

OTHER ACQUISITIONS

Our knowledge and information on almost all Jews deported from Berlin and the exact figures of all transports dispatched resulted in our survey of all concentration camp survivors returned to Berlin and other parts of Germany. The result of this survey was that we maintain a file of concentration camp survivors reporting about their transport and life during the imprisonment. (See appendix I and II) In many instances we possess reports of people who are the sole survivors of large deportations. This file is of importance to us since we often can piece together information submitted by the inquirer and reports obtained from the survivors.

Through one of our special investigators, Mr. Kaiser, we learned in the beginning of 1946 that a number of Jewish documents and files pertaining to Jewish deportations was still hidden in caves in the Kyffhäuser mountains in Thuringia. Mr. Kaiser worked during the war for the Berlin Jewish Gemeinde and was forced by the nazis to transport several complete Jewish card indexes to the Kyffhäuser area where he was ordered to burn them. Instead Mr. Kaiser hid as many documents as he could and escaped. His special investigation in the Kyffhäuser mountains disclosed that a complete 4 000 000 Polish Jewry index, a German Jewish card index, a set of 140 000 cards on the Dutch Jewry and several more documents were still laying in the basement of a castle in Bad Frankenhausen and in some caves of the Kyffhäuser mountains.

A detailed report was immediately submitted to the Berlin UNRRA Field Director, Mr. Doughty, wherein it was requested that the Allied Kommandatura gives assistance to Mr. Kaiser in obtaining an official pass from the Russians to travel to Erfurt for these documents. Although our request was approved by UNRRA and by the Public Safety Division it was

impossible to overcome the red tape necessary to obtain such a pass. The Jewish Gemeinde and the Victims of Fascism Organizations could have gotten these documents out without any special permission, since they were organizations recognized by the Russian Kommandatura, but the Berlin Jewish Gemeinde was less interested than expected.

As the result of this uncooperative and irresponsible attitude we resolved to obtain these documents on our own. By the time, Mr. Kaiser got into the Russian Zone and was all set to transport the documents, however, most of these were destroyed by a group of Russian soldiers which was assigned to clean out the basement of the Bad Frankenhause castle and to open a venereal disease hospital for the Russian soldiers. By order of a Soviet Army Medical Officer documentary proof of nazi deportation and killed Jews was destroyed. Ironically enough this particular officer happened to be a Jew. The only documents that survived were those hidden in one of the caves. These represented 140 000 Dutch Jewish names deported from Holland and whose properties were confiscated by the nazi government and Dutch collaborators. In March 1947 eleven cases packed with documents arrived in Berlin and were sent on to Holland.

In March 1947 69 German Jews were repatriated to Berlin from Russian internment camps in Karaganda. Interviews have been held with these people and informatory articles passed on to the JDC cooperating committees and public relation offices. A complete list of the entire Karaganda group was dispatched to our New York office, to agencies in England and other countries.

During July 1947 a survey of mental hospitals in Berlin and the Russian Zone was made and 17 cases, 15 of which were known to the Gemeinde, were registered. By comparing the names with our location index one tracing request for one of the registered by the JDC was found.

After the assumption of the Berlin AJDC directorship by Mr. Joseph Fink in August 1947, further attempts

were made to transfer our tracing activities to the Berlin Jewish Gemeinde. Because of reasons stated in earlier paragraphs we failed again and resumed responsibility for tracing. The need for a more organized tracing coordination in Berlin was recognized and after some discussions between Mr. Fink and the Berlin IRO Team Director Mr. Fishbein, both tracing offices at the Berlin-Schlachtensee and Berlin-Mariendorf DP Camps became part of our tracing organization. At the time of this writing tracing requests are being filed by the camp inmates at the JDC tracing sub-sections in the camps on our forms and sent via this office to countries abroad. Replies for individuals in the camps are being routed through this organization.



Mr. and Mrs. Larry Lubetsky discussing a general report on one of the concentration camps

Our card index bearing all names of surviving Berlin Jews has been completed. This index also includes non-Jewish spouses of mixed marriages, Jews of non-Jewish faith (a peculiar group in Germany) and dissidents. We also have the names of persons who died since the end of war or who left Berlin

for countries abroad. A list of all people buried at the Jewish cemeteries in Berlin since 1938 was compiled by the cemetery officials for our use. Thus a check of our deportation index can be made to establish whether some of the listed as suicides correspond with the information contained in the cemetery listings. Such an index gives us steady information on the present "Jewish Population" in Berlin. There are approximately 7800 Jews and 3000 others connected with the Jewish community or persecuted during the nazi regime. An additional 15 000 cards give us the picture on DPs in our area.

Our index of Jews within the Russian Zone was also completed and corrected during May—June 1947.

A very important new discovery of the Berlin AJDC are documents concerning Allied soldiers who were killed by the nazi army during the war while being prisoners of war in Germany. These cards were turned over to the Allied Military Missions here in Berlin.

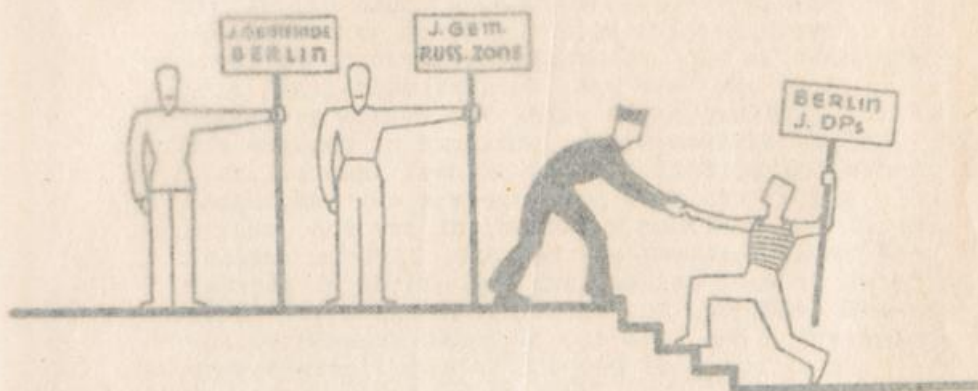
SEPTEMBER 1945
AJDC IN BERLIN



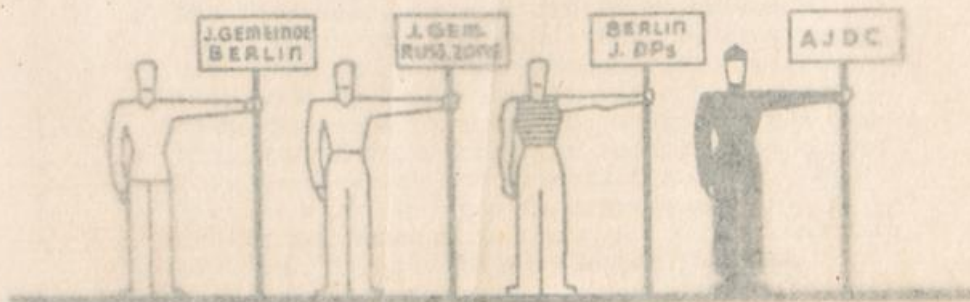
1945 ORGANIZING
JEWISH GEMEINDE AND
RUSSIAN ZONE TRACING



1946-1947 ORGANIZING DP CAMP TRACING



1947-COORDINATION OF TRACING IN BERLIN & RUSSIAN ZONE



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