

Geneva, January 3rd, 1941.

His Excellency
Count E. Raczynski,
Ambassador of Poland
Polish Embassy
47, Portland Place
L o n d o n.

Dear Count Raczynski,

In view of the present circumstances I beg to enter at once "in media res". On May 18th, from one hour to another after almost 20 years, my services in the League Library ceased. Almost all my colleagues who were in the same position left Geneva at the earliest opportunity. I myself had the chance to immigrate to the United States as professor in a Women's College or University. I declined such an offer considering my duty to stay in Geneva and continue as long as possible not only the humanitarian work for the refugees but also the liaison work for which Geneva was such a good centre.

At that time I had the impression that my activity would continue to be here till the end of the war. (I must add that the financial side of the problem did not tangle me as the League indemnity allows me to live for a few years without any salaried job). But for obvious reasons the situation has changed: Conditions in Switzerland are such that a foreigner like myself cannot do any really important work any more. I have thought the problem over and over and discussed it with competent personalities, and have come to the conclusion that I ought to leave the country as quickly as possible (also because the geographical position of Switzerland might make it impossible to leave any more in the spring).

Please, understand me well, I don't want to desert but on the contrary to transfer temporarily my activity to another continent. As you perhaps remember, I have excellent contacts in the U.S.A. where I have been several times; once during four months special leave where I travelled around and lectured. On the other hand it seems that public opinion in the U.S.A. just now needs stimulation! I have the impression I could make many American circles understand what goes on in Europe and influence their "opinion" as well as their "purse".

In addition, I am just putting the finishing touch to a book of personal remembrances of my international life. This book has no ambition to be taken seriously in political circles: its object is to interest the average American woman. I confess that I have written it with the very definite purpose to have a large circulation in the United States, and a good sale. If this book happens to be a success, I am sure that it will secure me numerous lecture engagements. Furthermore, I am keeping part of my material unpublished to furnish the background of lectures which I know will appeal to the American public.

And here I come to the special purpose of this letter which is to offer, in connection with my lecture-trip, my services in the U.S.A. to the Polish Government. If I dare to do this quite simply and candidly, it is because I hope that you know me enough not to misunderstand me.

I believe, during all my activity as League official, to have always been loyal to my country as well as to my race although, as you know, my position in this connection has sometimes been a very delicate one. In a very open talk with the regretted Mr. Gralinski, I had the opportunity to discuss in detail the position of our present government regarding the Jewish problem. As the outcome of this conversation I promised to put all my forces at the disposal of our Government, which meant not only my technical services in the Library (documentation, etc. for Angers) but my loyal collaboration in any sphere in which I could be useful.

In the spring, I heard that the Government was planning a kind of "good will tour" in the U.S.A. and was considering to include the American Jewish circles in the campaign. Already then I contemplated to offer my services, but in the meanwhile the French catastrophe occurred. The necessity for approaching these American circles has grown since, also because it is necessary to raise important funds on behalf of our prisoners, civil as well as war prisoners.

I believe to be able to approach the right people in the U.S.A. mainly through 4 channels :

1. The so-called Warburg group of American Jews who have not only supported (through the Joint Distribution Committee) my refugee work since 1933, but whose confidence in all matters I have gained through many narrow personal contacts.
2. The very influential American Women organisations like the "League of Women Voters", "Federation of University

Women", "Business and Professional Women Clubs" with whom I am collaborating regularly since long years. The fact of being one of the two Polish members of the Board of the "International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship" (President Mrs. Corbett Ashby) gives me special authority to draw the attention of American women to the Polish question.

3. The American Libraries (numbering by thousands) with which I have been in touch not only through correspondence but of which I visited the most important ones. Here I foresee, with the co-operation of the American Library Association, the possibility of revising not only their documentation but also of speaking before the educational centres gathered around the public libraries in America.

4. The numerous humanitarian Associations with whom I collaborate regularly in the refugee work. Here I think of the non Jewish ones and non sectarian like the American Red Cross, and Christian ones like the Quakers, the Y.M.C.A. etc.

I am accustomed to address American audiences. I am not afraid of the physical strain which American life implies, and above all I have faith in the victory of our cause!

Without going into details I should like to add a few explanatory remarks about my campaign plan:

While in certain circles I shall be able to speak quite openly on my subject, I propose not to give my lectures the external appearance of official "propaganda" but to influence in my "informal talks" the audience in the right direction. As far as I know American atmosphere, very often small private discussions in drawing rooms carry much further than any open debates. In this connection, one cannot overrate the influence on the young generation one can have through round table discussions in Colleges!

As to the collection of funds for Polish philanthropic activities, it is too early yet to lay down definite rules but I would, in time, fix the question in detail. In case of paid public lectures, I should like that a part of the benefit should always go to Polish interests.

To be able to execute these above mentioned propositions I need an official status in the form of a Diplomatic mission. Needless to say that I don't want any honorarium from the Polish Government. The chief advantages of such an "ordre de mission" would be :

I. in U.S.A.

- a) It would enable me to enter without difficulties.
- b) It would make possible to stay the necessary time for the accomplishment of my work and to move freely.
- c) It would give me the social standing so important in U.S.A. which would allow me to approach groups otherwise inaccessible.

II. in Europe

- a) It would allow me to leave Geneva on a temporary basis in keeping the legal domicile which I have here since 1914.
- b) It would technically facilitate the journey (diplomatic transit visas, reservation on boat or plane).
- c) It would solve the problem of my parents whom for obvious reasons I must take with me if I do not want to leave them as hostages behind me.

I suppose that the decision will have to be taken by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Zaleski, himself and I therefore beg to ask you to be good enough to submit my request to him. If I took the liberty to write to you and not directly to Mr. Zaleski it is because I remember the interest which you have always shown for my work while you were in Geneva and because I hope that you will support my demand.

Should our Government entrust me with this mission I can assure you, Dear Count Faczynski, that I will do all in my power, to the utmost of my ability and with all my heart and soul to show myself worthy of this honour.

Although this letter is an official one I cannot close it without asking you to remember me to the Countess Raczynska and without presenting to you and herself my best wishes for the coming year.

Believe me yours sincerely,

Marie Ginsberg.

P.S. In order to facilitate the "technical side" of the question I take the liberty to add two appendixes which summarize the various steps to be undertaken.

APPENDIX I.

According to Section 3(1) of the American Immigration Act 1924 (43 Stat. 153) the various restrictions concerning immigration and proceeding to the United States of America, as contained in the above Act, do not apply to Government Officials and their family.

This means that, in the present circumstances, in order to be able to render the services suggested by me I must obtain a mission from our Government in London, giving me the qualification of a "Governmental Official" in the meaning of the above Act, securing my stay in the United States for at least one year. If it should be for some reasons impossible or unadvisable to employ me directly by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to entrust me with the special mission, which seems to be fit to the Government, I might perhaps be attached as Governmental Official to the Polish Embassy in Washington. May I, however, take the liberty to mention that from my long knowledge of American mentality I am fully convinced that it would facilitate my endeavours in the circles indicated by me to a large extent, if I were attached directly to the Central Government.

As personal considerations, e.g. fear for the security of my family should not hinder my contemplated activity it will be an absolute necessity for me and be so indirectly in the interest of the cause to take over my mother and stepfather with me to the United States. I understand that under the above Section of the Immigration Act any recognised Governmental official is entitled to ask for a visa for such members of his family he wants to accompany him and I also know by experience that in the case of unmarried officials often parents take the place of wife and children.

As through my daily experience with immigration matters I realize more than I can explain by letter the necessity of leaving Switzerland before the middle of February if one does not want to run the risk of being caught in a mouse trap, I should be much obliged for taking up the matter without delay by cabling the necessary instructions to Washington, Ferne and myself, naturally at my expense.

SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE CABLES *)

As far as I understand the following cables (at my expense) would come into question:

- I. Cable from the Foreign Office to me whether the Government is willing to accept my services.
- II. Cable from the Polish Foreign Office to the Polish Embassy in Washington requesting them:
 - 1) to undertake the necessary steps with the State Department for:
 - a) obtaining the agreement of the American Government for my person as Polish Governmental official accompanied by my parents (Wives Stepfather Siegfried Goltschmidt, L.L.D. and Mother: Eleonore, dite Léonic née Sachs).
 - b) making the State Department cable this agreement to the American Legation in Berne.
 - 2) To cable to our Legation in Berne as soon as the State Department cables to the American Legation in Berne, that our Minister can get in touch with his American colleague.
- III. Cable from the Foreign Office to our Legation in Berne advising them to prepare and issue the necessary Polish papers: (ordre de mission and diplomatic passport) and to assist me in order to facilitate my departure from Switzerland.

*) I am perfectly aware that the American Embassy in London and the Polish Foreign Office know exactly the procedure to be followed. If I take the liberty of suggesting the above it is because I realize that under the present circumstances Government Officials are overwhelmed with work and this might be of help to them.