up and shot a bullet into his head and immediately threw him into the gutter.

Did they specifically target the children and the youth?

I do not know. I still do not know what is going on with me. I still can't believe that I no longer have my son, my dear Mattes! My only son and helper!

Two days ago, I was still a human-being, a boss; through my labour, I had prepared not only for Passover, but to live for an entire summer. Was able to work and earn for myself and help others. Now, see how I look. (He shows me two swollen feet full of bloody and pus-ridden wounds.) When I arrived, the boots were [9] full of blood. I barely managed to remove them with pieces of flesh. Who knows how long I will need to heal, or be able to seek work. In the meantime, I am staying with a relative. But will I be able to find work? How long will I be able to survive? Or isn't my son on the road better? (His wife, who is sitting nearby, begins to cry more heavily.) I want to tell you that it's

1252 (Polish) [labour] camp.

1253 (Polish) cherry liqueur.

all the same to me. If I don't have Mattes, I don't need to live. In Gocławek, while sitting in the tram, we were also mercilessly beaten.

His relative, Mala Wiśnia from Miłosna, who is sitting nearby, relates:

We were driven out a day later. Many Jews were also murdered in the same manner. From one Jew, Shimen, money was demanded (a *Volksdeutscher* recognised a rich Jew). Shimen emptied his pockets; barely three thousand zlotys. Don't you have more? the gendarmes asked. No, he replied. They searched him; and to his misfortune, in a small side pocket he had another bank note of 5 zlotys, which he himself did not know about. And for the sin, he was shot on the spot.

Already knowing about Okuniew (just 3 km away), we sold everything to the peasants; and whoever had the courage [10] fled to Warsaw.

The first were the butchers, who knew only too well that were not handing over their largest share to the Polish police, but it didn't do them any good.

My house was burnt down during the bombings. My husband was killed at that time in a barn. I was staying with a brother, Mattes Wiśnia. My brother told me a day earlier to take the child and flee to Warsaw.

On the other side of the ghetto, they extorted from me each minute and extracted money. Thus, they woke me in the middle of the night and said that I must take the child separately into the ghetto; if not, the Germans would shoot him. They took a few hundred zlotys from me. To cross over the wall I had to pay separately, the last of my money, 100 zlotys.

ARG I 939 (Ring. I/875)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (Ł*), ink, Yiddish, 162×180 mm, 10 sheets, 10 pages.

175

11 December 1939, Otwock, mayor Jan Gadowski. Announcement on a levy imposed by the German authorities on the Jewish population of Otwock.

Announcement

Pursuant to Mr *Kreishauptmann's* ordinance issued on the 7 December of this year, I hereby announce that the Jewish population of the Warsaw county is to pay a one-time tax.

The sum of the levy imposed on the town of Otwock is

100 000 zlotys.

The deadline for payment of the entire sum has been set for the 20 December this year.

To ensure just division and collection of the said sum a "Special Committee" was established on the 10th of this month, whose members are the persons enumerated below.

To carry out the collection, the Committee is authorised to co-opt Jewish citizens of the town, while nobody may evade this cooperation under sanction of severe punishment.

I warn that evasion of immediate payment of the tax set by the Committee shall be severely punished as "passive resistance".

The Committee is to submit a list of evaders to the relevant authorities.

Otweek, 11 December 1939

Mayor
JAN GADOMSKI

Members of the Committee:

1. ELA ARONIAK

6. HERSZ FROM¹²⁵⁴

11. IZAAK LESMAN¹²⁵⁵

¹²⁵⁴ Hersz From, owner of a shop selling accessories. See Sylwia Szymańska, *Ludność żydowska w Otwocku podczas drugiej wojny światowej*, Warszawa 2002, p. 67.

¹²⁵⁵ Izaak Lesman, owner of the "Palladium" boarding house in Otwock; chairman of the *Judenrat* between 31 December 1939 and 7 July 1941. *Ibidem*, pp. 27, 53.

2. CHAIM BIELOCH ¹²⁵⁶	7. JANKIEL FRYDENZON ¹²⁵⁷	12. MORDKA LANDSBERG
3. CHONON CETLIN	8. EFROIM GÓJSKI ¹²⁵⁸	13. TOBIAS MOKOTOWSKI ¹²⁵⁹
4. RACHMIL FLEISYNG	9. GUSTAWA KAMIŃSKA	14. MORDKA ORLIŃSKI ¹²⁶⁰
5. DAWID FELDMAN	10. CHAIM KENIGSBURG ¹²⁶¹	15. EFROIM RIKNER ¹²⁶²

ARG I 946 (Ring. I/782)

Description: Original, print, German, Polish, 470×402 mm, minor damage and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 1 page.

176 *After August 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony from Otwock, on the chief of Rembertów gendarmerie's search for Jews in hiding who survived the Aktion of 19 August 1942 and execution of 450 people at a Jewish police station, including a group of Orthodox Jews.*

[1] Following the *Aktion* in Otwock that took place on 19 August, in which a large part of the Jewish population was “resettled,” the chief of the Rembertów gendarmerie, the notorious murderer Lipsher¹²⁶³ who conducted the *Aktion* in

1256 Chaim Bielołoch, owner of a boarding house in Otwock; before the war, member of the board of the Jewish Community; member of the *Judenrat* since 31 December 1939. *Ibidem*, pp. 27, 54.

1257 Jankiel Frydenzon, before the war, member of the board of the Jewish Community in Otwock; member of the *Judenrat* between 1939 and July 1941. *Ibidem*, p. 27.

1258 Efraim Gójski (or Gujski), owner of a shop selling household goods in Otwock; member of the *Judenrat*. *Ibidem*, pp. 27, 54, 67.

1259 Tobiasz Mokotowski, real estate owner; before the war, member of the board of the Jewish Community in Otwock; member of the *Judenrat*. *Ibidem*, pp. 27, 54.

1260 Mordka Orliński, trader; member of the Otwock *Judenrat* between December 1939 and July 1941. *Ibidem*, p. 27.

1261 Chaim Kenigsberg, butcher; member of the *Judenrat* in Otwock. *Ibidem*.

1262 Efraim Rikner (Rykner), plumber; member of the *Judenrat* and the Jewish Police in the Otwock ghetto. See *ibidem*; Calel Perechodnik, *Czy ja jestem mordercą?* ed. 2, Warszawa 1995, p. 104.

1263 Karl Liebscher, captain (*Hauptmann*) of the gendarmerie in the Warsaw, Garwolin, and Ostrów counties; one of the leaders of the *Aktion* in Otwock. See J.A. Młynarczyk, “*Akcja Reinhard*” w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego, in: *Prowincja noc*, pp. 43,

Otwock, ordered the Jewish police to gather all the hidden Jews and bring them to the Jewish police station. And he would come every few days to shoot them.

The police diligently fulfilled the chief's command and searched out all the hidden Jews, and gathered them in the Jewish Police station. Lipsher came every few days and shot the assembled Jews, whose number reached several hundred at one time. In this way, 3,000 Jews were shot by the murderous chief. Cynically and in cold blood, smoking a cigarette, he ordered the victims to lie down on the ground. Some of them were still alive when they were tossed into previously prepared pits in various parts of the town.

On Sunday, 23 August, 60 Jews were assembled in the police station, where they waited to be shot by the chief Lipsher. When the news came that Lipsher had arrived to begin the slaughter, [2] a group of orthodox Jews, led by Nokhem Kohen, Yissakhar Pasternak, Borekh Bene[?], and Yitskhok Meyer Buński marched out dressed in *kitels*,¹²⁶⁴ with *tales* and *tefilin*, reciting chapters of Psalms. And with the cry *Hashem hu elokim*,¹²⁶⁵ they marched into an open pit to be shot. At the same time, Yissachar Pasternak delivered a fiery speech, in which he spoke to Lipsher's conscience about the great injustice he was committing by shooting hundreds of innocent victims. The cold murderer listened attentively to the sermon and answered with a cynical cold-bloodedness: *Ja, mein lieber Herr. Du hast recht, aber du musst in Graben gehen*.¹²⁶⁶ And then, with an extraordinary calmness, he shot all 450 Jews.

ARG II 355 (Ring. II/308)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (SJ*), ink, Yiddish, 104×267 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

61–62. The name is consistently spelled as “Lipsher”, typically in Polish (“Lipszer”) and Jewish testimonies.

1264 (German) shirts; loose white gowns, or shrouds, worn on *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, Passover, and by grooms.

1265 (Hebrew) The Lord is God.

1266 (German) Yes, my dear sir, though you are right, you must get into the pit.

After January 1941, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony גירוש פרושקאוו [The expulsion from Pruszków]. Fate of the Jewish population from November 1940: ghetto, activity of the Judenrat, forced labour, and deportation to the Warsaw ghetto in January 1941.

[1] The Expulsion from Pruszków

In the beginning of November 1940, it was decided that the Jewish population of Pruszków would be transferred to a special Jewish ghetto at the outskirts of the town.¹²⁶⁷ One must admit that the Pruszków *Judenrat*, made up of more sophisticated people, though exclusively nominated by the authorities,¹²⁶⁸ carried out important work and used its influence with the communal authorities to establish the Jewish ghetto in Pruszków itself and not to send the Jews to the barracks outside Warsaw, as was previously planned. The *Judenrat* had a difficult task transferring the Pruszków Jewish population, which numbered around 1,300 people, into the crowded area of the designated Jewish quarter consisting of several neglected little streets with 29 small houses.

The overcrowding was terrible; sometimes there were 6 or 8 people in a room. The dwellings were mostly damp, neglected. And so, on 15 November, the Jewish population had to leave their relatively clean and comfortable flats and move into the Jewish ghetto. At first, some of the Jewish businesses and workshops still remained open in the town; however, one had to return by 7 o'clock in the evening to sleep in the ghetto. The ghetto for the time being

1267 The ghetto in Pruszków was bordered by the streets: Pęcicka (now Armii Krajowej), Komorowska, Ceramiczna and Polna. See Marian Skwara, *Pruszkowscy Żydzi. Sześć dekad zamkniętych Zagładą* (Pruszków, 2007), p. 175.

1268 The chairman of the Pruszków *Judenrat* was Jan Postrygacz-Czernecki (1886–1943), merchant, town Councillor from 1927–1939, Zionist. After January 1941, he went into hiding in a village near Radziwiłłów (Żyrardów County), where he was murdered. The other members of the Pruszków *Judenrat* were Izidor Kenigsztejn, Erazm Rozenowicz, Noyekh Borensztajn, Beker, Tug, and Walman. *Ibidem*, pp. 162–163, 263.

was an open one. Jews were allowed to enter and [2] depart from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m., except for Sundays and holidays.

The Jewish residents of the ghetto quickly adapted to the new conditions, working and earning a living. At the street entrance to the ghetto, signs were erected with the caption: "Entry strictly forbidden to Poles and Germans".

In order to clearly understand later events, two factors must be explained which played a significant and tragic role in the events [connected with] the expulsion from Pruszków. Immediately following the occupation, Jews were snatched from the street and taken for various physical jobs, for public and military purposes. Mainly, they were selected for work in the large railway workshops, located near Pruszków, to load various armaments and iron, to clean the warehouses and granaries, wash floors, chop wood and for other dirty jobs. Often the Jews were badly harassed and beaten by the Jews. After many interventions, the *Judenrat* succeeded in bringing an end to the seizing [of people] off the street and the *Judenrat* committed itself to providing a certain number of Jews for labour each day. After a certain time, it was established that the *Judenrat* would provide 60 persons each day with a payment from the workshops directorate of 2.80 zlotys. For the most part, the work lasted from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m., but sometimes they were kept until 8 or 10 at night. [3] For its part, the *Judenrat* established a special fund and paid extra to the labourers in the workshops, a few zlotys each week. In this way, the labour in the workshops was almost normalized and a more humane approach was instituted.

In order to regulate the work, a department of work battalion was created within the *Judenrat*, directed by an official from the community named Yitzhok Śliwkiewicz, a refugee from Łódź. His past and former occupation were unknown; the *Judenrat* employed him as an energetic man for this responsible post. Since he was in close daily contact with the German representatives, and since the officials from the railway workshops had full trust in him, the *Judenrat* depended on him in this field and relied on his instructions and his response regarding how and who should be sent to work. His dealings with and approach to the workers under his authority became extremely brutal and dictatorial, which elicited great discontent and agitation among the entire Jewish population. The majority of the *Judenrat*, however, covered up for him completely. When appeals were made to them regarding his dealings, they answered that these were orders from the authorities which must be implemented precisely and totally, without any appeal. Unheard of abuses and

events took place, so that while one group of Jews worked without rest 7 days a week, there were many who were privileged and [4] did not work at all. Upon the inspiration of Mr Śliwkiewicz, and with the silent consent of the *Judenrat*, night arrests took place, during which innocent people were dragged from their beds, viciously beaten and, half naked, forcibly taken to work. Immense agitation and bitterness reigned among the Jewish population, but out of fear of yet harsher consequences, people ground their teeth and kept silent.

Eventually the tragic finale arrived, which no one could comprehend. Around 20 January, the *Judenrat* received the sad news that the expulsion of Pruszków's Jews was approaching. For reasons which remain unknown to this day, the *Judenrat* kept this a secret, but by chance it became known that certain members of the *Judenrat* were packing up their houses and sending their belongings out of the ghetto by night. The Jewish inhabitants became enraged and all pressing enquiries elicited no clear answer from the *Judenrat*. Understandably, a terrible panic broke out and various opposing versions spread: The Jews were to be sent to Biała Podlaska, to Lublin or to other places, they weren't to be allowed to take any of their household possessions etc. A highly tense atmosphere and more panic led to the complete closure of the ghetto on Sunday, 25 January and no one was allowed in or out.

[5] The *Judenrat* regularly held secret meetings and consultations and it was felt that something was being planned; what, when or how, no one knew. Suddenly a rumour circulated, the information that those working in the railway workshops would be allowed to remain in the town with their wives and children. The next day, all male Jews were called to assemble outside the premises of the Jewish community, with the participation of the German agents of the railway workshop's directorate. Following the instruction and decision of Mr Śliwkiewicz, many Jews were selected as workers in the workshops. The next day, the list of the selected workers was increased and reached the number of around 180 men. Many people, believing in the truth of this version, even voluntarily registered as workers, incurring expenses, hoping in this way to save themselves and their families. Also, most of the *Judenrat*, chairman and deputy chairman first, were included in the list. Mr Śliwkiewicz became the sole dictator and boss of the situation and the fate of the entire Jewish population, in reality, rested in his hands. On Tuesday evening, he issued an order that on Wednesday 29 January all the Jews on the list [6] must be ready with their hand luggage and they will be sent to

the workshops; the remainder must leave the town the next day at 6 in the morning, and are not allowed to take more than 5 kilos of luggage with them.

The despair reached the greatest height when, the next day, people realized that as a matter of fact there was no order from the authorities, but rather a sadistic malice on the part of Mr Śliwkiewicz. In fact, the selected 180 people were taken to the railway workshops, with tragic and heartrending leave-taking from their wives and children, parents, and families. Finally, on Wednesday 29 January at 9 in the evening, the definitive sentence was received that on Thursday, 30 January at 8 in the morning, all Jewish residents apart from Jewish workers in the workshops must leave the town. Since most of the members of the *Judenrat* had been taken to the railway workshops, a committee was formed to organize and to help with the evacuation. In fact, it was determined that the authorities, in other words the Pruszków local gendarmes, were taking over the supervision of transporting the Jews from Pruszków to Warsaw, with permission to take household items with them, with no limitations on quantity, and [7] a sum of five thousand zlotys was demanded in return.

That night was a true *lejl shimurim*. No one slept, packing and preparing themselves for the sad journey the next morning... Thursday 30 January 1941 at 8 in the morning, when all Jewish residents, old and young, already found themselves on the street, the first trucks drove up and collected the first transport of women, children and older men and took them to the blocks of the workshops where those Jewish expelled from Pruszków were supposed to be bathed and disinfected. The transferring of all the people and belongings lasted until 4 in the afternoon. Meanwhile a very shameful event took place during the bathing. A certain number of military men broke into the carriage where the *parówka* took place and aside from completely shaving off all the hair of many of the Jewish women, forced them to let themselves be photographed naked.

Afterwards, when the authorities realised that it was impossible to disinfect and bathe everyone, they were all put onto a special train and transported to Warsaw. The journey lasted [8] scarcely 4 hours and, finally at 9 in the evening, the train arrived in Warsaw at the Gdański station. When the train stopped, the command "Men out!" was heard from outside. The doors of the cars opened and the men were chased out to load the baggage onto special trucks. Many of them were beaten if they fell; a few unfortunate cases also occurred. All men, women, and children, in addition to all the luggage, were taken on trucks and passenger cars to the city bathing facility on Spokojna

Street. The process of bathing and disinfection which took place there lasted the entire night until 10 the next morning. On the one hand there was terrible torture: People, hungry, extremely on edge and their energy depleted after the whole day, had to wait outside in the courtyard in the cold for their turn to bathe and after bathing found themselves naked in cold rooms for a long time, waiting for their disinfected clothes. On the other hand, there was trading and extortion of money by the bath officials in return for not shaving hair or beards, not burning clothes, shoes etc.

People paid and it hardly helped. Eventually, people were taken group by group under the supervision of the Polish police to quarantine quarters on Leszno Street, meaning that they were being handed over to the control of the Jewish “authorities”.

ARG I 970 (Ring. I/892)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (BW*), pencil, Yiddish, 148×210 mm, 9 sheets, 9 pages. Hersch Wasser's note in the margin of p. 1 (ink): “19 March 1941” and sign “+” (red pencil). Hebrew letter “א” in the margins. The document was kept in a binder.

PUSTELNIK

178 *After 24 March 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Testimony גירוש “(פוסטעלניק) תש”ב [The Expulsion of 5702 (Pustelnik)], [recorded by Rabbi Shimon Huberband]. Fate of the Jewish population from 1939; help received from a Volksdeutscher, Zientara, and resettlement to Warsaw on 24 March 1942.*

[1] The expulsion of 5702 (Pustelnik)

[2] Along the line of a local train, which leads from Warsaw to [. . .] a small settlement, neither a town nor a village, by the name of Pustelnik.¹²⁶⁹ [. . .] from

¹²⁶⁹ The *Marecka Kolej Dojazdowa* (Marki Commuter Railway) connected Warsaw with Marki and Radzymin in the years 1896–1974. Today, Pustelnik is a district of Marki.

a station building of the train and two long rows of houses near both sides of the road, which leads to Radzymin. Further into the depth off the road, small groups of buildings lie scattered, which form separate units. These are factory buildings with accompanying houses for the workers and employees, because the whole area between Pustelnik-Marki-Zacisze, Radzymin and Zielonka is occupied by brick factories and peat quarries. Bricks and peat are the most important products of the area and the majority of the working population is employed in both these industries.

Before the war, the Jewish community of Pustelnik consisted of approximately 200 families, which numbered about 850 people. The Jewish population made a profitable living from working at the aforementioned brick factories, by producing and selling bricks, and also in providing machines and necessary equipment for the brick factories, from trade in the town in all kinds of goods and also from trade with nearby Warsaw. Many Pustelnik residents [. . .] Warsaw and taken to [. . .] cheaply. [3] [. . .] participated in Jewish social and political life. In the shtetl, Jewish parties had representation, and the *kehillah* consisted of members of political parties with a distinct Zionist majority.

The outbreak of the war befell Pustelnik just as it did in the other towns of Poland. It became familiar with mobilisation, with buying extra supplies, with some panic and air raid sirens. Pustelnik did not directly suffer from bombings ‘[. . .] was very often bombed because crowds of refugees and Polish military groups [. . .] on this road. Because of [. . .] [resi]dents carried from their houses by the road and the [. . .] deeper, near the forest. [. . .]’¹²⁷⁰ Hence, Pustelnik was destined to become a front-line position of the Germans during the siege of Warsaw.

On 11–12 September, the retreating Polish military groups appeared in Pustelnik, after which the advancing Germans moved in. Upon retreating, the Polish military forces made fortified positions on the Marki-Zielonka line. Immediately after them, on the morning of Rosh Hashanah, the first German patrols, motorcyclists, and armed cyclists appeared. One of them fell from a bullet, which had been fired by one of the last Polish patrols. This caused the Germans to set out from house to house enquiring after the military. [. . .] were [. . .] in the Polish [. . .] [4] Comrade Kal.[?] to go with them. Comrade P. [F.?] remained undisturbed and the [. . .]. Kal.[?] was taken by the Germans to

1270 ^cAnnotation no. 2 from p. [24] inserted as indicated by the author.

a place where other men, Jews and Poles, had already been assembled, who had been taken out from their homes in the same manner. The assembled men were arranged in rows; then Jews were separated from Poles and each group was led to a different place. The Germans reassured the people that they should not be afraid. Each one of the captives believed however, that this was just for the sake of appearances and that in truth they were being led to their death. For the time being, they were brought to an empty place, where they spent the night. On the following day, they were released, with a demand that in the evening all men were to present themselves again at the assembly points. Terrified, all presented themselves. No one was harmed. This was repeated for several days; then all were released from that obligation.

The days of the siege of Warsaw proved not too bad for the Pustelnik residents. The German military went backwards and forwards; people suffered shortage of bread and food and similar things, but no heavy persecution took place. Several larger flats were requisitioned and the residents thrown out, but [. .] this brought graver consequences [. .] [5] [. .] or at least defiled. [. .] days, before then came the robberies, conducted with the aid and even incitement of Polish elements.

It started with those who had gone away during the days of panic of 6–7 September¹²⁷¹ and left their homes and businesses unattended. Young German soldiers, accompanied by Polish youths and people of the underworld broke into those homes and businesses. ‘[. .] abandoned homes and businesses [. .] in such [as those] [. .] [that] belonged to the Poles. According to the accounts [. .] Jewish people of the underworld.^{c1272} [. .] threw out the Jewish possessions found there, and tossed them to the gathered mob as gifts. The human mob, as it was said, mostly young and lumpen, enjoyed the gift with abandon. At the same time, the conscious worker and the intelligentsia explicitly refrained from participating in the looting. Due to good relations, which both earlier and later were maintained with the local Polish police, many of the looted items were returned to their rightful owners. The most damage was suffered by the *shochet* of the town, who was the owner of a big

1271 On the night of 6–7 September 1939, Colonel Roman Umiastowski called on all combat-fit men to leave Warsaw and form a new defence line east of the Vistula River. It resulted in blocking the roads leading out of the city.

1272 ^c Annotation No. 1 from p. [24] inserted as indicated by the author.

manufacturing business. A group of Germans with the accompanying mob entered his home, opened the doors of the business, threw out the goods, and scattered them before the mob, who took whatever they pleased [. . .] and took it out [. . .].

[6] After the cessation of the war negotiations in the area, the residents [. . .] returned to their former occupation. Trade with Warsaw assumed larger proportions, especially the supply of food products, and the people found a livelihood again. The question of earnings was further clarified when the brickworks were set in motion again. Almost all the brick factories belonged to Jewish owners; also the brokers buying and selling the bricks and various necessary materials and means were Jews. Despite that, the relations established themselves favourably due to the following incident. A year before the war, a professional manager [of] a larger brick factory had been brought down from the Poznań area, a certain Zientara, who turned out to be a *Volksdeutscher*. This *Volksdeutscher* was granted temporary management of all the Jewish factories in the area and also became the manager of the “Ceramic Plants of the District of Warsaw”,¹²⁷³ newly organised by the district head. This Mr Z. restored work in the factories and employed all the former Jewish workers and even took on [new ones], because now, on account of small wages, many Polish workers did not [. . .] the work [. . .].

[7] [The re]lations with the local Polish population, the local authorities, the village head, and police stations also reverted to being amicable so that life could be regarded as bearable. From time to time, gendarmes appeared from either Warsaw or Radzymin, but for the most part one came to an understanding with them. Those who were intent on persecuting left after dealing out several blows to Jews they came across by chance, or other similar attacks. The others, and they were the deciding majority, were after a “practical result” – a little money, a lovely gift. One already sensed this and gave [it to] them. In the beginning, he who was assaulted by chance, was attacked during the offence, suffered; later, this was accomplished centrally, through the *Judenrat*.

Under the protection of money, which can help “atone for the sins”, the Jews held negotiations with the village, traded in flour, bread, food, meat, even ran illegal kosher slaughtering. Livestock, big or small, was brought

1273 That plant had the status of a forced labour camp. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 91.

“piecemeal” from the village to an agreed location, a so-called *maline*;¹²⁷⁴ the slaughterer arrived there, did his thing and was off. The meat was sold to Warsaw or other Jewish communities, which sought ritually slaughtered meat. [. . .] [8] These good relations lasted for the whole time until the expulsion. The summer of 1940 passed peacefully. Only by autumn did the storm clouds appear: the edict about a ghetto. The community immediately got down to the task of having the edict repealed or at least slowing down its implementation. The local population and the representatives of the authorities were absolutely confident. The main intercession concerned the district authorities in Warsaw. Here, influence was exerted through the familiar commissioner and manager of the brick factories, the *Volksdeutscher Z.*

As was the custom, one tried to stay in one’s own home, which means, in the houses by the road. However, this did not materialise and, as it transpired later, it turned out not for the bad, but for the good of the Jewish community of Pustelnik. The ghetto edict was carried out, as it has been said, in the autumn of 1940. For their place of residence, the Pustelnik Jews received three scattered groups of buildings, which thus created three separate ghettos; the distance between them was from about half a kilometre to one kilometre. The middle group of buildings consisted of dwellings which had been built [. . .] the well-known [architect?] [. . .]owicz.

[9] In principle, going from one ghetto to another without permission was forbidden. In practice, this was never observed. The Polish police from the stations at Marki and Zielonka, to whom the three complexes belonged, lived well with the Jews both before the war and later. They received their pay and not only did they not interfere, but helped and protected [them] from the “evil eye”.¹²⁷⁵ The German gendarmerie, on the other hand, had its own interests irrespective of real offences: some in beating and tormenting, some in bribery. However, this was not a frequent occurrence. The occupations of the Jewish population did not change much. The goods and chattels were moved into the new homes unhindered. Again, the largest number was employed at the brick factories and peat quarries under the management of the *Volksdeutscher Z.* The number of Polish workers decreased for various reasons. Mr Z. welcomed Jews. First of all, their wages were small;

1274 (Yiddish, from Russian thieves’ slang) hide-out, hiding place.

1275 In Jewish folklore, a curse cast by the envious.

secondly, he made good mutual business deals with them. Some of the Jews even became wealthy. The free movement of the workers who had the required [per]mission [...] remaining [...] [10] [...] needles, shoes, clothes, and items of furniture.

In the ghetto, hand mills for milling flour and groats were set up, as well as bakeries for baking bread. The ghetto baked bread not only for its own needs, but also for sale. The Polish population in Pustelnik bought bread in the ghetto, which was cheaper by 1 to 1.5 groszes. The bread from the Jewish ghetto was also taken to Warsaw by Jewish women or by Poles. Meat from the clandestine kosher slaughtering in the ghetto was also sold to Warsaw.

True, the living conditions were more difficult and a typhus epidemic also emerged, yet people did not have to deal with such loneliness and privation as in Warsaw. True, mortality increased, but it only affected the weaker elements: lonely old people, weaker young children. There were very few instances of death of people in their middle years in a healthier state.

Medical help was provided by two Polish doctors from [...] and Zielonka. Both doctors [...] the biggest help preparing[?] [...] [11] with his own life. He caught typhus, was gravely ill, did not pull through, and died. Aside from the epidemic, the ghetto also suffered from undesirable visits from several German madmen, who came with the aim of making life miserable. These were almost without exception young German soldiers, who came here from time to time on horseback, beat the Jews they came across, men or women, cut off beards, looked into several dwellings, disturbed things, and rode away. One of them distinguished himself with an especially insane cruelty and in town he was called by the universally familiar nickname “the deranged one”. He became a component of the Jewish ghetto of Pustelnik like the well-known old types of the shtetls: the town fool, the town lunatic, or the town idler. However, this scourge was regarded as extra colour, an adornment to the normal course of life, to normal existence. It was taken into consideration as a known variable in a mathematical equation.

[...] an exceptional occurrence or rumour appeared in Pustelnik again in early spring of 1941 (February-April). This [...] rumour about the expulsion [...] the shtetls and [...] which [...] [12] recovered from a fright, people went back to their normal work again until the second announcement about labour camps. This time, too, Mr Z. intervened and his Jews were left with him.

By the way, many of the Pustelnik Jewish population had already been employed at similar jobs in their own area. Namely, from February-March, military fortifications were built on the Zielonka-Radzymin line, crosswise through the historic Radzymin forest. The Jews were drawn into forced labour, digging pits of up to 40 metres deep. The Jews did not know what was done later, because the rest of the work was carried out by military formations. The supervisor of the work was a German officer of very good character. The narrator defines him as a noble man. His treatment of the Jewish workers was irreproachable. First of all, he negotiated a wage for them from the Warsaw Office of Labour (earlier [they] had not been paid as forced labourers). Then he tried to obtain food for them. [His] personal treatment of the people was very good [. . .]. He [?] showed [. . .] for the people, [an] interest [. . .] in their sufferings and [. . .] compassion [. . .].

[13] [to] the chairman of the *Judenrat* in Pustelnik.¹²⁷⁶ Although he was in the company of other officers, he apologised, came up to a Jew, greeted him and warmly asked after the Pustelnik Jews. The narrator thinks that the German liked the industriousness and the working ability of the Pustelnik Jews who, even as pre-war workers, did not avoid work and did it well.

The rising living costs of the summer of 1941 did not hit Pustelnik hard. The community had contacts with the peasants, bought village produce from them and sold their own produce or labour. The autumn did not bring any changes in life either. From time to time, one had encounters with “the deranged one” or other Germans, [but] in general people lived peacefully. Occasionally, Jews passed through, those who were going either from the “Great Reich” or to their homes abandoned in 1939–1940 in the “Great Reich”,¹²⁷⁷ they stopped in Pustelnik and stayed overnight or [spent] several days there. They brought [to] Pustelnik a contact with the wider world. Because of them, [. . .] [14] the Germans and did business with the gendarmerie. That “merit” of Radzymin also benefitted Pustelnik which from time to time encountered anti-Semitism.

During the winter of 1942, something began to change in brick production. The manager and commissioner of the factories, the *Volksdeutscher Z.*, showed less of an interest in brick production, constantly decreased production, sold

1276 The chairman was Z. Laufer [?]. AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/828, handwritten signatures at the foot of the documents.

1277 From the western territories of Poland annexed to the Reich.

the materials, both raw and semi-manufactured, partly sold the machines and equipment and switched to peat production, which he started to run to an increasingly larger degree and independently. The financial situation changed little. One traded and worked, earned not badly, provided for oneself without much difficulty. Chattels were of great value, almost ten times more than in Warsaw, and for sold items, people [. . .]. Peasants came and offered good prices; for example, [for a] tailor's sewing machine, over 9 thousand was paid. For a cupboard (with [. . .] but without a mirror) [. . .] demand [. . .] [15] [. . .] the cautious party established a contact with [. . .] relatives[?] in[?] [. . .] and brought in a few items and money.¹²⁷⁸ Opinions [of the future] were divided. Some maintained that there would be an expulsion, but one did not know [. . .]; others believed that the edict would be revoked as in 1941. Everyone waited.

Then the black Friday came. Suddenly, unfamiliar gendarmes appeared in the [. . .] and the surrounding areas who looked into the abandoned flats, asking questions for no reason about the people, their work, and moved on. Among the gendarmes, a man of short stature with the biggest [. . .] stood out, [who] behaved very provocatively. He made ironic [. . .], laughed brazenly and his whole bearing did not bode well. [. . .] going back[?] from the third ghetto [. . .] to the middle one, the gendarme [. . .] two young girls, one [. . .] [the] other 20 years [old], sisters, [. . .] having moved away f[rom] [. . .] 20 steps [. . .] [16] his help. The family felt [. . .] from/of such powerful protectors. And [. . .] into the village and earned well. They, too, did not [. . .] [gen]darmes. This time, although the gendarmes were in the ghetto, they [. . .] not carefully out of the zone without *opaski*.¹²⁷⁹ [. . .] Going back, the "short" gendarme [. . .] both girls and threatened to shoot them. The tone in which the threat was uttered and his entirely unambiguous conduct convinced every one of the gravity of the situation. The mother of the girls ran out and started pleading; also the girls themselves intensely and tearfully pleaded with him to spare their lives. They immediately offered whatever ransom he would demand. The brute [. . .] remained unmoved. He demanded that everyone step back and led both girls approximately [. . .] direction of the Jewish cemetery. [. . .] he stopped [. . .] wall and single-handedly with the revolver[?] [. . .]

1278 Probably news about deportation spread in Pustelnik and some of its inhabitants began to move their possessions and money to the Warsaw ghetto in advance.

1279 (Polish) armbands; see footnote XXX.

[17] [. . .] already to everyone an uncertain foreboding about their own [. . .] fate [?]. [. . .] one did not have to wait for long. On Monday evening of the following week, a Pole suddenly came to the middle ghetto and insistently enquired about a Jew he knew. People understood from his agitated behaviour that he had something painful and bitter to share. They tried to ask him for what he needed his acquaintance, what he wanted to say to him. He replied agitatedly that he had something important [to say], but was afraid of “getting a bullet in the head”. Finally, he found his acquaintance and told him that there was a suspicion [. . .] to expel the Jews and indeed without delay. He did not know any details. On the same evening, the chairman of the *Judenrat* went across with several [. . .] to the village head in order to [. . .] about the rumours. [. . .] he told them that he [. . .] ordered[?] and urgently [. . .]. [18] It goes without saying that everything was done with no order or aim, [. . .], things also got confused [. . .].

The following day, Tuesday, 24 March 1942, early in the morning around 6 [o'clock], peasant wagons appeared, and a big group of gendarmes led by a tall lean officer (lieutenant), surrounded all three Jewish ghettos. The first order ensued immediately: All out of the houses. The people obediently got out and took bundles with them. The appearance of the bundles incensed the Germans. Who ordered you to pack, who prepared you?” they shouted. “Unpack!” The people [. . .] started[?] to unpack. Soon, however, came another order, “Men – into the houses [. . .] and carry out everything there is.” The packing was thrown aside, [. . .] ran into the houses, from wh[ere] [. . .] dragged out furniture, bedding, [. . .], suitcases and the like. From [. . .] thrown through [. . .] the aforementioned things [. . .]. [19] [. . .] officer with a revolver and cold-bloodedly, with silent[?] [. . .] cruelties: beating, shooting, swearing. When a large pile of things accumulated, the officer ordered for it to be set on fire. The fire flared up, bright and high. It was ordered to also throw the larger bundles which the people had near them onto the pile. The former bookkeeper of *Kult-Bukh*,¹²⁸⁰ L., was ordered to throw his big bundle of things onto the fire. He could not accomplish this because the pile was very high and the fire blazed powerfully. He was threatened with shooting. Under the [. . .], he pounced at the burning pile and threw in his bundle. He [. . .] the danger for himself of being burnt. He remained in a torn [. . .]

1280 An interwar Yiddish publishing house.

one slipper and one rubber shoe. [. . .] complicit [?] Poles, it was not [. . .] to take the [. . .] things from their Jewish [. . .] everything [. . .] [20] with regard to the bundles and belongings, a difference between [. . .] groups prevailed. In “Osinka”¹²⁸¹ they preferred [. . .]. In the middle ghetto, the colony, where the officer ruled, people were ordered to hand in even the paper cash, and threatened with shooting if during the inspection even 1 paper zloty would be found. The terrified community handed in close to 7,000 zlotys. Comrade P. alone handed in 1,400 zlotys, which he had received the previous evening for a sewing machine. Incidentally, he had not wanted[?] to sell the sewing machine several weeks earlier for 2,000 [zlotys]. Also the aforementioned cupboard, which its owner had not wanted to sell for 2,000 zlotys, was thrown [. . .] the first floor and burnt. After several hours of similar [. . .] the transport [was] formed. [. . .]

[21] [. . .] [rabbi and] his son from the beginning became the object of cruel treatment. [. . .] he was abused and beaten. On the way, he collapsed. Two gendarmes stood over him and incessantly beat [him] with rifle butts, “like peasants thresh the crop”, on the head. With his last strength, the rabbi pulled himself up from the ground and continued to walk. Soon, however, his strength failed. Then a gendarme tossed him into the ditch by the road and shot him. His son, who screamed at the sight of the murder, was shot by the same gendarme and tossed into the ditch. [. . .] the officer in charge of the transport chose all the worst places. [He did] not lead [them] on the good road to Warsaw, but through side roads and [. . .] to Gocławek. Right by[?] Gocławek, [. . .] mother-in-law, who could not [. . .] was shot dead. [. . .] to Gocławek [. . .] 200–300 [. . .] official [. . .]

[22] In the tram that arrived, according to the order, first of all the sick and invalids [. . .]. At the same time, the gendarmes [. . .] swore [and] beat [them]. The lieutenant cold-bloodedly observed all that and [. . .]. He used the place also for religious research in the spirit of Fulk[?]. [. . .] of Erfurt, namely he approached the aforementioned Comrade L. with [. . .] what is the meaning of *goy*. The latter replied that it means a Christian, a non-Jew. “And what is the meaning of *hatov shebagoyim harog*,”¹²⁸² he asked again. L. replied that he

1281 Name of a brickyard in Pustelnik where the Germans established a ghetto in 1940.

1282 (Hebrew) the best among the Gentiles you should kill. A statement from teachings of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai (~100–160 C.E.), in reference to Exodus 9:20. It is usually understood to

did not understand Hebrew. The lieutenant smiled, then shouted in Yiddish (not German), “You know very well what the meaning is.” L. answered him in German that he did not understand [. . .]. The lieutenant let him go and turned to a group of Jews, who [were] burying in the field the latest victim of the “Via Dolorosa” [. . .], “But bury him according to all the laws of Talmud.”

The tram took the exhausted Jews of Pustelnik to Warsaw [?], where they were taken to quarantine in Leszno Street 109. Once there, the families were divided: some into town to relatives [. . .] acquaintances, or in a dwelling [. . .] of their own, or to refugee centres. In addition[?] [. . .] the mother of the aforementioned[?] Halpern could not [. . .] and jumped from the second floor. She [. . .] *Volksdeutscher L.* [. . .].

[23] the [. . .] of the *Judenrat* of Pustelnik was imposed in December of 1939. The *kehillah* was disbanded soon after the establishment of the German power, i.e. in November 1939. In the middle of December, the German *Landrat* imposed a levy of the sum of 10 thousand zlotys on the Jewish population.¹²⁸³ In order to claim this tax and also further to [. . .] the Jewish affairs, it demanded that a *Judenrat* of 8 Councillors with a chairman be created. 4 Jewish residents were made responsible (as hostages) for carrying this out.

These 4 hostages together with the former head of the community [. . .] imposed[?] on the Jewish residents and then collected. Later [. . .] elections to the *Judenrat* [. . .] general assembly. Each one of the [. . .] “honour”, but it remained [. . .] mandates due to [. . .] [24] talked a little about politics or just things of great importance, although before the war there was [. . .] political group in Pustelnik which was active and maintained a close contact with Warsaw.

ARG I 973 (Ring. I/893)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten (HUB*?), notebook, ink, Yiddish, 153×170 mm, major damage and fragments missing, 12 sheets, 24 pages.

refer to enemies in wartime, or still more narrowly to Egyptians of the time of Exodus, however, often cited against the Jews in general.

1283 The levy was imposed by the Warsaw *Landrat* on 7 December 1939. See Doc. 175.

179 *After December 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Notes on the situation of the Jews near Radzymin and in the Białystok voivodship; activity of Jewish self-defence detachments (e.g. those commanded by Moyshe Zieleniec in the vicinity of Jadów); the Aktion in Radzymin on 1 October 1942; escape from ghettos.*

[1] It was probably in October 1942 that the peasants began terrorising the Jews who had hidden in the woods. Then, a group exclusively made up of Jews organised themselves in the surroundings of the town Jadów,¹²⁸⁴ in Radzymin county, and compelled local wealthy property owners to give them large sums of money. On the whole, they spread fear among the local peasants. Whenever a group of Jews appeared, they were sold everything, unlike previously when no Jew could have bought a thing. The leader of the above mentioned Jews was a young 25-year-old Jewish man from Jadów, Moyshe Zieleniec.

These were a few Jewish survivors from Jadów, which earlier had 3,000 Jews.

In November 1942 in the morning, 12 German gendarmes and 25 SD arrived. While they surrounded the shtetl, they commanded that all Jews assemble on the square, and they immediately shot some of them. Immediately, groups of Jews appeared from all sides of the town. They responded with heavy shooting, so none of the Germans managed to run away and all were killed. No one showed up for the next three days. On the fourth day, the town was surrounded by a larger number of SS and Gestapo, but they were so surprised not to find a single Jew in the town. All the men, women, and children had disappeared into the woods.

¹²⁸⁴ The majority of the Jadów Jews were murdered in Treblinka on 22 August 1942. See J.A. Młynarczyk, "Akcja Reinhard" w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 62.

On 1 October 1942, which fell on a Friday, the town of Radzymin was overwhelmed with fear. Dreadful reports were reaching the ghetto from all directions, that on the following day, the Sabbath, the resettlement of Radzymin, Wołomin, and Legionowo would take place.¹²⁸⁵ Already on Friday at 4 p.m., some gendarmes entered the ghetto and began stealing what they could. Of the 3,000 Jews of Radzymin, only 200 young men escaped – some into the woods, some to Warsaw. 70 men also went to the labour camp in Izabelin (peat digging not far from Warsaw), but their end was dreadful. They were all shot and buried there, where they worked.¹²⁸⁶

[2] A hard and risk-filled life was had by all those Jews who had, as they say, settled on the other side of the ghetto. As long as they had money, a lot of money, they could make it through somehow, but as soon as their landlords saw that the Jews had no money left, then suddenly a *Volksdeutscher* or a so-called secret agent appeared and arrested the Jews. Obviously, if a Jew had anything to give, like an overcoat, a suit and so on, he was not arrested, but was instead allowed to leave the place. Thus, in the course of December, many Jews were forced to return to the Warsaw ghetto, as this was the only ghetto in the entire Warsaw district.¹²⁸⁷ Many Jewish survivors from dozens of towns that were resettled in the East, died trying to get to Warsaw.

ARG II 362 (Ring. II/302)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 222×340 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

1285 The *Aktion* in Radzymin was conducted on 3 October 1942, in Legionowo and Wołomin one day later. *Ibidem*.

1286 The camp in Izabelin was established in 1940. Until 1941 its prisoners, Jews from Jadów, Radzymin, and Wołomin were employed in mining hard coal, and subsequently in loading peat. See J. Marszałek, *Obozy pracy*, p. 87; J.A. Młynarczyk, “*Akcja Reinhard*” w *gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego*, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 69; Marta Janczewska, *Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów na terenie dystryktu warszawskiego*, in: *Prowincja noc*, p. 302.

1287 On 28 October 1942 the police authorities issued an ordinance regarding collection ghettos in the Warsaw and Lublin districts. Ghettos in Warsaw, Kałuszyn, Sobolew, Kosów, Rembertów, and Siedlce were deemed as places where Jews could settle in the Warsaw District. In January 1943, prisoners of all ghettos aside from the Warsaw ghetto were murdered. See J.A. Młynarczyk, “*Akcja Reinhard*” w *gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego*, in: *Prowincja noc*, pp. 69–70.

180 *After 27 May 1942, Warsaw ghetto, author unknown. Account “טלושץ” [Tłuszcz], recorded by Rabbi Shimon Huberband. Persecution of Jews (ca. 100 local families and 50 families of refugees) from the entry of Germans until the resettlement of 27 May 1942 to the Warsaw ghetto.*

[1] Tłuszcz

[1a] Tłuszcz, Jadów commune, Radzymin county.¹²⁸⁸ There lived up to a 100 Jewish families in the town. During the war, the Jewish community increased by 50 more families of refugees from various towns big and small.¹²⁸⁹

Immediately after, they marched into the shtetl, capturing Jews for work, cutting off beards and beatings, like everywhere else, but it was tolerable: there were no [dead] victims.

Jewish property, on the other hand, was appropriated. It occurred through inspections, requisitions, and extortion of money.

A *Judenrat* was created; Gutman Popowski became chairman.¹²⁹⁰ The chairman accomplished a lot and achieved much good for the Jewish population.

In the town, there was a gendarmerie unit of 12 persons, the chief was *Wachtmeister* Stein. Popowski got close to them, gave them various presents, such as [2] handkerchiefs, boots, fur coats, watches, to silk socks, furs, and diamond rings and wristwatches for their wives. However, it was worth it because from this one could live; the economic situation of the Jewish community was good, compared to other towns, one could say, brilliant.

1288 At that time, Tłuszcz was the seat of a commune in the Warsaw County.

1289 The number of Jews in Tłuszcz before the war is estimated at about 900. According to the *Judenrat*'s letter dated 20 January 1941 to the ŻKOM in Warsaw, it had 690 refugees and fire victims in its care. See T. Brustin-Berenstein, “Deportacje i zagłada,” table IIa; AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1030, pp. 6–7.

1290 Other *Judenrat* members were Szmul Meir Taub, Berek Gelbard, Mendel Żółty, Wolf Radzyminiński, Mordko Złotówka and Aron Gutman. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1030, p. 1.

The edict of the ghetto came,¹²⁹¹ the Jews were resettled from their places where their forefathers had lived, and settled out of town in the dwellings of wealthier peasants, while the peasants were located in the former Jewish huts. The ghetto was closed and an order issued that any Jew leaving the ghetto would be immediately shot.

The Jews lived mainly from going to the village, selling various wares to the peasants, taking food products from them. These food products were sold in [2a] Warsaw. The peasants bought all sorts of clothes, linen, jewellery, furniture, even pianos. They bought all this for groszes compared to the pre-war prices, but the Jews nonetheless earned [money] by it. When the edict of closing off the ghetto on pain of death came, it hit the Jewish population very hard. Even the craftsmen, Jewish tailors, cobblers, carpenters, and other professionals, felt themselves hard hit by the edict because they could not make a living from the small Jewish population alone.

Chairman Popowski then agreed with *Wachtmeister* Stein that they would get 1,000 zlotys every week besides other items. This is how it went: The Jews continued to go to the village; the Jewish craftsmen continued to work for the peasants. In the shtetl, the majority [still] had many possibilities to make a living.

[3] However, it did not last long. One day, it became known that the gendarmes had shot a Jew they had met in a village. Popowski went to *Wachtmeister* Stein with a complaint. Stein replied that as the Jew had been encountered by a patrol of 3 gendarmes, they became wary of each other, and that was why they shot the Jew. Soon after, a second incident of a Jew being shot occurred in a nearby village. Popowski again went to the *Wachtmeister* with a complaint; he gave a fresh excuse. By increasing the reward with several good items, the gendarmes promised to no longer shoot any Jew that they encountered outside the ghetto.

Although going to the village to trade was threatened with death, the Jews [3a] nonetheless completely disregarded it, risking their lives to trade in the villages. For that reason, everyone was pleased that Popowski had raised the reward for the gendarmes, which [meant that] Stein gave the assurance that no Jew would be shot. This was an illusion of security.

1291 The ghetto in Tłuszcz was established in September 1940.

In summer 1941, a typhus epidemic raged in the Jewish ghetto. The ghetto was completely closed off; even mail was not allowed in or out of the ghetto. Only chairman Popowski had a *przepustka*, a permit to go outside the ghetto.

In September 1941, a woman in the closed ghetto of Tłuszcz received some money. Because of the epidemic, the money was not paid out to her. She turned to Popowski, as he was allowed to go outside the ghetto, to collect her money from the post office. She gave him [4]an authorisation for it. Popowski went to the post office to take care of the matter. The post office clerk, a German, refused to do it. Popowski said a few harsh words to him and threatened that he would not be silenced about such a wrong-doing. The clerk grabbed a revolver and wanted to shoot Popowski. The latter noticed it and escaped through the window. The clerk chased him and started to shoot at him. Popowski threw himself onto the ground and skilfully dodged the bullets. In this way, he stayed alive.

Two weeks later, a messenger from the post office came to the office of the *Judenrat* and ordered Popowski to come to the post office because there was a telephone call for him from another town. At the post office, Popowski was awaited by several Gestapo officers, who had come by car from [4a] Warsaw. They told Popowski that he was arrested. They immediately summoned the remaining members of the *Judenrat*, to whom Popowski handed over the keys to the cashbox, all the documents and accounts, and also the chairmanship. Separately, they summoned his wife. Popowski's parting from his wife was heart-breaking. The Gestapo officers put him in the car and drove off to Warsaw.

In Warsaw, he stayed for some time in the Pawiak [prison].¹²⁹² The shtetl moved heaven and earth, collected a gigantic sum, operators worked in Warsaw, but could not accomplish anything. A few weeks later, a letter came from Popowski that he was in Oświęcim.¹²⁹³ Four weeks later, his wife received a parcel from Oświęcim. The parcel contained Popowski's clothes, bloodied and covered in mud. His wife also received a notification from there that her husband [5] had died.

1292 The biggest German political prison, on Pawia Street in Warsaw (hence the name). During the German occupation, approximately 100,000 people were kept there, of whom 37,000 were murdered, including Emanuel Ringelblum and his family.

1293 In the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Popowski's office as chairman of the *Judenrat* was taken over by Meir Taub.

Following Popowski's death, conditions for the Jewish population began to worsen. Incidents of shootings of Jews who left the ghetto and went to the village to trade multiplied.

Incidents of inspections also began to multiply. Through an informer's tip-off, they found a some wares in the house of a merchant Lustik; it included a larger number of silk socks, silk underwear, and linen. The entire shtetl gave money to satiate the appetites of the gendarmes. In the house of another Jew, they found some leather; this cost 12 pairs of tall leather boots, a pair for each gendarme.¹²⁹⁴

A chapter of extorting money from the Jewish population began. Apart from the weekly [5a] sum of money that the Jews paid to the gendarmes, their appetite grew constantly stronger; they had to be provided with the most expensive items.

The Polish policemen also extorted countless money from the Jews.

Two weeks before Passover, after the expulsion of the Jews from the shtetls of Pustelnik, Wawer, and others,¹²⁹⁵ talk of an expulsion began in this shtetl as well. We also found out that the Poles, whose huts the Jews had moved into because of the establishment of the ghetto, turned to the *Landrat* in Radzymin with a plea to expel the Jews from Tłuszcz.

These rumours of an expulsion were constantly repeated; we did not know how much truth lay in these rumours. [The festival of] *Shavuot* went by, and the Jews now began to say the opposite: that the danger had passed, one could be calm.

On Monday, 25 May 1942, a Jewish tailor, who was working on a uniform jacket of a Polish policeman, was [6] visited by the policeman and asked to have the jacket ready on the same day because the following day all the Jews would be expelled from the shtetl. The Jew told other Jews what the policeman had said to him, and a panic and commotion ensued in the town.

There is no cemetery in Tłuszcz; all the deceased are taken to Jadów to be buried at the local cemetery. It so happened that on the following day, Tuesday, 26 May 1942, an old Jew, Meir Radz[y]miński, died in the town.

1294 Jews were forbidden to trade leather and fabric. See Doc. 123.

1295 26 March 1942. See Doc. 178.

The deceased man had to be taken to Jadów to the cemetery. In such cases, one would always get a pass for the closest relative, a man from the burial society and a Jewish policeman. In connection with the rumours on the expulsion, it was decided that rabbi Yakov Yosef Brikman and the commandant of the Jewish [6a] police, Berl Geldbord, should go as mourners. They needed to find out from the village head of Jadów, through the mediation of the Jadów *Judenrat*, how much truth there was in the rumours of the expulsion.

In case the rumours appeared well-grounded, the rabbi had to stay in Jadów and the Jewish police commandant had to make an announcement about it in the town. In case the rumours were lies, the rabbi had to come back. Before the departure of the funeral procession, it became known that the Tłuszcz village head and the village heads of Jadów and other shtetls had come together that day for a consultation with the Radzymin *Landrat*. We perceived in that alone that something was brewing.

Upon arrival in Jadów, the chairman of the local *Judenrat* got in touch with the village head who explained to him in secrecy that in consultation with the Radzymin *Landrat*, it had been [7] announced that all the Jews would be expelled from Tłuszcz that night. It also became known that the Poles, whose huts the Jews had had to move into during the creation of the ghetto, had turned to the Radzymin *Landrat* with a petition about expelling the Jews from Tłuszcz.

When the commandant of the Jewish police, Berl Geldbord, returned to the town with this sad news, darkness descended upon the town. Jews started weeping and lamenting; they immediately proceeded to make bundles of all their important items and distributed them among the members of each household so that everyone had a bundle to carry. Also, everyone put on several shirts, undershirts, and their best garments. It was the *leyl shimurim*, the night of Tuesday, the 26th, to Wednesday, the 27th of May. Nobody went to bed; people gathered between [7a] huts to see if anything was happening.

It was quiet all night, not a peep was seen or heard. The day started to break, Wednesday arrived, and with the arrival of the day, the mood also started to lighten up. People began to talk to each other: Perhaps we were just frightened; perhaps there'll be no expulsion; perhaps the Jadów village head lied. Optimists started to make light of the whole business in general. "Ay," they argued, "may it descend upon their heads. You see for yourselves that it is quiet, as if nothing has happened. It is a big day, nothing is starting, there

is just idle talk of this from before Passover. The night is wasted for nothing.” Some started yawning and going inside their homes to go to bed.

Speaking in this way, we noticed a taxi drive up to the gendarmerie station in Tłuszcz. [8] We understood that something was already underway, because several gendarmes got out of the taxi. It was still quiet, but we were frightened. A couple of minutes later, we saw many Polish policemen arrive from Radzymin and the nearby shtetls. A couple of minutes later, more gendarmes arrived from Radzymin and several cars with gendarmes [came] from Warsaw. Our hearts sank with fear, the blood virtually froze in our veins: we saw that the disaster was coming. We saw that on the other side of the town there was turmoil, stir, and commotion: shouts and commands from all sides. We all stood terrified and panicked; the men wrung their hands, the women tore their hair out of their heads, the children cried.

[8a] The ghetto was surrounded on all sides by gendarmes and the Polish police. It started with a heavy cannonade into the air. The first order came: All Jews into the market. The Jews immediately began to be rushed along. At the same time, everyone began to get heavily beaten. At the market, 3 groups were formed: women and children separately, men from 16 to 30 years old separately – immediately led away to a labour camp – and the remaining men separately.

An order: Both men and women must place all the bundles in one place. This was immediately carried out. A tall pile of valuable items, linen, clothes and bedding was formed in the market. Again, another order: All, men separately [9]and women separately, are to arrange themselves in rows, 3 persons in each row. All the orders were given and the *Aktion* was headed by the Tłuszcz *Wachtmeister* Stein.

An order came to carry the Jewish furniture out into the market. *Wachtmeister* Stein selected a group of Jews for that job, and he and several other local and other gendarmes started to chase the Jews to [complete] the job.

Among the group of workers, there was also an elderly Jew, *Reb* Leybl Lerner, a relative seventy [years old].¹²⁹⁶ The group of workers carried the most beautiful furniture out of all the Jewish flats and placed it on the pile in the market. When the work was finished and the Jews resumed their places

1296 Perhaps a relative of the author. Leybel Lerner appears on many lists of people assisted by the ŻSS branch in Tłuszcz. He was the head of a family of nine. See AŻIH, ŻSS, 211/1030.

in the rows, it turned out that *reb* Leybl Lerner was missing. Very quietly the other workers related that Lerner had been given a heavy table to carry and because of the heaviness of the burden [9a] he did not carry it quickly enough, so a local gendarme, for whose wife a sealskin coat had been made a few weeks earlier, shot him 3 times and killed him. The Jew could barely cry out “oy...”

A gendarme arrived with a small packet of leather and handed it to *Wachtmeister* Stein. He called out [the name of] the Jew Velvl Radz[y]miński, owner of the house where the packet of leather had been found. Then he called out his son Yosef and also the residents of the house, Leybl Zalcman, a certain Hirsh and four other Jews, residents of that house. He instructed the 8 Jews to stand separately, one next to another. Two bursts were heard and the 8 Jews were left dead.

A table was placed in the middle of the market. They gave bowls to the Jewish policemen. The Jewish policemen came to the [10] rows of Jews and instructed the Jews to throw in all the money they possessed. It was allowed only to leave one zloty for oneself. One was also to throw gold, silver, diamonds, foreign currency into the bowls. Any Jew, on whom any of these things or money over one zloty were found after the collection, would be shot on the spot. The money and items, explained *Wachtmeister* Stein, go as payment for the cost of resettlement. The Jews threw [things] into the bowls as instructed. When the bowls were emptied onto the table, a big pile of money and objects had been collected. The same collection also took place among the rows of women: They tore their clothes and took out [the hidden] diamonds and jewellery that had been sewed in. They also took off their wedding rings [10a] and threw them into the bowls.

Twenty odd carts arrived; they ordered women and children to climb onto them. There was no room for all the women and children, so when they climbed onto the carts, jostling ensued. Amongst the women, there was a 20-year-old girl [by the name of] Lustik. Miss Lustik was very beautiful, not only the most beautiful in *Tłuszcz*, but also the most beautiful in the whole area. She was well known for her beauty. When the girl wanted to take a place on one of the carts, *Wachtmeister* Stein ran up to her and cried out, “There needn’t be such a beautiful girl among the Jews,” he dragged her off the cart and shot her on the spot. Then they called out the chairman of the *Judenrat*, Meir Taub, and shot him, too.

The *podwody* received an order to go to Radzymin, a distance of twenty odd kilometres. The [11] women, who could not climb onto the carts because of the lack of space, were ordered to run behind the carts. The men remained standing. After an hour's wait, Stein ordered them to run after the carts and catch up with them before Radzymin.

The expulsion began; the bodies of the holy martyrs along with all the Jewish possessions remained in the town.

Coming out of the town, Poles with red bands on their arms and spades in their hands were seen standing.

The order came: Run! We started to run; we immediately heard shooting on both sides of the running files. They shot all those who had fallen behind and could not run as fast as the gendarmes on [their] horses and bicycles.

Fathers saw their sons being shot, [11a] children saw their fathers, brothers, and other relatives being shot. One was forbidden to look back or tarry for a moment, because a bullet came right away. It could be noticed that the Poles with the red bands on their arms immediately ran up to the fallen Jews, dug pits, and tossed the Jews inside. Running 10 kms like this, victims constantly fell and the *goyim* with the red armbands constantly buried them. We did not catch up with the *podwody*. 10 kilometres beyond Tłuszcz, we noticed 2 gendarmes with machine guns standing in a field. Their horses stood beside them. As we approached the place where they stood, we heard them shout, "So the Jews are walking? Run! Run!" We started running with all our might. At that very moment, heavy shooting was heard from the machine guns and [12] countless people began to fall in our group. Terrible cry of *Shema Yisroel* started, one fell on top of another, groans and death rattles of the fallen ones and the shouts of *Shema Yisroel* of those still alive were heard; piles of fallen people heaped up. When we got out of the line of fire, there were about twenty of us in total, out of a group of 150 men. The red armbands had work to do. Not from strength, but solely from fear of such a wretched death, we ran on, until we caught up with the wagons behind Radzymin. Having come up to the wagons, I thought to myself, "Only a day ago, you were rich; you had husbands, children, fathers. Now you have become widows, orphans, lonely and poor people."

From Radzymin, we approached a suburb of Warsaw. The Jewish trams with the Star of David [12a] already waited for us there; we were taken away

to the quarantine, from there we went into the ghetto and here we await the end...

We have already related that the Tłuszcz rabbi, Rabbi Yakov Yosef Brikman, went to Jadów a day before the expulsion and remained there. On the day of the expulsion, several gendarmes from Tłuszcz went to Jadów. They ordered that the *Judenrat* turn over to them the Tłuszcz rabbi and all the other Tłuszcz Jews who were found in Jadów. The *Judenrat* had an opportunity to buy them out with money, but they were afraid to do it. They threatened that if the *Judenrat* did not turn the rabbi over to them, they would shoot all children under 10 years of age. The rabbi presented himself in person. The *Judenrat* produced his wife and child. When she came to the gendarmes, the wife started to cry and turned to one of them [13] and reminded him that several weeks earlier he himself had given her a *przepustka* to go to Jadów to a doctor with her sick child. The gendarme remembered, confirmed it, and freed the wife and the child.

They led the rabbi out into the market, ordered him to take off his shoes down to his bare feet, and dance on one foot around the market. At the same time, they beat him savagely. When the rabbi, wounded and bathed in blood, fell on the ground, they shot a bullet into his foot, beat him again, and shot a bullet into his hand, then another bullet into the soft flesh, and only then in the head. They ordered the Jews to dig a deep pit in the middle of the market. Water was poured into the pit. Then they ordered the Jews to throw the holy martyr into the pit and stone the body, but not to fill it in. [13a] Then they saw a Jew sitting, a refugee from Łódź, who was swollen. They shot the Jew and ordered to throw him into the same pit where the rabbi was lying. When the Jews did so, they ordered [them] to fill the pit, and the Jews were [ordered] to dance on the grave.

Lord avenge their blood.¹²⁹⁷

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1297 In Hebrew.

Glossaries

General terms

AGUDAT ISRAEL, *Agudah* (Hebrew: union of [the people of] Israel) – political party of religious Orthodox Jews, established in 1912. Prominent in interwar Poland; cooperated with the Polish government.

AJDC (AJJDC, JDC, *Joint*) – abbreviation for American (Jewish) Joint Distribution Committee, charity organisation established in 1914, active in the interwar period. Functioned officially in Nazi-occupied Poland until US entry into the war; then went underground. Re-established in Poland several times after the war.

AKTION (German: action) Nazi term for an operation aimed at total or partial destruction of the Jewish population of a town, ghetto, or camp, accompanied by pillage, confiscation of belongings, torture, mass murder, and deportation(s) to death camps.

ARBEITSAMT (German: labour office) – department of the Head of the District office, managing Jewish forced labour.

AUSWEIS (German) – identification card; in the General Government, a certificate of employment.

BETAR (Hebrew: acronym of *B'rit Trumpeldor*) – Trumpeldor Association [of Jewish Youth] in Poland; Zionist Revisionist organisation aimed at military training.

BLACKS – detachments of the *Selbstschutz*, consisting of local *Volksdeutsche*, who usually wore black uniforms.

BUND (Yiddish: union) – Jewish Socialist party and workers' movement in the western part of the Russian Empire, established in 1897; especially active in interwar Poland.

BUNDIST – member of the *Bund*.

CENTOS (Polish: *Centrala Związku Towarzystw Opieki nad Sierotami i Dziećmi Opuszczonymi*) – Central Association for the Care of Orphans, established in 1924. Its activities were partly supported by AJDC. Active during the Nazi occupation under the auspices of ŻSS.

CONGRESS POLAND (Polish: *Kongresówka*, also *Królestwo Kongresowe*), the non-sovereign Polish state established on the basis of the 1815 Vienna Congress. It encompassed some of the Polish territories under the Russian partition. Despite the unification, the borders of the former partitions were still referred to in the Second Republic of Poland.

COUNCIL of Elders – see *Judenrat*.

COUNTY GOVERNOR – see *Kreishauptmann*.

DEATH CAMPS (killing centres) – establishments organised by Nazi Germans with its primary goal of mass murder of the Jews and Romanies. The first death camp was in Kulmhof (Chełmno nad Nerem) where vans and exhaust fumes were used. Camps in Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau (Oświęcim-Brzezinka) had specially built gas chambers.

DROR (Hebrew: freedom) – socialist-Zionist youth organisation, established in Poland in 1938; belonged to the *Hehalutz* movement.

ENDEK – member or sympathiser of the Endecja political party. See below.

ENDECJA (Polish: short form for *Narodowa Demokracja*, National Democracy), Polish nationalist and strongly anti-Semitic movement established in 1886.

FELDSHER (Yiddish: field surgeon) – a medical or surgical practitioner without formal qualifications.

FOLKIST (Yiddish) – adherent or member of *Yidishe Folkspartay in Poyln* (Jewish People's Party in Poland).

FOOD RATION CARD – a voucher to which only registered persons were entitled, allowing for purchase of official limited allocation of food for official prices.

GEMEINDE (German) – see *gmina*.

GENDARME (French: *gens d'armes*) – soldier or officer of the military police.

GENDARMERIE (French: *gens d'armes*) – military unit whose main objectives are public order and security, often in cooperation with the secret service or police.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT (GG) – central Poland, occupied by the Third Reich following Hitler's decree of 26 October 1939. As the administrative unit, it existed until the end of WWII. It was divided into four districts with Nazi authorities in Kraków, Lublin,

Radom, and Warsaw. The fifth district Galicia, mostly former Polish voivodships of Stanisławów, Tarnopol, and Lwów (in USSR from 17 September 1939), was included in the GG from 1 August 1941. The central authority was Governor-General Hans Frank, residing in Kraków.

GESTAPO (German: *Geheime Staatspolizei*) – secret political police of the Third Reich.

GMINA [ŻYDOWSKA] (Polish), also *kehillah* (Hebrew) or [*Jüdische*] *Gemeinde* (German) – (Jewish) community; smallest unit of territorial self-government; traditional self-government organisation of Jews of a given town.

GROSZ, pl. groszes (Polish) – Polish currency, 1/100 of a zloty.

HANOAR HATZIONI (Hebrew: Zionist youth) – organisation established in 1932, affiliated with General Zionists; aimed at preparing youth for emigration to Palestine

HASHOMER HATZA'IR (Hebrew: young guard) – left-wing Zionist youth movement, established in 1922, affiliated with the Poalei Tsiyon Right.

HATIKVAH (Hebrew: hope) – popular Zionist song; now anthem of the State of Israel.

HEERESUNTERKUNFTSVERWALTUNG, HUV (German) – military quarters management in the German Army.

HEHALUTZ (Hebrew: The Pioneer) – Zionist youth movement whose aim was to train its members for settlement in Palestine.

HILFSPOLIZEI (German) – auxiliary police.

IN SITU (Latin) in (the same) place.

J-CARDS – identity cards stamped with the letter “J” for *Jude* (Jew).

JEWISH POLICE – see *Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*.

JEWISH SELF-HELP – see ŻSS.

JOINT – see AJDC.

JSS (German: *Jüdische Soziale Selbsthilfe*) – see ŻSS.

JUDE, pl. *Juden* (German) – Jew, Jews.

JUDENRAT (German) – Jewish Council; German-appointed authorities for Jews of a given town; sometimes referred to as *gmina* or *kehillah*, also as Council of Elders.

JUDENREIN (German: cleansed of Jews) – term used in German reports to state that a town or city no longer had a Jewish population after deportations.

[JÜDISCHE] GEMEINDE – see *gmina*.

JÜDISCHER ORDNUNGSDIENST (German: Jewish Order Service) – uniformed service instigated by Germans to keep order inside ghettos; usually referred to as the Jewish police.

JUNAK (Polish: brave young man) – forced labourer of the *Baudienst* (German: building service), organisation based on the ordinance of Governor General of 1 December 1940. The *junaks* were employed mainly in building roads and drainage of agricultural lands; sometimes involved in anti-Jewish actions.

KEHILLAH – see *gmina*.

KREISHAUPTMANN (German) – county governor.

LANDRAT (German) – county head.

LANDRATSAMT (German) or *Landratura* (Polish) – county office.

LANDSMANSHAFT (Yiddish) – organisation of former residents of a town, province, or country.

Los! (German) – aggressive order: forward! move on! go!

MACCABI (named after the Maccabees, fighters against Syrian rule over Judea in the 2nd century B.C.E.) – oldest and biggest Jewish sports organisation, active in the entire Jewish world from the late 19th century; affiliated with the Zionist movement.

MELDEKARTE (German: registration card) – document issued by *Arbeitsamt*, confirming employment, theoretically preventing one from being sent to a forced labour camp.

MIZRACHI (Hebrew: eastern; acronym for: *merkaz ruchani*, spiritual centre) – religious Zionist movement, established in 1902; political party in Poland active from 1919.

ONR (Polish: *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny*) – National-Radical Camp; extreme right-wing fascist political party established in 1934; dismantled after 3 months by the state authorities. Later acted illegally, split into *ONR-ABC* and *ONR Falanga*.

ORDNUNGSDIENST – see *Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*.

ORT (Polish: *Organizacja Rozwoju Twórczości [Przemysłowej Rzemieślniczej i Rolniczej wśród Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce]*) – Society for the Propagation of Labour [among Jews] established in 1880 in Russia to promote job training, then spread to many other countries; still in existence today. Its main objective is to support and develop qualified crafts and agriculture among Jews.

OYNEG SHABES (Hebrew: Joy of Sabbath) – code name of the underground archive of the Warsaw ghetto; also called the Ringelblum Archive, from the name of its organizer and leader, Polish-Jewish historian Emanuel Ringelblum.

P.T. - abbreviation for *pleno titulo*, (Latin) full title; a formula used when addressing and honouring the public-at-large and when using everyone's proper title would be impossible.

PARÓWKA (Polish: steaming) – pseudo-hygienic measure against the epidemic of typhus, applied obligatorily to Jews.

PICKETS, PICKETING, picketeers – groups of young Polish nationalists who blocked doors to Jewish stores.

PLACÓWKA, pl. *placówki* (Polish: work site) – detail work site(s), usually outside ghettos.

POALEI TSIYON (Hebrew: labourers of Zion) – socialist-Zionist party established in 1906 aimed at creation of the socialist Jewish society in Palestine; promoted national-cultural autonomy of the Jews in Poland. In 1920, it split into two groups, *Poalei Tsiyon Left*, related to communist ideals, and *Poalei Tsiyon Right*, related to a socialist movement.

POLISH POLICE – police of the General Government, established by the Germans on 17 December 1939, obligatory for functionaries of the pre-war State Police. It reported to local commanders of the German *Ordnungspolizei*; responsible for many anti-Jewish actions, while largely cooperating with the Polish patriotic underground.

PRZEPUSTKA, pl. *przepustki* (Polish) – pass (es).

PYZIAK (Polish: from Russian *pidzhak*, meaning jacket) – popular name of the *Sonderdienst* functionaries, named for their manner of dress.

REFUGEE CENTRES – shelters for the resettled and refugees in the Warsaw ghetto. Due to shortage of appropriate spaces, the centres were located in prayer rooms, cinema halls, or private quarters. They were very overcrowded and usually devoid of hygienic conditions, contributing to very high mortality rates.

REICHSDEUTSCHE (German) – ethnic Germans living in the territory of the German Reich after 1871.

REICHSMARK, MARK, RM, Rmk – German currency.

RESETTLEMENT – expulsion of large groups of people, sometimes entire communities, especially from the territories annexed to the Third Reich, moved to the General Government at the start of German occupation of Poland. Later it meant expulsion of Jews from the small towns of the Warsaw District to the Warsaw ghetto. Its meaning changed again to refer to deportation and death in the death camps at Treblinka, Bełżec, Sobibór, Majdanek (in GG territory), Kulmhof and Auschwitz (in Third Reich territory).

RESETTLEMENT to the east - expression used by German authorities for deportation to death camps.

REVISIONIST – see Betar.

SHEYGETZ, pl. shkotzim (Yiddish) – non-Jewish man (usually derogatory). See also shikse.

SHIKSE (Yiddish) – non-Jewish woman (sometimes derogatory). See also sheygetz.

SICHERHEITSDIENST, SD (German) – security service of the Third Reich. Its posts were in every large town in the occupied territories. Its functionaries participated in acts of terror against civilians.

SŁUŻBA BUDOWLANA (Polish: Building Service; from German *Baudienst*) – see *junak*.

SONDERDIENST, SD (German: special service) – police formation affiliated from 1940 to the civilian administration of GG. Its functionaries participated in requisitioning levies, murder of the ghetto population, destruction of partisan groups. In October 1942, it was subordinated to *Ordnungspolizei* (Orpo).

STADTHAUPTMANN (German) – city governor.

STAROSTA (Polish) – county government, authorities head.

“THE THIRTEEN” – official name: Office to Combat Usury and Profiteering (*Urząd do Walki z Lichwą i Spekulacją*). Its address in the Warsaw ghetto was Leszno Street 13, hence the moniker. It was a Gestapo agency in operation from late 1940 till July 1941. In spite of its official name, the members’ main activity was extortion of goods and money, including profits from smuggling.

TOZ (Polish: *Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce*) – Society for the Protection of Health of the Jewish Population in Poland; established in 1922, active during the Nazi occupation under the auspices of ŻSS.

TREUHÄNDER (German: trustee, fiduciary) – the term denoted an administrator, on behalf of the German authorities, of the individual requisitioned enterprises and the estate of liquidated institutions and associations during WWII in Germany occupied territories.

VOLKSDEUTSCH(ER), pl. *Volksdeutsche* (German: ethnic German) – person(s) of German origin living outside the borders of the German state before 1939. They declared their German nationality after the Nazi seizure of power.

WACHTMEISTER (German) – military rank in cavalry and gendarmerie, equivalent to sergeant in other formations.

WASSERWIRTSCHAFT (German) – water management; system of local German authorities which supervised regulation of rivers and drainage of agricultural territories in GG. It employed forced labourers, mostly Jews.

WARTHELAND (German: Land of the Warta River) – administrative region established during WWII in the central part of the Polish territory annexed to the Third Reich.

YID, pl. *Yids* (Yiddish) – often derogatory term for Jew, Jews.

ZLOTY, pl. *zlotys* (Polish) – Polish currency.

ŻSS (Polish: *Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna*) – Jewish social self-help organisation for Jews in the General Government; active under other name(s) beginning September 1939. Officially established on 29 May 1940, it served as the umbrella organisation for CENTOS, TOZ and other Jewish associations. It was liquidated by the Nazis on 29 July 1942 and replaced by the Jewish Self-Help Office of dubious activity, which lasted until spring 1944.

Jewish religious/traditional terms

BET MIDRASH, *bet hamidrash* (Hebrew: house of study) – place for studying religious texts; often a place of prayer as well.

CHALLAH (Hebrew) – special bread for *Shabbat*.

CHAZAN (Hebrew: cantor) – leader of prayers in a synagogue.

CHEDER (Hebrew: chamber) – traditional school for boys (also for girls beginning in the late 19th century), aged 3 to 13.

CHEVRA KADISHA (Hebrew/Aramaic: holy society) – Jewish voluntary burial society that prepares corpses for burial.

GEMILUT CHESED (Hebrew: good deed, charity, loving kindness) – one of the most important values in Judaism; a social self-help organisation providing free loans to the needy based on this value.

GEMILUT-CHESED BANK – bank providing interest free loans.

GMINA (Polish: community) – see *kehillah*.

GOY (Hebrew: nation; pl. *goyim*; adj. in Yiddish *goyish*) – a non-Jew, Gentile; non-Jewish. Can be either a neutral or a derogatory term. See also *shabes goy*.

GZEYRE (sometimes *gyzayre*; Yiddish, from Hebrew *gzerah*) – initially a rabbinic law preventing unintentional breaking of commandments; later the term for decrees issued against the Jewish population and subsequent catastrophes.

HASID (Hebrew: pious) – follower of Hasidism.

HASIDISM – religious movement based on messianic ideas, started in mid-18th century in Podolia; later an influential movement of Judaism.

KADDISH (Aramaic: holy) – one of the oldest, most important and frequently repeated prayers, praising God, his greatness and holiness; traditionally considered a prayer for the dead.

KEHILLAH (Hebrew: community) – self-governing community of the Jews of a given town; also community board. See also *gmina*.

KIDDUSH (Hebrew: sanctification) – blessing over wine on the Sabbath.

KIDDUSH HA-SHEM (Hebrew: sanctification of the name, i.e. of God) – choosing martyrdom rather than denying one's faith or failure to fulfil the Commandments.

KITEL (German: shirt) – long, loose white gown, like a shroud; worn on *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Passover*, and weddings by grooms.

KOL NIDRE (Aramaic: all vows) – prayer immediately preceding the evening service on *Yom Kippur*.

KOSHER (Hebrew) – term referring to ritual purity of food and various objects according to Jewish law; the opposite of *treyf*.

LEYL SHIMURIM (Hebrew: vigil, sleepless night) – traditionally, two first nights of *Passover*.

LINAT HATZEDEK (Hebrew: proper lodging), charitable institution providing medical help to the elderly and the sick.

MIKVAH (Hebrew) – ritual bath.

MINYAN (Hebrew: number, quorum) – prayer group of at least ten adult men (less traditionally, also includes women) required for public prayers and reading the Torah.

MOREH HORA'AH (Hebrew) – expert and teacher of Jewish religious law; certified religious adjudicator.

PASSOVER (from Hebrew *Pesach*, literally: passage) – festival commemorating the liberation of the Jews from Egyptian captivity, described in Exodus and Numbers.

PURIM (Hebrew, from Akkadian, [drawing] lots) – festival commemorating the liberation of Jews from Persian minister Haman's hands, described in the Book of Esther.

RABBI (Hebrew: my master, my teacher) – spiritual leader of a Jewish community or congregation; expert on Jewish law. Title given to a person with *smicha*.

REBBE (Yiddish form of *rabbi*) – Hasidic spiritual leader; also called *tzaddik* (Hebrew: just, righteous person).

ROSH HASHANAH (Hebrew: beginning of the year) – Jewish New Year; commemorates the creation of the world and the Day of Judgement.

SELICHOT (Hebrew: forgiveness) – penitential prayers recited during the week before *Rosh Hashanah*.

SHABES (Yiddish) or *Shabbat* (Hebrew: rest) – the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week commemorating the day of rest after the creation of the world; begins on Friday at sunset and lasts until the following sunset on Saturday.

SHAMMES (Yiddish, from Hebrew *shammash*) Servant, an attendant in a synagogue; also an additional candle in a *Hanukkah* lamp, which serves to light the other candles.

SHAVUOT (Hebrew: weeks) – festival commemorating obtainment of Torah on Mount Sinai, celebrated seven weeks after Passover.

SHEMA YISROEL (Hebrew: Hear, O Israel!) – first words of the most important Jewish profession of faith in God.

SHOCHET (Hebrew; Yiddish: *shoykhet*) – ritual slaughterer. See also *kosher*.

SIMCHAT TORAH (Hebrew: joy of Torah), the last festive day of *Sukkot*, when all the Torah scrolls of a given synagogue are carried in a procession, often celebrated with dancing.

SMICHA (Hebrew: ordination) – certification of one's position as a rabbi with approval to teach and/or to judge in matters of Jewish law.

SUKKAH (Hebrew: hut, tent) – a temporary structure built of planks and/or tree branches, used for meals and prayers during the seven days of *Sukkot*.

SUKKOT (Hebrew: huts, tents; sing. *sukkah*) – festival also called “feast of tabernacles;” commemorates the sheltering of the Jews in the wilderness on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land.

TALES (Yiddish, from Hebrew *tallit*) – prayer shawl.

TALES-KOTN (Yiddish, from Hebrew *tallit katan*, literally: little *tales*) – ritual fringed undergarment.

TALMUD (Hebrew: study) – recording of the oral tradition of Judaism, compiled in the third to the seventh centuries C.E.; a collection of commentaries on the Torah.

TORAH (Hebrew: teaching, law), the first five books of the Hebrew Bible; also, the parchment scroll on which the Pentateuch is written.

TZADDIK – see *rebbe*.

VIDUY (Hebrew: confession) – collective confession made on *Yom Kippur*; also an individual confession made before death.

YESHIVA (Hebrew: sitting, attending) – Jewish religious school for *cheder* or *Talmud Torah* graduates above the age of thirteen and not married.

YOM KIPPUR (Hebrew: Day of Atonement) – concluding the celebration of the Jewish New Year; in Poland often called Day of Judgement.

Year Festival	5700 (1939/1940)	5701 (1940/1941)	5702 (1941/1942)
Rosh Hashanah	14–15 September	3–4 October	22–23 September
Yom Kippur	23 September	12 October	1 October
Sukkot	28 September – 4 October	17–23 October	6–12 October
its 7th day: Hoshana Rabba	4 October	23 October	12 October
Shemini Atzeret	5 October	24 October	13 October
Simchat Torah	6 October	25 October	14 October
Hanukkah	7–14 December	25 December – 1 January	15–22 December
Tu B'Shvat	25 January	12 February	2 February
Purim	24 March	13 March	3 March
Shushan Purim	25 March	14 March	4 March
Pesach	23–30 April	12–19 April	2–9 April
Lag ba-Omer	26 May	15 May	5 May
Shavuot	12–13 June	1–2 June	22–23 May
Tisha b'Av	13 August	3 August	23 July
Leyl selichot	28 September	13 September	5 September

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