

Inside Story:

HOW NAZIS TRADED REFUGEE LIVES FOR 5-MILLION BRIBE

By ERWIN SAVELSON
Copyright, 1945, N. Y. Mirror

Three months before V-E Day, an innocuous paragraph appeared in New York newspapers dated Bern, Switzerland.

The story, last February, related that a convoy of 1,200 starved Jewish refugees from the Theresienstadt concentration camp in Austria had arrived safely in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland.

The busy world shrugged off this brief despatch. News of greater importance was in the offing. The Allies were putting the final squeeze on Hitler. Armies hammered at the gates of

C/T No. 133301	CABLE OR RADIO TRANSFER The Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York FOREIGN DEPARTMENT	CUSTOMER'S RECEIPT
Payment subject to approval of Swiss Authorities	License #NY671422-R JANUARY 23, 1945	
FOR REMITTANCE TO Isaac Sternbuch	Amount \$5,000,000.00	
3 Teufener Strasse St. Gallen, Switzerland	Rate .2332	\$100,000.00
FOR ACCOUNT OF: Vaad Hatzala Emergency Committee	Commission \$	31.25
Amount: Four Hundred Twenty-eight Thousand Eight Hundred Sixteen	Cable or Radio Charge \$	33.35
(Equal to one million in the past) 4 7/100 Swiss Francs		\$100,000.60
Paid to: Vaad Hatzala Emergency Committee		
Address: 132 Nassau Street, New York, N. Y.		

Payment to freedom. Check for \$100,000 was cabled to secret operators at St. Gallen, Switzerland, direct from sidewalks of N. Y. With it, Isaac Sternbuch saved thousands in death camps.

Berlin. Nazidom was on the brink of doom. But if the paragraph escaped attention of millions, it did not fail to puzzle many Americans. For the story from Bern said the 1,200 were liberated after negotiations with none other than Heinrich Himmler, head of the dreaded Gestapo.

Readers could not reconcile this with the fact that Himmler had with a mere wave of a finger sent millions to death in gas and torture chambers.

"Oh, well," said many, "he figures the jig is up, so he's trying to get on our good side."

In part, that was true. Himmler was sweating to find a means of convincing the American public he was not such a bad fellow.

But now, for the first time, the Mirror can reveal that Himmler did not free those 1,200 because of his humanitarian feelings.

He did it for the biggest double-cross Hitler ever experienced—a \$5,000,000 attempted bribe in exchange for the lives of 300,000 innocent people.

Thrilling Intrigue

Behind this amazing story of Nazi double-dealing within their own ranks lay six years of thrilling international intrigue—directed right from the sidewalks of New York.

The story of some of the means employed to rescue thousands from Nazi death camps will be officially revealed for the first time Dec. 17, by Mayor-elect O'Dwyer, former Treasury Secretary Morgenthau and John W. Pehle, ex-director of the War Refugee Board.

They will be honored at a dinner that night at the Hotel Astor by Vaad Hatzala—the Rehabilitation Committee—which functioned secretly for six years to save oppressed peoples through a network of underground agents on three continents.

The manner in which Himmler was outwitted and how a \$300,000 bribe left for him in a Swiss

REPORT OF A MIRACLE
This was the thrilling radiogram to Union of Orthodox Rabbis of U. S. and Canada last Feb. It told of the deliverance of 1,200 victims from Theresienstadt concentration camp.

RADIOGRAM
ACA COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
A BRANCH CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE
"ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — VO SPOKAT"

RECEIVED AT 30 PARK ROW NEW YORK, N. Y.
WITH SPOTS IN NEW YORK ON 2 1300

URGENT UNION ORTHODOX RABBIS VAAD HATZALA EMERGENCY COMMITTEE
332 BROADWAY NEW YORK

THE FEBRUARY 11, 45 MESSAGE JUST ARRIVED FIRST TRANSPORT OF 1200 JEWISH REFUGEES FROM THERESIENSTADT STOP THIS CONVOY WAS RELEASED BY GERMANY DURING INTERVENTION OF CONSULS FEDERAL.

DEBT CHANGED WITH THIS MESSAGE BY THE EUROPEAN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE UNION OF ORTHODOX RABBIS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA IN RESPONSE GERMANY AGREED TO RELEASE STALLED TRANSPORTS.

CLAREY STEINBERG

bank is now being used to rehabilitate victims of the Gestapo is one of the most fascinating to come out of the war.

It is second only to the great humanitarian efforts of Pope Pius XII to save thousands of Jewish children and adults from almost certain death. The Pontiff also made a financial contribution for the relief of distressed Jews in Hungary.

Mirror reporters have learned how the Holy See intervened to hide Jewish children in non-Jewish homes and later restored them to Jewish agencies; how high-ranking Catholic prelates in New York met with Jewish clergymen to discuss aid for victims abroad;

how the Vatican intervened to exact a promise from Nazis to halt extermination camps.

The story of Vaad Hatzala—in reality the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada—is one of death-defying agents who bribed their way right into concentration camps.

Right on Border

With the pennies, dimes, quarters and dollars from New York they set up a secret underground right on the Swiss border, headed by 17 Swiss businessmen.

When the United States entered the war, the Vaad Hatzala Emergency Committee functioned through the War Refugee Board and not one penny of hundreds

of thousands of dollars was spent without government approval and scrutiny.

Trained agents in neutral countries established contacts with underground resistance workers in enemy territory. The wife of an underground agent in Switzerland took her life into her hands and traveled right into Berlin to negotiate for the safe conduct of children.

High Nazi and Gestapo officials yielded to bribery; Polish, Czech and Hungarian patriots smuggled food packages and passports right into camps under the noses of guards; in some cases bribed guards even signed receipts for packages.

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD: THEY LIVE BECAUSE MEN DARED



Dr. Isaac Levine of New York (3rd from left) and Dr. Sam Schmidt of Cincinnati (right), Vaad Hatzala representatives, are shown at Villejuif, France, with some of the children daringly and ingeniously saved from extermination.

(Other photos on Centerfold)
A famed rabbi from Neutra, Czechoslovakia, stalked like a ghost through Nazi-infested territory, rescuing hapless people, until he was slain by the Gestapo.

King Helped

The King of Sweden and Count Bernadotte were interested in the humanitarian work and helped feed without cost almost 1,000 refugees liberated through the War Refugee Board and private agencies.

Nearly \$20,000,000 in private funds were licensed by the Treasury Dept. for transfer abroad for private rescue and relief projects under guidance and control of the WRB.

Of this amount the Joint Dis-

tribution Committee provided \$15,000,000; Vaad Hatzala, \$1,000,000 and the World Jewish Congress, \$300,000.

Latin American sympathizers furnished thousands of faked passports to save victims trapped not only at Dachau and other infamous camps, but in one known instance smuggled a visa right into the Warsaw Ghetto. The Ghetto later was wiped out in an historic last stand by Polish Jews.

These and many other intriguing stories were revealed to the Mirror by the men directly involved in the fight to save as many as they could from Hitler. It cost the Vaad \$5,000,000, but it was worth every penny spent

THE WAR IS OVER, but these six articles reprinted from the New York Mirror should be a powerful reminder. Intolerance and terrorism such as the Nazis practised have no place on this earth; never should we allow this threat to revive.

Nazis Dealt In Lives Of Children For Profit

Saved through efforts of underground operators and cash negotiations with Nazis, these children of all nationalities are shown safe in Switzerland. They converged from many hiding places.



← TWIN SISTERS Ruth and Dina Neuer, born in Vienna in 1935, fled the Nazis with their parents, who later disappeared in the European maelstrom. Twins finally were brought to Switzerland by the underground.



POLISH-BORN Michael Urlich, II, was sent to Germany to labor in factory. He was smuggled out of Reich.

C/T No. 133334	CABLE OR RADIO TRANSFER The Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York FOREIGN DEPARTMENT	CUSTOMER'S RECEIPT LIC # 680488 R
PAYMENT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF SWISS AUTHORITIES	DATE <u>MARCH 24</u> 1945	
FOR REMITTANCE TO <u>ISAAC STERNBUCH</u>	Amount <u>Sw. Fcs. 400,000.00</u>	
Destination } <u>3 TENDLER STRASSE</u> ST. GALLEN, SWITZERLAND FOR ACCOUNT OF: <u>VAAD HAHATZALA</u>	Later <u>2000</u> \$ <u>100,000.00</u>	
Amount <u>FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND SWISS FRANCS</u> (Repeat in words amount to be paid) AND <u>47/100</u> OF A SWISS FRANC	Commission <u>21.85</u>	
Purchaser <u>VAAD HAHATZALA EMERGENCY COMMITTEE</u>	Subst. for Post Charge <u>13.36</u>	
Address <u>132 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK 7, N. Y.</u>	THE PUBLIC NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY OF NEW YORK	

C/T No. 133307	CABLE OR RADIO TRANSFER The Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York FOREIGN DEPARTMENT	CUSTOMER'S RECEIPT
PAYMENT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF SWISS AUTHORITIES	DATE <u>MARCH 10</u> 19 <u>45</u>	
FOR REMITTANCE TO <u>CREDIT SUISSE BERNE</u>	Amount <u>Swfcs. 1,000,000.</u>	
Trans. Dept. for s/c Isaac Sternbuch, c/o Hieffs, Montreux, representative in Switzerland of Vaad Hahatzala	Amount <u>\$ 233,200.00</u>	
Dist. # W-2426 sale Emergency Committee, and Roswell D. McClelland, rep. War Refugee Board in Switzerland	Commission <u>\$ 35.44</u>	
Destination } <u>McClelland, rep. War Refugee Board in Switzerland</u>	Cable or Radio Charge <u>\$ 18.50</u>	
Amount <u>One Million Swiss Francs</u> ----- Total <u>\$ 233,254.94</u>		
Purchaser <u>VAAD HAHATZALA EMERGENCY COMMITTEE</u>	THE PUBLIC NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY OF NEW YORK	
Address <u>132 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK, 7, N. Y.</u>		



HEADQUARTERS of Vaad Hatzala, underground organization, was St. Gallen (underlined), on Swiss border.

C/T No. 133310	CABLE OR RADIO TRANSFER The Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York FOREIGN DEPARTMENT	CUSTOMER'S RECEIPT
PAYMENT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF SWISS AUTHORITIES	DATE <u>MARCH 19</u> 1945	
FOR REMITTANCE TO <u>CREDIT SUISSE BERNE</u>	Amount <u>Swfcs. 2,018,010.29</u>	
Trans. Dept. for s/c Isaac Sternbuch, c/o Hieffs, Montreux, representative in Switzerland of Vaad Hahatzala	Amount <u>\$ 703,800.00</u>	
Dist. # W-2426 sale Emergency Committee, and Roswell D. McClelland, rep. War Refugee Board in Switzerland	Commission <u>\$ 109.97</u>	
Destination } <u>McClelland, rep. War Refugee Board in Switzerland</u>	Cable or Radio Charge <u>\$ 18.50</u>	
Amount <u>Three Million, Eighteen Thousand Ten 29/100 SWISS FRANCS</u> Total <u>\$ 703,928.47</u>		
Purchaser <u>VAAD HAHATZALA EMERGENCY COMMITTEE</u>	THE PUBLIC NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY OF NEW YORK	
Address <u>132 Nassau Street, New York, 7, N. Y.</u>		

← CHECKS totaling \$1,037,000 were sent to Vaad Hatzala headquarters in Switzerland. Money, contributed by New Yorkers, was used as bait to free children held in Germany. Himmler was one of Nazis outwitted.
(All Photos Copyright, 1945, by New York Mirror)
(Story and Other Photos on Page 3)