

ABSTRACT
THE RESCUE OF JEWISH REFUGEES BY SPAIN DURING THE HOLOCAUST
OF WORLD WAR II

by

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Although at the beginning of World War II Spain was an ally of Germany it was one of the few countries in the world to make a direct effort to rescue and grant protection to Jews who were doomed to the Nazi Death Camps.

In 1492 the Spanish Jews, known as the Sephardim, were expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella who wanted to purge the country of all the non-Catholic element. Even those Jews who had converted to the Christian religion were later persecuted and deported by the Spanish Inquisition and the Jews were not officially welcomed back into Spain until 1924, when the Spanish Government granted Spanish nationality to all Sephardic Jews.

From 1940 until the end of the war thousands of Jews escaped from Nazi-occupied Europe into Spain, where they were permitted by the Spanish Government to remain, although they were cared for by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and other interested individuals, among them the American Ambassador, Carlton J. H. Hayes. American influence was more directed to the Allied war

effort and in securing embargos against Germany, especially in the case of the wolfram ore that Germany required and that Spain had in abundance.

Once the embargo had been acquired Spain was considered "friendly" to the Allies, although remaining neutral, and Hayes was able to direct his attention to the problem of exerting influence on the Spanish for the refugees who entered Spain.

The Franco Government itself was the entity most instrumental in aiding Jewish refugees. It directly intervened in several European countries, granting protection and asylum to thousands of Sephardic Jews who would have otherwise been deported to the Nazi death camps. General Franco himself ordered that protection for members of the Sephardic group be secured, for reasons that are at times speculative and are no doubt an assertion of his own authority in defiance of his former German ally, who had aided his victory during the Spanish Civil War.

Since World War II additional legislation has been enacted in Spain creating an atmosphere conducive to Jewish emigration and a general attitude of tolleration for this minority group. Some of the help given Jews in Spain has been done for oportunistic reasons, such as creating a favorable impression on the United States and its large Jewish minority, but the situation for Jews in modern Spain has continued to progress.

During World War II the Jews were persecuted

by the Axis powers and although their lives were in jeopardy they were not granted priorities by the Allies, even after six million had been lost. Thanks to Spain, thousands were alive after the war, although of the six million this was but a fraction; but one nation did care about Jewish suffering.

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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1973 I went to Spain to investigate the history of the Jews who were rescued by Spain during the terror of the Nazi Holocaust.

Other countries had provided a refuge for Jewish exiles who were uprooted from their traditional homes and hounded by a conquering regime that asked for their lives simply because they or their ancestors happened to be Jews. Thousands of Jews sought asylum in Switzerland, but no real attempts were made by this neutral country to rescue Jews; some 7,000 Jews fled from Denmark to Sweden, which accepted them after high officials had pressured the government in their favor, and although Denmark was a notable exception, the Danes risked their lives to protect only their own Jews; few were able to emigrate to the United States and other countries on the American continents, but these countries had not invited them to seek the haven they so desperately needed nor were their doors opened more than just a crack; the people of Holland had sheltered the Jews of that country until their own lives were endangered because of it. No country, as official policy, especially one on friendly terms with Germany, willingly sanctioned the arrival of Jews within their borders except for Portugal and Spain. Spain, whether for the right reasons or the wrong reasons, granted protection to some 30,000 Jews during the course of

World War II. Of the six million who perished in Nazi flames this is but a fraction of those who should have been rescued. But those who were fortunate enough to pass through Spain were still alive when the war was over.

And of what importance are numbers when the price of one human life is indeterminable?

My investigation began in Valladolid, in the heart of Old Castile, where in 1453 Don Alvaro de Luna, the Constable of Castile, had been executed by his master John II after 50 years of faithful service, where in 1469 the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella was celebrated, where Christopher Columbus died in 1506 in poverty, and in whose Plaza Mayor, the large central square of the city, Philip II had ordered Castile's first auto-da-fé in October of 1559.

Valladolid was the administrative capital of Spain in 1492 when the "Catholic Kings," Ferdinand and Isabella, decided to expell thousands of their citizens--the Jews. Queen Isabella, the daughter of John II, was a capable and an intelligent ruler whose religion was the great passion of her life. This inordinate zealousness blinded her to the worth of these noble people and the kingdom had to be purged of all the non-Catholic elements to satisfy the historic and inherited desires of monarchs who had succeeded in reunifying the country after 700 years of foreign dominance by the Arabs. Isabella thought

CHAPTER I

OF THE JEWS IN SPAIN

1492

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that it was "God's will that the Jews be expelled,"¹ and she gave further impetus to a national fervor that was to endure for decades.

Near the end of the Fourteenth Century a Spanish archdeacon of Seville had begun raving against the Jews, whom he claimed were guilty as a body for committing the greatest crime in history: Adhering to a faith that had been rejected by the Son of God, Himself.² The deacon was one Ferran Martínez, who in spite of warnings from the King, the Archbishop and the Pope, continued ranting until the masses began to believe him and he never desisted until they believed him more than he believed himself. Another era of horror began for the thousands of Jews whose ancestors had lived in Spain since the beginning of the Christian era. Up until this time the Jews of Spain were able to exist more peacefully most of the time than their co-religionists in other parts of Europe. In 1290 the Jews had been expelled en masse from England by Edward I; sixteen years later this example was followed in France by Philip IV, called the Fair; the Germans were at this time too disorganized to carry on such a formal policy and satisfied themselves with occasional pogroms and bloody massacres that were in themselves even more furious and

¹Jacob R. Marcus, The Jew in the Medieval World (New York: Atheneum, 1973), p. 53.

²Cecil Roth, The Spanish Inquisition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1964), p. 17.

comprehensive in scope.³

The expulsion from Spain of the inhabitants of the Jewish faith was conducted for religious rather than racial reasons;⁴ but these people were once again forced to begin a sad pilgrimage in search of a new home, leaving behind them their homeland, all of their possessions and most of their money.⁵ When the Jews had departed the Christians suffered the loss of talent, activity and economic vitality, as well as a noticable lack of physicians, artisians and skilled craftsmen.⁶ Most of the refugees found their way to the realms of the Ottoman Empire, shifting from a Christian society that had displaced a Moslem society to a vast empire ruled by Moslems and inhabited by Moslems, Christians and Jews. Large numbers settled in Salonika, Constantinople and Sefad.⁷ Many also founded new homes in North Africa, especially Morocco, in Italy, Syria, Greece, the Netherlands, London, France, the Balkans, as well as the West Indies and the New World.⁸ Spanish Jews

³Ibid., pp. 19-20.

⁴"Spain and the Jews", Diplomatic Information Office, Madrid, 1949, p. 18.

⁵Heinrich Graetz, History of the Jews, Vol. IV (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), pp. 348-350.

⁶Ibid. pp. 353-354.

⁷Ellis Rivkin, The Shaping of Jewish History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 131.

⁸Louis I. Newman, The Jewish People, Faith and Life (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1965), p. 27.

had arrived in the Americas long before the Germans, several converted Jews having sailed with Columbus.⁹ From 1492 begins the intellectual revival in Palestine, instituted by the arrival of the Spanish exiles.¹⁰

The people whom the Catholic Kings eliminated because they were Jews belonged to the Sephardim. Traditionally there have been two major ethnic groups within the Jewish people. One group is the Ashkenazim, coming from the Biblical reference to the Jews of "Ashkenaz" (Genesis 10:3 and Jeremiah 51:27). These people were found since the Ninth Century in the regions of present day Germany, Austria, Russia, Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere in central Europe and their major language was Yiddish,¹¹ a group of similar High German dialects with a vocabulary admixture from Hebrew and Slavic and written in Hebrew. The Sephardim were named after the region of "Sephard," an area in Asia to which many exiles from Jerusalem were deported after the destruction of the First Temple 586 years before the Christian Era. During

⁹Twenty-three Jews settled in Peter Stuyvesant's New Amsterdam, establishing the first Sephardic Jewish Community in North America. Of the American Sephardim Moses Lazarus became a member of the Knickerbocker Club and his daughter Emma composed the poem enscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty. Ernest Van Den Haag, The Jewish Mystique (New York: Stein and Day, 1969), pp. 193-194.

¹⁰Marcus, p. 383. Some 300,000 Spanish-speaking Jews live in Israel today.

¹¹Newman, p. 26.

the Middle Ages the Jews referred to the Iberian Peninsula as Sephard, to which they migrated from Judea and Mesopotamia, joining Jewish communities which had been in Spain for centuries. The language of the Sephardim was Ladino, Castilian Spanish written in Hebrew characters.¹²

Western Jewry considered the culturally advanced Spanish Jewry to be its predecessor to a certain degree.¹³ When the Jews left Spain they took with them their trades and skills, their inner strength, the closely woven unity of their political life, their social relations and public life organization and these were the forces that upheld them and prevailed among them and became part of the heritage of Jewry.¹⁴ When the Jews were forced to leave, Spain lost more than an important aspect of its traditional society. Even today the Spanish people are sensitive about this unfortunate act.¹⁵

In Fifteenth Century Spain Christians were not sensitive about Jews. Before the expulsion of 1492 many Jews in attempting to save themselves hurriedly converted

¹²Ibid., p. 27.

¹³Shaul Esl, "Some Observations on the Place of the Sephardim in Modern Jewry," from Actas del Primer Simposio de Estudios Sefardies (Instituto Arias Montano, Madrid, 1970), p. 133.

¹⁴Cecil Roth, "Jewish Society in the Renaissance Environment" from Jewish Society Through the Ages edited by H. H. Ben-Sasson and S. Etinger (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), p. 238.

¹⁵The report published by the Spanish Diplomatic Office in Madrid in 1949 represents the continued apology.

to Christianity, following the pogroms of 1391 and the restrictive economic legislation of 1412-1415. Until 1449 the New Christians were called "Conversos" and were deemed to be faithful, freely intermarrying with the nobility, occupying high and respected positions in the state, and finding their way into the upper reaches of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Jews declined sharply in public favor by 1449 and were branded as "Marranos" (filthy ones; pigs) and in 1480 the Inquisition, established to purify Catholicism, began to regulate their exclusion from positions of leadership and to confiscate their property. Actually the Marranos hated the Jews and the Jews hated them, but once the New Christians were accused of being secret-Jews they were all lumped into one common identification. Even if a Converso was a better practicing Christian than the Christians who set out to persecute him, he was considered a secret-Jew and the only remedy with which to deal properly with him was the Inquisition.¹⁶

The Plaza Mayor in Valladolid today is in the process of being transformed into an underground parking garage. When the work is completed the paving stones will be placed back on the spot where in 1559 Philip II, just back from a trip to Flanders, graced the proceedings of an auto-da-fé with his presence, for which a Flemish

¹⁶Rivkin, pp. 141-142. Some writers, such as Warren Freedman, The Selective Guide for the Jewish Traveler (New York: Collier Books, 1972), p. 133, claim that most Marranos were "feverently Jewish at heart."

visitor estimated that 200,000 persons turned out for the "solemnity of the occasion."¹⁷ Protestants and "other heretics" as well as converted Jews were burned at the stake in the ancient central square of Valladolid and in many other cities of Spain. Cecil Roth in The Spanish Inquisition states that

the smell of roasting human flesh became familiar; and the shrieks of the dying heretics sounded as sweet music in the ears of blameless adherents of the Church, who celebrated the immolation with a public holiday.¹⁸

It was not just Catholic zeal that prompted the crowds to gather for the public spectacles. It was the same base curiosity that was responsible for enormous attendance at public executions held in England¹⁹ and the county fair atmosphere that surrounded hangings in the Old West.

Thousands died at the stake during the Spanish Inquisition and thousands more were expelled from the country, but during the Twentieth Century millions lost their homes and their lives in an age when uniformity of religious belief and dogma was not considered an essential part of society.²⁰

¹⁷Roth, pp. 170-171.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 137.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 122.

²⁰Leslie S. Domonkos, class lecture delivered at Youngstown State University, March 5, 1974.

War

Valladolid is the crossroads to the north and the west of Spain and its Estación del Norte (North Station) is one of the country's busiest rail terminals. Colonel-General Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Operations Section of Hitler's High Command, realized the strategic location of this terminus and in reports to his staff in early 1943 referred to an operation "Gisela," a study made to utilize Valladolid for troop amassing, involving a plan that would include Spain aiding Germany.²¹ When the Allies failed to utilize the Iberian Peninsula as a point for troop landings Hitler abandoned the plan in the summer of 1943, ending the German decision to operate from Spain.²²

From 1936 to 1939 the trains passing through Valladolid were transporting soldiers and weapons for the war called the rehearsal for World War II—the Spanish Civil War. This was not a time for the Jews to look to Spain as an "escape hatch" although it was the time they needed one. Sephardic Jews had been offered Spanish nationality in 1924 by the Spanish Government, but there was a great deal of confusion and delay in publishing this information

²¹Charles D. Burdick, Germany's Military Strategy and Spain in World War II (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968), pp. 174-175.

²²Ibid., pp. 187-188. Burdick states that Hitler's interest in Spain was always sporadic and never consistent and was indicative of his frantic attempts to maintain two continental fronts against his Allied opponents.

and in carrying out the Royal Decrees so few of the Sephardim availed themselves of this privilege.²³ General Francisco Franco confirmed the act on December 29, 1948, by which time it was too late.²⁴

Yet the Fascist dictator of Spain deserves some credit in regard to the Jews for not being "against" them at a time when the leaders of the Democratic countries were not "for" them. During the Spanish Civil War, when emotions were at a fever pitch and the memory of what was done and said then still endures, prominent American rabbis, among them Edward L. Israel and Abba Hillel Silver, were actively engaged in pro-Loyalist organizations, such as the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.²⁵

About thirty miles from Madrid the train from Valladolid comes down from the plateau of Old Castile and nears El Escorial. While approaching this castle-monastery complex of Philip II I saw the 492 foot reinforced concrete cross of the "Valley of the Fallen" off in the distance and wondered how all Jewry escaped Franco's wrath for this support of his enemy. I know a man who was condemned to work on this monument to the Civil War for nine years, the reason being that he was suspected of being a Repub-

²³Diplomatic Information Office, p. 18.

²⁴Gerald Reitlinger, The Final Solution (New York: A. S. Barnes & Company, 1961), p. 376.

²⁵Richard P. Traina, American Diplomacy and the Spanish Civil War (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 180.

lican as a teenager during the war.

On September 22, 1940, Franco wrote to Hitler protesting "unchangeable and sincere adherence" both to the Führer and to the cause in which he was fighting.²⁶

Alan Lloyd, one of Franco's biographers, quotes an unknown Spaniard on Franco's attitudes:

Franco wanted the Axis dictators to win not merely because he thought the alternative would finish him, but because he admired and respected them. When he looked at Hitler, he saw a man who had accomplished some of his own fondest ambitions: who had built a powerful army from a demoralized force, who had created order and discipline from chaos, who had raised the morale of a nation by firing its racial prejudice.

True, he did not relish the prospect of a Europe dominated by Hitler. But he thought that a democratic victory giving reign to Leftist influences throughout the Continent, would be far worse.²⁷

Lloyd tells of a change in attitude:

Suddenly, the man who had hailed Germany as the defender of European civilization and who had promised a million Spanish soldiers to help the German people if Berlin were ever threatened, was offering his congratulations to the conquering generals of the Allies.²⁸

The shrewd Franco now admired Generals George Patton and Omar Bradley and declared that they would go down in history as the two greatest generals that the war had produced.²⁹ It was wise to be on the winning side.

²⁶Alan Lloyd, Franco (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969), pp. 178-179. Franco was possibly courting aid for the reconquest of Gibraltar (p. 179).

²⁷Ibid., pp. 196-197.

²⁸Ibid., p. 197.

²⁹Ibid.

It requires more than police tactics to remain dictator of the Spanish people for almost forty years. Just as it is incorrect to classify all the Loyalists of the Spanish Civil War as "Communists" Franco himself is not a German, or even Italian style, Fascist. On February 26, 1938, Franco's typewritten Noticiero de España (Spain's Reporter), the weekly guide of civil war events and his party's guide to thought and action, reported Hitler's latest speech in lyrical terms, praised his absolute disinterest in granting military aid to the Franco forces and said that he supported the Nationalist uprising as a crusade of the nation against Communism.³⁰ Supporters of the Republic would have cited this pamphlet as proof of Franco's Nazi nature, but his Noticiero of January 8 had carried an erudite and humane article, on the Jews by the greatest Twentieth Century Spanish novelist, Pío Baroja, who calmly and methodically refuted Hitler's anti-Semitic race theories without mentioning either Hitler or the Nazis.³¹ It was one thing to accept aid from Hitler and praise him a bit, especially when Franco knew that he would need more to win his war, but even then his regime did not care to absorb nonsensical theories about Jews and Aryans.³²

³⁰Brian Crozier, Franco (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 268.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid. Crozier says that the Spaniards know that their blood is more Jewish than Aryan.

On June 30, 1942, six weeks after President Roosevelt's newly appointed ambassador to Spain, Carlton J. H. Hayes, arrived he reported to the President on Franco, based on personal observations:

Nor does General Franco entirely conform to the Hitler-Mussolini norm of "dictator." True, he wears a colored wool shirt and receives Fascist salutes from the faithful. But the faithful seem to be somewhat scarce and their salutes a bit perfunctory, while the wearer of the supreme shirt is strangely taciturn and untheatrical. The Papal Nuncio tells me there is an old Spanish proverb about a Galician being "as prudent as a bear, as stubborn as a mule, and as dumb as an ox," and that the proverb is particularly applicable to the Galician Franco.³³

Later in the letter Hayes predicted a shift in the policy of the Franco regime as German fortunes might ebb and internal criticism develop within Spain.³⁴ Hayes role was to court the favor of the Spanish Chief of State and to house him securely in the camp of the Allies. There were advantages for Spain also. In Hayes' October 29, 1942, letter to Roosevelt he told the President:

At Granada, the Military and Civil Governors and the Mayor all expressed appreciation of your interest in the resumption and expansion of the tourist-trade. "Turismo" has been, of course, Granada's chief industry; with its practical disappearance during the past six years, the city's economy has suffered grievously; and the prospect of eventually resuscitating it is especially alluring.³⁵

³³Letter from Carlton J. H. Hayes to Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 30, 1942, p. 1. Carlton J. H. Hayes papers, Special Collection, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York. (Hereafter documents from this collection called "Hayes Papers" if reference not apparent.)

³⁴Ibid., p. 3.

³⁵Letter from Carlton J. H. Hayes to Franklin D. Roosevelt, October 29, 1942, p. 1.

Hayes told Roosevelt that there was "a crying need—and the golden opportunity—for the right kinds of propaganda" in Spain.³⁶ The diplomatic manuevers of the Ambassador were in the interest of winning the war for the Allies. He was not briefed on seeking aid for Jews as a priority—at the time they were being hauled away from their homes in Europe and were being "resettled" in Hitler's famous Death Camps. Washington had been aware for two years of the brutal deportations of Jews to concentration camps and since June of 1941 had been informed of Hitler's plan of genocide.³⁷ In 1942 General Franco would have been receptive to an organized rescue plan for Jews.

located in a castle-like building on the Plaza Santa Cruz in the old part of Madrid, to see if permission had been granted, I was told by a secretary to the Minister that it had been. But she said, "After the year 1931 all information is completely prohibited." I lacked the proper credentials which would have impressed this office and was denied a probable wealth of information.

In the street of the Duque de Medinaceli at No. 14, near the Palace Hotel, I visited the Instituto Arias Montano. This institute was created by the Spanish regime in 1940 to maintain a cultural link with the Sephardim and was forced under the auspices of the patron-

³⁶Hayes to Roosevelt, June 30, 1942, p. 4.

³⁷Saul S. Friedman, No Haven for the Oppressed (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973), pp. 134-135.

³⁸Diplomatic Information Office, p. 74.

CHAPTER II

THE DIPLOMATIC MISSION OF AMBASSADOR HAYES

In Search of Documents

It is somewhat difficult to trace the history of the Jews who came to Spain during World War II. I applied with the Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, the Foreign Office, for permission to conduct research in this area. The period of waiting for the petition to be approved was thirty days. When I returned to the Foreign Office, located in a castle-like building on the Plaza Santa Cruz in the old part of Madrid, to see if permission had been granted, I was told by a secretary to the Minister that it had been. But she said, "After the year 1931 all information is completely prohibited." I lacked the proper credentials which would have impressed this office and was denied a probable wealth of information.

In the street of the Duque de Medinaceli at No. 14, near the Palace Hotel, I visited the Instituto Arias Montano. This institute was created by the Spanish regime in 1940 to maintain a cultural link with the Sephardim and was formed under the auspices of the patronage of the Higher Council for Scientific Research, bearing the name of the great Spanish oriental scholar, Arias Montano.³⁸

³⁸Diplomatic Information Office, p. 34.

The library of the Arias Montano Institute contains 16,000 volumes on Sephardic Jewish history.³⁹ The Institute publishes the magazine Sefarad, which contains articles, reports and book reviews on Hebrew culture; it also publishes books, mainly dealing with literary themes; and has a cultural interchange with the Jerusalem University. The government is quick to point out that it was founded at the time that Spain maintained full diplomatic relations with Germany.⁴⁰

The librarians in the Institute are cordial and helpful but the 16,000 volumes contain little of historical interest. There are no publications or documents referring to the Holocaust, except for a few anthologies and a general historical sketch. The librarians assured me that this is not because there is any sort of regulation against the information. None of the Jews who avail themselves of the library have ever expressed any interest in this subject and the library itself has never thought to investigate this important phase of Jewish history. Jewish scholars in Madrid, or those who come there, are primarily interested in literary sources and conduct their work accordingly.

³⁹Warren Freedman, The Selective Guide for the Jewish Traveler (New York: Collier Books, 1972), p. 140.

⁴⁰Diplomatic Information Office, p. 34.

The Wolfram Crisis

Beginning in 1940 thousands of refugees began pouring over the Pyrenees into Spain, aided by paid French guides. The majority of these refugees were Jews who had had their original German, Polish, Hungarian or other citizenship annulled by the Nazis and were without regular passports.⁴¹ Ambassador Hayes in Madrid recognized the urgency of their condition, which increased over the next three years, and in December of 1942 set up a special "refugee and relief section" of the Embassy under the direction of Niles Bond, the Third Secretary of the Ambassador's staff. With the cooperation of the British Ambassador, Sir Samuel Hoare, arrangements were made to solicit funds and supplies to care for the refugees until they could be received elsewhere. Both Hayes and Hoare pledged to press the Spanish Foreign Office to ensure the proper reception and handling of these people and their eventual evacuation to North Africa.⁴²

These maneuvers were "prompted by more than purely humanitarian motives." The Allies were at the same time attempting to free French North Africa from Axis military control and some of the refugees were French

⁴¹Carlton J. H. Hayes, Wartime Mission in Spain (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1945), p. 112.

⁴²Ibid., p. 114.

troops who could assist in this operation.⁴³ In the summer of 1943 another crisis developed, which the State Department of the United States wanted the staff in Madrid to grant full priority to aid the Allied cause. This was the situation of wolfram ore that was being exported from Spain, who had unlimited quantities, to Germany, who required it for war production.

While Hitler was putting into motion his "Final Solution" for the Jews of the countries in which Panzer Divisions were creating more lebensraum for the Germans, Spain continued to trade with the Nazi homeland. Carlton J. H. Hayes, in Wartime Mission in Spain, claims that Spain did not export food products to Germany to aid the Axis powers against the Allies. The exports were in payment for imports which economically bankrupt Spain required to furnish materials which the Allies, for war reasons were unable or unwilling to supply, such as heavy machinery, precision tools, buses and streetcars, chemicals and drugs and seed potatoes. Spain did not export wheat to Germany and even as late as January of 1944 Germany was exporting 20,000 tons of wheat to Spain.⁴⁴

The greatest exportation problem confronting the Ambassador was the "Wolfram Crisis." The Nazis needed a supply of wolfram ore, from which steel-hardening

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 84.

tungsten is derived. It was in plentiful supply in the Iberian Peninsula and was not available in Germany, and Hitler was wholly dependent upon this source.⁴⁵ From August 1943 until the end of April in 1944 this project was given more priority than saving lives in jeopardy.

In a Confidential Staff Memorandum to the Ambassador on November 13, 1943, he was informed of the benefits of an embargo on wolfram:

The Spanish Government has an obligation to foster the interests of the Spanish people.

It is in the interest of the Spanish people, as of all other peoples, that the war be brought to a swift conclusion.

An embargo on the export of wolfram would contribute in some degree to this end.

It is obviously in the interest of the Spanish people that economic relations between Spain and the United Nations be strengthened. The embargo would have this result.

An embargo on the export of wolfram would not be a breach of Spanish neutrality. It is within the sovereign right of the Spanish Government to impose such an embargo. The direct significance of such an embargo is purely internal and no foreign country has the right to object to it.

If the Spanish Government would object that the embargo would, in fact, be discriminatory against Germany we can point out that in 1940 and 1941 Spanish olive oil was sent to Germany and Italy while none was permitted to be exported to the United States. This was, in fact, direct discrimination against one of the belligerents in the present war. We are asking nothing like this in the case of wolfram.⁴⁶

Another Confidential Memorandum on December 2, 1943, referred to a conversation between the Spanish Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs and Willard L. Beaulac, who advised

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 194.

⁴⁶W. L. Beaulac, Memorandum to Ambassador Hayes, November 13, 1943, p. 1.

Hayes:

Germany was still getting wolfram out of Spain and although we were getting the larger part of Spain's production, Germany's net purchases had not declined in any important degree. We had no use for the wolfram we purchased, and therefore Spain should contemplate the possibility that we might cease buying wolfram. The shock to Spanish economy, in that event, would be very great, as he [the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Jordana] must realize.

I said that we had made a proposal which would eliminate the possibility of any such shock to Spanish economy. We were, in effect, offering Spain the opportunity to resume what amounted to normal trade with the democracies. This was an opportunity which few, if any, countries in the world had today, and we thought very seriously that Spain should take advantage of it. We proposed nothing that was not in Spain's interest; on the other hand, we were offering to Spain adequate insurance against a possible serious disruption in its economy.⁴⁷

Through countless memoranda and correspondence we learn the diplomatic endeavor to stop the exportation of wolfram:

Count Jordana, the Spanish Foreign Minister, was reportedly deeply troubled over the matter in January of 1944 when Hayes brought it up to him.⁴⁸ The Spanish Government continued to delay and failed to reply when the Ambassador's staff proposed discussions on the matter, and finally claimed that the delays were because of "Spanish economic and political matters."⁴⁹

⁴⁷Beaulac, Memorandum to Hayes, Madrid, December 2, 1943.

⁴⁸Memorandum from staff to Hayes, Madrid, January 3, 1944, p. 3

⁴⁹Personal papers of Hayes, "Wolfram Embargo" January 4, 1944, p. 2.

An embargo on wolfram to Germany would greatly affect the economy. Many private interests involved in the production of wolfram were exerting strong influence and were alarmed at the prospect of an embargo. The Minister of Finance was likewise involved and alarmed, as was the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, because the embargo on the one-third of wolfram production going to Germany would affect three-thirds of the business of private interests as well as the Spanish treasury.⁵⁰

At the time Spain had been actively cooperating with the Allies and had declared neutrality, which evoked protest from Germany, because of "the French and other refugees" who were permitted to pass through Spain to safety or to join the Allied armies in North Africa. Spain feared the large German forces stationed on the frontier. An advisor of the Ambassador informed him that if Spain were to preserve its neutrality and stay out of the war it had to "give to both sides."⁵¹ The embargo on wolfram would mean a break with Germany because Germany would not tolerate it; and on the other hand, the Spanish economy would suffer from such drastic action.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 3.

⁵²Ibid., p. 4.

⁵³Hayes, letter to Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, January 28, 1944, No. 272, p. 1.

Spain Becomes an "Ally"

On the political side, all the moves that Spain had made in relation with the Allies were done in Spain's interest, such as accepting supplies of petroleum from American republics. Hayes reminded Count Jordana that if the Axis powers were in the position to, they would not hesitate to add Spain to their conquests.⁵²

At the same time the BBC in London increased the violence of its attacks against Spain in broadcasts in several languages. The British had been attacking Spain through radio broadcasts because of Spain's "friendly agreements" with Germany and its exportation of products used by Germany in the war against the Allies. The United States' diplomatic plan did not include public pressure on Spain and feared that attacks of the sneering and sarcastic British variety would cause continued resistance to the requests to halt the shipment of wolfram and would send Spain to Germany's side.⁵³ Hayes rushed off an urgent telegram to the State Department in Washington to inform Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, that the British Ambassador, Sir Samuel Hoare, promised to end the BBC campaign and agreed that diplomatic channels and little publicity would have more success in ceasing the loadings

⁵²Ibid., p. 4.

⁵³Hayes, letter to Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, January 28, 1944, No. 272, p. 1.

to Germany.⁵⁴ Hayes was afraid that the radio attacks would cause Spain to line up with Germany as they accused Spain of harboring Nazi spies,⁵⁵ when the Spanish Government knew full well that Hayes' extensive staff was heavily manned with United States' government agents involved in espionage work. He strongly urged that the publicity concerning relations with Spain be handled through the State Department and not by radio from London.⁵⁶

In January and February of 1944 Ambassador Hayes in Spain and Secretary of State Hull in Washington exchanged a series of telegrams written in code involving the wolfram crisis. In January shipments of petroleum were delayed and were being withheld from Spain. Ambassador Cárdenas, representing Spain in Washington, complained and was reminded of the Italian ships harbored in Spain, the continuing activity of German espionage and sabotage, the Spanish Blue Division, Spanish volunteers soldiering for Germany, that was fighting in Russia, financial arrangements with Germany, the prospect of a revival of German imports and the request of an embargo on wolfram. The Spanish Ambassador was informed that if these problems were considered in earnest the tankers

⁵⁴ Hayes, telegram (paraphrased) to State Department, January 28, 1944, No. 273.

⁵⁵ Hayes, telegram (para) to Secretary of State, January 29, 1944, No. 291.

⁵⁶ Hayes, telegram (para) to Sec. State, January 31, 1944, No. 306.

would not be suspended.⁵⁷ Hull felt that Spain should anticipate its long-term interests after the Allies had won the war, at which time there would be no market for wolfram ore.⁵⁸ Hayes was warned to watch internal developments in Spain closely and to report them currently.⁵⁹

The American short wave broadcasts and the London attacks on Spain were requested by the State Department to be halted to make Count Jordana more receptive to understanding the Allied point of view.⁶⁰ Drastice shortages in the supply of gasoline in Spain⁶¹ was a reminder that affected all citizens, who Franco had to keep content. The fuel supply had been cut to fifty percent by the beginning of February.⁶² The day after Hayes dutifully reported the results of the fuel cut-off Hull again reminded him that every ton of wolfram entering Germany was being "directly translated into terms of American

⁵⁷Cordell Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, January 25, 1944, No. 254.

⁵⁸Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, January 29, 1944, No. 254.

⁵⁹Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, January 25, 1944, No. 204.

⁶⁰Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, February 1, 1944, No. 277.

⁶¹Hayes, telegram (para) to Hull, February 2, 1944, No. 357.

⁶²Ibid.

casualties,"⁶³ and that the government was still awaiting concrete assurances from Spain respecting its desires.⁶⁴

Hull continued to work with the Spanish Ambassador in Washington. Cárdenas told him that when in 1940 Spain was unfriendly towards the United States it continued to be kind and considerate; and that when Spain endeavored to be considerate later the United States exercised considerable pressure. Spain claimed to fear a German invasion if the wolfram exports were halted. Cárdenas was convinced that Russia was exerting pressure and he feared for the remainder of 1,500 members of the Blue Division who remained on the Eastern Front. Russia was supposedly arousing Britain and America in order to attack the Caudillo directly.⁶⁵

The three-month delay in solving the wolfram crisis passed more slowly in Washington than it did in Madrid, where delays are considered normal. Cárdenas promised Hull that Spain would be America's eternal friend if we could only exercise patience and allow her to remain neutral.⁶⁶

Hayes reached the conclusion that if Spain

⁶³Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, February 3, 1944, No. 300.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 2.

⁶⁵Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, February 3, 1944, No. 315.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 2.

could be guaranteed an increase in the exportation of commodities such as fruit, fish and cotton goods he would be in a better position to negotiate with Count Jordana over the embargo to Germany,⁶⁷ but Hull held out with the discontinuation of the tanker loadings until a complete and permanent wolfram embargo had been established.⁶⁸

Ambassador Hayes reported back that a demand for an embargo would violate Spanish sovereignty and that Franco and his Cabinet would never accept such dictation, but if petroleum shipments would resume they would be in a better position to drastically limit wolfram exports.⁶⁹ Hull did not appreciate the remark made by the Spanish Foreign Minister that "Spain had done the United Nations a great service by not embarking on an aggression against them," which he repeated to Hayes, and insisted that the United States would make no economic sacrifices to Spain until the desired embargo was completed, convincing him of neutrality.⁷⁰

By the end of February 1944 Finland appeared interested in purchasing the wolfram in return for nickel which Spain urgently needed. This market was discovered

⁶⁷Hayes, telegram (para) to Hull, February 11, 1944, No. 476.

⁶⁸Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, February 11, 1944, No. 386.

⁶⁹Hayes, telegram (para) to Hull, February 18, 1944, No. 573.

⁷⁰Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, February 18, 1944, No. 458.

to satisfy the Spanish economy and to avoid protests from labor and mine owners in Spain.⁷¹

Count Jordana then told Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Ambassador in Madrid, that the Spanish Government was prepared to do the following things:

- 1) To expel the German military agents and the German Consulate from Tangier;
- 2) Put a drastic stop in North Africa and Spain to the espionage activities of the Germans;
- 3) Dissolve and repatriate Spanish units on the Russian front and not allow any new units or reliefs to leave Spain;
- 4) Settle the question of the Italian merchant ships on terms agreeable to us and the British;
- 5) Refer to arbitration the question of the release of Italian warships; and
- 6) Give every facility to assure drastic limitation in wolfram exports to Germany.⁷²

On February 28, 1944, Hayes was able to relate to Hull that Jordana had confirmed that the limitation of wolfram exports to Germany would be reduced to ten percent of the 1943 production and that the other five points promised to Hoare would be fulfilled.⁷³ Spain was not losing out either. It was promised American markets for its commodities and that all arrears in capital indebted-

⁷¹Ibid., p. 2.

⁷²Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, February 24, 1944, No. 515.

⁷³Hayes, telegram (para) to Hull, February 28, 1944, No. 682.

ness from American interests would be cleared.⁷⁴ Yet Count Jordana continued to insist that the Spanish Government was receiving pressure from Germany, whose spies had discovered the planned embargo, and produced a threatening note from that embassy.⁷⁵

The British had played no small role in all this. A final agreement was reached with the Spanish by the end of April 1944, but as late as April 25, Winston Churchill had indicated to President Roosevelt that unless the United States went along with Great Britain, "the later would conclude an independent agreement with Spain and furnish petroleum, thereby advertising to the world a cleavage between the English-speaking Allies."⁷⁶

Portugal had already established a complete wolfram embargo⁷⁷ and the State Department turned its attention to the fact that Spain, now "friendly enough" was still a Fascist regime, although it had disassociated itself from the most hideous branch of Fascism.⁷⁸

⁷⁴Hayes, memorandum, Madrid, March 30, 1944, p. 3.

⁷⁵Hayes, withheld telegram to Hull, Madrid, February 26, 1944.

⁷⁶Hayes, War Mission, pp. 222-223.

⁷⁷Willard L. Beaulac, letter to Hayes, Washington, June 16, 1944, p. 3.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 2.

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CHAPTER III

AMBASSADOR HAYES AND REFUGEES

1942-1943

The problem of eliciting an embargo on wolfram occupied a great deal of the time and involved countless hours of work on the part of the Ambassador and his staff. The embargo was essential in curtailing German war production but it had relegated the "refugee problem" to secondary importance.

Thousands of Jews looked to the Iberian Peninsula as a place of sanctuary or a place from which to continue their journey to lands where they could escape Nazi wrath. Even the tiny state of Andorra, nestled high in the Pyrenees between Spain and France was filled with Jewish refugees.⁷⁹

Tens of thousands of Jewish victims of Nazi atrocity poured into Spain in 1942 and 1943. They were from France, Holland, Belgium, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria. With no money and no food and nowhere to go they were placed in camps, such as the one at Miranda del Ebro, which rapidly became unsanitary with overcrowding and inadequate facilities. This not only caused a financial burden on the Spanish Government but diplomatic problems

⁷⁹Raul Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967), p. 413.

with the Germans, who insisted that these people would pass into Allied hands and take up arms against Germany.⁸⁰

Sir Samuel Hoare and members of the British Embassy devoted much of their time to helping the refugees and in putting pressure on the Spanish authorities to improve conditions for them. But Hoare's version of the situation, found in Complacent Dictator, a memoir of his years in Spain, is inaccurate and at times deliberately incorrect. According to him all refugees who did not seek British protection were ruthlessly herded into concentration camps where they lived under impossible and inhumane conditions and where most of the relief they received came from British charities.⁸¹ Hoare constantly cites the delays by the Spanish Government to thwart his own attempts to assist the refugees, but says that there were never anti-Jewish methods adopted by the Spanish Government.⁸²

The account of Carlton J. H. Hayes appears to be more objective. He tells in Wartime Mission in Spain that in the 1942 and 1943 period when the greatest number of refugees poured into Spain from France, Spain was going through a period of great shortages in food and other supplies, not having recovered from the Civil War, and

⁸⁰Crozier, p. 386.

⁸¹Sir Samuel Hoare, Complacent Dictator (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 230.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 233-234.

and the delays were caused by the traditionally slow procedures of the Spanish ministers and the problem of German threats.⁸³ Count Jordana promised the American Ambassador, however, that Spain would resist all German pressure and threats of aggression designed to impede the release of prisoners who might be helpful to the Allied cause and that the Spanish Government, and also that of Portugal, would provide transport ships to evacuate refugees to North Africa where they could join the Allies.⁸⁴ As for Spain not aiding the refugees, Hayes claims:

The Spanish Government had not closed its frontiers to refugees but had allowed them to enter and cross the country with considerable freedom. Their "travel documents" were not too meticulously inspected. Yet, in view of the very bad economic and food conditions in Spain in 1940-1941, the Government was reluctant to play permanent host to any large number of alien refugees.⁸⁵

Many of the unfortunates who struggled across the Pyrenees in deep snow were homeless Jews. Allied officials at the time argued that there were Nazi agents planted among these refugees and that they should not be granted passage to North Africa, but the Spanish Government granted the passage to Africa, where the Allies usured them into detention camps upon their arrival.⁸⁶ Hoare even

⁸³ Hayes, War Mission, pp. 112-120.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 119.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

⁸⁶ Crozier, p. 387.

states that the Franco government tried to prevent the arrival of the Sephardic community from Salonika,⁸⁷ yet we shall see how it directly intervened to save these people from the ovens of the death camps.

Hayes' account of his part in helping the "stateless persons," by which he means "chiefly Jewish,"⁸⁸ although more accurate, shows that he did not do all that he might have.

From 1940 to 1942 most of the Jews who came to Spain crossed the country to Lisbon in Portugal, from where they departed to America or Britain. By 1942 there were an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 who preferred to remain in Spain or who lacked the means of going elsewhere.⁸⁹ The care of the "stateless persons" was left entirely to "American humanitarian organizations,"⁹⁰ which consisted of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Quakers and no others, until a later time when aid was also offered by the Unitarian Service Committee and the War Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.⁹¹ In addition

⁸⁷Hoare, p. 237.

⁸⁸Hayes, War Mission, p. 112.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid. Amitié Chrétien and Boy Scout Groups in France cared for Jewish children who had to be left behind as their parents fled to Spain. Their subsequent fate when their foster parents refused to return them to the Jews after the war is another chapter in Jewish suffering.

⁹¹Hayes, Personal papers, "Relief of Refugees in Spain," January 1944, p. 3.

to Jews, among the refugees were "some of France's finest military leadership and thousands of her best fighting men."⁹² For this second group the State Department of the United States turned to the American Red Cross who promptly placed \$25,000 at their disposal, immediately adding another \$50,000 provided by President Roosevelt. And in addition the non-Jewish refugees were treated to warm knitted garments from the "sewing circles of Mrs. Hayes," "comfort kits" from the American Catholic Bishops and "sympathetic cooperation" from the Spanish Red Cross.⁹³

From among the 5,000 apparently undisturbed documents deposited at the Butler Library of Columbia University by the estate of Carlton J. H. Hayes, one of its most eminent professors of history, the earliest report on "The Refugee Problem in Spain" is dated April 21, 1942; he did not reach Madrid until May 16, 1942.

Hayes was informed that at this time it was against Spanish law to form any type of Jewish organization for any purpose whatsoever, which greatly hindered the work of the JDC (Jewish Joint Distribution Committee).⁹⁴ The JDC had approached the wife of the previous American Ambassador, Alexander Wilbourne Weddell, in January of

⁹² Hayes, War Mission, p. 114.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 115.

⁹⁴ Hayes, "The Refugee Problem in Spain," private papers, April 21, 1942 (author unknown), p. 1.

1941. Mrs. Virginia Chase Weddell had already undertaken to represent several relief agencies in Spain and to disburse their funds, and she graciously consented to distribute the equivalents in Spanish currency from which the JDC had deposited in her bank account in New York. Mrs. Weddell focused her principle attention on the plight of the Jews who were in the internment camp at Miranda del Ebro and in aiding the families of men who were imprisoned there. She sent food and clothing to the camp and granted cash allotments in individual cases.⁹⁵

At the same time there were also a few hundred Jews in Spain who had entered the country earlier and who had exhausted their resources. The JDC maintained them in hotels, through a representative of the JDC, as it was not possible to conduct organized relief work.⁹⁶ The Jewish people were threatened with imprisonment because they had entered the country illegally but they were permitted to remain in the country, costing the JDC \$183,000 during 1941 and the first three months of 1942.⁹⁷ The only other outside aid that the Jews were receiving at this time was from Protestant and Catholic groups in France, lead by Dr. Marc Boegner and Cardinal Guerlier,

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 1-2.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 2.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 3.

who provided them with supplies for their flight to Spain.⁹⁸

In March of 1943 Hayes' office was visited by Señor Baraibar, the Chief of the European Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who informed the Ambassador that the Spanish Government would grant visas to some 300 Jews in Germany who had a claim to Sephardic origin if the JDC would guarantee that they would be transported elsewhere within six weeks or so.⁹⁹ Baraibar emphasized that this information was to be entirely confidential and that it could be discussed only with the American Ambassador and that the entire project was extremely urgent as he had information that new regulations would be applied against the Jews in Germany on April 4.¹⁰⁰

From the inter-office correspondence of the American Embassy in Madrid it appears that the Spanish Government had made the first overtures in assisting Jews. Yet by the end of March, 1943, the Embassy received information that the Spanish Foreign Office planned to close the Pyrenees border frontier to all undocumented persons.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸Donald A. Lowrie, Memorandum to Hayes, Geneva, September 19, 1942, p. 1.

⁹⁹Beaulac, Memorandum to JDC (?), March 18, 1943, p. 1. (Hayes Papers).

¹⁰⁰Beaulac, Memorandum to Hayes, Madrid, March 29, 1943, p. 1.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 2-3; Hayes, Memorandum to Roosevelt, "The Refugee Problem in Spain," May 3, 1943.

The Hayes Office planned to inform the Spanish of the inadvisability of this scheme. By turning back refugees from the borders, Spain would appear in world opinion to be collaborating with the Germans in their effort to enslave the people of Europe; Franco was reminded that his troops were permitted to enter France during the Civil War and continue their journey to Nationalist Spanish territory; there was no justification for returning escaped prisoners of war; and it was the obligation of the French and the Germans to prevent their escape, not that of Spain.¹⁰²

Hayes had come to Spain to influence Spain from joining the Axis, to encourage Spain to resist any possible threat of an Axis invasion or the threat of an invasion, and to obtain from Spain every possible facility for an Allied plan of warfare against Germany.¹⁰³ Roosevelt had elicited a promise from Hayes that he refrain from interference in any internal affairs in Spain,¹⁰⁴ always having been cautious about placing Jewish refugees as a priority.¹⁰⁵

On May 3, 1943, Hayes reported the situation on the "Refugee Problem" to the President. After November

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Hayes, War Mission, p. 16.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁰⁵Friedman, No Haven, p. 289. (Cited as an example.)

11, 1942, when the Germans overran the previously "unoccupied" part of France an additional 15,000 refugees, including many Jews, crossed the Pyrenees into Spain. Count Jordana is credited with convincing the ultra-cautious Caudillo and important Falangist elements to grant asylum to these persons.¹⁰⁶ The Spanish Government policy involved the following points:

- 1) Positive refusal to return any refugees to France;
- 2) The removal of the refugees from internment camps as soon as possible;
- 3) Evacuation of refugees from Spain and arrangements made for their transit through Portugal;
- 4) Informal recognition of the French North African regime;
- 5) Facilities to be extended to other Allied embassies for the care of refugees of their respective nationalities; and
- 6) Recognition of official agents of the Joint Distribution Committee, the Quakers and the American and British Red Cross, and granting them the power to dispense relief to refugees who had to remain in Spain because they had no other place to go.¹⁰⁷

Roosevelt was also informed of the help granted by the Portuguese Ambassador in Madrid and by Dr. Salazar, the dictator of Portugal, in Lisbon, who permitted refugees to cross into Portugal and who granted use of Portuguese ports for transport to North Africa.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Hayes to Roosevelt, May 3, 1943.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

Hayes did concede that all this cooperation was aided by the fact that the Allies were conducting a successful military campaign in Tunis and that there was a growing conviction in Spain that the Axis were losing the war and that the United Nations was winning it. And he added that United States' policy toward Spain in respecting its neutrality and territorial integrity and in supplying it with petroleum and other essential products, as well as continuing to establish friendly relations with the Spanish people, had aided this cause.¹⁰⁹

Within the Ambassador's staff there were unfavorable reports about the JDC from some officials. They claimed that the JDC was only interested in aiding Jewish refugees and that its primary aim was to get the refugees to the United States, not just out of Spain.¹¹⁰ R. Brandin, who issued the report, did credit the JDC with aiding a great number of persons who had no other organization from which to elicit aid, but criticized it heavily for not discriminating "between worthy cases and unworthy ones."¹¹¹

The same staff also calmly submitted first-hand reports from those whom the JDC aided in a Pamplona prison.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 3.

¹¹⁰R. Brandin, letter, Madrid, June 28, 1943, Hayes papers.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 4.

A Frenchman told Percy Winner of the Embassy that he had seen "many thousands of Jews" murdered in the ghetto of Lwow in Poland, and that the next month an additional 15,000 were massacred in a five-day period;¹¹² he told of the three Blazquiz brothers, Basques from France, who had helped 1,500 Jews over the Pyrenees into Spain;¹¹³ he related the history of Jews who had escaped from the concentration camp of Ferramonti in Italy;¹¹⁴ and countless first-hand reports of Jewish suffering and misery from living a life of terror.

1944

On January 4, 1944, before the formation of the War Refugee Board, Hayes had issued a telegram to the Secretary of State concerning the plight of the refugees. He cited the already known fact of the "several thousand" refugees who were in Spanish concentration camps and prisons and described the great suffering they were undergoing due to an inadequacy of housing, food, medicines, heat, clothing and sanitary facilities, and told that the Spanish Minister of the Interior was hind-

¹¹² Percy Winner, letter to Robert E. Sherwood, Office of War Information, Pamplona, Spain, August 29, 1943, Hayes papers.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹⁴ Winner to Sherwood, September 7, 1943, Hayes papers.

ering efforts to ease the hardships of these people.¹¹⁵

Hayes urged Secretary Hull to summon the Spanish Ambassador to Washington, Cárdenas, and remind him that Spain was now being accepted as a neutral.¹¹⁶

In late June of 1944 it was learned that the Jews of Hungary were to be deported to Nazi death camps and the War Relief Board cabled Hayes to act more quickly in obtaining protection in Spain for Jewish refugees.¹¹⁷ Even Cardinal Spellman, the Archbishop of New York, was quoted in the coded telegram to convince Hayes, a practicing Catholic, that the Nazis planned to "annihilate the race from which Jesus and Mary sprang."¹¹⁸ At the same time the WRB was trying to convince Hayes that he must recognize the urgency of the situation and influence the Spaniards, who it was always impossible to hurry, rather than be content to accept their reasoning for a lack of cooperation.¹¹⁹

In his book While 6 Million Died, Arthur D. Morse insists that Hayes refused to permit the assignment of a member of the War Relief Board to his embassy

¹¹⁵ Hayes, telegram (para) to Hull, January 4, 1944, No. 17.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Hull, telegram (para) to Hayes, June 29, 1944, No. 1850.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹⁹ Friedman, p. 217 and p. 292.

in Madrid,¹²⁰ yet it seems as if this assignment would have come from the Department of State or the President, if they had insisted on not considering his reasonings. A member of the WRB staff accused Hayes of an "apparent unwillingness to have private refugee organizations operate actively in Spain...[demonstrating]...a lack of understanding or sympathy."¹²¹ It appears as if Hayes did relish such power as he had in Spain, for in May he demanded an explanation when he learned that rescue operations were being conducted without his concurrence.¹²² At the same time it must be remembered that Hayes had no real power in Spain and that ambassadors are never considered an advisor on internal matters.

Hayes answered the War Relief Board in July of 1944, the time immediately after he had completed the negotiations for the much-demanded wolfram embargo. He cited how in 1942 and 1943 his office had assisted the charitable institutions in aiding refugees,¹²³ this being a time before American Government Offices were concerned with the effort; he reiterated the cooperation of the Spanish

¹²⁰Arthur D. Morse, While 6 Million Died (New York: Ace Publishing Corporation, 1967, 1968), p. 268.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 269.

¹²²Ibid., p. 270.

¹²³"N. W. B.", "Memorandum on Refugee Relief Activities of American Embassy in Madrid, With Special Reference to Proposed Participation of War Refugee Board," July 7, 1944, p. 3. Hayes papers.

Government, who was still officially friendly with Germany;¹²⁴ and directly referred to the creation of the War Refugee Board on January 22, 1944, three weeks after his cable to Hull described the condition of the refugees, and told how following its policy too closely could have undermined diplomatic relations in fields more closely related to the Allied war effort (the Embargo).¹²⁵ Hayes feared interference by the Spanish Government in the efforts of the groups who were actively aiding Jewish refugees and insisted that too much pressure against Franco could cause disruptions of this and the other negotiations being conducted.¹²⁶ The Spanish Government was still not firmly committed to being friends with the Allies and abandoning their ally of the Civil War, to whom it was still obligated and claimed to fear.

John Pehle, Director of the Treasury Department's Division of Foreign Funds, cabled Hayes on August 24, 1944, "that in view of French victories no further efforts should be made to rescue either adults or children from France through Spain" and that the JDC was instructed to advise its Lisbon office "along these lines."¹²⁷ This decision in itself is amazing considering

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 5.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 7.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 6-8.

¹²⁷"Paraphrase of Department's Telegram No. 2331, WRB 81, dated August 24, 1944," Hayes papers.

that the period after August 1944 until the defeat of Germany in May of 1945 was the most crucial time of all for the Jews who remained in territories under Nazi jurisdiction and that Spain was one of the few places in Europe left to receive Jews.

David Blickenstaff in Madrid issued a report to Ned Campbell of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency) in North Africa at the end of December in 1944 to explain how the Ambassador's office would aid in the transport of "stateless and other unprotected refugees" from Spain to the camp at Fedhala.¹²⁸ It was decided that "the American Government would assemble and transport the refugees in Spain to the port of embarkation, and the British Government was to provide transportation by sea to North Africa."¹²⁹ In this report the plight, misery and condition of the "refugees" was outlined again and it was cited that their care was a pressing problem that demanded immediate attention.¹³⁰

Had it not been for favorable Spanish attitudes and influence on the Government, the refugees would never have entered Spain.

¹²⁸ Report to Ned Campbell, UNRRA, North Africa, from David Blickenstaff, Madrid, December 27, 1944, "Evacuation of Stateless Refugees to North Africa", p. 1-7. Hayes papers.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 1.

¹³⁰ See Friedman, p. 15 and pp. 210-224.

CHAPTER IV

SPAIN HELPS THE JEWS

Jewish leaders in Spain credit only the Spanish Government and the American Joint Distribution Committee with offering aid to Jews whose lives were saved by coming to Spain. The Rabbi Benshabat of Barcelona says that it was only through the protection of the Spanish Government that the Jews who were granted asylum in Barcelona were alive.¹³¹ Max Maxin, the President of the Hebrew Association of Spain, says that only the Spanish Government was interested in saving lives, because, and in spite of the fact that, they were Jewish, and would have saved more if it had been able to do so.¹³² Rabbis and leaders of associations are also good politicians, especially in Fascist Spain, but at least in the case of Sr. Mazin there is personal knowledge of the respect given his opinions.

Granted, the Spanish Government did not go all

¹³¹Personal letter from Rabino Revdo. Sr. Benshabat, Barcelona, Spain, May 18, 1973.

¹³²Federico Ysart, España y los judíos (Barcelona, Spain: Dopesa, 1973), p. 10. The essay of Federico Ysart, winner of the "Essay Prize of 1973 in Spain, is the only source available of documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It includes extensive lists of many of the Jews who were directly saved by Spain, including photocopies of their papers and certificates pertaining to their origin, etc.

out to rescue Jews and its acts can be attributed in part to criticism of the "Black Legend" of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, maneuvers to court friendship of the Allies (This is one thing they did not ask for. Would it have mattered to them?), and favorable reaction to the efforts of interested persons and groups applying pressure from the outside.

Nevertheless, the Spanish Government intervened directly in several European countries to rescue Jews who were in danger of loosing their lives at the hands of the Nazis.

Bulgaria

On January 29, 1941, the first anti-Semitic legislation appeared in Bulgaria, affecting an estimated 28,000 Jews, the majority being of Sephardic origin, although no measures were taken against them until August 1942.¹³³ At the end of 1941 Julio Palencia y Tubau, the Head of the Spanish Legation in Bulgaria, formally protested to von Ribbentrop in Berlin, having received a formal protest against the anti-Semitic laws from the Bulgarian Foreign Minister.¹³⁴ Before deportations began in 1943 to the work camps the Spanish Legation had issued 600 visas to Jews, regardless of their origin. By July

¹³³Reitlinger, p. 379.

¹³⁴Ysart, p. 120.

it was announced that all Jews who were not able to prove citizenship to other nations would be deported to the camps; those who had the proper papers would have until September 1 to leave the country.¹³⁵ Palencia protested immediately to Vidal, the Spanish Ambassador, who received permission from Madrid to issue more visas, enabling 130 Sephardic Jews to leave for Spain. During this time León Arie, a renowned perfume manufacturer of Sofia, had the temerity as a Jew to present his case to the courts, exciting public attention regarding the deportations. The Nazis planned to make an example of this incident and in spite of protests from the Spanish Minister and Pope Pius XII, he was executed, although no Bulgarian Jews were ever deported,¹³⁶ a unique situation among Hitler's puppet satellite governments.¹³⁷

A total of 90,000 Sephardic Jews from the other Balkan countries went to their deaths¹³⁸ and the situation in Bulgaria can be attributed to Spanish influence.

Rumania

Rumania had a ratio of Jewish population second

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 121.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Reitlinger, p. 379.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 384.

only to Poland and had a record of the worst treatment of Jews of all countries, and had conducted the first Jewish massacres of the entire war in 1940.¹³⁹ In the end there was a loss of from 200,000 to 220,000 Jewish lives from a total of approximately 692,000.¹⁴⁰

In January of 1939 an unknown Jewish spokesman presented himself at the embassy of the Spanish Nationalist Government (This was during the Spanish Civil War.) to describe the plight of the Jews in Rumania. He claimed that he represented 150,000 Jewish individuals, who would be loyal to the Franco Government, planned to convert to Catholicism and change their names to Spanish surnames. They were acting under the auspices of Cardinal Pacelli (later, Pope Pius XII) who would intervene directly with the Vatican to arrange this project of mass conversion. The spokesman said that the 50,000 Jewish families involved were financially well-off and would aid the Spanish economy after the Civil War. The future bautizados (baptized ones) claimed that arrangements could be made with the Rumanian Government for them to export their capital in Rumanian products. The Vatican never contacted the Spanish Government to aid this group and incorporate the 150,000 souls into the Catholic faith,¹⁴¹ but the situation

¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 394-396.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 496-497.

¹⁴¹Ysart, pp. 124-126.

illustrates the plight of the Jews of Rumania living under the terror of the "Iron Guard" organization, which was established in Rumania in 1930.

This Jewish group contributed monetarily to the Franco Government, hoping to escape the oppressive anti-Semitic legislation of Rumania. The Spanish representative, José Rojas y Moreno, brought the situation to the attention of General Antonescu, the Rumanian Premier, and after long negotiations presented his under-secretaries with lists of the Jews who wished to emigrate to Spain.¹⁴² By the time the Franco regime had come to power in Spain the Spanish representatives had obtained from those of Antonescu in Bucarest papers of Spanish protection that entitled 1000 Jews to emigrate to Spain, documents of protection for 200 families who remained, and 300 certificates of protection to be exhibited over Sephardic doorways, reading "This house belongs to a Spaniard."¹⁴³

Hungary

Of the 400,000 Jews of pre-war Hungary only about half survived the Holocaust.¹⁴⁴ Of this 200,000, many having been officially declared "alive" when liberated from the Nazi death camps, the Spanish Government

¹⁴²Ibid., pp. 127-130.

¹⁴³Ibid., pp. 131-132.

¹⁴⁴Reitlinger, p. 497.

claims credit for issuing 352 provisional passports, 1898 letters of protection and 45 passports for emigration to Spain by Sephardic Jews.¹⁴⁵

Greece

Two-thirds of all Greek Jewry from a total of about 67,200 lived in Salonika.¹⁴⁶ These were the ancestors of Jews expelled from Spain by the Catholic Kings 452 years earlier and who still spoke pure, although slightly archaic, Castilian.¹⁴⁷ Spain, the first nation in the world to receive refugees from the Russian pogroms of the Nineteenth Century, was the nation most instrumental in saving Jews in Greece.¹⁴⁸ The Franco Government, following the centuries-old tradition, did not act with haste in securing safety for the Sephardic community.¹⁴⁹ Its version of what happened tells part of the story:

At the beginning of 1944 we received an urgent telegram from our friends in the Jewish agency in Estambul [sic], requesting our intercession or assistance for the four-hundred Sephardite Jews of Spanish origin in the Haidari concentration camp, in Greece, who were going to be deported to Poland by the Germans. In answer to our request Don Nicolas Franco, Spanish Ambassador in Portugal and brother of General Franco, immediately contacted his government. Later, the Spanish Ambassador informed us

¹⁴⁵Ysart, p. 151.

¹⁴⁶Reitlinger, p. 370.

¹⁴⁷Crozier, p. 387.

¹⁴⁸Reitlinger, p. 376.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

that the Spanish government had decided to protect these Jews and that the Germans had already been informed of this decision. In this manner, the 400 Sephardite Jews in the Haidari camp were not deported. As a result of the action taken by us, the Spanish Government also decided to put under its protection all Sephardite Jews of Spanish origin in occupied countries, regardless of whether or not they were in possession of Spanish documents. More recently, the Spanish Ambassador Don Nicolas Franco, in an interview with Mr. Dextes, the representative of the War Refugees Department, and in the presence of the delegate of the World Jewish Congress in Lisbon, declared that, in accordance with information received from his government, several hundred Sephardites who had recourse to the Spanish consulates, had been recognized to be under Spanish protection and therefore had not been deported.¹⁵⁰

Von Thadden of the German Foreign Office said that it was too late for Spain to repatriate Spanish Jews as its option had been cancelled in November of 1943, after five renewals.¹⁵¹ The Spanish Government then consented to receive 367 Jews from Bergen-Belsen camp on the condition that they would be transits.¹⁵² Those who were rescued lived in the Barcelona Jewish Community and were cared for by the JDC for nine months,¹⁵³ from which they were transferred to Palestine.¹⁵⁴ In April of 1943 the Spanish Government had opened a branch of the Falange Party in Athens, which was reportedly financed

¹⁵⁰Diplomatic Information Office, p. 24.

¹⁵¹Reitlinger, pp. 376-377.

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³Letter from Rabino Benschabat.

¹⁵⁴Reitlinger, p. 377.

by Jews from Salonika.¹⁵⁵ Franco had vacillated about accepting even these persons because von Thadden, of the German Foreign Office, warned him that "every Jew was an enemy of Germany, even if by chance he had a Spanish passport."¹⁵⁶ Franco defied his German allies and promised protection anyhow.

France

Of the pre-war population of 320,000 Jews in France the best estimate of the loss is between 60,000 and 65,000.¹⁵⁷ We have already seen how approximately 30,000 were saved by crossing the Pyrenees into Spain. On September 17, 1940, the Spanish Consulate in Paris informed the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that there were about 2,000 Sephardic Jews living in Paris who were subject to the same anti-Semitic regulations as all other French Jews.¹⁵⁸ In November, Madrid sent instructions to the Spanish Embassy in Vichy to inform Sephardic Jews who could claim Spanish citizenship to do so when submitting their registrations under the anti-Semitic statutes.¹⁵⁹ When abuses were reported against this Sephardic

¹⁵⁵Hilberg, pp. 447-448.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 448.

¹⁵⁷Reitlinger, pp. 493-494.

¹⁵⁸Diplomatic Information Office, p. 19.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 19-20.

group on March 7, 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Spain cabled the embassy to "procede to defend, in accordance with the instructions you have already received, the interests of the Sephardite Spanish subjects, demanding from French authorities the fulfillment of the Hispano-French Treaty of 1862."¹⁶⁰

The Spanish Government, the only one in the world that was able to persuade the German occupation authorities to do so, had the property of Spanish Jews administered by a representative of the Banco de España (The Bank of Spain), obtaining exemptions from the economical measures which threatened to destroy their means of income. The Sephardic Community was even exempted from wearing the Yellow Star of Israel.¹⁶¹ The leaders of the Spanish Sephardim formally acknowledged the help granted by the Franco Government and cited that more than 3,000 Jewish lives were saved in Paris by this gesture.¹⁶² Many other Sephardic Jews were granted permission to emigrate to Spain, having deposited their money in a Paris bank under the protection of the Spanish Embassy, who held it for them until they were repatriated.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁶¹Ibid.

¹⁶²Ibid., pp. 21-22.

¹⁶³J. I. Fishbein, "Jews Under Franco," from "The Sentinel," Chicago, February 20, 1964. Copy furnished by Embassy of Spain, Washington, D. C.

French Morocco

In the French territories in North Africa the French Government ignored Spanish pleas to exclude Sephardic Jews from the anti-Semitic laws in spite of negotiations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French General Residency.¹⁶⁴ Exclusion was finally granted to an unknown number, which was no doubt small, who had been made "honorary vice-consuls of Spain."¹⁶⁵

The Role of General Franco

In tangible figures the Jews who were directly saved by the Spanish Government was niggardly small in comparison with all the Jews who were lost. More help was granted by permitting those who could to cross into Spanish territory without being returned, although the majority found themselves guests of concentration camps for long periods; yet the JDC and other groups were permitted to aid them. The fact remains that Spain was one of the few countries in the world, and the only one sympathetic to aspects of Nazi dogma, which directly made efforts to save human lives that happened to be Jewish.

The Spanish Government claimed in 1949 that the only reason it made public documents pertaining to

¹⁶⁴Diplomatic Information Office, p. 24.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 25.

its rescue efforts was because it wanted to prove that it was worthy of becoming a member of the United Nations. A report was issued because Abba Eban, the Israeli delegate, had asserted:

The United Nations arose out of the sufferings of a martyred generation, including six million Jewish dead. In the terrors of Nazism, one million of our children were thrown like useless rubbish into furnaces and gas chambers. If the history of Israel lasts for countless millenia, we shall never for a single moment allow ourselves to forget that most frightful episode of organized inhumanity. This memory is for us decisive. We do not for a moment assert that the Spanish regime had any direct part in that policy of extermination, but we do assert that it was an active and sympathetic ally of the regime which was so responsible, and thus contributed to the effectiveness of the alliance as a whole.¹⁶⁶

The Franco Government responded:

Spanish protection of Jewish communities during the war was not founded on cold and protocolary principles, but on a cordial and generous impulse of sympathy and friendliness towards a persecuted race, to which Spaniards feel themselves attached by traditional ties of blood and culture.¹⁶⁷

This is true; so is the statement by Mr. Eban.

General Franco himself has never stated his reasons for helping the Jews during World War II. It seems that the attitude of Franco towards the Jews is due in part to opportunistic reasons, as the Jews who entered Spain represented no danger to his regime. The much professed chivalry of the Spaniards, when it involved no departure from Franco's policies, also played an impor-

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 7-8.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 9.

tant role.¹⁶⁸ In Spain, where there were practically no Jews, and especially in the north, Franco's native region, where there were none, he would not have developed any personal prejudices against them.

Franco knew how to ally himself and the country with the forces that would be most beneficial. Referring to the Jews, he told the Nazi ambassador Dieckhof in 1943 that "thanks to God and the clear appreciation of the danger by our Catholic Kings, we have been relieved of that nauseating burden."¹⁶⁹ Franco was still pretending to be grateful for Nazi aid during the Civil War. Also in 1943 Franco ordered that all discrimination against the Jewish religion be stopped. He needed grain and food products from the Allied nations, as Spain was suffering the worst droughts and starvation problems in living memory and also depended on the income from the products that Spain was able to export.

The Franco Government was never anti-Jewish in its acts. The same regulations were applied to all refugees, Jewish and non-Jewish, who escaped to Spain, and were undoubtedly due to Gestapo demands. Only persons who were of military age were interned in camps and men under 18 and over 40 and women and children were released

¹⁶⁸Nemehiah Robinson, "The Spain of Franco and its Policies Toward the Jews," (Unpublished report, Institute of Jewish Affairs, New York, 1953), p. 10.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 8.

from this ordeal.¹⁷⁰

It is not improbable that Franco himself saw the plight of the Jews, especially those who had come from Spain originally, as an unfortunate and senseless incident and was determined to exert his power and influence to assist at least some of them. Sephardic Jews were considered Spanish subjects and he did not care to have other powers dictating to them. The professed friendliness and support that the Balkan Sephardic Jews offered Franco during the Civil War would have favorably affected his attitude towards all Jews who wanted to enter Spain.

...coming from Ireland to Turkey, in which they did not encounter reactions of one sort or another because they were Jewish.

In 1949 East European Jews who had fled from Nazi lands established a synagogue in Madrid in a basement on Calle Cardenal Cisneros and ten years later moved it to a model apartment, after legislation of 1956 recognized the Jewish community of Madrid as a public corporation for social, educational and welfare purposes. In 1966 the Spanish constitution for the first time granted religious freedom to all religious minorities.¹⁷¹

December 16, 1968, the Jewish Community Center on Calle Balnear was officially opened. The Center has a 550-seat synagogue, a youth chapel, auditorium, library,

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 10.

CHAPTER V

THE SITUATION OF THE JEWS IN SPAIN TODAY

In the Principe Pío Train Station in Madrid I met a young couple from Ohio who required an interpreter for the purchase of complicated ticketing arrangements so they could continue their three-month tour of Europe. During the lunch that followed I discovered that they were Jewish. They both claimed that even in 1973 Spain was the only country other than Israel that they had visited, while traveling from Ireland to Turkey, in which they did not encounter reactions of one sort or another because they were Jewish.

In 1949 East European Jews who had fled from Nazi lands established a synagogue in Madrid in a basement on Calle Cardenal Cisneros and ten years later moved it to a model apartment, after legislation of 1956 recognized the Jewish community of Madrid as a public corporation for social, educational and welfare purposes. In 1966 the Spanish constitution for the first time granted religious freedom to all religious minorities.¹⁷¹ On December 16, 1968, the Jewish Community Center on the Calle Balmes was officially opened. The Center has a 550-seat synagogue, a youth chapel, auditorium, lounge,

¹⁷¹Freedman, p. 133.

mikvah (ritual bath), library, classrooms, recreation rooms and office facilities.¹⁷²

The Comunidad Israelita is located at the end of a narrow street of brick buildings, most of which are workshops for various repair services. The building itself is a four-story brick and glass structure covered with mosaics of Hebrew script and design. Israel is not officially recognized by the Spanish Government, yet an armed Guardia Civil (Civilian Police) is stationed outside the door as a "gesture of respect" to Israel, as is the practice at all official embassies and legations. The Jewish Center receives few tourists and foreign visitors and does not solicit them, yet I spent several afternoons there asking questions of David Bentolila Cohen, the Secretary to Philippe Halioua, the President, who was on vacation.

Spain's treatment of the Jewish refugees, including those who had entered the country clandestinely during the war, was reported to have been generally good, with only isolated cases of direct discrimination and no evidence of actual persecution.¹⁷³ Religious freedom has been granted to minorities, who represent less than one-tenth of one percent of the total population; even this

¹⁷²Introduction to Hakesher, Comunidad Israelita de Madrid, Sivan 5733 (June 1973).

¹⁷³Robinson, p. 10.

was not possible under the Republic of 1931 to 1936, which in general provided more social reforms.¹⁷⁴ Yet publications of the Jewish Community carefully include comparisons to the Christian religion and add that references to conflicts in the Mid-East, the Arabs being "traditional friends" of Spain, "have no actual worth as being possible political interpretations,"¹⁷⁵ to avoid possible censorship problems.

Max Mazin states that the Spanish Government does not place any obstacles in the way of Spanish Jewry, and the minority religions are allowed to function as long as they apply no outside interference, such as the practice of proselytization, in which the Jews have never indulged anyhow.¹⁷⁶

The Franco Government published its report on its treatment of Jews during World War II in order to create a good impression on the Jews of the United States and elsewhere in 1949, during which time Spain was applying for entrance to the UN, and although much of the help granted the Jews was done for opportunistic reasons the situation for Jews in Spain has continued to progress. In 1953 there were about 3,000 Jews living in Spain; now the figure is closer to 9,000.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴Crozier, p. 504.

¹⁷⁵Hakesher, p. 14.

¹⁷⁶Fishbein.

¹⁷⁷Private information.

Of the approximately 470 Jewish families now living in Madrid the majority are from typical middle class circumstances, engaged in commerce, office work, construction, and other jobs such as factory positions. Most Jews in Spain are from Spanish backgrounds in the Peninsula and in the colony in Morocco and can trace their ancestry in Spain back many generations. Most of the "refugees" of the war have relocated in Israel and other free nations. During the 1967 Mid-East War some several hundred Jews came to Spain to escape possible Arab persecutions in North Africa, including many French-speaking Jews from the former French areas.

The Jews in Madrid have no special area or location in which they prefer to live and are found in all sectors of the city. There are Jewish people of modest incomes, but none live in poverty conditions. All come to the Community Center for religious and holiday occasions, as well as availing themselves of the social functions of the Comunidad Israelita. There are classes for the youth, instructing them in traditional Jewish customs and religious aspects, as well as special classes, such as instruction in French for those from the French territories.

Even among those who attend universities in Spain there is little interest in the Holocaust period. The students study to enter professions and trades and do not find the time for intellectual investigation and

research. Interest in World War II and in Jewish history in general is minimal among the Jewish young, not because there are restrictive measures by the government on such themes, but because of a general lack of interest. There is cultural communication with universities and organizations in Israel, but this appeals mostly to older persons.

The Jews in Madrid do not seek friends strictly from among their coreligionists but from among their acquaintances, whoever they happen to be. No overt discrimination is practiced but Sr. Bentolila claims that some ignorance can be detected in newspaper and magazine articles and among people who do not personally know members of the Jewish community. The Jews consider themselves Spaniards as well as Jews.

It was impossible for me to contact any survivors of death camps in Spain, as Sr. Bentolila said that he knew of no one of this background, and in fact had never thought about it himself.¹⁷⁸

Yes, the Quakers and a few interested individuals, among them the American Ambassador, Carlton J. E. Hayes. Hayes was sent by President Roosevelt to act in the interest of gaining support for the Allied war cause and was never instructed to place the rescue of Jews as a priority. Yet he exerted influence with Spanish officials to alleviate Jewish suffering, although his orders if he could have

¹⁷⁸David Bentolila Cohen, private interviews, Madrid, August 9 and 13, September 3 and 5, 1973.

CONCLUSION

In 1492 approximately 160,000 Jews were unceremoniously expelled from Spain. About 450 years later more than 30,000 came back under conditions just as degrading. The intervening history of Spain was one of wars, revolutions, outside interference and general strife. It was not until 1939, after three years of one of the bloodiest civil wars in history, that stability was re-established at the loss of liberty, for a Fascist dictatorship came to dominate the country until the present time. Amidst all that the Jewish people suffered from 1939 until 1945 Spain was one of the few countries in the world that offered them any positive support, although as official policy it was a "neutral" country.

The only real outside help came from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Quakers and a few interested individuals, among them the American Ambassador, Carlton J. H. Hayes. Hayes was sent by President Roosevelt to act in the interest of gaining support for the Allied war cause and was never instructed to place the rescue of Jews as a priority. Yet he exerted influence with Spanish officials to alleviate Jewish suffering, although one wonders if he could have done far more.

The Spanish Government, despite friendship

agreements made with Hitler, actively aided Jews in several European countries controlled by the Axis powers, supporting them under the guise of claiming that Sephardic Jews were still Spanish citizens. As the war progressed Spain also kept an eye open for possible post-war conditions, planning to ingratiate itself with the winning side.

Present day life for Jews in Spain, who must conform to dictates of a totalitarian regime, is better than in many nations subscribing to a democratic doctrine.

Much criticism is leveled at Spain for actions it might have taken to aid Jews who had nowhere to go in Europe and no one to help them. Many of these critics represent governments who did nothing for the Jews during the Holocaust Period except to discuss their plight.

Today many individuals can not understand the attitudes of Jews and the policies of the State of Israel. The Jews are a people who lost six million of their own and who themselves came to the brink of extermination, and who would invite disaster to "let bygones be bygones."

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