The Earl Harrison Report: Its Genesis and Its Significance
by Monty Noam Penkower

The first promising turn in Zionist fortunes after V-E (Victory over Europe) Day—imperceptible at the time—occurred on 21 May 1945. With the Allied armed forces receiving Nazi Germany’s unconditional surrender just two weeks earlier, a few members of the U.S. Treasury Department’s inner circle wondered: Could some organization succeed the War Refugee Board (WRB)? The board had saved many thousands of Jews from the Holocaust, but now its mission was over. Treasury Department Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr., whose confrontation in January 1944 with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, his sponsor and closest friend, had played a decisive role in the WRB’s creation, “definitely and positively” wished to wind up his own efforts on its behalf. Having been instrumental in designing and financing Roosevelt’s New Deal domestic programs and especially in funding America’s participation in World War II, Morgenthau sought to focus on fiscal matters, both domestic and foreign, in the postwar world.

Josiah E. DuBois Jr., principal author of the scathing anti-State-Department “Report to the Secretary on the Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews,” which had persuaded Morgenthau to face Roosevelt on the issue, pressed for a new agency run by a cabinet committee. It would act, argued DuBois, the WRB’s general counsel, as “the U.S. spark-plug” in the whole problem of resettlement of those displaced persons (DPs) who did not have homes to return to after the war, primarily “the Jewish group.” The United Nations Relief and Reconstruction Administration (UNRRA) would not do this job, nor would the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR) if the State Department instructed its representative not to. State had recently appointed Earl G. Harrison as its representative, John Pehle interjected. With Morgenthau not serving on the agency, Pehle, the WRB’s first director, doubted that it would be very different if Harrison were working under State or a new organization. Undoubtedly, Pehle agreed with DuBois, the secretary’s involvement would do a lot of good, but there would be many more “headaches” than the WRB—notably “the Palestine thing.”
Morgenthau suggested that he present a personal report to President Harry S. Truman, who had entered the White House following Roosevelt’s sudden death on 12 April 1945. After telling the sixty-one-year-old Truman about the WRB’s work, Morgenthau could advise that either State or a new cabinet committee “handle and advise” on the matter of non-repatriable refugees. Morgenthau’s preference would be a three-person group from the State, Interior, and Commerce departments. The British followed a similar cabinet committee procedure very successfully, he pointed out. There were many reasons why he (a Jew of German ancestry) should not be on the committee, Morgenthau added: “We’re not kidding ourselves. It gets down largely to Palestine.” With all in agreement that Monday, WRB Assistant Executive Director Florence Hodel was tasked with drafting one memorandum on the WRB and one bearing Morgenthau’s suggestion to the chief executive.¹

At Truman’s first cabinet meeting, Morgenthau had actually been the first to offer his resignation if desired. Two days later, after Truman expressed his desire that Morgenthau stay on as Treasury secretary, Morgenthau concluded that Truman had a mind of his own: “The man has a lot of nervous energy, and seems to be inclined to make very quick decisions. He was most courteous with me, and made a good impression, but, after all, he is a politician, and what is going on in his head time only will tell.” Rumors swirled about that some of Truman’s acquaintances had started a campaign to get rid of perhaps five cabinet members, including Morgenthau (because he was a Jew, among other reasons). Yet Truman expressed “complete confidence” in Morgenthau when he broached the idea of writing a book that would explain the Morgenthau Plan to eliminate Germany’s armament and industrial capabilities. A week later, however, a more guarded Truman requested Morgenthau to hold off on publication; while he was “by and large” for the stringent plan, the three major war allies had not yet agreed on Germany’s future. “I again went away with the distinct feeling that the man likes me and has confidence in me,” Morgenthau wrote in his diary on 9 May, “and I must say that my confidence in him continues to grow.”²

Morgenthau had read the thirty-third president of the United States incorrectly. Not an ideological New Dealer like Morgenthau, Truman spent his ten years in the Senate with pragmatic, middle-of-the-road politicians. Wanting a cabinet that could help him on Capitol Hill, he
would soon give posts to four members or former members of Congress. Clinton Anderson of New Mexico took over Agriculture from Claude Wickard, while Lewis W. Schwellenbach of Washington, one of the few national figures to support Truman in his uphill battle to be re-nominated in Missouri’s democratic Senate primary in 1940, replaced Frances Perkins in the Labor Department. James Byrnes of South Carolina, whom Morgenthau disliked, was Truman’s choice to succeed Edward R. Stettinius Jr. at State. Truman considered Kentuckian Fred Vinson—who, as director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, had clashed at times with Morgenthau—a “straight shooter, knows Congress, and how they think, a man to trust.” Vinson was a regular player in Truman’s poker games, and the new president thought him very worthy of heading the Treasury Department. As for the Morgenthau Plan, Truman deferred to Secretary of War Henry Stimson, its major opponent in the cabinet, who had insisted to Roosevelt that ten European countries, including Russia, depended upon Germany’s export-import trade and production of raw materials. Western Europe had to be kept “from being driven to revolution or Communism by famine,” Stimson warned the president on 16 May, and the revival of Europe could not be separated from the predicament of Germany.

One week later, Morgenthau gave Truman the memoranda on the WRB’s record and his own proposal for its successor. The board, set up under the secretaries of State, Treasury, and War to “save victims of Nazi oppression in imminent danger of death,” had achieved much in terms of rescue and relief; protecting stateless Jews who held questionable identification papers; issuing warnings to forestall further persecution of Jews and other minorities; and establishing a temporary safe haven for 982 refugees in Fort Oswego, New York. “The equally great problem of the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons who are unable or unwilling to return to their homelands” remained, however. To achieve the IGCR’s future success in this regard, Morgenthau advised, every consideration should be given to setting up a new cabinet committee that would place “the full force and weight” of the U.S. government behind its activities. The committee, perhaps consisting of the secretaries of State, Interior, and Commerce, could also handle U.S. relations with the IGCR and UNRRA. If Truman wished, Morgenthau would be glad to sound out other interested people about this proposal.
prior to the liquidation of the WRB, which was contemplated for the very near future.4

Truman read the WRB memorandum very carefully, after which Morgenthau observed that he did not feel he should continue on the new committee. “This was going to lead right into the Palestine question and a lot of other Jewish questions,” he explained. Recalling his experience on Capitol Hill, the president responded: “I know that there are three different groups of Jewish interests and none of them see alike.” “I don’t belong to any group,” Morgenthau rejoined; he would be delighted to be consulted if the president asked for his advice. “I am representing 135 million people,” Morgenthau asserted as their meeting ended. “I know that,” said Truman. He did not ask Morgenthau to do anything, but he kept the memorandum. That same evening, following the submitted resignations of Perkins, Wickard, and Attorney General Francis Biddle, the press asked Truman if Morgenthau had done the same. He had not, the president emphatically replied, and if he had done so the resignation would not have been accepted. Asked if he intended to make a change in the State Department, the president answered that he did not.5

Pressing forward, Morgenthau and some staff met with Edward D. McKim, Truman’s chief administrative assistant, on the morning of 28 May. For personal reasons, Morgenthau began, he felt that he should withdraw from the proposed cabinet committee but hesitated to do so without seeing the program cared for by members who would be sympathetic toward war refugees. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes and Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace would afford the needed viewpoint, Morgenthau asserted; Stettinius, although sympathetic, might be forced to delegate personal consideration to “old-line” State personnel, who would manifest insufficient interest in the approximately seven million refugees “walking the roads of Europe.” The Jews were represented by three groups and such a sympathetic committee would relieve Truman of this pressure. Morgenthau said he would send McKim contact information for Earl Harrison, now in London, who was acquainted with the refugee program. McKim summarized Morgenthau’s suggestion in a memorandum to Truman, adding that Judge Samuel Rosenman, Roosevelt’s main speech writer and adviser to Truman, questioned the advisability of the Interior and Commerce Departments being on the committee. If Truman decided to form this new agency, McKim noted,
it should be done before the WRB was dissolved. “What good would such a board accomplish?” Truman wrote on the memorandum.6

The same day, Joseph C. Grew, acting secretary of State while Stettinius chaired the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco, sent Truman a memorandum on Palestine. The American Christian Palestine Committee, chaired by Senator Robert Wagner (D, New York) and including a number of distinguished non-Jews, was requesting all members of Congress to have the president endorse unlimited Jewish immigration and statehood in Palestine now that the war in Europe had ended. Palestine, Grew noted, may be included among the dependent areas for which a system of trusteeship was evolving at San Francisco, and definite arrangements regarding specific territories were to be considered later. Given the current crisis in Syria and Lebanon and renewed outbreaks of terrorism in Palestine itself, any action by the U.S. government along the lines desired by the American Christian Palestine Committee would “increase the prevailing tension in the Near East.” Truman agreed that such an endorsement would have “most unfortunate” repercussions. That evening, at his first official dinner, Truman received the regent of Iraq, who would be publicly told by Special Departmental Assistant William Phillips that the government welcomed the Arab League’s formation on 22 March as not only benefiting the Arab countries but making “important and constructive contributions to the great tasks awaiting the United Nations.” The following day, Truman “approved in principle” the efforts of the departments of State, War, and the Navy, sanctioned by Roosevelt in January, to seek congressional aid for Saudi Arabia’s urgent financial requirements.7

Truman’s congressional record toward Jewish needs up to this point was clear. He had protested the May 1939 British White Paper, which effectively sealed off Palestine to large Jewish immigration and imagined a state there with a large Arab majority, as but another example of British “surrender to the Axis powers.” In his address to “Demand Rescue of Doomed Jews” at a Chicago rally on 14 April 1943, Truman had urged that “today—not tomorrow—we must do all that is humanly possible to provide a haven and place of safety for all those who can be grasped from the hands of the Nazi butchers.” Yet he immediately resigned from the militant, Irgun-inspired Committee for a Jewish Army when it
condemned the Anglo-American Bermuda Conference on Refugees that same month for indifference to Jewry’s systematic slaughter across Nazi-occupied Europe. “The Jewish Congregations,” he admonished a rabbi that December, should “support wholeheartedly the foreign policy of our government.” He likewise accepted the administration’s stance against a pro-Zionist congressional resolution in early 1944, using a mixed metaphor to explain himself to disturbed constituents: with London and Washington “absolutely necessary to us in financing the War, I don’t want to throw any bricks to upset the applecart, although when the right time comes I am willing to make the fight for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.” A few months later, Truman endorsed a resolution in the Democratic Party’s election plank to favor the opening of Palestine to “unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization, and such a policy as to result in the establishment there of a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth.”

Untried as yet in foreign affairs, the new occupant of the Oval Office had authorized a Zionist delegation led by Stephen Wise on 20 April to say that he was carrying out his predecessor’s policies and that “we, his visitors, knew what Mr. Roosevelt’s policy in regard to Palestine had been.” Given the actual uncertainty in Roosevelt’s position, Stettinius had weighed in four days earlier with a memorandum to Truman about present government policy that both Arabs and Jews should be consulted before a definite settlement was reached, with the primary responsibility resting in Britain’s hands. A “distinction” was to be made between Palestine as such and the question of Jewish refugees, Stettinius added, for whom we afford “the greatest possible assistance” through agencies such as the WRB and the IGCR. Two weeks later, Grew disclosed to Truman three pertinent facts: Roosevelt’s assurances during the war to Arab leaders that no decision on Palestine would be reached without “full consultation with both Arabs and Jews”; Roosevelt’s letter on 5 April to Saudi Arabia monarch Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud saying that he would take no action “which might prove hostile to the Arab people”; and Roosevelt’s recent acknowledgment to a State Department official that a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine could be created and maintained “only by military force” in light of Arab hostility to Zionism throughout the region. On 17 May, Truman renewed to Emir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan Roosevelt’s assurances that “no decision should be taken respecting the basic situation” in Palestine
without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews. The president of the Egyptian Council of Ministers would receive a similar assurance from Truman not long thereafter.  

**British Resistance to Zionism and Non-repatriables**

For the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and its advocates, the issue was unequivocally clear. As the V-E Day manifesto of the Jewish Agency for Palestine executive in Jerusalem asserted, the time had come to draw the lesson from “the fearful cataclysm” that had claimed three-quarters of the Jewish people under Hitler. No one was prepared for the unmentionable atrocities that Allied forces had encountered when reaching the German concentration camps one month earlier. Shocked by a tour of Ohrdrurf on 12 April, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) commander Dwight D. Eisenhower cabled Washington and London to send officials and prominent editors to serve as eyewitness to the “unspeakable conditions,” “where the evidence of bestiality and cruelty is so overpowering as to leave no doubt in their minds about the normal practices of the Germans in these camps.” Stomach-turning photographs of Nordhausen, Dachau, Bergen-Belsen, Mauthausen, and many other barbarous centers, filling newspapers and magazines worldwide, only strengthened the Zionist argument: the Jews’ unique stateless position marked them for wholesale destruction in what would later be termed the Holocaust, and they must have sovereignty in their ancestral homeland of Palestine.

On 22 May, WZO president Chaim Weizmann submitted the Jewish Agency’s memorandum to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, demanding the early establishment of a Jewish commonwealth and the quick immigration of the first million Jews from Europe and the Muslim world into Palestine. Had not the Conservative Party promised during its last meeting the previous November a substantive pro-Zionist solution when the war against Germany ended? The White Paper still stood, “prolonging the agony of the Jewish survivors.” The situation of Jews in liberated Europe was “desperate,” Weizmann pleaded, and his own position as president of the Jewish Agency was becoming “untenable.” That same day, at the British Labour Party’s Annual Conference in Blackpool, Hugh Dalton had reiterated the party’s earlier commitment to facilitate
entry into “the Land of Promise and Hope” for any Jew desiring to go there and suggested that steps be taken to obtain American and Soviet consent for a policy “which will give us a happy, a free and prosperous Jewish State in Palestine.”

The members of the British Cabinet Committee on Palestine thought otherwise. Minister Resident in Cairo Edward Grigg (supported by Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden) recommended a new mandate or trusteeship for an undivided Palestine with a legislative council and His Majesty’s Government (HMG) retaining its responsibility for administration and security. Partition advocate Colonial Secretary Oliver Stanley considered this in essence a return to the White Paper, and he urged that Jewish immigration be temporarily continued after September (when the White Paper quota was expected to run out) pending the ultimate deliberation. To the members of his senior staff, he suggested on 25 May that in a few years’ time the Jewish case for large-scale immigration to Palestine might be much weaker, “as they might not be able to get immigrants.” Much depended on Russia’s position, he noted, and “it would be a pity” to make any fundamental change “in order to meet a problem that might disappear in the near future.” Further evaluation of Arab and Jewish reactions to possible alternatives, of the military commitments involved, and of the foreign policy implications for HMG still had to be made, Stanley concluded.

SHAEF’s revised administrative memorandum of 16 April 1945 had distinguished among “refugees,” “displaced persons,” and “stateless persons” in Germany. The first were German civilians within Germany temporarily homeless because of the war, while the second were civilians outside of the boundaries of their country who wished to return home but could not without assistance. “Stateless” persons, to include persons of enemy or ex-enemy origin, by law or in fact “lacked protection of any government”; only after every effort to determine nationality failed should individuals be relegated to this category. UNRRA had been authorized by the United Nations to undertake the care, relief, and repatriation of displaced persons. The IGCR was responsible for the resettlement of persons, including stateless, who “have been obliged to leave their homes for reasons of race, etc.” UNRRA had agreed to care for these for a period of time to be agreed upon, after which the IGCR would assume responsibility for those not repatriated or resettled. SHAEF recognized that it was “normally desirable”
to accommodate non-repatriable persons in separate assembly centers with
a view to “relatively permanent occupation”; special welfare, educational,
and medical staff should operate there when possible. German residences
would, as necessary, be requisitioned, vacated, and used to provide accom-
modation.\textsuperscript{13}

This approach did not sit well with the British authorities. The American
Embassy in London cabled to the State Department, Harrison, and the
WRB on 28 May a Foreign Office spokesman’s declaration that cabi-
net ministers had decided not to engage in any discussion of the broad
problem of resettlement and to treat this matter “passively.” Every effort
should be made, they felt, to repatriate the refugees, in this way reducing
the IGCR’s responsibilities. The refugees might be encouraged to refuse
to return to their country of origin if the matter of resettlement were
raised. “Very strict” tests should be made to non-repatriability. Finally,
cabinet ministers declared that the “British authority will not go” be-
yond their present financial commitments for the operating expendi-
tures of the IGCR for 1945.\textsuperscript{14}

Indeed, on 2 June the Foreign Office’s specialist in such matters con-
firmed this decision to IGCR Director Herbert Emerson. According to
Paul Mason, head of the Cabinet Committee on Refugees, their meeting
concluded that it was “probably premature” to assume that a “hard core
of considerable magnitude” of non-repatriable refugees would be found.
Its members “favored the assumption that all refugees were repatriable.”
The problem, therefore, should not be considered on “an international
footing.” The same day, Truman wrote Morgenthau that he had “about
made up my mind” not to appoint any committee about the refugee
program. The next time the two met, he added, they would discuss it
further.\textsuperscript{15}

Pointedly, all of these confidential memoranda (including Morgenthau’s
to Truman for a cabinet committee) masked the identity of Hitler’s
prime target of racist hatred at a time when Jewish organizations in
Great Britain and the United States unsuccessfully pressed their respec-
tive governments to aid Holocaust survivors, who were either stateless
or citizens of former enemy countries with none to intercede on their
behalf. While thousands were dying from disease each week in the very
concentration camps where they had been incarcerated by the Germans,
those still alive were wearing the same thread-bare clothing and receiving food rations lower than those allocated to Germans. HMG’s War Office dug in its heels, opposing delegations of visitors to the camps. Thanks to harrowing reports from chaplains in the U.S. Army, the American Jewish Conference got six congressmen to cable Eisenhower on 10 May, asking him to “appoint Jewish liaison officers under military assignment and control” to act as consultants with SHAEF and to deal with “displaced persons and their repatriation and resettlement.” The American Jewish Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews volunteered to prepare a list of qualified personnel. Eisenhower’s reply came on 29 May, assuring the congressmen that the survivors’ plight had been brought to the attention of his headquarters and that UNRRA had arranged for voluntary agencies to care for specific problems. The request for Jewish liaison officers was rejected.16

In view of Truman’s note that he did not favor the creation of a cabinet committee to continue the WRB’s work, Morgenthau sought to ensure the early liquidation of the board. With the principal remaining problem the WRB’s overall responsibility for the Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Oswego, Morgenthau met with a group of concerned organizational representatives on 5 June. He thought that Congress would permit these refugees to remain in the United States, and he suggested that three prominent legislators be seen by these representatives to achieve this end. A policy of “sponsored leave” would be the best solution, thought those present. Pehle, special assistant to Morgenthau, prepared a memorandum for Truman, with WRB Executive Director William O’Dwyer presenting another about the ending of that body and the suggestion that the Interior Department, which had actual administrative responsibility for the Fort Oswego project from its inception, take over full authority. The next day, Truman signed the memorandum and agreed that O’Dwyer, then running on the Democratic ticket for the New York City mayoralty, remain on duty until the WRB closed at the end of August. Roswell McClelland, the WRB’s delegate in Switzerland, was immediately instructed to complete his work by that date, forward to Washington all reports and records, and return all unspent confidential funds to Chase National Bank, New York City. The remaining 206,000 prisoner of war food parcels in McClelland’s possession were transferred to UNRRA control.17
Weizmann’s anxious letter on 7 June to Meyer Weisgal, his closest confidant, would dramatically alter the fate of the Holocaust survivors in Europe. Churchill had still not replied to Weizmann’s latest appeal, while the results of a general election in Great Britain, scheduled for early the next month, could not be forecast. “I wonder,” Weizmann asked, “whether the situation is being made clear to Talboker?” (This Hebrew coded reference to the German “Morgenthau”—morgen” meant “boker” and “thau” meant “tal,” thus the family name translated as “morning dew”—would not be lost on Weisgal.) The delay in reaching a decision on Palestine, he added, “is costing many Jewish lives from the poor remnant that remains to us, and the longer they wait, the more difficult everything will become.” Weizmann would try to do something in London in the course of the next few weeks, but Weisgal had “to help from your side, too.”

Weisgal, then in New York, lost little time in contacting the Treasury Department head via Henrietta Stein Klotz, Morgenthau’s secretary since 1922 and watchdog over all of his appointments. Klotz, the daughter of Orthodox Polish-born parents, had first inculcated in Morgenthau some appreciation of his Jewish heritage, and cultivated her boss’s budding association with Weizmann and Weisgal during the war years. Weisgal proposed that a thorough survey by a presidential emissary be made of the current position of the Jews in Europe, covering their needs, prospects, and hopes. He suggested James McDonald, first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany (1933–1935), and in one day obtained the “unqualified approval” from a cross-section of American Jewish leadership for this mission. Assuming that McDonald’s embrace of Zionism during the war would be anathema to State’s anti-Zionist Near Eastern Department, Morgenthau thought Harrison a better choice. On the morning of 11 June, Morgenthau telephoned Grew, asking him to meet for five minutes with Pehle to consider Harrison’s going to see “how the Jews are being treated in Europe.” Some of Morgenthau’s Jewish friends were saying that the survivors were being treated “as badly as they were before we defeated Germany.” He did not know whether this was true or not, but he thought that “we had better find out the facts.”

Grew responded that the proposal had to be cleared with Eisenhower as well as Stimson. If it is a question of a cable, Morgenthau retorted, a talk
with Pehle could determine what kind of telegram to send. Grew, who was tied up almost every hour that day, suggested that William Phillips talk with Pehle, as Phillips was “running that side of the show.” Wanting the cable to go out the same day authorizing Harrison to go, and with Phillips a personal friend, Morgenthau agreed. That same afternoon, after Pehle saw Phillips, Grew sent a telegram for Eisenhower’s “immediate” attention seeking permission to have Harrison travel, possibly with McClelland, to “ascertain certain facts with regard to displaced persons particularly Jews” as a matter that should have the government’s “wholehearted support.” A delighted Morgenthau had Klotz inform Weisgal of this swift development. On 14 June, Weisgal wrote Morgenthau that regardless of who else might accompany Harrison, he should have someone who is familiar with Jewish history and tradition, “one who has deep roots in Jewish life,” and who is equipped to talk directly with some of the Jews to ascertain how best to deal with “the European Jewish problem.” If permitted to do so, Weisgal would be pleased to submit certain suggestions in this regard. In a letter to Klotz, Weisgal added that “our people” were deeply appreciative of Morgenthau’s ready response in this matter: “There is such a deep sense of despair with regard to the position of the remaining Jews in Europe that the mere knowledge of his interest and solicitude in the matter is a source of great comfort to us.”

The Zionists Intervene

Earl Harrison was a leading trial lawyer in Philadelphia, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, a Republican, and a Presbyterian. The forty-six-year-old had entered government service when appointed commissioner of Alien Registration in 1940 at the suggestion of then-Solicitor General Francis Biddle. In that capacity, he imaginatively had suggested the use of post offices for registration and fingerprinting for approximately five million noncitizens, and the success of that program led to his appointment as commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization in July 1942. During the next two years, the friendly, hard-working commissioner oversaw the largest number of applications for citizenship in the history of the service. Harrison had direct charge and responsibility for the nation’s detention centers for aliens whose loyalty was in doubt, as well as for many special wartime duties. Visiting every one of twenty-two district offices, he displayed an open, warm demeanor and noteworthy
administrative abilities. These, together with first-hand knowledge of various social agencies, led wartime Attorney General Biddle to praise his “extraordinarily human heart” for making foreigners in the country “understand how much they contributed to us.” For a record of remarkable achievement in solving problems under his jurisdiction, the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born awarded Harrison its annual medal in April 1943. On 15 March 1945, Roosevelt appointed Harrison the U.S. representative on the IGCR, which placed him in close touch with the immense refugee problems created by the persecutions and dislocations across war-torn Europe.21

Representatives of Jewish organizations who already had dealings with Harrison since his appointment to the IGCR found him an understanding audience. Jewish U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Felix Frankfurter told Weisgal that Harrison was “a good man.” Weisgal cabled the Jewish Agency office in London that he was “very sympathetic and friendly” and should be seen. Two executive members of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) in New York noted that Harrison accepted their view on a number of points. Regardless of the abolition of Nazi legislation, Harrison agreed that no one should be forced to accept German nationality against their will and that thousands of Jewish survivors, stateless or citizens of mainly East European countries who were not naturalized, should not be treated as ordinary aliens and forced to be repatriated to their former countries. Harrison also assented to their requests that the Fort Oswego refugees be authorized to stay there for a few months more until the problem of their immigration could be solved, and that a WJC representative should be included in the UNRRA delegation to Germany—although he pointed out that difficulties might well arise if that individual were to focus on Jewish immigration to Palestine. The Hadassah Women’s Zionist organization brought to Harrison’s attention the plight of eight hundred Jewish orphans from Buchenwald, now in France, who could not receive permission from that government to travel to Palestine because their parents, “deported by Germans from France to unknown destinations,” might still return.22

The promising appointment of Harrison, the objective but idealistic law professor, could not have come at a better time for Weizmann, who had finally received word from Churchill on 9 June. The prime minister’s curt answer—“There can be no possibility of the question being
effectively considered until the victorious Allies are definitely seated at the Peace table” – came as a “great shock.” This, Weizmann wrote back six days later, “substituted some indefinite date in the future.” Continuance of the White Paper, barring Palestine’s doors to “the surviving remnant” of European Jewry, was also “unbearable” to Jews confined to “a territorial ghetto” consisting of 5 percent of the area of Western Palestine. The earnest plea drew no reply, although Randolph Churchill soon told Weizmann that his father realized the urgency of the Jewish question but felt he must obtain American support. Hearing this, Weizmann wrote Weisgal: “Now it is essential that your chief [Truman] should be fully briefed about the situation, and convinced of the need for taking some sort of decision at the earliest possible moment.” Weizmann thought that Palestine would be discussed at the forthcoming Big Three meeting in Germany with Truman, Churchill, and Soviet Prime Minister Joseph Stalin. It was therefore all the more crucial “to have your chief’s full weight on our side: perhaps only he can really swing the balance.”

The proposed Harrison mission to liberated Europe moved forward. On 12 June he and George Warren, State Department’s specialist on refugee issues, called on Pehle. Pehle made it clear that, for all the pressure from various groups, “particularly the political Zionists,” his boss was primarily concerned with the needs of these “displaced people.” Harrison expressed a willingness to undertake the trip and appeared to approve fully of McClelland’s aiding him. It was suggested that Harrison travel not in his IGCR capacity but either as Truman’s emissary or emissary of State with a personal letter from the president. Warren declared that he would arrange these details, clearing all with Pehle before setting any formal request in motion. Morgenthau drafted a memorandum to Grew, noting particularly the “very serious” situation of approximately one million surviving Jews, who continued to be victims in many countries of racial hate “engendered and intensified” by the Nazis. It noted that many groups in the country felt that the Allies did not act “vigorously enough” or were unable to take action that might have prevented the massacre of millions of European Jews. These groups also believed that, with the war over, the opportunity existed for immediate assistance to the surviving Jews, “who as a people were the greatest victims of the Nazis.” The memorandum closed by saying that Harrison and McClelland should be sent immediately to investigate
what intergovernmental, governmental, and private agencies could do for the survivors that was not now being done.24

Warren, State’s liaison to the WRB, prepared a displaced persons press release. Quoting Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy, it announced that of the almost 5.5 million displaced persons, the Allies had repatriated up to 3,075,726 to their home countries by 18 June. Another 2,177,609 were being cared for in Allied displaced-persons camps, with another 168,200 estimated to be living outside such camps. SHAEF estimated that “the entire problem” may resolve itself by 1 September into caring for the residual of non-repatriables and stateless persons. Behind these figures lay a story full of drama, bringing “order out of chaos” by channeling the movement of people and providing them with food, clothing, temporary housing, and medicine. Displaced persons had received “highly preferential treatment” in Germany, with U.S. Army groups instructed by SHAEF to raise their living conditions to a standard as high as resources allowed “without consideration of any adverse effect on living conditions of the German people.” By the end of summer, UNRRA, which currently had 280 teams deployed throughout the Allied zone in Germany, would assume virtually the entire burden of handling displaced persons. Eventually, the IGCR would have the problem of finding places for “those people whom the Nazis and the war turned into men without countries.” Reviewing how the problem was met, Eisenhower came to the following conclusion at a press conference in Washington on 18 June: the personnel in charge of displaced persons have done their task “beautifully, and the process of getting them out has been working most efficiently.”25

The same day, Pehle informed Morgenthau that a cable about the mission had just arrived from SHAEF. A paraphrase of the telegram, given him by Phillips, indicated that it “welcomed” the visit of Harrison and McClelland to make the proposed survey. The American delegate to the IGCR was ready to leave at any time. Warren, working on all arrangements for the trip, would try to get Harrison off to Europe late the same week, while McClelland would be cabled to be ready to meet Harrison in Paris. Pehle suggested to Harrison that he would be more successful if he were to go as the president’s representative or at least have a letter from Truman endorsing the trip. Harrison agreed strongly, although Phillips did not give much encouragement to the idea. State
was preparing a “special passport,” but Pehle considered that a diplomatic passport should be issued “if real importance is attached to this mission.” Pehle thought that both of these matters could be satisfactorily handled by a telephone call to Grew from Morgenthau, were he so inclined, after he had seen Harrison. O’Dwyer cabled McClelland that the WRB “heartily” approved the suggestion of his accompanying Harrison and asked if he would agree to serve as special attaché of the American Legation in Berne.26

Reminding Morgenthau that destiny had cast him for a role in Jewish affairs regarding Truman greater than he could have played with Roosevelt (FDR), Frankfurter arranged for Morgenthau to receive an update on Palestine from Gershon Agronsky, founding editor of the Palestine Post. The meeting came on 19 June, with Agronsky explaining that the Jewish yishuv (community), which had played its part in the Allied war effort, was prepared to “go down fighting” against the restrictive White Paper. If the British firmly announced a pro-Zionist settlement for Palestine, backed up by America—which was the only circumstance in which HMG would likely take a strong stand, there would be “no trouble” with the Arabs. Complete unity existed in the Jewish camp for free immigration, including non-Zionists such as American Jewish Committee (AJC) President Joseph Proskauer. Morgenthau noted that they were sending Harrison to Europe to see “what remains of the Jews.” They could not send McDonald, but Morgenthau thought Harrison would be “first rate.” Morgenthau pressed Agronsky to send him something in writing for Truman, then departed. Frankfurter advised Agronsky that Morgenthau, and this talk with him, would be very valuable. With Morgenthau, Frankfurter added, Agronsky had one of “unsere Juden” (our Jews), who at this stage was worried as to what extent the demand for immigration was unanimous.27

“I hasten to advise you,” Grew replied to Morgenthau’s letter the next day, that he approved both the request for a diplomatic passport and a letter to Harrison from the president. Along the lines that Morgenthau had suggested, the letter would express Truman’s interest in the mission and ask for a report from Harrison on his return. It would be sent to Truman for his signature and forwarded to Harrison in Europe. Morgenthau soon cabled Treasury Department representatives across Europe, as well as Colonel Bernard Bernstein, U.S. counsel
on the Control Commission for Germany and a strong proponent of the Morgenthau Plan, to extend their fullest cooperation to Harrison in his “difficult task.” He soon received, from Weisgal, Weizmann’s letter of 7 June about “Talboker,” while Klotz heard from Weisgal that Agronsky was much impressed with Morgenthau and that Weisgal would be seeing Harrison at his law office in Philadelphia the next day.28

Acknowledging Morgenthau’s initiative, Grew’s memorandum on 21 June to Truman noted that State had directed Harrison to proceed immediately to the liberated countries of Europe and to Germany to ascertain the needs of those who were stateless and non-repatriables, particularly Jews, as well as to determine generally the view of the refugees “with respect to their future destinations.” Private groups in the United States were pressing urgently for this information, facts that would aid federal agencies to deal effectively with the problem through military channels and the related international agencies. SHAEF had approved the mission, and an expression of Truman’s interest would facilitate the mission and reassure interested groups that positive measures were being undertaken on their behalf. An attached draft for Truman’s signature assigned Harrison to be his “personal representative with the rank of minister.” Harrison was asked to inquire into the relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement needs of the displaced persons who had survived Nazism, “particularly the Jews.” Truman expected Harrison to report to him the findings of the survey and such recommendations as he might feel free to make.29

On 22 June 1945, in a letter on White House stationary, Truman authorized the mission.30 Omitting any reference to Jews or Harrison’s additional charge to determine their views regarding their “future destinations,” the communication from the White House to Harrison was brief:

I am advised by the Department of State that you are to proceed abroad to inquire into the needs of stateless and non-repatriable refugees among the displaced persons in Germany and to determine the extent to which those needs are now being met by military, governmental and private organizations. It is important to the early restoration of peace and order in Europe that plans be developed to meet the needs of those

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who for justifiable reasons cannot return to their countries of pre-war residence.

I wish you every success in your mission and will be interested to receive your report upon your return.

Very sincerely yours,
Harry S. Truman

A decade later, Truman’s memoirs record that he did not think the State Department’s approach in 1945 toward the Palestine question “would solve the basic human problem.” The fate of thousands of Jews in Europe—“really only a fraction of the millions whom Hitler had doomed to death”—was “a primary concern.” They had suffered “more and longer” than any other group which had been displaced by World War II, yet their condition “had barely improved since the fighting had ended.” Truman intended the Harrison mission to investigate their current condition. Other than Truman’s basic humanitarian concern, the appointment appeared justified on political grounds, responding to the concerns of organized American Jewry. Finally, as aired years later on CBS Reports, a personal memory explained his stance. Truman related how members of his own family in Jackson County had been displaced from Missouri in August 1863 by Union Order No. 11, intended to deprive pro-Confederate guerrillas of material support from the rural countryside, and then he declared:

It was my attitude that the American government could not stand idly by while the victims of Hitler’s madness were not allowed to build new lives. Hitler had been murdering Jews right and left. It’s been estimated that he killed six million Jews—burned most of them up in furnaces. It was a horrible thing. I saw and I dream about it even to this day. On that account, the Jews needed some place where they could go.31

Weisgal sat down with Harrison on 23 June, bringing along his close friend Henry Montor. The two had first met soon after Montor moved from Cincinnati to New York City in 1925 to become assistant editor under Weisgal of the Zionist Organization of America’s New Palestine magazine. He subsequently established the PALCOR news agency, meant to feature news of Palestine, and became publicity director of
the United Palestine Appeal. At Montor’s suggestion, Weisgal took the lead in organizing the highly successful Jewish Palestine Pavilion at New York’s 1939 World’s Fair. Since the creation of the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) that same year, Montor had proved to be a highly gifted fundraiser in his capacity as its executive vice-chairman. Weisgal and Montor intended to impress upon Harrison that an enduring solution had to be found for the survivors of the Holocaust and that it rested in Palestine.32

Weisgal and Montor were “deeply reassured” to find Harrison in “obvious” sympathy with European Jewry’s plight and the prospects that he was to survey. He agreed to the suggestion that he meet with Weizmann in London and that Joseph Schwartz of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) join in the mission, if possible. The pair stressed that Harrison’s rendered service could be “truly historic,” as Weisgal put it, laying the foundation “for a sound, constructive solution of a problem that has so long eluded the world and bedeviled the Jewish people.” A maximum of time, preferably eight weeks, ought to be allowed for his mission, and Jews should be “free of duress” so they could talk to Harrison without constraint during his trip abroad. A long-range solution had to be found, rather than the temporary and unhappy solutions that had been offered Jews for thousands of years, since the lack of a permanent home lay at the root of the “Jewish problem.” Weisgal urged Harrison to go to Palestine to study for himself what had been done and what could be done to help Jews who desired a lasting haven, and he wished Harrison good fortune on the “momentous journey.”33

At Harrison’s suggestion, Weisgal followed up with a lengthy memorandum to Harrison two days later. The physical and economic condition of an estimated 1.25 million Jewish survivors, including the refugees in Allied and neutral countries, “is precarious in the extreme,” he emphasized. The condition was aggravated by virulent antisemitism in most of these countries. Their “permanent security” mandated a long-range solution to the centuries of Jewish homelessness. The majority of the Jews of Europe would wish to go to Palestine if given the opportunity to do so, Weisgal asserted. Europe had but three alternatives: “the completion of the process of slaughter so that there shall be no Jewish problem in Europe”; complete, guaranteed equality wherever the Jews may be; or immigration to a land “which they can call their own and where they are welcome and within which they can develop themselves

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as a permanent, free, secure basis.” The recommendations of Harrison’s survey, to be effective, should be determined “on the basis of their justice and equality and in the light of the difficulties of execution of the program.” The United Nations had to take resolute action, the memorandum concluded, “so that the Jews who suffered more from hate and brutality than any other people on earth may, too, achieve some measure of peace and security in the world now being created.”

In Washington, Morgenthau, his resolve bolstered by the Zionist presentation of Frankfurter and Agronsky, informed State Department official Robert B. Reams on 25 June that, “as a Jew and as a citizen,” he was very much interested in the Jewish problem and had raised the question in his memorandum of the Jews going into Palestine. Reams, the European Division’s expert on refugees, who had consistently and staunchly opposed relief and rescue during the Holocaust, was greatly shocked. He asked: “Why in Jews? You are interested in humanity.” Morgenthau called in Pehle and asked him to prepare a memorandum to take over to Reams the next day. He also repeated “the same story”—of the postwar Jewish refugee problem—to McCloy, the assistant secretary of war. He made an appointment for Pehle to see McCloy the next day as well.

Pehle’s memorandum of 26 June, observing that “the interested American public” was becoming “gravely concerned” over the plight of approximately 100,000 Jews located in the SHAEF zone of Germany, proposed that immediate steps be taken to bring about their mental and physical rehabilitation. These included the movement of all who desired to go to Displaced Persons Centers; the availability there of adequate food supplies; the removal of children as soon as possible to temporary refuge in nearby countries ready and willing to receive them; and the establishing as soon as possible of a system of communication, a vital factor in rehabilitation, whereby survivors could write to friends and relatives. Reams promised to bring this matter promptly to Grew’s attention and see if a cable along these lines could be sent promptly to SHAEF headquarters in Frankfurt. McCloy agreed with the suggestions and said that he would take immediate action. Pehle assured Morgenthau that he would follow the matter up with both the State and War departments.

That same day Weisgal informed Morgenthau that Harrison agreed to Schwartz’s accompanying him as “the most capable person for such a
mission.” The Ukrainian-born scholar, after receiving an Orthodox rabbinic ordination at what later became Yeshiva University and a doctorate in Arabic and Near Eastern studies at Yale University, had spent some time at Cairo University and in Palestine. The Great Depression ruled out an academic career, so Schwartz worked as executive director of the Brooklyn Federation of Jewish Charities, briefly joined the JDC in New York as secretary, and then moved to Europe to direct its activities there. In that capacity, he became the JDC’s single most influential personality during World War II. The charismatic, tall Jew in the uniform of a U.S. Army colonel also arranged, after a meeting in 1943 with Jewish Agency treasurer Eliezer Kaplan, to have the JDC help with shipping and maintenance for passengers of aliyah bet (immigration in contravention of British mandatory law) on their way to Palestine. Not surprisingly, Weisgal quickly received an “urgent request” from the Jewish Agency and the American Jewish Conference that Morgenthau appoint Schwartz as Harrison’s associate. Apprised by Weisgal and Kaplan of the mission, Schwartz indicated his availability and said that he would remove himself from his JDC post for the time required. Morgenthau hesitated, thinking that Schwartz’s affiliation with the non-Zionist JDC might render him unacceptable to Zionists. A long telephone conversation with Weisgal ultimately convinced Morgenthau, who had been informed that McClelland needed at least one month to wind up WRB affairs in Switzerland, to recommend Schwartz’s appointment to State. A few days later, Grew requested Schwartz, with his “special knowledge,” to serve as a consultant to the State Department.57

Weisgal cabled to Weizmann that Morgenthau had obtained Harrison’s assignment and had requested that “his messenger” be given all the attention possible. A letter that Morgenthau received from Agronsky, stressing that only Palestine could show “a light at the end of the tunnel” for the surviving handful of Jews in Europe—“their former homes in ruins, the ruins haunted by ghosts”—had also made its mark. Fully in agreement with Agronsky’s plea that only America could press Great Britain to support a Jewish state to bring in the survivors and prepare the country for their reception, Weizmann replied that he would certainly give Harrison his fullest attention. Yet he thought the inquiry came “rather late in the day.” To his Jewish Agency colleagues in London, Weizmann declared that Truman, “about whom they knew nothing,” had to be approached before the Allied leaders’ meeting at Potsdam. Any delay would be dangerous, because he
considered the position “untenable.” In fact, Weizmann seriously considered resigning his post, as Churchill and Roosevelt had “deceived and let down” the Zionists. He had no confidence in the Big Three: “Nobody cared what happened to the Jews. Nobody had raised a finger to stop them from being slaughtered. They did not bother even about the remnant which had survived.”

The Jewish Agency’s other two major leaders, political department director Moshe Shertok (Sharett) and executive chairman David Ben-Gurion, harbored similar convictions. On 18 June, Shertok had officially requested Palestine High Commissioner Lord Gort, in light of the unprecedented “campaign of extermination” that had destroyed more than six million European Jews, for 100,000 immigration permits (25 percent for children) to be placed immediately at the agency’s disposal. A detailed memorandum indicated that a settlement of this size was not only practicable, but it would generally benefit the economic structure of the country. Gort, who insisted, in secret cables to the Colonial Office, on a maximum of two thousand permits per month until the peace conference, did not respond with alacrity. Ben-Gurion went further, declaring in press conferences abroad that only “a regime of bloody terror” would be able to maintain the White Paper and that the yishuv had to unite for a Jewish state immediately and so “redeem the Jewish people.” On 27 June he told State’s Near Eastern and African Affairs office head Loy Henderson that if their demands were not met, the Jews would fight in defense of their rights “and the consequences would be on Great Britain’s head.”

**Morgenthau’s Exit**

At 8:00 AM the next day, Harrison flew to London for the start of his mission. Meeting with a few intimate staff members, Morgenthau wondered out loud what he would answer if Truman said anything to him “about being next in line” to the presidency. He thought he would first laugh, then respond that he was going to say a prayer that evening and an extra prayer for the president’s health, and he hoped the others would do the same. Stettinius, he went on, was officially out, with Byrnes to take his place. If anything should happen, “God forbid,” to President Truman, he observed, “I would be next.” (Since there was no vice president and the secretary of state would accompany the
president at Potsdam, the current law would have the treasury secretary succeed to the White House.) Rosenman had confirmed, in response to Morgenthau’s inquiry, that this was the case.40

Yet by that point Morgenthau sensed his distance from Truman. The president disagreed with his criticism that Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson’s plan for the Allied trial of German war criminals would delay indefinitely any convictions. When Morgenthau, trying to ascertain the truth of rumors about Byrnes succeeding Stettinius, told Truman that “I can’t get along with him,” Truman had sidestepped the issue. On 18 June Truman had turned down Morgenthau’s request to accept a French government invitation to open an exhibit of war bonds in Paris early in July, during which Morgenthau intended to see if the U.S. Army was building up a strong Germany. Hearing that Truman did not want Morgenthau in Europe at the same time when Truman would be at Potsdam, Morgenthau noted that before departing for the Yalta Conference in February, Roosevelt had said that if anything happened or an emergency arose, Morgenthau should convene the cabinet. “That’s so,” responded Truman. “I want you to be here. You are the ranking man by law.” Truman declared that he wanted no congressional hearings on the Morgenthau Plan until he had his “feet on the ground” on Potsdam. Two weeks later, Morgenthau would learn that Truman, worried about coal supplies in Europe, had overruled Treasury in sanctioning the production of coal in Germany’s Saar and Ruhr regions. Meanwhile, Byrnes’s appointment by Truman had been announced on 30 June.41

A showdown could not be long away. Frankfurter sent Morgenthau warm congratulations on the success of his Seventh War Loan, along with a note about Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour’s stated hope in 1920 that the Arabs would not begrudge “that small notch” in their territories to Jews who “surely have a title to develop on their own lines in the land of their forefathers.” Yet Morgenthau’s great disappointment about Truman’s decision that he stay home from the meeting of the Big Three festered, and now Byrnes had received swift Senate confirmation on 2 July as the new head of the State Department. Morgenthau felt the need to send “heartiest congratulations” to Byrnes, conveying his full cooperation and that of his department in the future. He could not have known that, meeting with the president briefly the same morning, Stimson sharply objected to Morgenthau’s being part of the U.S.
delegation to Potsdam. “Don’t worry,” Truman responded to Stimson, “neither Morgenthau nor [Bernard] Baruch nor any of the Jew boys” would be going there. One year earlier, Stimson had confided to a diary his conviction that the Morgenthau Plan derived first and foremost from his cabinet colleague’s “Semitic grievances,” and that “a man of his race” should be forbidden to deal with Germany. Rather than have the plan “fighting brutality with brutality,” Stimson called for punishment of Nazi war criminals by legal process and for Germany’s rehabilitation. Morgenthau could not, at the same time, shake off gossip around Washington that he was going to resign and that Vinson would take his place. After a week’s thought, and with his lawyer and close friend General Edward Greenbaum advising Morgenthau to get out “while the going is good,” he concluded that the time had come to find out what Truman wanted.42

Truman, a Missouri Baptist from a prejudice-ridden small town, had embraced, in some of his private correspondence, negative stereotypes about the business acumen of “Hebrews and kikes.” His mother-in-law and his wife, Bess, never hosted a Jew in their house. On the other hand, Truman and Eddie Jacobson, who first operated a highly successful Army canteen together during World War I and then ran a men’s clothing store in Kansas City until it went bankrupt, remained close friends. A notation in Truman’s diary for 1 June questioned the Jewish claim to be picked out for “special privilege,” and averred that “any race, creed or color can be God’s favorites if they act the part—and very few of ’em do that.”43 The remark one month later about “Jew boys” (although Baruch opposed the Morgenthau Plan) also found its way into Stimson’s diary. Still, Truman had just approved the Harrison mission, and his foreign policy on Palestine remained unclear. Public actions, not private words, would be the true test of decision.

At 10:15 AM on 5 July 1945, Morgenthau sought to verify where he stood with Truman. His considerable agenda, according to Morgenthau’s diary, included talking about “Weisgal and Schwarz [sic],” but the conversation completely dealt with a single issue: Morgenthau’s future at the Treasury Department. According to what Morgenthau told his staff soon thereafter, Truman offered to make a “categorical denial” about the secretary’s resigning. But when Morgenthau requested a letter saying that the president asked him to stay until V-J (Victory over Japan) Day,
Truman responded that he needed time to think it over. Morgenthau understood this was “the tip-off” that Truman was “dodging for time” and might want a new head for the Treasury Department. Believing that he deserved not to be on trial after twelve years of dedicated cabinet service, Morgenthau proposed that he submit a letter of resignation and suggested that it be given out that evening. Vinson could be sent over to the department, and Morgenthau would “break him in.” Hearing that Vinson would be going with Truman to Europe to look after Lend-Lease and other matters, Morgenthau concluded that when the two came back “they would pull the carpet out” from under his feet. Unable to hold his head up and have Truman say he was uncertain about Morgenthau’s future, Morgenthau decided to resign without delay. Before departing, he received Truman’s agreement to his publishing a book, now as a private citizen, advocating the Morgenthau Plan, and giving Eisenhower a copy. A half hour had passed.

With the help of longtime associates Daniel Bell and Herbert Gaston, Morgenthau’s letter reached the White House fairly quickly. Revealing nothing of the tension from the morning’s interview, it recalled his active work with Roosevelt in meeting the important problems confronting the country before and during the war, and it stated that Morgenthau felt he could now appropriately “be released from my responsibilities.” Almost at the same time, a United Press story, based on an “unimpeachable source” at the White House, announced that Morgenthau had resigned during his visit with Truman, the step to take effect when Truman returned from the Big Three conference. “I am beginning to feel kind of good,” Morgenthau told his aggrieved staff. A greatly surprised Rosenman, whom Truman had assigned to draft an official response, met with Bell and Gaston to record the “high spots” of Morgenthau’s record: the highly successful federal tax programs; financing the government in time of war; reducing the interest on the national debt coincident with the tremendous increase in revenues of more than $200 billion; and the proposed Bretton Woods Conference legislation setting up a system to regulate the international monetary system.

At 4:00 PM, Truman made the announcement himself, saying that he was sorry for the decision but grateful that the secretary would remain until he returned from Potsdam. In reply to a reporter’s question, he indicated that he had Morgenthau’s successor in mind. The president’s later recollection of their
meeting states that he did not want the Treasury Department to meddle in foreign affairs, so he fired Morgenthau when Morgenthau insisted on going to Potsdam or he would resign. Morgenthau’s diary, which made no mention of the Potsdam issue, indicates that he lost little time in calling a few prominent editors, explaining how he “forced the issue” in the face of Truman’s evasiveness with the request to stay until Japan’s defeat. “It’s a different crowd—I’m not one of the gang,” he told columnist Drew Pearson, and this to Senator Wagner: “So we will let Missouri in and New York move out.”

The next evening, Truman announced his intention to appoint Vinson as secretary of the Treasury. Morgenthau immediately offered his “very heartiest congratulations,” along with his assurance that when Vinson returned from Potsdam Morgenthau stood ready to give him any and all assistance that he would like. Surprised to hear that Truman had decided to leave Vinson in Washington, Morgenthau repeated his offer to make himself available and tell him “about this very complex work.” Morgenthau then cabled all the senior Treasury representatives abroad and told them that he would remain at his post until the president returned from the conference in Europe; he requested that they discharge their duties fully and conscientiously and thanked them for their service. Before leaving for a brief rest on 7 July, he met with Eisenhower to give him the current draft of the Morgenthau Plan. From their talk, Morgenthau got the impression that there was not “one iota of difference” between their approaches to the treatment of postwar Germany.

With Vinson remaining in Washington, however, Truman saw no reason why Morgenthau should not step down without further delay. Having sailed away for the Potsdam Conference, he sent Rosenman to urge Morgenthau to do so, claiming that the White House was under great pressure “on account of the people worrying about the succession.” “I just think that he wants to have his own people around him,” advised an uncomfortable Rosenman. He suggested (with Morgenthau’s approval) that, in a private letter, Truman make Morgenthau American Governor of the International Fund and Bank to be set up once Congress enacted the Bretton Woods legislation. With Vinson refusing to endorse the idea, however, Rosenman sent drafts of Morgenthau’s letter of final resignation and Truman’s public acceptance, as well as a third cable with his own proposal for Morgenthau’s new appointment. “I appreciate very
much the fine spirit and keen sense of public responsibility in which you have approached this matter,” Truman’s letter of acknowledgment to Morgenthau concluded. On 14 July, Truman ordered that only the first two drafts be released, not the third cable. “It is a cold-blooded business-like way of doing it,” Morgenthau told Rosenman, and “it is what I expected.” On 17 July, the Senate confirmed the new secretary of the Treasury. “I’m totally free,” Morgenthau wrote, as he put an end to his diary entries. Standing alone in a corner when Vinson was sworn in, looking “crushed” until Klotz came over to comfort him, he quietly departed Washington soon thereafter. The fate of the Harrison mission, a venture made possible by Morgenthau’s direct intervention, now lay in the hands of others.46

“I was shocked out of my wits” at the news of Morgenthau’s resignation in this morning’s papers, Weisgal wrote to Klotz on 6 July 1945. Fortunately, Weisgal had received a cable several days earlier from Harrison, which would be of interest to Klotz and her “chief.” Harrison wrote: “Just finished inspiring helpful hour with Dr. Weizmann confidentially follow up on Schwartz.” The same day, Weisgal mailed Schwartz a copy of his memorandum to Harrison of 25 June, although certain that Schwartz knew “about 1000 times more” than was contained in it. Wishing him “all the luck in the world,” Weisgal expressed the hope that Schwartz would have a “very fruitful—I am afraid I can’t say pleasant trip.” To Weizmann, he advised the importance of making Schwartz understand “we want unequivocal report it may have important bearing on subsequent events since instructions for report comes from very top.” Weisgal also requested to meet with Morgenthau, only to receive a brief reply that “at present my plans are too uncertain to permit me to make any definite arrangements.”47

**Harrison’s Mission Begins**
The problem of an estimated 1.5 million survivors could not wait, Weizmann informed Harrison when they met on 30 June. Palestine’s doors would soon be closed, as only three thousand Palestine certificates remained under the White Paper. The British would not move alone to solve the problem; they needed the support and prodding of the United States. Churchill’s hands would be strengthened by the Americans, who would be responding to a humanitarian, not a political, interest. The
idea that Washington would share with London in the mandate was
“absurd,” Weizmann thought; it would mean a double administration, a
condominium; the Jews would “fall within [sic] two stools,” and nothing
would happen. The Americans could say they wanted a settlement and
were willing to help economically in Palestine’s development. Hearing
that Harrison had read Walter Lowdermilk’s book—which claimed that
certain projects, such as a Tennessee-Valley-Authority-type reclama-
tion project for the Jordan Valley, could settle an additional five mil-
lion people in Palestine—Weizmann suggested that they would be able
to arrange a loan of $200 million in America for this purpose. Two
armed divisions were “ample to hold the Arabs,” but the matter could
be worked out with them, particularly with U.S. aid, if the “will to do”
existed. Weizmann “heartily” endorsed Schwartz, having had many per-
sonal experiences with him. A good percentage of the survivors could
be taken care of with an increase of 300,000 immigrants to the yishuv,
thereby approaching the Arabs’ current numerical strength. Weizmann
saw “no other place to go.”

Weizmann colleagues Selig Brodetsky, Berl Locker, and Joseph Linton
expanded on his stance in a ninety-minute interview with Harrison.
They observed that the day that Hitler entered Prague in March 1939
(thanks to Western appeasement) also signaled Britain’s adoption soon
thereafter of the White Paper. Widespread antisemitism in Europe, be-
ginning with Poland, confronted Jews at present; SHAEF refused Jewish
organizations’ entry into refugee camps. The Zionists were requesting
100,000 additional certificates to Palestine. Currently, 12,000 certifi-
cates were blocked in Rumania and Bulgaria, where Jews had trouble
with exit permits. Of some thousands of survivors admitted to Sweden,
many were already asking for Palestine certificates. Russia appeared
friendly to their concerns. Speed was necessary, and temporary solutions
could not meet the crisis. The issue must be faced now.

Weizmann’s group continued to brief Harrison, asking him to keep in
mind the needs of Jews outside of Europe. This included 750,000 Jews
in Arab and Muslim countries, North Africa, and Asia, whose condi-
tions were not as bad as that of the Jews of Europe. As for the Jews of
Palestine, they did not wish to remain a minority—especially in light of
having received international promises in Great Britain’s 1917 Balfour
Declaration and the Palestine Mandate, temporarily given Her Majesty’s
Government by the League of Nations in 1922, to support the creation of a Jewish “National Home.” “Ghetto rule,” according to Palestine’s land law, restricted Jews to 5 percent of the country and imposed discriminatory tax legislation. The position in Palestine, not static, would revert to uprisings—the Jews “will take matters into their own hands”—if immigration stopped. Altogether, aside from ideological grounds, they declared, Palestine was the only possible solution—“no other place” wanted the Jews. Brodetsky concluded that Harrison, who took copious notes, knew a lot about the situation, was not new to the subject, and seemed very interested in what they told him.49

“Obviously Harrison was a new factor in the situation,” Weizmann remarked to his associates on 3 July, two days before Morgenthau’s resignation. Morgenthau, Weizmann pointed out, would hand over to Truman the final report by Harrison—who “primarily was attached to Morgenthau.” Harrison would proceed to Paris the next day and wait for Schwartz, who was due to arrive there two days later. Schwartz was “very much infected with Zionism,” Brodetsky chimed in. Schwartz knew Hebrew and Arabic, Weizmann added, had been in Palestine, “was a thinker,” an Orthodox rabbi, “a man of parts, and absolutely honest.” If Weizmann explained the potential significance of this mission, “he would be very careful.”50

While still in London, Harrison also met with IGCR director Herbert Emerson. Some Jews were returning to Poland and Hungary, Emerson noted, but most Polish Jews refused to go back to their former country, and Rumanian Jews were reluctant to do so as well. All survivors, he claimed, were leaving the Russian zone of Germany. He suggested that a survivor’s own statement should not yet be taken as fixed, nor should UNRRA determine “with finality” whether one was non-repatriable. It was clear now that resolution of the problem, larger than at first assumed, would take more than six months. Of the three broad groups (repatriable immediately, dissidents, and stateless), Emerson wished the Jews to be treated as within the second category, since some had not been deprived of their nationality. He estimated that the million shown on a SHAEF chart as “hard core” would in fact be down to five hundred thousand by the end of the year.51

In a detailed memorandum to Warren of the State Department, Emerson sought to answer Harrison’s worry about possible “overlapping
and confusion” between the specific functions of UNRRA and the IGCR. UNRRA does not operate in some countries, he explained, and it only deals with people displaced as a result of World War II. A short-term organization, it did not cover the long-term problem of the stateless and non-repatriables. As to the protection of refugees, the IGCR’s duty was to “safeguard and promote” the “legitimate interests” of the stateless and others lacking government protection. Some governments had recently asked it to intervene on behalf of refugees, such as the French regarding Spanish refugees in their territory, Emerson noted, and there was ample scope for “intervention and representation” by an international authority on behalf of persons coming within its mandate.52

Harrison also took testimony from two other refugee specialists in London. Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence Cramer of the Combined Displaced Persons Executive confirmed Emerson’s estimate of “hard core” non-repatriables. The half-million figure, he added, depended on how the Polish situation would be handled. If it were done properly, he thought that 80 percent of all Poles would be willing to return. IGCR vice-director Patrick Malin suggested that unless it was recognized that an international organization had to take care of stateless refugees, preferably within the UN’s Social and Economic Council, the British and Americans would find the problem largely theirs because of Jewish pressure within the United States, and peace in Western Europe was vital, particularly to the United Kingdom. The movement of 10,000 stateless persons by sea from Lübeck to Sweden had commenced two weeks earlier, as had that of 250 children from Buchenwald to Switzerland and 535 to France. He noted that some Jewish children had been kidnapped by Polish authorities, placed in possession of the Polish Red Cross, and refused to the French government. Clearly, the condition of the survivors was fraught with pitfalls.53

Harrison heard a “most amazing” story about the removal of Jewish children, mostly orphans, from the Buchenwald concentration camp. Miss Pollack, of the Swiss Red Cross, served as liaison between UNRRA and SHAEF; she observed that rigid limitations divided many families—even in some cases parents from children, a matter in which she had taken a very arbitrary stand. Finally, 449 people got on a train. At the border, Swiss police were not going to admit the group,
refusing to let escorts go along. Some of the children had to stand during the entire two-day journey until reaching their destination. At one town, the locals, including Red Cross workers, would not bring water to the young passengers. Everyone adopted a most hostile attitude to these arrivals. The Swiss even refused to permit UN personnel to remain overnight, until the consul intervened. Some liaison offices, part Polish, refused to consider Jews their nationals.54

Lieutenant Colonel Charles I. Schottland, a Jew who served as chief of the Processing Center Section of the successor to SHAEF’s former Displaced Persons Branch, disclosed to Harrison that he was about to visit DP camps. He wanted to have army groups agree to set up separate camps, more or less as permanent centers, for non-repatriables, and to review the possibility of using UNRRA personnel. Army officials, he confided, thought that theirs was “a quick, turn-over job,” but they were gradually beginning to notice a group of non-repatriables, including Jews, who did not move along “according to the pattern.” These the military consequently regarded as “troublemakers,” because they could not be handled like the rest. The non-repatriables tended to be neglected, with no liaison officers “pounding the desk” for them, as was done for UN nationals. Hence the delay in the U.S. Army’s approving entry into Germany for the JDC and other organizations. The JDC could manage some situations that military personnel did not handle since they wanted to avoid quarrels with Germany’s city mayors, with whom they had to live for some years. SHAEF, Schottland added, made recommendations that individual armies were not bound to accept. Eisenhower personally signed “very fine things” to help the DPs, but implementation in the field was up to the local military commanders. Under the circumstances, Schottland urged that a presidential statement indicate the United States’ interest in helping solve the problem of non-repatriables.55

Harrison and Schwartz spent two days in Paris, at which time Schwartz conveyed his understanding of the survivors’ parlous condition. He already had determined that the majority of an estimated 200,000 [sic!] Jewish survivors in Germany and Austria did not wish to be repatriated. They appeared doomed to stay there for an indefinite period of time unless a “radical solution” was found. All the Jews from Germany wished to go to Palestine, Schwartz had just told a meeting of Hadassah’s national board. Jewish adults returning to France, Belgium, Italy, and
other countries from Poland and Germany were in “a terrible state,” particularly grieving their loved ones. The Jewish Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and Yugoslavs who were scattered throughout Germany did not know what was to become of them. The U.S. Army conservatively estimated the figure of Jewish children in German concentration camps at six thousand to seven thousand, many of them orphans. A large number of these had received temporary stays in nearby countries, but those governments wanted to know what was next. They knew the situation in regard to certificates and were not fooled when the JDC and Jewish Agency replied that they would send the children to Palestine. The real problem in this instance was how to get large numbers of Jewish children who remarkably had survived the Holocaust out of Europe, and where to place them. “Europe is a very sick continent,” Schwartz concluded.56

Schwartz also shared with Harrison a report that he, Ben-Gurion, and other Jewish leaders had received about the condition of survivors in Austria. The report came from Hyman Yantian of the Jewish Relief Unit, a group of ten social workers whom the UNRRA lent to the JDC office in Italy. Yantian had visited camps and spoken with some Jewish chaplains in Salzberg, Augsburg, Dachau, Allach, Ebensee, Linz, and Freienberg, and he concluded that these many thousands of the “battered remnants” of Central and East European Jewry—in most cases the sole remaining members of their families—shared a “passionate desire” to emigrate. Daily they witnessed the repatriation of the French, Czechs, Dutch, Russians, and others who had a country to which to return, and they felt that the United Nations and the world Jewish organizations were neglecting them. Their pressing needs consisted of clothing, food, medicines, and jobs. We must work unceasingly, Yantian asserted, for entry into Palestine for all who wish to go there, as well as the presence of Jewish relief personnel in the proposed Jewish camps.57

Yantian’s report included observations from Chaim Burszteyn and two comrades who had just returned from Poland. The Jewish Committee there estimated that twenty thousand Jews remained in the country, together with another twenty thousand non-Polish Jews. The Russians decreed that all property confiscated by the Germans could be claimed by the third generation. The Red Army was caring well for the remaining

The Earl Harrison Report
three hundred Jews too weak to leave Auschwitz, which currently was
being used to hold prisoners of war, SS members, and Völkdeutsche. 
Estimates of those murdered in Auschwitz, including perhaps 3
million Jews [sic!], reached 4.5 mil-

lique. Nazi and Polish persecutors
were obligated to place fresh flowers
every day on a memorial that the
Russians had raised for all who died
there. Several ex-Auschwitz prison-
ers confirmed that of the Italian
Jews deported there in 1943, two
transports arrived in Auschwitz
II (Birkenau), and all, with very
few exceptions, were immediately
gassed. In January 1944, about
nine hundred men and women,
mostly old people, had arrived from
Trieste. Italians could not stand the
cold Polish climate, and many who
were not immediately gassed died
after about two months. 58

On 7 July, Harrison and Schwartz,
accompanied by IGCR’s Malin and
the JDC’s Herbert Katzki (who had
been McClelland’s assistant), arrived in Frankfurt. Harrison and Schwartz
decided to divide into two teams, each one of them writing his own re-
port, which Harrison would integrate into the final document. Colonel
Milton Richmond, head of a U.S. military transport unit in Dachau,
helped facilitate Harrison’s visit; he quietly informed Chaplain Abraham
Klausner that the Third Army, under General George S. Patton Jr., had
structured an itinerary for Harrison that focused on high-level policy
discussions and bypassed most of the DP camps. Lieutenant Klausner, a
feisty, thirty-year-old Reform rabbi, had traveled on his own throughout
Bavaria looking for survivors, and he had reported the previous month
to Jewish leaders including Stephen Wise and Philip Bernstein, executive
director of the Jewish Welfare Board’s Committee on Army and Navy

Dr. Joseph Schwartz and Earl Harrison.
(Courtesy JDC Archives)
Religious Activities. The report highlighted deplorable conditions in the camps; the silence of American Jewry’s leadership; and the U.S. Army’s refusal to recognize the remnant of Europe’s Jews as a separate nationality. Besides collecting tons of materials for the camp inmates, Klausner had recorded to date the names of survivors in three volumes. The last volume included a letter of 28 June from the head agency delegate attached to the Allied Commission in Italy that “we may be able to receive our brethren in their motherland.” Klausner told Richmond to ask Harrison to meet with him when Harrison reached Dachau, where Klausner had arrived to join the 116th Evacuation Hospital unit three weeks after the camp’s liberation on 29 April.59

Witnessing the Remnant in Germany and Austria

His first day in Germany gave Harrison an overall picture of the complex refugee situation. Of a total of nearly 2,750,000 refugees remaining in the SHAEF zone, Poles and Russians constituted the majority. No transport or reception centers existed for 100,000 Yugoslavs. Of the 350,000 Balts and Balkan peoples, Malin thought that most Balts would be repatriable. He guessed that there were 25,000 German Jews, perhaps another 5,000 to 10,000 Balkan Jews, and the same number of Polish Jews; the last group was subject to an “additional complication”—antisemitism in Poland. The German, Austrian, Rumanian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian groups, “largely a Jewish problem that was just beginning,” lacked formal representation. The British and Americans had to make up their minds whether dissident Poles, Balts, and Yugoslavs should come in under the “same umbrella” with prewar refugees. The argument against “is political dynamite,” Harrison wrote, while the argument for was “get rid of the charge of doing something for Jews alone.” Outside of Germany, about 100,000 Jews were settled temporarily in Europe. If they were to be helped, we “must interest other nations and to do this [we] must have other peoples to offer.”60

Two items in Stars and Stripes, relating to these matters, caught Harrison’s eye. The American newspaper covering the U.S. military forces reported on 10 July that the U.S., British, and Russian occupying powers agreed that food and coal would be supplied from all the Allied zones in Germany to Berlin’s nearly three million German civilians. A Soviet-Polish agreement also provided for the release from Soviet citizenship of
Poles and Jews who were Polish citizens in September 1939, while any Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Ruthenians, and Lithuanians could apply for such release from Polish citizenship. The same edition reported that 818 Jews had just embarked from Marseille for Haifa on the final lap of a journey that had begun in the “Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp” three years ago, taking them through “the most infamous concentration camps in Germany, such as Dachau, Oranienburg, Treblinki [sic], Magdeburg, Belsen, and Buchenwald.” Ranging in age from fifteen days to eighty-two years, some still wore the marks of Nazi treatment on their thin, hollow faces. This shipment was the first since their liberation, and it had been arranged by SHAEF in cooperation with UNRRA and the JDC. Antisemitism is “endemic in Western Europe,” the article ended.

During his week in Frankfurt, Harrison met with Ben Klotz, head of the local Jewish Committee, and Lieutenant Aryeh Simon of the Jewish Brigade. Klotz found Harrison understanding of his request that the housing estate in nearby Zeilsheim be converted into a reception center for survivors. The Jewish Brigade, formed as part of the British Army

![Image of Lt. Gen. W. Bedewell Smith tasting soup served to displaced Jewish persons at Landsberg, Germany, during an investigation of living conditions there.](image-url)
in September 1944, had fought in Italy against the Germans from March until the war’s end, when it set about bringing aid to the survivors. Sent to survey their condition throughout Germany, Simon heard in Frankfurt about Harrison’s mission. He arranged a meeting with Truman’s envoy and informed him that the feeling of the Jewish remnant in almost all the camps was, “The occupation authorities are against us.” Aside from the U.S. Army’s refusal to recognize them as a group apart, the Jews remained behind barbed wire under armed guard, suffered malnutrition, and lived in constant fear of forced repatriation. Simon estimated that 90 percent from Poland and the Baltic states wanted to go to Palestine, while the more assimilated Jews of Hungary would seek their future abroad, including Palestine. He found Harrison extremely supportive of his two main requests: temporary concentration of the Jews in separate camps and free and immediate immigration to Palestine.62

Schotlland’s report on a visit to various U.S. army groups confirmed his earlier view that orders from the top received different receptions at the lower level of command. The army groups were supposed to designate camps for non-repatriables, and in some cases distinct progress had been made. It was stressed that non-repatriables presented an “entirely different problem.” In Wiesbaden, Colonel W. Brewer of the 12th Army did not believe that “permanent camps” were any solution, as indecisive individuals would go out on their own and “turn up again somewhere as a problem.” Brewer advocated “instituted assimilation,” giving non-repatriables a flat somewhere, the father a job, and the children a classroom education. Landsberg, with around 1,500 Jews out of a population of 5,500, needed clothing and reading materials. Colonel Falferis of 3rd Army headquarters was much impressed with the demands of different nationality groups there but felt that “some things just cannot be done.” While Funk Kaserne was only supposed to be a transit camp, about two thousand from Dachau had been there for some time and were housed in very crowded conditions. Army officials, having closed out some camps to make room for soldiers, were “dumping” DPs there, sometimes making them walk. The camp, with forty-five hundred people, needed a great deal of cleaning up. No organized recreation or facilities (except for the sick) were available.63
Armed with these informative findings, Harrison left Frankfurt on 13 July. In one day, he paid visits to Wiesbaden, Darmstadt, Heidelberg, Mannheim, and Karlsruhe. The following day, he left for Stuttgart, lunched near Ulm and reached Munich. During the next two days, he conferred with Klausner and, with Klausner as his guide, met representatives of what already was called “She’erit Hapletah” (the Surviving Remnant) in nearby DP camps, including Landsberg, Feldafing, St. Ottilien, and Munich. Klausner, characterized in Harrison’s diary as “aggressive [and] irritating,” gave credit to the U.S. Army for tending to the survivors’ health but deplored “everything else.” In spite of SHAEF directives, the military at the lower level practically refused to acknowledge the Jews’ statelessness or recognize the Central Committee of the Liberated Jews in the U.S. Zone of Germany, which Klausner and thirty-three-year-old Kovno physician Zalman Grinberg had established at Feldafing on 1 July. Estimating the total number of Jews in Germany at fifty-five thousand, Klausner thought that twenty-five thousand Palestine certificates would solve the problem for those insistent on going there. As he was not a Zionist, he believed that the others ought to receive help to go where they wanted and where it would be best for them.64

Monty Penkower
Harrison’s notes on four of these camps left little to the imagination. In Dachau, where American soldiers had found numerous corpses piled in railroad cars and near the crematorium, the U.S. Army chose to favor the non-Jewish German population—telling “others to go home—if they don’t we will make conditions as unpleasant as possible.” The 200 Czech and Dutch Jews in Alfondschule were housed in a very poor school building with no facilities of any kind: “Sanitation awful. Complete absence any oversight.” Washing and toilet facilities were far better for the 600 Jews, practically all Poles, in Schleissheim, but food was very poor, most clothing consisted of concentration camp uniforms, and inmates lay around all day waiting for meals. The 1,000 Jews in Bogenhausen, including 280 from Greece, enjoyed good food and regular meals, yet “again no supervision apparent.”

A fuller picture emerged from Harrison’s lengthy interview in Munich with a committee from Dachau. Its members estimated that about ten thousand Jews could be found in many camps in South Bavaria, their condition dependent on the military officer in charge. Bürkert did not have enough food, Celle lacked a kitchen, and in all DP centers little clothing other than camp uniforms could be had. Survivors, many with heart trouble and tuberculosis, lacked communication, medical supplies, and work. “Most [were] sitting and waiting”; they had no feeling of liberation: “all depressed, uncertain of fate.” No children had survived; there were some young people aged thirteen and fourteen who, wanting to live, had told the SS that they were sixteen. Curfews and passes to leave camps were mandatory. German citizens fared much better as to housing, clothing, and food; Nazi officials still were in positions of responsibility. The survivors wished to go, in about equal proportion, to Palestine and the United States.

On 16 July Harrison traveled to Garmich-Partenkirchen, Rothenberg, and Salzburg, an area with about fourteen thousand displaced persons. One day was then spent in Linz, where his diary notation read: “nub of trouble is that Jews have no papers—no status—have nothing,” while another entry observed that the military directive did not differentiate between Germans and the persecuted: When tallying numbers of those requiring repatriation, the United States Forces European Theater (USFET) intelligence report listed countries and registered “unknown” for “stateless.” The Jewish Brigade, Harrison heard, was bringing Jews
into the camp and also taking them out, “presumably to Italy.” The Mauthausen labor camp at the time housed only three hundred Jews, mainly Hungarians and Poles, with about two hundred in the hospital. The U.S. Army major in charge, “disgusted with the dirty habits” of the inmates, would not move people unless it was to go home or depart Germany. That officer took no account, Harrison observed, of the psychological impact of the “cc [concentration] horror camps.” All told, the conditions were “very bad” in twenty-two camps, with poor food and little decent clothing, throughout Austria.67

Harrison’s general impression of Germany, as he drove about in a Plymouth sedan courtesy of SHAEF headquarters, was one of massive destruction. His notes began: “Ruined cities, food ration lines, no business being conducted, trucks and wagons with people and scanty belongings, walking with bundles, many bicycles.” The country itself was beautiful, flowers sprouted everywhere, women were working in the fields, and the villages remained largely intact. Occasionally, evidence arose of fighting at some crossroads, with hundreds of Nazi planes and trucks in ruin lying along the roads and in fields. Rolling stock could be seen overturned along railroad tracks, and only a half dozen trucks were in motion. Many buildings had one or two rooms remaining; there were few horses, teams of cows, or oxen. Broken bridges appeared everywhere, with little signs of reconstruction in building and farming. Wounded men, many legless, and people trudging along the road left an indelible mark on the American visitor.68

Later entries in Harrison’s diary noted German planes lining both sides of the road outside Augsburg, having used the Autobahn for a landing strip. An American sergeant at Nuremberg directed Harrison’s driver: “Go down here and turn right. That’ll bring you to a sorta stadium where they held their big shindigs and Hitler made his speeches. Yea, we blowed the eagles off the damn place a coupla days ago.” Two baseball diamonds were arranged within the stadium now; another large stadium remained unfinished. Nuremberg was utterly demolished, Karlsruhe 60 percent demolished after undergoing Allied bombing raids over five days. One man, hearing on a radio that his wife was alive in Sweden, set out immediately without any papers in confidence that he would get there. Such reunions were “most touching and pathetic sights.” Destroyed bridges at Heidelberg could be seen, but its famous university, like those of Oxford
and Cambridge, had not been bombed because of an unwritten agreement between the British RAF and the German Luftwaffe. The Autobahn still offered good roads. Mannheim, badly damaged, had much rubble in the streets and on the sidewalks. In Eisen, an estimated ten thousand bodies were still buried in the rubble and ruins. Signs on American jeeps read: “Jersey or bust. Now for the Japs.”

Some refugees could be repatriated, Harrison decided. Many of the Balts were really German by nature and could be assimilated; many had collaborated, and therefore could become German, and even the others could nevertheless fit into German life as agriculturists. The dissident Poles, who would have a hard time in Germany, required help to settle elsewhere, probably Canada and the United States. Dissident Yugoslavs fell between Poles and Balts, since they faced less trouble back home than Poles but more than Balts.

Jews constituted a separate problem. They confronted tremendous antisemitism in Poland among the people (Harrison underlined the word twice). Not surprisingly, a high percentage wished to go to Palestine. Those originally from Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria faced less Jew-hatred, but, with many engaged in business, would face Soviet pressure against their being members of the capitalist class. German and Austrian Jews would be bound to live on a lower economic scale at home, while those now outside Germany could not return. Out of a total of fourteen thousand registrants in Munich schools up to the fourth grade, there was one (Harrison's emphasis) Jewish child. One survivor gave Harrison a horrific tale of how his wife and child, required to go to “the left” in a death camp, vanished from his sight and almost certainly were gassed along with many others, whose naked bodies were sent via a carrier belt to the crematorium. Only three hundred Jews returned to Frankfurt out of a prewar population of twenty-five thousand. Jews favored separate camps. All survivors had two big questions: “Relatives and where to go.” Some wished to return to their own countries, Harrison noted, largely to seek relatives, but ultimately they wanted Palestine.

Snippets of overheard conversation also found their way into Harrison’s diary. Five U.S. soldiers were coming out of Germany, and one said, “Now that we can fraternize I don’t see anyone we can frat with.” The entire town of Heilbrunn had been wiped out, with thirty thousand killed. In that air raid, six American flyers were killed; the graves of twenty-four Frenchmen, all shot in the back of the head, were found. The U.S. Army decided to
lift the nonfraternizing rule in Wiesbaden on Saturday night, realizing that fraternizing between American soldiers and German women was “going at anyhow”: The soldiers “prefer” to be in Germany. That city suffered one raid, and only one section was damaged. Darmstadt, on the other hand, was badly damaged. Some 80 percent of the community “has been bled,” and there was not much in the way of supplies.72

As for the survivors of the Holocaust, Harrison concluded that 80 percent of the non-native Jews in Germany wanted to get out—“Palestine, U.S., etc.” This he conveyed to Eliyahu Dobkin, head of the aliyah (immigration) department of the Jewish Agency. Dobkin had been told that the British zone held twenty-two thousand Jews. The present quota of certificates under the 1939 White Paper, he warned Harrison, would last only through August. The Jewish Agency had requested an additional 100,000 from Her Majesty’s Government in London based on the absorptive capacity of Palestine, which currently faced a labor shortage. He requested that representatives from the yishuv be permitted to set up offices in the DP camps, choosing candidates for immigration. Dobkin would soon report to his colleagues in Jerusalem that Harrison made a good impression and was a friend. It seems, he added, that Harrison’s final report would state that 85 percent of the survivors in DP camps throughout Germany had no recourse but immigration to Palestine.73

On 18 July Harrison proceeded to Deggendorf, Strasburg, and Regensburg. Nuremberg, Neumarkt, Bamberg, Wildflecken, and Frankfurt occupied three days of his trip between 19 and 21 July. In Deggendorf, which had a capacity of thirty-five hundred, he was told that the inmates had been largely Yugoslavs but recently had been moved, and about eight hundred Jews from the Theresienstadt ghetto had been moved in the next day because this DP camp offered the best facility for the approaching winter. Many of these survivors were in very bad physical condition; fortunately, there was a good hospital. Inside, most of the latrine facilities were old and decrepit. Most of Wildflecken’s 650 Jews wished to go to Palestine and the United States.74

Schottland’s latest information included the promising news that UNRRA supplies, thanks to International Red Cross package stocks, would begin to flow soon in large quantities to DP camps. In Schottland’s estimate, the numbers of surviving Jews stood as follows: Hungary, 165,000 (most in Budapest); Rumania, 320,000; Poland west
of the Curzon line, 90,000; Russia, 150,000; Polish Jews in Germany, 45,000 to 50,000. The JDC was shipping about fifty tons of clothing weekly into Poland west of the Curzon line. A significant conclusion in Harrison's notes appears on 20 July: 100,000 Palestine certificates would be ample for survivors in Germany and Austria.75

A separate report reached Schwartz on the same day from the JDC’s Reuben Resnick. Yantian, of the Jewish Relief Unit, had visited the American zone, including Salzburg, Linz, and Ebensee, together with Munich and Augsburg, while Resnik visited Villach, Klagenfurt, and Spital in the British zone. Large numbers of Jews had returned to Hungary, fewer to Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and to the east. A substantial number, some four thousand to five thousand, had entered Italy with a view to migrating to Palestine. Reports indicated that groups of refugees were leaving Hungary and Rumania and entering Italy. In Resnick’s view, of the groups remaining in Austria, most—mainly Hungarians—would return to their homes, while some desired to reach Italy to immigrate to Palestine and other countries. The conditions in the camps had recently improved in general, Resnick concluded, but several major problems remained. Special and convalescent feeding, including supplementary feeding, headed the list. Clothing and the establishment of Jewish centers and camps; vocational training; the care of transients; and the provision of special medical supplies all had to be addressed. Providing employment for displaced persons had still not been resolved. No important efforts were made to date to use them for civilian labor units of various military government establishments. Finally, the movement out of Italy to Palestine required issuing a much larger number of immigration certificates than were presently available.76

On 21 July, Harrison cabled his first report to the State Department’s George Warren, with a copy to the secretary of the Treasury. The situation in the American zone of Austria was so serious, it began, as to impel an interim report because “action [was] required at high level.” Repatriation had not proceeded at the same rapid pace as in Germany, and the movement had now slowed down considerably. The area was seriously overpopulated, particularly with Germans and Hungarians, and no prospect appeared of approving evacuation. Military leaders feared epidemics unless the population congestions around Linz and Salzburg, as well as food and fuel shortages, were relieved. Displaced persons and
particularly the subjects of his mission even now were living in “more unhappy condition and circumstances” than in most of the American zone in Germany, while the imminent approach of severe winter weather indicated real danger and suffering ahead unless remedial steps were taken immediately. Moreover, there was less indication of UNRRA action and planning than in Germany. Prompt action was particularly essential in three areas, the telegram ended: the evacuation of 70,000 Hungarians; the transfer of 127,000 Germans; and “drastic assistance” with respect to food and fuel supplies.77

Harrison pressed on. Leaving Frankfurt on 22 July, he visited Kassel and Bad Oeynhausen. On 23 July he was in Celle, Hanover, and Bergen-Belsen, which he listed as “one of the largest and most vicious of the c.c. camps.” According to Joseph Rosensaft, the dynamic, thirty-four-year-old chair of the newly formed Central Jewish Committee for the British Zone of Germany, some thirty thousand had died there since the British Army reached its gates on 15 April. “Don’t leave us in this bloody region,” he urged Harrison. The remnant could not go back to former, still antisemitic countries—“land soaked with Jewish blood.” Nobody seemed concerned about the survivors, who should be treated as Jews, not as “nationals,” because of what they had suffered. “Each little step” raised “constant difficulties” with the authorities. The norm prevailed: scarce clothing, few jobs or the possibility of communicating with the outside world, and a lack of variety in food. The doors of Palestine and other countries should be opened, Rosensaft emphasized, so that survivors could find homes and be with their relatives.78

At a lengthy meeting with three Jewish representatives, Harrison received a full picture on the region. Norbert Wollheim, whose wife and child had been gassed in Auschwitz, reported on several cities. Lübeck: Jews needed clothing, transport, cultural activities, and specific recognition; the same Germans retained their prewar positions. Hamburg: antisemitism “at every step.” Neustadt: insufficient food and clothing. Hanover: of fifteen hundred Jews liberated on 8 April, thirty-one survived and ten since died; Jews were in hospitals while returning Germans get their homes back. Braunschweig: Jews, their food rations stolen and girls frequently assaulted by Polish boys, had to call on British MPs for protection. Celle: 85 percent of the Polish Jews did not wish to return to Poland yet were treated as Poles; Germans outside of
the camp were living in much better conditions than Jews, who were living in horse stalls with sick and healthy together. Rosensaft added that Jews, constituting 70 percent to 80 percent of patients in hospitals, find their German doctors “very objectionable.” His conclusion: “one solution—emigration.”

Rabbi Isaac Levy, attached to the British forces reaching Bergen-Belsen, observed that he had attended twenty-three thousand burials since liberation, 90 percent of which were Jews. The “unwanted” survivors represented the “first claim upon the conscience of people of US and UK.” Were the democratic nations condemning the policies and actions of the Nazis toward the Jews?, he queried. Authorities continued to ask him what was the nationality of survivors, but one had to think in terms of persons, not numbers. Levy, Rosensaft, and Wollheim agreed that most Jews wanted to go to Palestine; those who returned to Hungary and Rumania thought that they had a better chance to reach Palestine from there. They were afraid of improving present camps, because it might give the impression that a solution to their plight had been found. Military officials, not recognizing that Jews were in German camps because they were Jews, seemed to think that Jews “must have committed some offence” (Harrison’s emphasis). Food had improved in Bergen-Belsen, they agreed, but continued hunger could not be satisfied. Survivors were haunted by the uncertainty of how long they would have to stay.

On the morning of 24 July, Harrison reached the most traumatic point of his trip. “Seldom have I been so depressed,” the diary began. He spent only seven hours going through Bergen-Belsen, the largest of the DP camps, “but it seemed like a life-time.” Officially, he had been told that no need existed for visiting the camp because it had been burned down, but he found fourteen thousand people there, including seventy-two hundred Jews, still confined behind barbed wire. Building #1, with its “fiendish” gas chambers and crematoria, had been destroyed, “but the rest is bad enough.” One loft, about 80 feet by 20 feet, housed eighty-five people. For Harrison, the last two weeks in Germany and Austria had made it clearer than ever that the end of the war in Europe would not make the slightest difference in meeting responsibilities toward war problems during 1946 or diminish the necessity for the Allied Relief agencies. Harrison’s spirits were only raised by recalling the U.S. Welfare and War Chest campaigns and the charitable workers at home—so different from “man’s degradation of man, so much evidence of...
which I’ve seen the last two weeks.” This long entry concluded: “Thinking of America and her generous givers almost blotted out Belsen. Think I’ll go to bed.”

**Harrison’s Report**

On 28 July, before reaching London via a few more stops in Germany, then on to Brussels, Paris, Geneva, and Bern, Harrison dispatched a long report from Zurich to Vinson (although Morgenthau had departed ten days earlier). In general, he found “complete confirmation of disturbing reports” concerning Jews in the SHAEF zone of Germany. It appeared that the survivors numbered closer to 50,000 than the 100,000 figure that Pehle and McCloy had assumed. Most authorities refused to recognize them as a separate category in spite of “admitted greater suffering” and equally refused to recognize statelessness, preferring to treat all groups by nationality alone and to force repatriation by maintaining unpleasant surroundings and conditions. A high percentage of Jews, especially Poles, wished a prompt evacuation from Germany, preferably to Palestine. If this were not possible within the reasonable future, greater and special attention should definitely be given to their billeting. City housing was obviously scarce owing to destruction, but many intact villages and rural areas presented possible prospects. Unfortunately, military government personnel seemed reluctant to inconvenience the German civilian population for the benefit of displaced persons either through requisitioning apartments or portions of houses; their rationale was that they must live with the German population, while the DPs’ stay was probably temporary.

This policy “needs drastic change from the top,” Harrison stressed. If, as likely, taking over buildings would not meet all requirements, he urged that a program of separate camps for Jews be pushed more vigorously. Jews themselves wanted it as second best to evacuation, and in no other way could the special needs of those who have “suffered most and longest” be met without repercussions and charges of preferential treatment. One completely Jewish camp at Feldafing, with more than five thousand survivors, was working beautifully. SHAEF had accepted the concept of special camps for non-repatriables, but its policy was not being pushed hard enough and was given lip service but not observed at many points in the field where, in fact, repatriation continued to be
the military’s only interest. Many quarters were unsuitable for winter occupancy. It was highly desirable that UNRRA take over the management of camps, especially for non-repatriables, at the earliest possible date; but UNRRA was a big organization, and it needed to weed out a lot of personnel. The military, while professing eagerness, had UNRRA assume responsibility, yet they were not giving it adequate assistance in matters such as headquarters and transports. UNRRA’s assumption of operations was important, among other reasons, because of the great need, but arranging the supplemental services of private agencies and acting upon proposals was terribly slow. Finally, tracing and opening up communication with relatives should be pushed as aggressively as possible to prevent the “complete breakdown” of morale among Jewish families, who had been separated for years. Sporadic efforts by Jewish chaplains and the JDC had helped, but official recognition and assistance were sorely needed. These are only a few highlights, Harrison concluded, sent now in the hope that actions could be taken to indicate to the relatively small number of survivors that they have “in fact been liberated as well as saved.”

Vinson, Morgenthau’s successor, brought a copy of Harrison’s cable on 1 August to the attention of Grew of the State Department. Summarizing its contents as well, Vinson then added: “I am sure you will agree that prompt steps should be taken to remedy the distressing situation which Harrison has reported, and I should like to be advised as to what action is taken.” He also decided to send a copy of Harrison’s cable to the War Department. The War Refugee Board’s Hodel, still with the Treasury Department, sent a copy of the cable to Morgenthau “because of your deep interest in the Earl Harrison mission,” along with a copy of Vinson’s letter to State and War. Treasury also sent the cable to London, where the department’s Harold Glasser was instructed to discuss it with the appropriate UNRRA officials there. Hodel informed her former boss that they would follow the matter and continue to press for action “as long as we can.”

The top echelon of the War Department, both Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army George C. Marshall and Secretary Stimson, soon cabled Eisenhower of Harrison’s preliminary findings. On 3 August, Marshall asked Eisenhower to verify the accuracy of Harrison’s conclusions and to furnish the War Department with the results of his investigation.
Along with Grew and Vinson, who were “extremely concerned about its implications,” Stimson pointedly noted to Eisenhower the importance “we attach to this problem and request that everything possible be done to improve present situation.”

Receiving Stimson’s telegram on 10 August, Eisenhower, who had just turned down Wise’s request that he appoint a Jewish liaison officer on the grounds that such personnel were selected “on a nationality basis,” wired Stimson the same day that he would appoint a Jewish chaplain as his “special advisor on affairs dealing with displaced persons.” He suggested that the War Department select some “broad-gauge” Jewish representative to serve as investigator and adviser. It was impossible to consider every Jew as stateless, Eisenhower angrily added, and the tenor of the 28 July report was “completely different” from what Harrison had transmitted to his headquarters. Still, he conceded Harrison’s allegation that “this headquarters makes no differentiation in treatment of displaced persons.” As to other criticisms, Eisenhower informed Stimson of SHAEF’s official policy regarding stateless non-repatriables and displaced persons; USFET directives giving priority in adequate housing to Jews; the creating of special centers for Jews along the model of Feldafing; the functioning of a Central Tracing Bureau to unite relatives and families; and the making of arrangements to have UNRRA assume “maximum operating responsibility” by 1 October.84

Harrison had actually emphasized to Eisenhower’s top aides in Frankfurt the major points contained in the report of 28 July. To General Clarence A. Adcock, in charge of civil government, and General Stanley M. Mickleson, in charge of displaced persons, he pointed out that the non-repatriables, who had little reason to feel liberated, presented a “sorry picture.” They still lived under considerable restraints, and there were very few distinctions drawn between the persecuted Jews and other DPs. Considerable pressure had been brought by a military government eager to get people back home. The authorities had so many responsibilities that they gave scant attention to issues beyond making arrangements to move people out of camps, so that everything depended on each camp commandant. Military officers hired German civilians rather than DPs and refused to requisition homes for survivors. At many points in the field, little was known of SHAEF policies, including special camps for Jews. Tracing relatives who might be alive and providing good clothing had to be improved. JDC and
other special services were needed, as well as a directive recognizing Jewish groups. In sum, Harrison informed the two generals, no policy toward Jews existed, and the U.S. military practically refused to recognize statelessness. Apparently, his listeners had not conveyed the severe critique to their superior.85

As Harrison realized, the implementation of SHAEF’s humane and unmistakable directives depended on how army group officers in the field responded. In answer to Pehle’s memorandum of 26 June, McCloy had noted how the U.S. military had already taken steps to meet all of the suggestions. On 4 August, in replying to complaints from Leon Kubowitzki, Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress, the War Department’s Civil Affairs Division asserted that it intended to correct “some cases of neglect and injustice... as rapidly as possible.” The following day, Schottland delineated the many special SHAEF directives that had been issued since mid-April to indicate that “the care of displaced persons was a principal Allied objective.” Indeed, the Seventh Army in Northern Germany allowed camp residents to move about freely, little looting took place, and morale was good. By order of Patton, however, who commanded the Third Army in southern Germany—where most of the DPs in the American zone resided, all camps were staffed by armed guards. Patton’s diary reveals his view that the displaced person was not a human being, “and this applies particularly to the Jews who are lower than animals.” They had to stay behind barbed wire lest they “spread over the country like locusts, and would eventually have to be rounded up after quite a few of them had been shot and quite a few Germans murdered and pillaged.” As confirmed at the end of July by Victor Bernstein’s columns in the American newspaper PM, of which Harrison took note, the U.S. Army had to “enforce a uniform policy everywhere.”86

Before leaving London for New York on the morning of 5 August upon completion of the mission, Harrison wrote in his own hand “a partial report” consisting of four sections. The first three noted that many Jewish displaced persons and other possible non-repatriables in Germany and Austria were living behind barbed-wire fences, often in unsanitary conditions, in complete idleness, unable to communicate with the outside world, and still in their concentration camp garb or even German SS uniforms. Many “pathetic” cases of malnutrition could be found. The 2,000 calorie allotment per day often included 1,250 calories of a black,
wet, and extremely unappetizing bread. Many of the buildings housing DPs were clearly unfit for winter use, and a great concern existed about the prospect of adequate fuel. Recognition of the Jews’ singular status, given “their former and more barbaric persecution,” represented their first and plainest need. They did not want be classified according to nationality, and most wanted to leave these two countries as soon as possible. Palestine was “definitely and pre-eminently” the first choice for the stateless and those not wishing to return to their homes. UNRRA was not sufficiently organized or equipped, nor was it authorized to operate DP camps or centers on any large scale; it had not been in a position to make any substantial contribution to the situation. The military authorities, preoccupied with mass repatriation and facing housing, personnel, and transport difficulties, had shown “considerable resistance” to the entrance of voluntary agency representatives, however qualified, to help meet the DPs’ existing needs.

Harrison’s conclusions and recommendations, the last and by far the longest section of the report, began with Rabbi Levy’s assertion that the Jews in Germany and Austria should have “the first claim” upon the conscience of the people of the United States and Great Britain, the military, and other personnel who represent them in this work. As to the pressing issue of evacuation and judged “on a purely humanitarian basis,” Harrison thought it “nothing short of calamitous” that Palestine’s gates should be soon closed under the 1939 White Paper. The Jewish Agency’s memorandum requesting 100,000 additional immigration certificates made a “persuasive showing” with regard to Palestine’s absorptive capacity and the current, actual worker shortages there. Given Hugh Dalton’s endorsement at the Labour Party Conference in May 1945 of Zionist claims, it would be appropriate for the American government, while permitting immigration under its own existing laws, to support “some equitable solution” allowing “some reasonable number” of Europe’s persecuted and homeless Jews to resettle in Palestine.

As for some immediate temporary solution, Harrison pressed for separate Jewish camps as required by considerations of “justice and humanity” for a group “which has been depressed to the lowest depths conceivable by years of organized and inhuman oppression.” Particularly given the Potsdam Conference’s policy to convince Germans of their complete military defeat and that “they cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves,” it was difficult to understand why, in rural
areas, Germans continue undisturbed in their homes while the Jews were in crude, overcrowded camps. The military government officers “manifest the utmost reluctance or indisposition, if not timidity, about inconveniencing the German population.” They employed German civilians although equally qualified DP inmates could easily be found; gave Jews far inferior quarters to those accorded to returning civilians; kept Jews behind barbed wire under armed guard; and only allowed exit by means of passes, which at some places were “illiberally granted.” UNRRA should take over the camps’ operations as quickly as possible, with the Army providing assistance so far as housing, transport, and other logistics were concerned. A review of sympathetic personnel for camp commandant positions should be undertaken, and a more extensive plan of field visitation by appropriate army group headquarters instituted. Finally, plans for reuniting family members and communication services should be accelerated to the fullest extent possible, with private agencies given an opportunity to help in this direction.87

Marshall’s reply to Eisenhower on 15 August declared that the War Department would study the response of Eisenhower’s staff in conjunction with the complete Harrison report, which would soon be available. While considering Eisenhower’s suggestion for a “broad-gauge Jewish representative,” it had approved ten special representatives of Jewish organizations to work under UNRRA’s auspices to assist with Jewish stateless and non-repatriable individuals. On 22 August, Eisenhower issued an order to create separate camps in the U.S. zone of Germany as soon as possible for stateless Jews, who should be given a high standard of accommodation. Those Jews without nationality or non-Soviet citizens who did not desire to return to their country of origin “will be treated as stateless and non-repatriable.” UNRRA teams would be requested for these centers “without delay”; these teams should have “maximum” operating responsibility and all necessary assistance by military commanders. Schottland quickly informed the Jewish Agency that its proposals to work with DPs in Germany under UNRRA supervision had been approved. Major Judah Nadich, then serving at the office of the theater chaplain in Paris, received his orders one week later as Eisenhower’s special adviser to investigate conditions of the Jewish DPs in Germany. He was to report to Micklesen and Adcock as well as assist UNRRA, Jewish organizations, and military officials as might be necessary.88
Eisenhower’s order of 22 August made no impression on British authorities, who consistently refused to recognize Jews as a separate nationality. The Foreign Office insisted that UNRRA adhere to this position, and “was strongly of the opinion that at least all persons displaced as a result of the war must be regarded as eventually or politically repatriable.” The deputy military commander of the British occupied zone in Germany objected to giving Holocaust survivors preferential treatment, asserting on 26 July that this would be unfair to “many other sufferers,” while resulting in “a large group of Jews of many nationalities” who would refuse repatriation “and constitute a continuous embarrassment.” Writing on behalf of the chief of staff of the British Element of the Control Commission for Germany, Major-General R.H. Dewing informed the War Office, London, three weeks later that “it is undesirable to accept the Nazi theory that the Jews are a separate race.” Jews, he emphasized, ought to be treated according to nationality in common with all other religious sects, not given special camps and liaison officers.

Schwartz’s independent report of 19 August, written in the JDC’s Paris headquarters, challenged that position head-on. Although more temperate in language than Harrison’s scathing assessment, and giving more credit to the U.S. Army’s “remarkable job” of repatriating 4.2 million displaced persons in three months, Schwartz’s lengthy report charged that “only a small beginning” had been made to improve the non-repatriables’ needs. All were still grouped as nationals, while SHAEF directives were disregarded or did not find their way into the field. Inferior food, overcrowded camps, inadequate clothing, limited medical facilities and sanitation constituted the norm. Enforced idleness, lack of employment, few cultural activities, and nonexistent means of communication were part of the “tragic aspects” of camp life. Very often, American and British military government detachments looked upon German civilians as “their” people and gave them preferential treatment, while the DPs were seen as “intruders who are a nuisance.” The great majority of survivors wished to go to Palestine, and not less than ten thousand had entered Italy illegally in the preceding several months with the hope of achieving this end. Separate camps for Jews—perhaps entire villages, with improvements in their basic requirements—should be established throughout Germany and Austria and placed under UNRRA management.
The “only real solution,” Schwartz concluded, lay in the “quick evacuation” of all the non-repatriable Jews who wished to go to Palestine. In addition to the 60,000 in Germany and Austria who wanted this, another 40,000 certificates would enable Jews in the other Western countries—France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, and Switzerland—whose positions were “precarious,” to find permanent settlement there. Evacuating 100,000 survivors would also remove a problem from the military authorities who had to deal with it. To be effective, this plan must not be delayed. The situation was urgent; it was “inhuman” to ask people to continue to live for any length of time under current conditions. The U.S. Army had amply demonstrated its ability to move millions of people quickly and efficiently. With the end of the Allied war against Japan in mid-August, shipping should also have become sufficiently improved to make such a move feasible. “The civilized world,” Schwartz averred, owes it to this handful of survivors to provide them with a home where they can settle down and begin to live as human beings again.”

Harrison’s final report, repeating his partial one of 5 August, added two significant points. Section five (“other comments”), drawing on Schwartz’s praise of the Army’s repatriation of more than 4 million persons and his acknowledging the overwhelming task involved in caring for refugee groups, quoted verbatim Schwartz’s conclusion. Further, section four, after its reference to the Potsdam Conference’s declared policy vis-à-vis the German people, included this new paragraph:

As matters now stand, we appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them except that we do not exterminate them. They are in concentration camps in large numbers under our military guard instead of S.S. troops. One is led to wonder whether the German people, seeing this, are not supposing that we are following or at least condoning Nazi policy.

The striking—and excessive—insertion had apparently been taken from an earlier report by Joseph Dunner, then head of the press office in the military government in Munich and close to the Central Committee of the Liberated Jews. His report, handed to Lieutenant Colonel Murray Gurfein in Frankfurt, castigated the shabby treatment of Jews by Patton’s Third Army, its refusal to recognize them as a distinct people, and its effort at their forcible repatriation. In turn, the head of USFET’s Intelligence Section of the Information Control Division transmitted this indictment
to Harrison, who prevented Dunner’s court-martial and Patton’s evacuation order of Jews in the Buchberg camp to Poland. Harrison’s ultimate report reached Truman on 24 August.  

**Truman’s Response**

One month earlier, on 24 July, Truman had written to Churchill of America’s “great interest” in the Palestine problem and of the “passionate protest” raised there against the “drastic restrictions” that “deny to Jews, who have been so cruelly uprooted by ruthless Nazi persecutions, entrance into the land which represents for so many of them their only hope for survival.” He therefore expressed the hope that the British government “may find it possible without delay to take steps” to lift these restrictions, and he proposed that they could discuss the problem together “in concrete terms” at a “not too distant date.” A thoroughly exhausted prime minister did not reply to the dramatic step, and two days later his party lost Britain’s general election in a landslide. Labour Party victor Clement Attlee chose not to be rushed in the matter, following the advice of Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin. He responded to Truman’s request with a brief communication one week later: “You will I am sure understand that I cannot give you any statement on policy until we have had time to consider the matter, and this is simply to inform you that we will give early and careful consideration to your memorandum.”

Before making his personal appeal, which he did without State Department knowledge, Truman had received a Jewish Agency memorandum that reached him prior to the Potsdam Conference. It called for an immediate decision “to establish Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth” and to grant the agency authority to bring as many Jews as need and wish to settle there. He had also been given a letter from AJC President Proskauer supporting “the liberalization of Jewish immigration into Palestine, for that may become necessary for the relief of many thousand stricken European Jews.” (Proskauer also revealed Roosevelt’s private sentiments against Jewish statehood). On 16 August, Truman informed a press conference questioner that he had discussed Palestine with Churchill and Attlee in Germany and that “the American view” is that “we want to let as many of the Jews into Palestine as it is possible to let into that country.” The matter would have to be worked out diplomatically with the British and the Arabs, so that “if a state can
be set up they may be able to set it up on peaceful bases.” He quickly added, “I have no desire to see 500,000 American soldiers there to make peace in Palestine.” Truman’s extemporaneous public statement, drawing the Arab world’s ire and mixed reactions in the Zionist camp, signaled a major shift in the stand of the United States on the issue. “This is the first forthright enunciation of policy by this government on that controversial question,” declared a New York Herald Tribune editorial. His qualification relating to the maintenance of civil peace is “new and important,” noted Harold Beeley, Bevin’s adviser on Near Eastern affairs. William Yale, who prepared the State Department’s memoranda for Byrnes on four possible Palestine solutions, later concluded that in August 1945 “Mr. Truman took into his own hands the formulation of United States policy with respect to a Palestine settlement.” And now the president, acting independently, had linked that dilemma to the plight of the Holocaust survivors in Europe.

Eight days after the press conference, the president had a long meeting with Harrison, who left him the final report. He handed it to Rosenman for further study. The next morning, Truman informed his cabinet that he had read the document the previous night and “it made him sick.” The three-sentence paragraph that Harrison had inserted in section four, and that Truman underlined, made a particular impression. “The situation at many of the camps, especially with respect to the Jews, was practically as bad now as it was under the Germans,” he told the cabinet. “It was a moving document,” Truman subsequently recalled. “The misery it depicted could not be allowed to continue.” As a consequence, on 31 August, enclosing a copy of the report, he wrote a long letter to Eisenhower that emphasized the stinging paragraph and stressed that SHAEF policy was not being implemented in the field. “I know you will agree with me that we have a particular responsibility toward these victims of persecution and tyranny who are in our zone,” Truman added. He also requested a response as soon as possible on the steps Eisenhower was able to take “to clean up the conditions” mentioned in the Harrison report. He noted that he was communicating directly with the British government in an effort to have Palestine’s doors opened “to such of these displaced persons as wish to go there.”

The reprimand from Eisenhower’s commander-in-chief drew what Leonard Dinnerstein has termed an honest, but defensive, response. In a short first reply, Eisenhower assured Truman that “no possible
effort is being spared to give these people every consideration toward better living conditions, better morale and a visible goal.” Indeed, he toured Felda fing with an unsympathetic Patton on 17 September and pledged the assistance of the American military until the Jews could leave Germany. His fuller report the next day, with a copy sent to Marshall, observed that the U.S. Army had faced “the most difficult of redeployment problems.” These included maintaining law and order; services for its personnel; and the question of displaced persons with “unusual demands” covering transportation, housing, fuel, food, medical care, and security. With these complications, he went on, “you can well understand that there have been undeniable instances of inefficiency.” Commanders of all grades were seeking these out. He was confident that a comparison of conditions now with what they were three months ago at V-E Day would show the president that “your Army has done an admirable and almost unbelievable job in this respect.” Most Jews, he added, want to go to Palestine. On 20 September, with a directive that he dictated personally, Eisenhower ordered all subordinate commanders to quickly improve conditions for all displaced persons (the noun “Jew” went unmentioned) as regards housing, security, health, and food.

Most significantly, Truman wrote a letter on 31 August for Byrnes to give Attlee together with a copy of Harrison’s final report, informing the British leader of Harrison’s investigation in the American and British zones in Germany. Calling Attlee’s attention to the report’s recommendation of allowing 100,000 Jews entry into Palestine, Truman concurred in the belief that “no single matter is so important for those who have known the horrors of concentration camps for over a decade as is the future of immigration possibilities into Palestine.” Europe’s postwar peace depended in large measure upon our finding sound solutions to such issues, he declared, and “no claim is more meritorious than that of the groups who for so many years have known persecution and enslavement.” Accordingly, Truman called for “the quick evacuation” to Palestine of as many as possible of the non-repatriable Jews who wished that choice. Paraphrasing the joint conclusion of Harrison and Schwartz, he closed: “If it is to be effective, such action should not be long delayed.”

Byrnes transmitted the communication to Attlee on 10 September. Four days later, the secretary of State informed Bevin that Truman would publicly endorse some of Harrison’s recommendations the same
evening. Not yet having written his reply for Attlee’s signature, Bevin responded that if the president pressed for the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine, he would announce in the House of Commons that he expected the Americans to provide four divisions to maintain order in Palestine. Byrnes quickly telephoned his chief and persuaded him to hold off. The same day, former Senator Guy Gillette (D, Iowa) publicly revealed the contents of Truman’s letter to Attlee, who confidentially wired Truman that a statement favoring the 100,000 would “do grievous harm to relations between our two countries.”

The official British response could be foretold. Truman’s 24 July request of Churchill had already set Near East specialist Beeley’s teeth on edge, indicating to him that the Zionists had been “deploringly successful in selling the idea” that, even after Allied victory, immigration to Palestine represented for many Jews “their only hope for survival.” Wishing to avoid a postwar influx of Jews into Palestine, the Foreign Office’s Refugee Department had expressed the fear in March 1944 that British trials of Germans on charges of crimes against humanity committed against Jews would convince survivors not to return to their native countries after the war. Whitehall’s expert on refugees, Ian Henderson, was convinced that the Zionists were behind Harrison’s recommendations. British military authorities in Germany rejected Harrison’s criticism, claiming that Jews were being treated exactly like all other displaced persons. Refugee Department head Paul Mason informed the Board of Deputies of British Jews that HMG ruled out Jewish liaison officers attached to military staffs, since London deemed it not possible “to treat Jewish persons as possessing a separate Jewish national status.”

On 16 September, one day after the British press reported that the 1939 White Paper would continue, Attlee’s full reply to Truman asserted that “there appears to have been little difference in the amount of torture and treatment” suffered by Jews and other DPs. If Jews were placed in a special racial category “at the head of the queue,” other groups in the camps would react violently against them. Immediate relief could be given for 35,000 Jews with two camps in North Africa. As to Palestine, HMG also had to consider the Arabs and the “easily inflamed” 90 million Muslims in India. In refusing the 1,500 Palestine certificates available this month, Attlee added, the Jewish Agency insisted on the immediate granting of 100,000 quite regardless of its effect on the situation
in the Near East. “It is hoped,” a more cautious Truman replied the next day, that we can work out a successful program “which would provide for the Jews and other displaced persons in Europe some measure of relief at an early date.” He added that he would take no further action until Byrnes’s return to Washington.¹⁰¹

The State Department’s release on 30 September of Harrison’s final report, along with Truman’s letter to Eisenhower, elicited predictable reactions. HMG announced it would make no more than fifteen hundred Palestine certificates available to the Jewish Agency each month. In response to Harrison’s report, Weizmann cabled him: “greatly impressed your humane document. In these sad times sympathy brings some measure consolation.” “You have attacked the problem with vision, humanity and statesmanship,” Weisgal wrote him. The National Council of Jewish Women urged its members to write to Truman, praising his firm stand. Some Refugee Department officials in Whitehall, on the other hand, wondered if Harrison could be an “impartial witness.” On 6 October the State Department officially heard that London was “unwilling to recognize Nazi attempts to deprive Jews of their German or any other nationality, or Jewish attempts to regard Jews as possessing any separate or over-riding nationality of their own or distinct from their political nationality.” The Daily Telegraph and other British newspapers editorialized that Harrison made his statement “purely on a humanitarian basis” without reference to ideological or political considerations, particularly Arab protests. Echoing Muslim capitals across the region, secretary-general of the Arab League Azzam Bey announced that there should be no more Jewish immigration to Palestine or additional alienation of Arab land; he called for democratic elections and self-government with independence for the Arab majority.¹⁰²

HMG especially viewed Harrison’s recommendation that the survivors be segregated pending their removal to Palestine or elsewhere outside of Europe—a policy now adopted in the U.S. zone in Germany—“with grave concern.” That policy, read an aide-mémoire from the British Embassy in Washington to State on 9 October, suggested acceptance of the Nazis’ contention that there should be no place for Jews in Europe. Rather, the two governments should improve conditions whereby Jews, “not the only persecuted group,” would “feel natural and right to go home.” State countered at the month’s end that the fact that Jews who
did not want to return to their home countries were being housed in separate camps did not constitute a decision as to their repatriability; such housing had no relation to “the wholesale removal of European Jews to Palestine.” Washington and London should explore the possibility, the State Department urged, of “a more positive approach” to the problem of those groups of DPs who had expressed unwillingness to return home.\textsuperscript{103}

An Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine

Bevin took the lead when offering a “fresh approach” to his cabinet colleagues on 4 October. The foreign secretary refused to accept Truman’s endorsement of the Harrison report that the bulk of the survivors should quickly be settled in Palestine—had not the Allies fought Hitler to rid Europe of racism? Still, a telegram from Ambassador Edward Halifax in Washington warned Bevin of mounting American Zionist agitation, which focused on humanitarian grounds; the political pressures brought on Truman by the November congressional elections; and bipartisan calls against the White Paper in a Senate debate that sought effective relief for the “first victims of Hitler terrorism.” In Bevin’s mind, Harrison’s report was “not based on real investigation.” Bevin told Weizmann that Truman was merely trying to gain votes by his stance; the United States had to take its share of those Jews who must be removed from Europe. Bevin suggested to the cabinet that an Anglo-American committee should, in consultation with Arabs and Jews, investigate how to ameliorate the entire DP problem and ascertain Palestine’s economic capacity to aid in the circumstances. Attlee’s cabinet ultimately accepted an innocuous draft “to examine the position of the Jews in Europe,” but the Americans insisted on adding this phrase to the terms of reference: “and to make estimates of those who wish, or will be impelled by their conditions to migrate to Palestine or other countries outside Europe.”\textsuperscript{104}

The British conceded to their counterparts by 24 October, but Truman’s involvement led to a delay of three weeks in announcing the committee’s formation. Halifax reported to Bevin Washington’s fears that a joint declaration before the 6 November elections, announcing an inquiry that would further postpone any large-scale immigration to Palestine, would “inflame” Jewish voters and “destroy any prospects” of the Democrats’ mayoralty candidate in New York. On 18 October,
following a protest from Saudi Arabian monarch Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, Truman had to backtrack on his earlier statement that Roosevelt had made no assurances to the king but added that he still hoped the British would accept his earlier proposal for the 100,000 into Palestine. He listened to Rosenman’s suggestion that the announcement of an Anglo-American inquiry be postponed until after the U.S. elections and that, when it was announced, it would make clear the twinning of Palestine and the Jewish refugees. On 13 November, Bevin and Truman finally announced the creation of the committee. Truman also released his letter to Attlee and declared that he still supported Harrison’s recommendation for 100,000 Palestine certificates to relieve the “distressing situation of the Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution in Europe.”

Truman’s statement emphasized that the new committee would make possible, a “prompt review” of the survivors’ “unfortunate plight” in Europe, and address questions relating to the current rate of immigration into Palestine and its absorptive capacity. In meetings on 29 September with Zionists Wise and Abba Hillel Silver and the AJC’s Proskauer and Jacob Blaustein, Truman had stressed that the “humanitarian factor,” not the political, should be placed foremost when dealing with Palestine. The president made the same point on 10 November when conferring with the U.S. chiefs of mission in the Near East: If Palestine could only take some of the refugees, it would alleviate for the time being the situation in Europe, satisfy some of the demands of the “humanitarian” (again his characterization) Zionists, and give the U.S. government an opportunity “to turn our attention to a permanent solution of the political problem.” Truman’s 13 November announcement, once more reverting to Harrison’s stress on urgency, closed with the observation that the situation of displaced Jews in Europe as winter approached allowed no delay in this matter: “I hope the Committee will be able to accomplish its important work with the greatest speed.” Only time would tell, yet a new chapter in Palestine’s vexed history had certainly been opened.

**Conclusion**

The Earl Harrison report, reprinted in full by *The New York Times*, played a decisive role in a world seared by the Holocaust. Although not taking sufficient account of the military’s difficulties in coping with more than 7 million Europeans in Germany and Austria alone
who had been uprooted by World War II, its devastating critique of the U.S. Army’s treatment of Jewish survivors living there led to a number of improvements in their daily lives. Eisenhower’s final report to Truman on 8 October, based upon Nadich’s inspections (some accompanied by Schwartz and some by Klausner), acknowledged the turn. These included separate Jewish centers; unarmed DPs voluntarily performing necessary guard duties; better housing; daily caloric intake increased to a minimum of 2,500 for “racial, religious and political person;” and more adequate clothing and shoes. Eisenhower, angered over Patton’s opposition to denazification—comparing the controversy over Nazism to a “Democratic and Republican election fight” and commenting to the press that a strong Germany would serve as a buffer against the Soviet Union—relieved him of command of the Third Army. On 16 October, Truman released Eisenhower’s report about the condition of Jewish and other DPs, with no immediate comment to follow.107

Harrison’s findings about the refugee situation, resulting as well in a higher priority given to the problem of the Jewish DPs in general, coincided with and confirmed Truman’s convictions. On 24 July, one month before receiving Harrison’s report, the president had independently urged Churchill to lift without delay the White Paper’s “drastic reductions” that denied the cruelly persecuted Jews entry into the land that so many considered their only hope for survival. The Harrison report, urging that 100,000 survivors be settled in Palestine without delay, persuaded him further to send a similar request to Attlee. To Zionists, non-Zionists, and anti-Zionist U.S. Near East chiefs of mission alike, Truman emphasized the need on humanitarian grounds to aid survivors of the Holocaust as soon as possible, with Palestine to be their principal haven. Congressional elections only delayed the administration’s public endorsement of an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine. Truman hoped that, once the 100,000 had been granted admission there, the findings of the committee members would lead to a long-range solution endorsed by the United Nations.

The British refused to accept Harrison’s linkage of the survivors’ pressing needs with the Palestine conundrum that HMG had faced ever since receiving the mandate on 24 July 1922. Their negation of Jewry’s national identity, which they adhered to consistently during and now since the Holocaust, ruled out the possibility of their approving special Jewish
centers or attaching Jewish advisers to their military command in Europe. Unlike the American military administration, they refused to allow Jewish refugees into their zone in Germany because the new arrivals would likely press for Palestine entry.

When first proposing to Byrnes a joint Anglo-American Committee on 16 October, Bevin had specifically omitted Palestine as a haven for these DPs. Echoing the spirit of Attlee’s reply on 16 September to Truman, he informed the House of Commons on 13 November of the committee’s formation by reiterating that “Jews” (he intentionally avoided saying “the Jewish people”) should not be driven out of Europe and that Palestine alone could not solve the Jewish problem. The Balfour Declaration, Bevin asserted, lacked moral validity. He then told American reporters that “if the Jews, with all their sufferings, want to get too much at the head of the queue you have the danger of another anti-Semitic reaction through it all.” It would not be the last of Bevin’s expressions in this respect. The lack of sensitivity displayed, coming soon after the near annihilation of Europe’s Jews, triggered anti-British demonstrations in Germany and Austria DP camps, as well as Wise’s judgment that Bevin was “an enemy of the Jewish people; he is a foe of human justice.”

The Zionists, understandably, embraced the report’s fundamental premise, joining as it did the “Surviving Remnant” with the biblically covenanted Promised Land. Already on 25 July 1945, with members of the Jewish Brigade, the Jewish Agency’s Dobkin, and the indefatigable Klausner in attendance, the first conference of the She’erit Hapletah demanded “the immediate establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, the recognition of the Jewish people as an equal with all the Allied nations, and its inclusion in the peace conference.” The survivors’ “decisive leadership groups,” to use Ze’ev Mankowitz’s phrase, were fully wedded to this ideal as the only hope for European Jewry’s rescue and rehabilitation. The first Zionist Congress to convene after World War II, representing not only seventeen countries but also (as Weizmann said to Morgenthau) “the pervading ghosts of our five million or more dead,” resolved unanimously one week later to demand “the speediest settlement” of the remnant and sovereignty in what Jews for millennia had called Eretz Israel. HMG’s decision to continue the White Paper after the Holocaust directly triggered the establishment in October of the yishuv’s United Resistance Movement against the mandatory power.
After visiting Zeilsheim that same month, where ecstatic hundreds greeted David Ben-Gurion with the Zionist anthem “Hatikvah” and received his assurance that Palestine's Jewish community would bring them home to a warm welcome, Ben-Gurion wrote in his diary that the *yishuv* and its strength, America, and the DP camps in Germany constituted Zionism’s three major forces. Under his leadership, the survivors would be forged into a “political factor” of prime importance.¹⁰⁹

Morgenthau, whose initiatives had led directly to the Harrison mission, became an ardent advocate for the immediate admission of at least 100,000 of the homeless, stateless Jews into Palestine. Accepting a gold medallion from B’nai B’rith on 7 November for his outstanding contributions to the war effort and to refugee relief, Morgenthau insisted that Palestine was the one harbor “where they can be assured of achieving at once the status of welcome and respected citizens.” He noted that Harvey Gibson of the American Red Cross, having inspected refugee camps at Eisenhower’s invitation, recently agreed with Harrison’s conclusion regarding the survivors’ overwhelming wish to immigrate to Palestine. Truman’s request of Attlee, Morgenthau declared, was “a thoroughly statesmanlike and a thoroughly humanitarian appeal.” The entire Palestine problem should be placed under the UN’s auspices, he added, since the plight of the Jewish DP’s “is the responsibility of all the peoples who fought Fascism and was a new opportunity for democracy.”¹¹⁰

Supreme Court Justice Frankfurter considered Morgenthau—whose B’nai B’rith’s medallion read “Lover of Israel”—one of “our Jews.” The former Secretary of the Treasury suspected that Truman rejected his presence at Potsdam because he was a Jew and could succeed to the presidency; this was a feeling that Morgenthau confided one year later to *yishuv* wartime parachutist Lieutenant Reuven Dafni. There is no indication of this in anything Truman said or wrote. Still, aside from rumors around Washington to that effect, it was a time when government institutions still supported limitations on Jews’ full participation. For example, Morgenthau could recall at least two incidents when Roosevelt had privately remarked that American Jews should abide by a quota system in terms of university admissions and federal positions.

Morgenthau’s subsequent book championing a tough peace against Germany failed to sway Truman or the U.S. military, and his chairmanship of the Modern Industrial Bank did not satisfy his activist
streak and search for a cause that would absorb his energy and passion. Fortunately, with the strong backing of Henrietta Klotz, UJA Executive Vice-Chairman Montor offered the perfect solution: the general chairmanship of the UJA. Under Morgenthau’s forceful leadership, and with the driving Montor serving as his right hand, the UJA would raise a remarkable $150 million in 1947 and more than $200 million the next year. His commitment to the *yishuv’s* security also made possible the tremendous success of *yishuv* labor leader Goldie Meyerson (later Golda Meir) in raising $50 million across the United States in February 1948 for the embattled “state-in-the-making.” Together with the JDC, under Schwartz’s guidance, and the vast majority of fellow Jews and their supporters worldwide, Morgenthau’s innate concern for the survivors ultimately converted him to the Zionist cause. Weizmann, Weisgal, and others sensed this in “Talboker,” and his receptive response proved them correct.111

As for Harrison, he regretted that attention had been centered on the conditions in the DP camps rather than on his major recommendation that the Holocaust’s remnant in Europe should be moved to Palestine. On this score, Harrison publicly criticized Eisenhower’s final report to Truman. Further, he observed, shifting Jews from one camp to another, while having a slight psychological advantage, was scarcely liberation. (This judgment was even harsher than a contemporary French report that summarized the survivors’ situation: “We were liberated, but we are not free.”) “In spite of considerable misunderstanding over parts of my report,” Harrison wrote to Weisgal, “I am satisfied that some progress has been made as a result of it.” His article in *Survey Graphic* two months later, which the JDC reprinted, called for “the last hundred thousand” stateless to be given their “enduring solution” with admission to Palestine. Harrison, who had been open-minded with respect to Palestine’s being a haven when he first set out for the camps in Germany and Austria, had returned with the feeling that “the only sound and sensible plan” for tens of thousands rested in their movement to that country. As for the immediate present, he observed, scant provision had been made for family units in the camps, and very little had been done toward rehabilitation or any form of camp activities to make life more sustainable. Fresh foods were hard to come by, and a scientific determination of the nutritional needs of “this great group of deliberately
starved and mistreated people” had to be made. He ended: “The least that civilization can give is new hope and opportunity to these survivors of the most barbaric persecution in the long, black record of man’s inhumanity to man.”

Harrison’s concern for individuals in great need continued thereafter. While serving for three years as dean of the University of Pennsylvania’s Law School before returning to a law practice in Philadelphia, he became chair of the National Citizens Committee for Displaced Persons Legislation. This proved to be the catalyst in legislation providing for the ultimate admission and resettlement of 395,000 displaced persons in the United States. In 1952, after the passage of the McCarran Act over Truman’s veto, he was appointed to the President’s Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, whose report on 1 January 1953 recommended basic changes in U.S. immigration laws. The following year, Harrison applauded Israel’s giving more than 500,000 Jewish victims of Nazi barbarism “new life, new hope, new homes”; he also commended West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, who, in endorsing the German-Israel reparations agreement, proclaimed that “crimes of genocide cannot go unpunished and the moral debt arising therefrom must be paid.” On 28 July 1955 Harrison, an American champion of humane values, closed his eyes forever.

Harrison’s report, which Landsberg committee chair Samuel Gringauz acknowledged as sparking the shift in survivor policy from the “military police” period to the humanitarian period, would also prove encouraging for Zionist aspirations. “Obviously Harrison was a new factor in the situation,” Weizmann had astutely realized after their meeting at the end of June 1945. “Such acts as your own,” Weisgal wrote Harrison following the report’s publication, “make it possible for us to continue to live and to hope that perhaps a better world might yet emerge in which the Jewish people too will find a little solace.” At the UJA’s national conference that December, the pro-Zionist Schwartz lauded Harrison’s understanding, sympathy, and love for the people with whom he was called upon to deal, leading the pair simply to exchange ideas from time to time before the final report to Truman. In bestowing an honorary doctorate of humane letters upon Harrison at the June 1947 commencement exercises of Yeshiva University, Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein hailed “this champion of liberty, this apostle of brotherly love,” who put the displaced persons “upon the agenda of the world.” Harrison and Schwartz, followed by Simon Rifkin—appointed Eisenhower’s civilian
adviser on Jewish affairs in October 1945—testified to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine that the wish of the She’erit Hapletah for new lives should be coupled to a future in Palestine.\textsuperscript{114}

Truman, who (as Byrnes told Weizmann) wished to handle “the whole matter … to a considerable degree” by himself, made the same connection. Wise and Silver, co-chairs of the American Zionist Emergency Council, charged that the new Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry would “further complicate the situation, make for interminable delays, and lead to confusion worse confounded.” Urging Truman to help implement his request for the immediate admission of 100,000 survivors into Palestine as advocated in the Harrison report, and the British government to abandon or revoke forthwith the 1939 White Paper, they called on the two major Western powers to fulfill the international pledge given to the Jewish people, “based on their historical connection with Palestine,” to reestablish in that country “their national home.” Yet the president’s memoirs record that he thought that the aims and goals of the Zionists at this stage “were secondary to the more immediate problem of finding means to relieve the human misery of the displaced persons.” In officially dissolving the War Refugee Board, he similarly had declared that steps be taken “for the immediate rehabilitation of these survivors of Nazi savagery, as well as for a humane and natural solution of their ultimate resettlement.” Frankfurter cautioned the Jewish Agency representative in Washington, Eliyahu Epstein (later Elath), “not to make tactical mistakes which might harm the cause” with Truman, who, after all, was “the man who is to decide what shall be done.” Whether Truman’s basic humanitarian impulse would translate into a firm political decision remained to be seen.\textsuperscript{115}

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Notes

1 21 May 1945. vol. 848, Henry Morgenthau Jr. Diaries (hereafter MD), Franklin Roosevelt Library (hereafter FDRL), Hyde Park, NY. For the creation of the U.S. War Refugee Board, see Monty Noam Penkower, The Jews Were Expendable: Free World Diplomacy and the Holocaust (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), ch. 5. For a survey of the board’s activities during World War II, see David Wyman, The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust 1941–1945 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pt. IV. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was created during a forty-four-nation conference at the White House on 9 November 1943. Its mission was to provide economic assistance to European nations after World War II and to repatriate and assist the refugees who would come under Allied control. The Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, established as a result of the July 1938 Evian Conference on Refugees and headquartered in London, did little during the war years.

2 Entries on 12, 14, 16, 27 April 1945; 2, 4, 9 May 1945; all in vol. 848, MD.


4 Memorandum, 22 May 1945; Morgenthau memorandum for the president, 23 May 1945; both in vol. 849, MD; Edward N. Peterson, The American Occupation of Germany: Retreat to Victory (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 37–34.

5 23 May 1945, Morgenthau Presidential Diaries (hereafter MPD), FDRL; Washington Evening Star, 23 May 1945.

6 28 May 1945, vol. 849, MD; McKim to Truman, and Truman’s penned notation, 28 May 1945, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library (hereafter HSTL), Independence, MO; Foreign Office (hereafter FO) 371/45239, Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), Kew England; Truman notation, 29 May 1945, on Grew memorandum, 23 May 1945, copy in L35/A116, Central Zionist Archives (hereafter CZA), Jerusalem.

7 8 May 1945, President’s Secretary Files (hereafter PSF) 82, HSTL; Halifax to Foreign Office, 3 June 1945, FO 371/45239, PRO); Truman notation, 29 May 1945, on Grew memorandum, 23 May 1945, copy in L35/A116, CZA, Jerusalem.

8 Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 1st session, 1939, vol. 84, pt. 13, app., 2231–2232; Mel Schiff, “President Truman and the Jewish DPs, 1945–46, The Untold Story,” American Jewish History 99, no. 4 (October 2015): 330; Truman to Bergson, 7 May 1943; Truman to Smoller, 12 December 1943; Truman to Levin, 16 February 1944; all in senatorial and vice-presidential file 71, HSTL; Reuben Fink, America and Palestine (New York: American Zionist Emergency Council, 1944), 420–421. On the Committee for a Jewish Army and other groups organized by Hillel Kook (Peter Bergson) in the war years, see Monty Noam Penkower, The Holocaust and Israel Reborn: From Catastrophe to Sovereignty (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1994), ch. 4.


12 Grigg to Eden, 29 January 1945, PREMIER the Prime Minister’s papers at the Public Record Office (hereafter cited as PREM) 4/52/3; Grigg memorandum, 4 April 1945, CABINET papers at the Public Record Office (hereafter cited as CAB) 66/64; Stanley memorandum, 16 May 1945, CAB 66/65; 25 May meeting, Colonial Office (hereafter CO) 733/461/75872/ II; all in PRO.

13 SHAPE administrative memorandum 39, revised 16 April 1945, Earl Harrison diary RG-10.088, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC (hereafter USHMM). I thank Benton Arnovitz for making this diary available to me.

14 Winant to State, 28 May 1945, vol. 849, MD.

15 Mason to Emerson, 2 June 1945, Harrison diary, USHMM; Truman to Morgenthau, 2 June 1945, vol. 851, MD.


175 June 1945 meeting; O’Dwyer to Morgenthau, 6 June 1945; both in vol. 852, MD; diary, 6 June 1945, with Morgenthau memorandum for the president, MPD; Board to McClelland, 6 June 1945, vol. 852, MD; Board to McClelland, 9 June 1945, vol. 853/2, MD. In confidence, Morgenthau conveyed this last decision to Wise, who on 5 June had raised the matter of WRB surplus parcels in Switzerland. Morgenthau to Wise, 9 June 1945, file 264, World Jewish Congress Archives (hereafter WJCA), New York City (now at the American Jewish Archives [AJA], Cincinnati).

18 Weizmann to Weisgal, 7 June 1945, WA.

19 Klotz interview with the author, 14 March 1977; Weisgal to Klotz, 12 June 1945; Morgenthau-Grew telephone call, 11 June 1945; both in vol. 854, MD. An earlier draft of a memorandum, dated 8 June, by Morgenthau’s staff for Grew to give Truman had proposed that McDonald be assisted by Harrison. 8 June 1945, box 11, War Refugee Board (hereafter

Morgenthau-Grew telephone calls; Morgenthau-Pehle telephone call; Pehle-Morgenthau telephone call; Phillips to Murphy; all 11 June 1945, vol. 854, MD; Weisgal to Morgenthau, 14 June 1945, Z5/991, CZA; Weisgal to Klotz, 14 June 1945, Z5/1046, CZA.


Frankfurter to Weisgal, 28 June 1945, Z5/967; Weisgal to Linton, 6 April 1945, Z5/991; both at CZA; Tartakower to Office Committee, 21 May 1945; Harrison to Tartakower, 28 June 1945; Harrison to Biddle, 15 June 1945; all in file 2a, WJCA; Kramarsky to Harrison, 7 June 1945, Z5/991, CZA.

Churchill to Weizmann, 9 June 1945; Weizmann to Churchill, 15 June 1945; Linton to Namier, 18 June 1945; Weizmann to Weisgal, 18 June 1945; all in WA.

Hodel 12 June 1945 memorandum; draft of Morgenthau memorandum to Grew, n.d.; both in box 11, WRB.

Warren draft memorandum, n.d., box 11, WRB. The draft was not released.

Pehle memorandum to Morgenthau, 18 June 1945, vol. 855, MD; O’Dwyer to McClelland, 19 June 1945, box 11, WRB.

Agronsky note, 19 June 1945, A209/3, CZA.

Morgenthau to Grew, 20 June 1945; Grew to Morgenthau, 20 June 1945; Morgenthau to Treasury representatives, 21 June 1945; all in vol. 856, MD; Weisgal to Klotz, 22 June 1945, vol. 857/2, MD.

Grew memorandum to Truman, and draft letter attached, 21 June 1945, box 11, WRB.

Truman to Harrison, 22 June 1945—a copy sent by Pehle to Morgenthau, 27 June 1945; vol. 859, MD. The State Department’s eventual public announcement declared that Harrison’s mission was to ascertain the extent to which the needs of non-repatriables, who include “many Jewish survivors of Nazi persecutions,” were now being met by the military authorities. Jewish Telegraphic Agency (hereafter JTA), 9 July 1945.


Montor interview with the author, 8 June 1977. The United Jewish Appeal for Refugees and Overseas Needs combined the efforts of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, led by Rabbi Jonah Wise; the United Palestine Appeal, led by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver; and the National Coordinating Committee Fund, led by William Rosenwald. While the organizations raised funds together, the Joint Distribution Committee assisted Jews in Europe, the United Palestine Appeal aided the Jewish community in Palestine, including refugees from Europe arriving there, and the National Coordinating Committee Fund assisted refugees arriving in the United States. New York Times, 13 January 1939.
Weisgal to Harrison, 25 June 1945, Z5/991, CZA.

Weisgal memorandum, 25 June 1945, Z5/991, CZA.


Pehle to Morgenthau, 27 June 1945, vol. 859, MD; Pehle memorandum, 26 June 1945, box 11, WRB.


Agronsky to Morgenthau, 26 June 1945, Z5/861, CZA; Weizmann to Weisgal, 28 June 1945, WA; Jewish Agency Executive London, 25 and 27 June 1945; both in Z4/30017, CZA.

Shertok to Gort, 18 June 1945, Jewish Agency confidential files, Zionist Archives, New York City (now in the CZA); Gort to Stanley, 17 and 19 March 1945, CAB 95/14, PRO; Zionist Review, 15 June 1945; JTA, 22 and 26 June 1945; FRUS, 1945, vol. 8, 713–715.

28 June 1945 meeting, vol. 859, MD.

23 May 1945; 1, 13, 16, 18 June 1945, MPD.

Frankfurter to Morgenthau, 2 July 1945, vol. 862, MD; Morgenthau to Byrnes, 2 July 1945, vol. 861, MD; Beschloss, The Conquerors, 246; 3 July 1945, Henry L. Stimson Diaries, vol. 52, Sterling Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT; Kochavi, Post-Holocaust Politics, ch.3.


5 July 1945, MPD; various entries, 5 July 1945, vol. 862, MD; Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, 1, Year of Decision, 327.


Diary entries for 11 and 13 July 1945, MPD; Morgenthau-Rosenman telephone calls and drafts of letters, 13 July 1945; Truman cable to Rosenman, 14 July 1945; Truman to Morgenthau, 14 July 1945; Morgenthau-Rosenman telephone call, 14 July 1945; all in vol. 863, MD; Henry Morgenthau III, Mostly Morgenthau, A Family History (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1991), 406.

Weisgal to Klotz, 6 July 1945, Z5/1046, CZA; Harrison to Weisgal, July 1945; Weisgal to Schwartz, 6 July 1945; both in Z5/991, CZA; Weisgal to Weizmann, 3 July 1945, WA; Morgenthau to Weisgal, 18 July 1945, Z5/991, CZA.

49 Jewish Agency Executive London, 3 July 1945, Z5/30017, CZA; “Conversation with Brodetsky-Locker-Linton,” Harrison diary, USHMM.
50 Jewish Agency Executive London, 3 July 1945, Z5/30017, CZA.
51 Harrison-Emerson interview, Harrison diary, USHMM.
53 Conversations with Cramer and with Malin, Harrison diary, USHMM.
54 Harrison diary, USHMM. For a contemporary account by an American Jewish chaplain who accompanied another group of children to France, see Robert S. Marcus, “535 Children Leave Buchenwald,” Congress Weekly, 29 June 1945.
55 Harrison diary, USHMM. The Displaced Persons Branch was succeeded by the Combined Displaced Persons Executive.
57 Yantian to Schwartz, Ben-Gurion, et al., 9 June 1945, S25/15200, CZA; Harrison diary, USHMM.
58 Yantian report, Harrison diary, USHMM.
59 Klausner interview with the author, 19 May 1976; Grobman, Rekindling the Flame, 65–66; Klausner to Bernstein, 1 June 1945; 11 June 1945; 28 June 1945; all in box 3, Jewish Welfare Board Archives, New York City; Nahon to Klausner, 28 June 1945, Sh’erit Ha-Pleita, vol. 3 (1945), 49, 82, 87.
60 7 July 1945, Harrison diary, USHMM. One scholar states that SHAEF had repatriated about 3,869,000 refugees by July 1945. Kochavi, Post-Holocaust Politics, 15.
61 Harrison diary, with Stars and Stripes clippings, USHMM.
62 Zeev W. Mankowitz, Life Between Memory and Hope: The Survivors of the Holocaust in Occupied Germany (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 55–56. For the Brigade’s creation, see Monty Noam Penkower, Decision on Palestine Deferred: America, Britain and Wartime Diplomacy, 1939–1945 (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 301–303. The Brigade’s contemporary memorandum called for opening wide Palestine’s gates “to the hundreds of thousands whose only hope for a rebuilt dignified existence lies in that direction” as the “only one ultimate solution.” 6 August 1945 memorandum, box 13/61, Sh’erit HaPleita files, YIVO Archives, NY.
63 Harrison diary, USHMM.
65 Harrison diary, USHMM; Michael Selzer, Deliverance Day: The Last Hours at Dachau (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott, 1978), chaps. 13 and 15.
66 Harrison diary, USHMM.
67 Harrison diary, USHMM.
68 “General Impressions Germany,” Harrison diary, USHMM.
69 Harrison diary, USHMM.
70 Harrison diary, USHMM.
71 Harrison diary, USHMM.
72 Harrison diary, USHMM.
Harrison diary, USHMM; Dobkin at Jewish Agency Executive Jerusalem, 18 September 1945, CZA.

74 Harrison diary, USHMM.

75 Schottland report, Harrison diary, USHMM.

76 Resnick report, Harrison diary, USHMM.

77 Harrison to State (Warren) and Treasury, 21 July 1945, box 11, WRB.

78 Harrison diary, USHMM.


80 Harrison diary, USHMM. Levy’s wrenching reports, which were first published in the London Jewish Chronicle, were recalled by the author fifty years later. Isaac Levy, Witness to Evil: Belsen, 1945 (London: Halban Publishers, 1995).

81 24 July 1945, Harrison diary, USHMM. Survivor Paul T repman later remembered the visit of a shaken Harrison, chain-smoking as tears streamed down his face. He could not speak. “Finally, he whispered weakly, ‘But how did you survive, and where do you take your strength from now?’” Mark Wyman, DPs: Europe’s Displaced Persons, 1945–1951 (Cranbury: Balch Institute Press, 1989), 135.

82 Harrison to Treasury secretary, 28 July 1945, box 11, WRB.

83 Vinson to Grew, 1 August 1945; Hodel to Morgenthau, 2 August 1945; both in box 11, WRB.


85 Harrison diary, USHMM.

86 McCloy to Pehle, 6 July 1945, box 11, WRB; Moffitt memorandum, 29 July 1945, World Jewish Congress Archives, London; Kubowitzki to McCloy, 26 July 1945; Chanler to Kubowitzki, 4 August 1945; both in file 267/16, WJCA; Schottland memorandum, 5 August 1945, file P68/9, Abraham Klausner MSS, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (hereafter CAJHP), Jerusalem; Martin Blumenson, The Patton Papers, 1940–1945 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 751; Schwarz, The Redeemers, 24–25; Bernstein columns, PM, 24, 26, and 30 July 1945, in Harrison diary, USHMM. For the far more sympathetic attitude of General Mark Clark, then-commander of the American zone in Austria, and his staff to the survivors, see Schiff, “President Truman and the Jewish DPs,” 340–347.

87 Report, 5 August 1945, Harrison diary, USHMM. For Klausner’s influence on the report, see Grobman, Rekindling the Flame, 73–74. General Lucius Clay, deputy to Eisenhower, indicated at the time that the general feeling of “war guilt or repugnance for Nazi doctrine and regime” had not yet manifested itself among the German population. Clay to Hilldring, 5 July 1946, in The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay, Germany 1945–1949, ed. J.E. Smith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 47.
88Nadich, *Eisenhower and the Jews*, 42–49; Newman to commanding generals, 22 August 1945, S25/5215; Schottland to Jewish Agency, 23 August 1945, A289/23; both in CZA. Jacob Trobe, director of the JDC mission in Germany, recommended Nadich after Schottland and other U.S. Army officers found Chaplain Robert Marcus—who had been pressing Stephen Wise to recommend a liaison officer to Eisenhower—too abrasive in relations with the military authorities. Grobman, *Rekindling the Flame*, 76–78.


90Schwartz report from Paris, 19 August 1945, file 1025, JDCA. Schwartz was the first Jewish representative from abroad to enter Poland after the war. Although he briefly visited Poland, Hungary, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia at the end of July, he did not include impressions of this trip in his report.

91Harrison final report, n.d., HSTL.

92Schwarz, *The Redeemers*, 26–28; Mankowitz, *Life Between Memory and Hope*, 57. Dunner subsequently wrote to Truman, informing him that the clear majority of the seventeen thousand Jewish survivors in upper Bavaria wished to go to Palestine; that it would be very easy to find American Jewish soldiers who would go to Palestine to assist the British in keeping law and order; and that the issue should be taken “out of the realm of electoral promises and deal with in a spirit of generosity and true humaneness.” Dunner to Truman, 25 October 1945, 867N.01/10-2545, State Department records (hereafter SD), National Archives (hereafter NA), Suitland, MD.

93*FRUS, 1945*, vol. 8, 716–717, 719; Bevin to Attlee, 30 July 1945, FO 800/484, PRO.

94Jewish Agency memorandum to Truman, 3 July 1945, Z4/31587, CZA; Proskauer to Truman, 6 July 1945, Israel/Palestine files, American Jewish Committee Archives, New York; *Palestine Post*, 2 September 1945.

95State Department reports on reactions to the Harrison Report, 867N.01/8-1945 and 867N.01/8-2045, SD, NA; Jewish Agency analysis of Truman’s statement, n.d., Z6/2302, CZA; Jewish Agency Executive London, 17 August 1945, Z5/30017, CZA; Beeley note, 20 August 1945, FO 371/453379, PRO; Yale memorandum, 23 April 1948, box 2, William Yale MSS, Boston University, Boston. For Yale’s four memoranda, see *FRUS, 1945*, vol. 8, 727–733.

96Eben Ayers diary, 25 August 1945, HSTL; *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman*, 164; Nadich, *Eisenhower and the Jews*, 113–114. Publicly, Harrison asserted that Truman had manifested real interest in the report; that the desire of the survivors as to their future destination “revealed a definite trend” (he declined to mention Palestine); and that no substantial number expressed a wish to come to the United States. “We are known as a restrictive country,” he added. *JTA*, 26 August 1945. Harrison told Wise that he was led to believe that his report would be published immediately. Wise to Billikopf, 3 October 1945, box 104, Wise MSS, American Jewish Historical Society (hereafter AJHS), New York.

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CZA. Zalman Grinberg, however, wrote the World Jewish Congress at the month’s end that living conditions in the Bavaria camps had worsened. Grinberg to World Jewish Congress, 26 September 1945, file 272/75, WJCA. A summary appeared in the Christian Science Monitor, 3 November 1945, without the author’s mordant conclusion: “Give us a chance to live, give us the right to live, give us Palestine; and if not, restore the crematories and gas chambers and exterminate us in the name of democratic justice.” Thanking the congress for a copy of Grinberg’s letter, Harrison noted that it “verifies additional information” that he had gotten, and he concluded that “we must keep everlastingly at the whole problem unless real and substantial solutions are found.” Harrison to Kubowizski, 9 November 1945, file 68/182, WJCA.

98 FRUS, 1945, vol. 8, 737–739.
99 Martin memo, 18 September 1945, CO 733/463-I/75872/134, PRO; JTA, 14 September 1945; FRUS, 1945, vol. 8, 739.
101 FRUS, 1945, vol. 8, 740–741. Gillette’s leaking of Truman’s letter to Attlee, along with the elections for the New York City majority in November, led the White House to issue a press release on 29 September that published excerpts from Harrison’s report and the substance of Truman’s letter. The release also stated that Attlee had not answered Truman’s communication, forcing Attlee to inform the British public on 2 October that he had, in fact, done so, and that he understood that no action would be taken further until Byrnes’s return. FO 371/45380, PRO; FRUS, 1945, vol. 8, 653.
102 The Department of State Bulletin, 30 September 1945, 13: 455–463; Martin to Shertok, 25 August 1945, ZA/31263, CZA; Weizmann to Harrison, 1 October 1945, WA; Weisgal to Harrison, Z5/991, CZA; Welt and May to section presidents, 3 October 1945, National Council of Jewish Women Archives, New York; 6 October 1945, FO371/45400; Halifax to FO, Oct. 7, 1945, FO 371/45438; both in PRO; FRUS, 1945, vol. 2, 1193–1194; Winant to State, 867N.01/10–145; 867N.01/10–545, both in SD, NA.

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Ruth Kluger (later Aliav), who spearheaded this effort, also received Eisenhower’s permission to travel freely in a U.S. Army uniform as a colonel, whereby she rescued some forty-seven Jewish children in the Eastern zone of Germany. Kluger memoir, A454, box 7/13, CZA.


112 Montor to Weisgal, 17 October 1945, Z5/991, CZA; *JTA*, 18 October 1945; Brenner, *After the Holocaust*, 10; Harrison to Weisgal, 24 October 1945, Z5/991, CZA; Earl G. Harrison, “The Last Hundred Thousand,” *Survey Graphic* 34 (December 1945): 470–472. Deploaring that the American people refused to believe all the atrocities and brutalities committed by the Nazis against the Jews, Harrison pointed out to the UJA national conference that as some survivors would want to come to the United States, the National Refugee Service would continue to be needed in the future to ease the adjustment of these new immigrants. *JTA*, 17 December 1945.

114 Königseder and Wetzel, Waiting for Hope, 37; Weisgal to Harrison, 2 October 1945, Z5/991, CZA; Schwartz address, 15 December 1945, Paul Baerwald files, Herbert Lehman Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York; Lookstein remarks, 24 June 1947, Yeshiva University Archives, New York (my thanks to Shulamith Berger for this information); London Office Meeting, 24 September 1945, A172/3/6, CZA.

115 Memoirs of Harry S. Truman, 166, 170–172; JTA, 16 September 1945; Epstein to Shertok, 24 October 1945, L35/92, CZA. A few years later, Truman told Eliyahu Elath that his initial assistance for Holocaust survivors in Europe had been motivated by humanitarian considerations, and only Bevin turned it into a political issue. Heller, The Birth of Israel, 47.