

## **Cantor Joseph Cysner: From Zbaszyn to Manila The Creation of an American Holocaust Haven**



Cantor Joseph Cysner Inside Temple Emil, Manila, 1941

### **Introduction**

As archivist for the Jewish Historical Society of San Diego (JHSSD), I accession new collections into our repository on a frequent basis. In May 2003, as I began processing the collection of Cantor Joseph Cysner, a Holocaust survivor whose personal papers had been donated to the JHSSD by his widow, Sylvia Cysner, a unique story within the field of Holocaust studies emerged. The collection comprises two boxes of documents

from Germany, Poland, the Philippines, San Francisco and San Diego.<sup>1</sup> Some of the most important items come from Cantor Cysner's experiences in the Polish border camp of Zbaszyn, c. 1938-1939, and the Santo Tomas Civilian Detention Camp in Manila, c. 1942-1945. How did one man experience both German and Japanese internment? And more important, how did he survive them both and live to tell about it?

Zbaszyn is a Polish town in the Poznan province that lies near the German border-town of Neu Benchen. Between November 1938 and August 1939, Zbaszyn was the site of a camp for displaced Jews from Germany. The Germans estimate that between 15,000 and 17,000 Jews were forcibly expelled and dumped at the Polish border between October 27 and 31, 1938. Cysner's Zbaszyn documents include a fifteen page hand written German memoir detailing his deportation and confinement experiences in Poland, along with an English version of the memoir, type written by Cantor Cysner at a later time. This small journal exists as a rare personal testimonial amid a modest group of writings from other Zbaszyn survivors.

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Israel, houses 175 extracts from contents of letters sent out from Zbaszyn internees to friends and relatives that recount expulsion experiences.<sup>2</sup> My investigation into Cysner's documents uncovered a unique story of his incarceration and deliverance from both German and Japanese war-time prisons. Born to Polish parents in Bamberg Germany in 1912, Joseph Cysner found himself, along with other Jewish aliens, deported by the Nazis to Poland in October 1938 and confined in the border town of Zbaszyn. Destined for eventual internment in a Polish ghetto or a Nazi concentration camp, Cantor Cysner was delivered from an uncertain fate when a telegram from the Philippines reached him in Zbaszyn and requested his services as cantor for the Jewish Community of Manila in the Philippines. This timely rescue incited my research interest into the circumstances that allowed Cantor Cysner to escape the European Holocaust and find a haven in the Far Eastern American commonwealth community of Manila, the only commonwealth nation under American jurisdiction during World War II.<sup>3</sup>

My initial research revealed that very little scholarship has been done on the efforts of the American-led Jewish Community of Manila to create a haven for Holocaust refugees. The Philippine Commonwealth status marked a decade of political transition intended to move the archipelago from a dependent American territory into a self-governing democratic republic. As its imperial power, the U.S. government empowered the Philippines with a degree of constitutional self rule to prepare it for independence in 1946. Therefore the Philippines were able to control their own immigration policies and were exempt from the quota restrictions on immigration into the U.S.<sup>4</sup> In the early 1930s, while the Philippines still functioned as a territory, the Jewish Community of Manila, numbering about 350 persons, was comprised of Jews from more than 15 countries of the world, nations primarily in Europe, North America, and the Middle East. While their religious observance was weak, their ethnic identity remained strong.<sup>5</sup> Because overt anti-Semitism directed at the Jewish community from either the Filipinos or others in Manila simply did not exist, the assimilated nature of societal interaction that the Jewish community enjoyed supplanted the need for a religious connection. However, their Jewish identity came to the forefront of their lives with the onslaught of Jewish persecution in Europe and the spread of Nazi power in the 1930s.<sup>6</sup>

The largest influx of Jewish immigrants to the Philippines, over 1000 refugees, came during the Commonwealth years of 1935 to the end of 1941, at which time the Philippines became a Japanese occupied territory during WWII. The Jewish Refugee Committee of Manila (JRC) was constituted in 1937 to initially aid the German-Jewish refugees from Shanghai, who needed to flee when the Japanese overran China in the Sino-Japanese War. Unique immigration policies of Shanghai allowed an unchecked admittance of refugees without visas, resulting in

nearly 20,000 Jewish refugees arriving in near poverty and eventually living in ghetto conditions.<sup>7</sup> When the Shanghai migration failed to materialize into any great numbers, the monies and efforts of the committee turned to the German-Jewish refugees of Europe instead. After the first wave of refugee immigrants began arriving in September 1938, Cantor Cysner emigrated from Poland and arrived in Manila in April 1939, and in turn brought his mother over in June 1940.

With the swelling of the Jewish refugee population in Manila, the community took on a distinctly religious lifestyle, certainly aided by the more pious immigrants such as Cantor Cysner. This renewal of Jewish observance flourished until the



Japanese occupied the islands in the early months of 1942 and interned many members of the Jewish community as civilian enemy aliens, including Cantor Cysner. His miracle of deliverance in Europe became one of confinement in the Far East. However, not all Jews were interned, only those whose passports identified them as citizens of enemy nations at war with Germany and Japan. Thus, the German Jews and some Austrian Jews did not face imprisonment. Through efforts led by Rabbi Schwarz, who was a German Jew, food and supplies were continually collected and provided for those in the camp. Emergency circumstances could be cited to obtain special consideration and exemption from incarceration. Such was the experience of Cantor

Cysner, whose aged mother, supported by the Jewish community, pleaded for Cantor Cysner's freedom so that he could care for her outside the camp and resume his services at the synagogue. Confinement ended with deliverance yet again for Cantor Cysner as his eight months of detainment ended in October 1942.

Since most of the European Jewish refugees in Manila came from Germany, the Japanese did not initially recognize German Jews as enemy aliens, which allowed Rabbi Schwarz and other non-interned German Jews of the community to supply relief aid to those interned members of their community who bore passports from nations at war with Japan. However, pro-Nazi sympathizers, within both the German community of Manila and the Japanese military hierarchy, sought to implement policies to either intern or deport all Jews in Manila, including the German Jews. Active political involvement by the most influential members of the Jewish community prevented the implementation of this plan. Cantor Cysner's additional appointment as music instructor at the Catholic De La Salle College prior to the outbreak of the war brought him into contact with many influential families of the Philippines, and these contacts helped to enforce the valuable contribution of the Jewish community to Manila's cultural and educational life.

When the Japanese were driven from the Philippines by the American forces in 1945, the destruction of Manila rivaled the destruction of Warsaw,<sup>8</sup> and other European cities devastated by bomb warfare. The city once known as the "Pearl of the Orient" was reduced to a pile of rubble.<sup>9</sup> The decimation of Manila depleted the Jewish community, as the vast majority of its citizens immigrated to the United States after their liberation, as did Cantor Cysner in 1946. He became a valued servant to the Jewish communities of San Francisco and then San Diego, until

his untimely death due to coronary arrest in 1961 at the age of 48. This paper seeks to document his remarkable story of survival and service against the harsh background of war, from Polish citizen and Zbaszyn survivor to Manila cleric and Japanese prisoner to post-war immigrant and American cantor. His story of confinement and deliverance is encompassed within the larger picture of how one small Jewish community in the Far East created an American Holocaust Haven, in spite of restrictive U.S. immigration laws and repressive Japanese policies.

### **U.S. Immigration Policies and the Refugee Question**

In order to understand the significance of Jewish immigration to the Philippines during this time, it is important to discuss it within the context of U.S. Immigration Laws and their application to the American Commonwealth of the Philippines. In the 1920s, following two centuries of unlimited immigration, the United States developed restrictionist policies that were spawned by economic conditions, postwar isolationism, and nationalistic racism.<sup>10</sup> On May 19, 1921, the U.S. Congress passed the Emergency Quota Act, which set immigration quotas and reflected racist theories that under laid the restrictionist movement for the next two decades.<sup>11</sup> The act enforced a quota number of 3% of any nationality resident in the U.S. according to the 1910 census.<sup>12</sup> By using the national origins totals of 1910, preference to immigration concentrated on Nordic countries, since national boundaries of the pre-WWI decade classified persons living in Germany and Hungary as "Romanians." The Romanian quota numbers were minuscule at best.<sup>13</sup> In essence, this percentage quota system, which was then lowered to 2% with the Johnson Immigration Act of 1924, severely limited immigration from southern, central, and eastern European countries that harbored most of Europe's Jews, while favoring immigration from the northwestern areas of Europe. The 1924 revisions placed an overall ceiling number at

approximately 165,000 immigrants—drastically reducing European immigration from over 800,000 in 1921 to less than 150,000 by the end of the decade.<sup>14</sup> Not only were the quota numbers reduced, but the criteria for qualification of refugees to obtain visas allowed anti-Semitic officials in both the State Department and the consular offices to deny visas to applicants based on selective interpretation of the laws. This resulted in the actual number of immigrants being far below the already reduced quota limits. These constraints, which were similarly imposed by many countries at the time, translated into disaster for the millions of Jews in Europe who faced encroaching Nazi anti-Semitic practices that demanded their "deportation"—a euphemism that soon translated into extermination.

America's immigration policies of the 1930s remained hostile to Jewish refugees. In spite of Germany's openly anti-Semitic Nuremberg Laws of 1935, the United States still resisted accepting more immigrants than the quotas for Germany allowed, even after over 500,000 German and Austrian Jews were declared stateless enemies by Hitler in 1935. As the Jewish refugee problem grew more acute, the United States, along with nations of Europe and Latin America, met in conference at Evian, France from July 6 to 15, 1938 to decide which countries could accept more Jewish refugees.<sup>15</sup> When Eastern European countries implied that they would like to deport their Jewish citizens as well, the manageable refugee numbers from Germany and Austria were suddenly augmented by over 3 million potential refugees from Eastern Europe. This was the kiss of death for any serious resolutions at the Evian Conference in favor of Germany's Jewish refugees. The Depression had strained economies, and the Western world simply could not, or would not, make room for that many more victims.<sup>16</sup> America's restrictive immigration policies remained unchanged, but Roosevelt did urge the State Department to allow

the immigration numbers to reach their fullest granted by the quota system. It is against the background of these events that the organized efforts of the Manila Jewish Community to save immigrant refugee Jews, as Cantor Cysner, are so remarkable.

### **From German Jew to Polish Refugee**

Joseph P. Cysner, the youngest of six children, was born in 1912 in Bamberg, Germany to Aaron and Johanna (Chaja in Hebrew) Cysner. Several factors within the political, economic, and social circumstances of Poland prior to World War I explain why many Polish Jews like the Cysner family lived in Germany at the time. Within a relatively short time period from the 1880s to the outbreak of World War I, these factors propelled an enormous migration of eastern European Jews to the West. Due to a disproportionately high birth rate among the eastern European Jewish population compared to the non-Jewish population, the Jewish people almost doubled their numbers in the fifty years between 1876 and 1925.<sup>17</sup> By 1914, three of the largest centers of Jewish population in the world were in Eastern Europe, and their rapidly increasing population created a surplus of people that could not be readily absorbed into the traditional Jewish occupations. Couple this phenomenon with the rise of anti-Semitic policies that resulted in organized pogroms as well as exclusionary economic regulations, and the result was the westward migration of more than 2.5 million Jews from eastern Europe just prior to World War I.<sup>18</sup> This resettlement of entire families to western European cities resulted in a Polish Jewish population of more than 50,000 in Germany and Austria alone. This demographic shift brought Polish families like the Cysners to think of Germany as their permanent home.

Following the demise of tsarist Russia and Austria-Hungary in WWI came the establishment of new states with new nationalities and cultural loyalties. Poland was reborn as an



independent nation. New boundaries created new trade walls that slowed economic recovery for the defeated larger nations, and hindered the development of viable economies in the smaller, newer states.<sup>19</sup> As long-standing ethnic groups tried to reconcile their cultural identity within new national territories, the Jewish minorities became more and more isolated and marginalized within their host societies. As Holocaust scholar Yehuda Bauer wrote:

in attempting to identify with nationalities who were fighting each other for control, Jews felt like outsiders; the foreignness of the Jew was emphasized—he was not a Pole, nor a German, a Czech, or a Slovak . . . none of the new nations saw the Jews as belonging to themselves.<sup>20</sup>

Jewish families, who were ostracized socially and excluded politically, were also ravaged economically. The decade following WWI and the establishment of the new state of Poland witnessed hundreds of thousands of Jews losing jobs and businesses, not due to the World economic crisis as much as to the growing anti-Semitism that looked for a scapegoat to blame for society's economic ills.<sup>21</sup>

Aaron and Johanna Cysner resettled from Poland to Vienna, Austria in the late 1880s, where five of seven children were born, one dying as an infant. They came to Bamberg, Germany just prior to the birth of their last two children—Henrietta sometime in 1908 to 1910 and Joseph in 1912. Aaron was a shoemaker by trade and, with six children, Chaja was a full-time homemaker. They were a close family of devote practicing Orthodox Jews. As the youngest, Joseph was the last child living at home during the early years of Hitler's rise to power. With the death of his father in 1937, Joseph assumed financial support of his mother for the remainder of his life. In 1935, the oldest sons, Ernst and Bartholdt, left for Palestine and never returned to Europe. Leopold moved to Hildesheim, married and immigrated before the war to the

United States. Henrietta and her husband stayed in Berlin until 1941 and then made their way to London. After the war they went to Los Angeles and from there left for Israel. Charlotte and her husband, Henry Kahan, died in Auschwitz.<sup>22</sup>

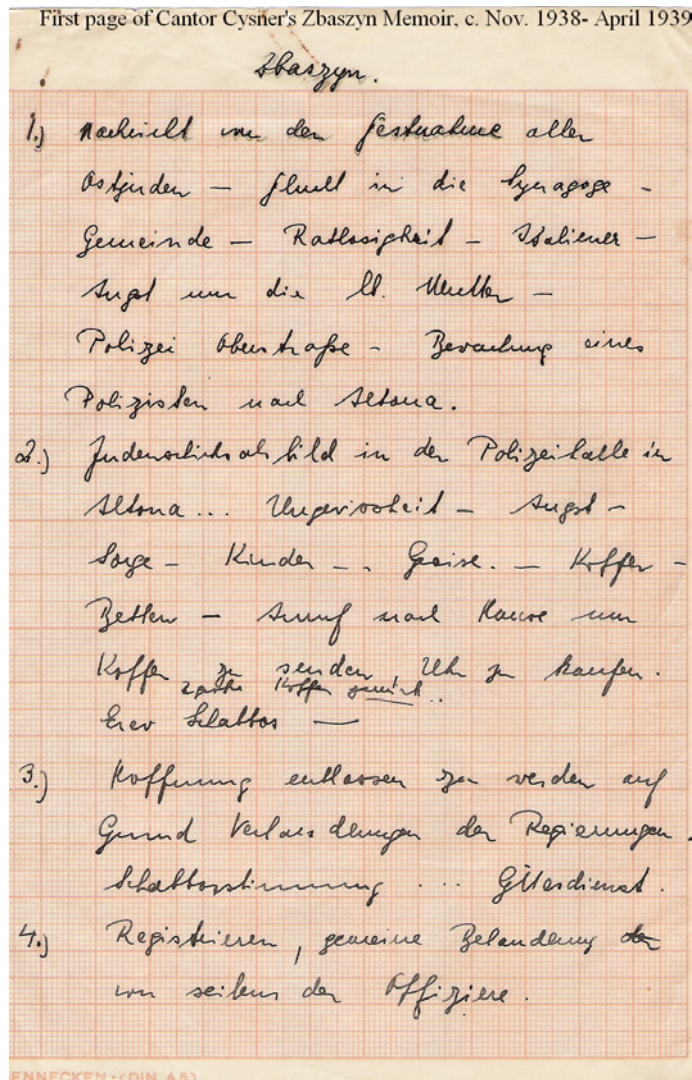
Joseph entered the Israelitische Lehrerbildungsanstalt (Jewish Teachers College) in Würzburg, Germany in 1929 and graduated in 1933, the year Hitler came into power. The college was founded in 1864 as a Teachers College with strictly orthodox orientation that provided training for teachers in Jewish elementary schools and for cantors in the numerous rural Jewish communities. It was the only Jewish Teachers College in the German Reich from 1864 until its closure during the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 1938.<sup>23</sup> After his graduation, Cantor Cysner's first appointment was in a small Jewish community near Hanover, Germany called Hildesheim, which claimed a Jewish population of only 790 in 1933.<sup>24</sup> But the significance of Cysner's work there cannot be understated. At Hildesheim his acquaintance with Rabbi Schwarz was crucial to the sequence of events that would eventually deliver him from the limbo of a Polish border camp in the spring of 1939.

The circumstances of the displaced Polish Jews residing in Germany took a horrifying turn in the late 1930s, resulting from the empowerment of Hitler's National Socialist German Worker's Party in 1933. An early manifestation of Hitler's anti-Semitic practices that would eventually devastate European Jewry was the Nazi party's anti-Jewish demonstration and one-day boycott of Jewish businesses on April 1, 1933.<sup>25</sup> With the implementation of the Nuremberg racial laws in 1935, which deprived all Jews of German citizenship, Hitler's vitriolic anti-Semitism became national policy as Jews were officially declared non-Germans without rights, and unwelcome guests of Germany.<sup>26</sup> Thus began Hitler's campaign to rid his Third Reich of any

Jewish presence, whether German citizens or not.

This campaign translated into dire consequences for Germany's large population of Polish Jews, to which Cantor Cysner belonged. A change in political leadership in Poland in 1935 brought about more restrictions against the Jews and prevented them from practicing their trades and professions.<sup>27</sup> These conditions, along with Polish pogroms in 1936 and 1937, motivated many more Jews to leave Poland, only to find countries closing their doors to Jewish immigration. By 1938, countries such as Britain, France, Switzerland, Brazil, and the United States imposed stricter quotas, and hopes for escape faded fast for the 3,250,000 Jews suffering in Poland.<sup>28</sup> The Polish Jews in Germany found themselves between the proverbial rock and a hard place, as neither Germany nor Poland wanted them and there were virtually no opportunities to emigrate elsewhere.

In 1937, Cantor Cysner entered into a lifetime contract with the Hamburg synagogue that would last for only a few months. As the Nazi regime coerced its Jewish residents into leaving Germany, Poland initiated policies that were designed to counteract a feared extradition of Polish-Jewish émigrés from Germany back into Poland. In late March 1938, the Polish legislature issued new laws that revoked Polish citizenship from any citizen who had lived abroad continuously for over 5 years. This decree, along with others that followed in October, in essence would make the estimated 50,000 Polish Jews living in Germany and Austria stateless on the return date deadline of October 31 1938. Fully comprehending the intention of the Polish legislators, Hitler forced a mass deportation of Polish Jews across the German-Polish border on October 27 to 30, 1938, before the edict could become final. The events of this deportation brought Cysner's lifetime appointment as Cantor in Hamburg to an abrupt end.<sup>29</sup>



### Zbaszyn Survivor

In response to the Polish decree rescinding passports of Polish citizens abroad, the German Foreign Ministry directed the Gestapo to arrest and then to expel all Polish Jews living in Germany. Poland refused to accept the refugees and threatened to eject all German residents from Poland as a counter-measure. Nevertheless, Germany's forced expulsion began on October 26, 1938.<sup>30</sup> Sometime during his deportation and confinement experience, Cantor Cysner began writing down his memory of the events. The original German manuscript

has no dates, but from the paper, the language, and the penmanship, we can deduce that he began the memoir while he was interned at Zbaszyn. Paper type, ink, and handwriting demonstrate that the memoir was written on at least three different occasions, possibly more. The typewritten English version appears to have been composed from the German memoir in Manila, probably before the Japanese invasion. Cantor Cysner's English version recounted his experiences of October 26, 1938:

A well-planned action seals the fate of thousands of Polish Jews in Germany - a cruel and barbaric deportation brings sorrow and unhappiness to thousands of Jewish families. Over night

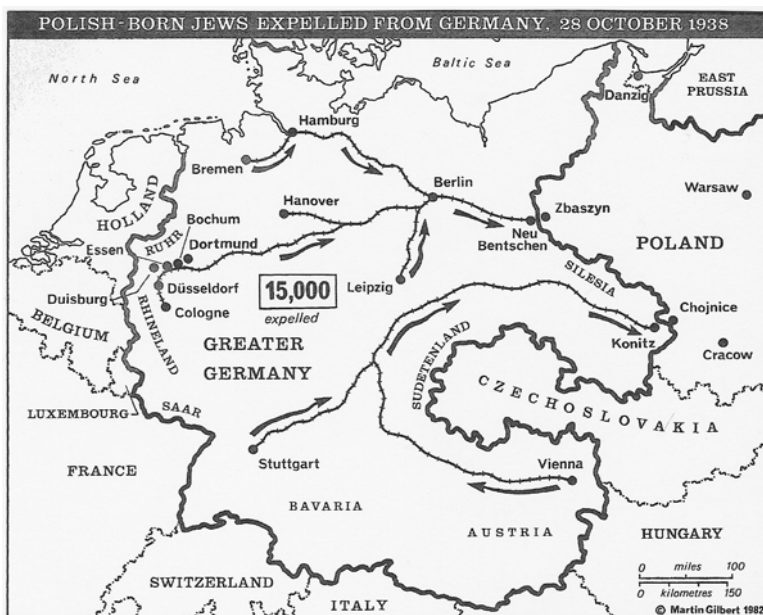
comes the command of the Gestapo and immediately the Polish Jews are rounded up and marched into a dark future, taken away from their houses and property, pushed around like animals by inhuman beings! Hamburg's Jewry is full of anxiety and excitement! Word spreads around [as] all the Polish Jews are rounded up, and coming home from the Temple I hear the shocking news from our neighbor. Not knowing what to do, as a policeman called for me in my absence, I go fearfully to the Temple and pray, hoping that my Mother will be saved and well! In my restlessness I go to the Consulate, where crowds await an answer from the Consul and not achieving anything there, I hasten to Dr. Italiener, who advises me to report to the police station and who assures me [he will] work for my early release. Being convinced to go this straight way, I return home, take my Tefillin and a prayerbook and go the heartbroken way to the police. Like a prisoner I am taken to Altona into a big hall where already hundreds of Jews are gathered, crying, praying, fearful what is going to happen next. A sorrowful picture! Old and sick people, children and babies are jammed into this hall awaiting their fate from the hands of the Nazis. It is Erev Shabbos, [Jewish Sabbath] and a tragedy of being dragged away from the places of worship into a place of horror. Everybody is guessing what will happen - the chance of being freed in a few hours dwindles more and more . . . Rough policemen force us to line up for registration and beat the Jews in their savage manner. Every hope of being released is gone when the darkness comes and we are loaded like animals into police wagons, which move fast through the streets of Altona, heading for the station. There we are unloaded, lined up again and with four dry pieces of bread in our hands, we are packed into compartments. The cries and weeping increase as we all feel the uncertainty of that train ride, the fateful hour in our life, which is in the hands of the Gestapo . . . We do not know where we go - we only guess - to Poland, to the border! Our train passes numerous other trains moving in the same direction and tears roll down my cheeks when I see frightful faces pressed against the windows - and suddenly my name sounds out of the darkness: Mr. Beim from Hildesheim recognizes me from another train and his voice trembles with fear.<sup>31</sup>

Thus began Cantor Cysner's extraordinary odyssey of repeated confinement and deliverance. Of the 50,000 Polish Jews residing in Germany and Austria at that time, at most 17,000 were forcibly expelled. 2000 of them were children.<sup>32</sup> Trainloads of refugees were unloaded at the Polish border and forced at gunpoint to march into Poland, where they again found weapons pointed at them from the opposite direction, halting their advance. Cysner's words described the scene:

In the early morning we reach Benchen, the city on the Polish border. We are told to leave the train and again [we are] lined up, searched if we have more than 10.00 Mark with us. For hours we stand around and while we shiver in the cold the endless column of Jews [are] forced to march, escorted by the military police with fixed bayonets. . . Children can hardly walk anymore - old people collapse on the way - but on goes the column of Polish Jews, driven by the Nazi beasts and beaten and threatened with the bayonet if they refuse to move on! Left and right are fields and woods...it is evident that we are to be driven and expelled to Poland! Turning around I see the suffering of a persecuted people, defenseless and weak, exposed to the cruelty of the

Nazis. . . For hours and hours we drag ourselves along through the rough highways and we approach a little house that stands right before the border - we reached Nomansland. The soldiers shout their orders and stand in groups, ready to do their job of chasing us with their bayonets over the border. On the other side you can clearly see the Polish border police, a few men [who] are quite puzzled to see such a mass facing them. The following phase is the most tragic one of that historic event. The soldiers amuse themselves, pushing us into Nomansland . . . And threaten to kill everyone who retreats . . . There is no alternative than to cross the Polish border, but we are between two rows of bayonets and nobody dares to move forward or backward. Men, women, children, and babies cry and scream at this moment of despair . . . a wall of people is moving back and forth, a terrific screaming fills the air and the SHMA [the holiest of all Jewish prayers] is uttered in this hour of danger. The pressure from the Germans increases more and more . . . Suddenly the Poles raise their guns and we are all told to lie down - then to stand up. Confusion makes the people more afraid and frightened. The minutes of that pushing and pressing seem like hours! I observe people looking for a place to run over and suddenly inspired by an inner voice I take a chance and take my little luggage and the violin of Dr. Broches and run...run...run right through the space between two guards into the woods.<sup>33</sup>

Cysner then recounts how a young girl, one of his former students from Hamburg, recognized him and ran with him, because she had been separated from her parents in the chaos. Both Cantor Cysner and his young student ran several meters over the border to a road, evading a policeman searching the area on a bicycle. Cysner noticed a vehicle approaching on the roadway and called out for their help. He and his young student joined this transport of Hanover refugees heading for the Polish border town of Zbaszyn.



From late October 1938 until August 1939, the relocation camp of Zbaszyn housed the majority of the Jews who had been expelled from Germany.<sup>34</sup> Other refugee camps were opened, but the largest was at Zbaszyn, which primarily housed refugees from Berlin,

Hamburg, Leipzig, and Rhineland cities such as Düsseldorf and Cologne. Refugees from Austria and the Sudetenland were deported to the German border-town of Konitz and displaced at its Polish neighbor-town of Chojnice. In what came to be called the Zbaszyn Deportation, the first forced extradition of Jews from Nazi Germany swelled this small village of 6,000 inhabitants in the Polish province of Poznan with 10,000 Jewish refugees, nearly tripling its population. Taken by surprise, the Polish authorities forced the internment of the hastily deposited Jewish refugees in Zbaszyn because of its proximity to the border. They hoped that the Jews' temporary status would facilitate negotiations for their return to Germany. Abandoned in obscurity and near destitution, the refugees were left to find their own shelter.<sup>35</sup> In many cases the only accommodations available were barns, stables, and even pigsties. Escape attempts were punishable by death.

Aid soon arrived from Warsaw and the deportees were eventually housed in army barracks and buildings surrounding a flour mill. Cantor Cysner's memoir recorded the dismal state of housing conditions:

Thousands of Jews from all over Germany are already assembled and the picture I see is a typical page of Jewish History: Geluth, [exile] deportations, suffering . . . Barracks are all around a desperate crowd - here and there trunks and blankets are lying around. Bearded Jews are praying fervently and the expression in their faces tells of their sorrows and hope. Hungry and thirsty we move around the big compound, looking for friends, inquiring what cities are represented . . . For days and nights registration is going on, every time somewhere else and every time by another official. [A] few people escape into the interior of Poland, but the majority are concentrated in Zbaszyn. After [a] few days a strict [rule] forbids any [to] move out of the village. We sleep in barracks like horses, crowded in stalls and resting on straw, living on a little bread and butter. The Hildesheimer family Beim takes good care of me and whenever there is somewhere something to eat they share it with me. Hundreds are sleeping in our barracks and try to get some rest while voices are whispering and babies are crying . . . Not being able to sleep in this unbearable atmosphere, I stroll around the camp, move over resting bodies, stumble over trunks. I get some fresh air and pass by the railway station, where a great number of Jews warm themselves and lie all around the halls. You hardly can find your way through, such a mass of unhappy people. Strange enough, but human, many Jews think that there is a chance of returning to Germany and many cables were received from there expressing the same hope. Rabbi Dr. Italiener sent me also

an encouraging cable. Joy and happiness suddenly prevails-optimism creates an atmosphere of hope-till the day of the killing of Rath by Grünsplan, whose parents and sister are in the same camp.<sup>36</sup>

Cantor Cysner's hope for freedom from confinement at Zbaszyn evaporated with the tragic shooting in Paris of the German Embassy official Ernst vom Rath by a distraught Jewish youth named Herschel Grynszpan on November 7, 1938.<sup>37</sup>

It has been termed the day the Holocaust began,<sup>38</sup> when Nazi officials seized on the Grynszpan incident as justification for the mass destruction of Jewish property and synagogues throughout Germany. Ben Austin, Holocaust educator, remarks:

The assassination provided Goebbels, Hitler's Chief of Propaganda, with the excuse he needed to launch a pogrom against German Jews. Grynszpan's attack was interpreted by Goebbels as a conspiratorial attack by "International Jewry" against the Reich and, symbolically, against the Führer himself. This pogrom has come to be called *Kristallnacht*, "The Night of Broken Glass."<sup>39</sup>

The centrally invoked violence left over 267 synagogues destroyed, along with an estimated 7,500 Jewish businesses burned or looted. By November 30, 1938, approximately 30,000 Jews had been arrested and sent to concentration camps. Nearly 100 died that night—some of the early casualties of the European Holocaust, along with the victims of the Zbaszyn Deportation.<sup>40</sup>

Cantor Cysner recorded their despair from this news:

The [Yiddish] papers report the destruction of the synagogues in Germany and the rounding up of all Jews and we know that the return is impossible. Not even into Poland are we allowed to travel—they have enough Jews there, they do not like any more! And Zbaszyn develops into a Jewish center, a community of its own with all its organizations. A polish village turns over night into a lively city of active Jews, who try to help each other and uplift each [in] the hour of grief.<sup>41</sup>

Resigned to an indefinite internment, the refugees at Zbaszyn formed committees that planned and implemented educational and cultural activities, in which Cantor Cysner played an integral part. He continued to perform his cantorial responsibilities, which included, among other duties,



performing marriages. A photograph from the Cysner collection in the JHSSD archives documents the wedding of Max and Rosi Schliesser, married by Cysner in December 1938.

Cantor Cysner standing behind Max & Rosi Schliesser, Zbaszyn, Dec. 1938



Emmanuel Ringelblum, who was one of those assisting with aid from Warsaw, tells how the Zbaszyn Township was set up. It had:

departments for supplies, hospitalization, carpentry workshops, tailors, shoemakers, books, a legal section, a migration department, and an independent post office . . . a welfare office, a court of arbitration, an organizing committee, open and secret control services, a cleaning service, and a complex sanitation service.<sup>42</sup>

Ringelblum explains further how cultural activities included classes in Yiddish and Polish, with educational facilities such as a reading room, a library, and a Talmud Torah religious school. The internees also enjoyed concerts and the formation of a choir, assisted by Cantor Cysner, who taught singing classes in camp. Many of the refugees faced internment for nearly a year. Cysner told of his 6 months spent in Zbaszyn:

Courses of all subjects are introduced and I am very successful with my music classes. The kids like to sing and forget all their worries and at the same time learn music and its moral and ethical value. Those children whose parents can not take care of them are sheltered in a big stadium under the supervision of young and experienced teachers . . . They have good food and all the privileges they need and plays and other programs prove the good job that is done in such a short period. One of the most impressive features is also an Oneg Shabbat on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor and singing spirited and inspiring Jewish songs. A discussion about current problems gives that evening a high level. All different organizations unite in that affair and one could feel the spark of Chaverut, of brotherhood!<sup>43</sup>

By the end of 1938, the camp began to close down in stages and negotiations between Poland and Germany concerning the disposition of the Jewish refugees broke off in January 1939. Some of the fugitives obtained permits to live with relatives in Poland, and some were lucky enough to obtain emigration visas to other countries. Refugees were often at the mercy of the consular officers who issued the visas. Jock Netzorg, former member of the Jewish Community of Manila, relates that when "consular staff was friendly to the Jewish people, Jews got out, and where they shrugged their shoulders, Jews did not get out."<sup>44</sup> Other refugees were granted temporary permits to return to Germany, settle their affairs, gather their family members, and then return to Poland. Some of this group were still in Germany when war with Poland broke out on September 1, 1939. Many then found themselves interned in other circumstances. A unique turn of events saved Cantor Cysner from the horrors of one of these other camps. He recounted his last days in Zbaszyn:

Half a year passes quickly and every week has another attraction, another experience that forms our personality. Naturally everybody is working to be released soon and emphasizing his immigration. Numerous Chaverim go illegally to Palestine, led by Shelichim, who came from Palestine to liberate them. The news that I am called to Manila as cantor gives me more confidence and hope. The formalities for getting the visa give me a chance to see Warsaw for a few days and – imagine - all by myself without a guard as originally planned - but I have to make a number of pictures, just in case I [run] away . . . In the middle of April I have all my papers fixed and am permitted to stay four weeks in Germany to arrange my transportation. The committee for the refugees, as well as all the teachers, gives me a fine farewell party, handing me a precious certificate for the services I rendered. Teachers and children accompany me to the railway station and I feel honored and proud to have worked so successfully and to have given to

my students and to the Jews in distress ideas that strengthen, prayers that uplift, songs that enlighten. The train rolls out of the station and hundreds wave their hands with Shalom and Berache on their lips and we pass that thornful and tearful road that we walked months ago - and with prayers of gratefulness and gratitude for my salvation and those of my brothers and sisters I head for a new world.<sup>45</sup>

Cantor Cysner left this refugee camp imprisonment and found a new world freedom in the Far Eastern community of Manila.

### **History of Jews in the Philippines**

Answering the obvious question as to how Cantor Cysner found himself serving at a synagogue in the Philippines in 1939 begs for some contextual understanding as to why a synagogue existed there at all. The history of the Jewish Community in Manila has roots that go all the way back to the Spanish Inquisition of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when many Jews of Spain, who were forcibly converted to Christianity, observed their Jewish life in secret, and found themselves tried, convicted, and expelled for heretical behavior. Known as Marranos or "New Christians," these Crypto-Jews accompanied Spanish adventurers who settled in the island republic of the Philippines in S. E. Asia.<sup>46</sup> Jonathan Goldstein, professor of history at Harvard University, who recently authored a paper on Jewish merchant ports in the Far East, offered the following:

The "New Christian" brothers Jorge and Domingo Rodriguez are the first Jews who are recorded to have arrived in the Spanish Philippines. They reached Manila in the 1590s. By 1593 both were tried and convicted at an auto-da-fe in Mexico City because the Inquisition did not have an independent tribunal in the Philippines. The Inquisition imprisoned the Rodriguez brothers and subsequently tried and convicted at least eight other "New Christians" from the Philippines.<sup>47</sup>

Such was the precarious status of the first Jewish settlers in the Philippines. The progression of the Jewish presence in these islands during the subsequent centuries of Spanish colonization remained small and unorganized. John Griese, who authored a Master's thesis in 1954 on the

Jewish Community of Manila, maintained that "Spanish law would not have permitted an organized Jewish religious life,"<sup>48</sup> so they practiced Judaism in secret.

The first permanent settlement of Jews in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial years began with the arrival of three Levy brothers from Alsace-Lorraine, who were escaping the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. As entrepreneurs, their business ventures over the years included jewelry retail, a general merchandising business, and import trade in gems, pharmaceuticals, and eventually automobiles. The opening of the Suez Canal in March 1869 provided a more direct trading route between Europe and the Philippines, which allowed traders to exchange manufactured goods for raw materials.<sup>49</sup> Businesses grew and the number of Jews in Manila grew as well. The Levy brothers had been joined by Turkish, Syrian, and Egyptian Jews, creating a multi-ethnic community of about fifty individuals by the end of the Spanish period.<sup>50</sup> It was not until the Spanish-American war at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the United States took control of the islands from Spain in 1898, that the Jewish community started to advance in the "first and only official American colony in history."<sup>51</sup>

When the Philippines became an American concern, this created opportunities for American Jewish citizens to take advantage of this new frontier. The arrival of American military forces to the Philippines brought a few Jewish servicemen who decided to remain in the islands after their military discharge and become permanent residents. Jewish teachers from the United States also arrived with a contingent of "Thomasites," a delegation of volunteer teachers, who gave public instruction to Filipino children. In 1901, 540 American teachers and some of their families boarded the U.S. Army Transport "Thomas" at San Francisco Pier, bound for the Philippines. Trained by prestigious institutions in the United States, these young men and

women were selected by the U.S. Civil Service Commission to establish a modern public school system in the newly acquired U.S. territory of the Philippines and to conduct all instruction in English. By 1902, the number of American teachers, labeled Thomasites, swelled to 1,074. In addition to education, new markets for import-export businesses attracted young Jewish businessmen, who set up new shops in the Philippines as well.

Two important names appear in the Jewish community at the turn of the century: Emil



Temple Emil, Manila, c. 1940

Bachrach and Morton I. Netzorg.

Annette Eberly, freelance author and Philippine resident, tells us

that Emil Bachrach arrived in Manila in 1901 and soon "built a commercial empire of fairly substantial proportions."<sup>52</sup>

Because he is regarded as the first American Jew who permanently settled in the Philippines, the synagogue and cultural hall,

which the Bachrach family financed in subsequent decades, bear his name: Temple Emil and

Bachrach Hall. Bachrach encouraged his extended family to resettle in the Philippines and to

experience the good life provided by this beautiful archipelago. Eberly, quoting Minna

Gabermann, Bachrach's niece, stated that living in Manila "was distinctly colonial and elegant in those days. It had a special air of a sumptuous, civilized world."<sup>53</sup> Bachrach's economic

successes allowed him to be a generous philanthropist, who supported both Jewish and Christian causes. By 1918, twenty years after the Americans took over the Philippines, the Manila Jewish community totaled about 150 people, including a number of Russian Jews who sought asylum from the white pogroms of the Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>54</sup>

In 1911, the Jewish community in the Philippines gained one of its most important families, Morton I. Netzorg and his wife, Katherine. They came from the United States and joined the Philippine public school teacher corps of Thomasites.<sup>55</sup> Their son, Morton "Jock" Netzorg, was born February 4, 1912 in the town of Nueva Caceres. His memoirs, written in 1987, relate the many business ventures the family built and the educational influence they had on the lives of the children of Manila's most prestigious families. When asked by an interviewer on March 4, 1987 why his parents had remained in the Philippines, he responded: "It was a much more civilized place than the United States for people of their temperament."<sup>56</sup> Jock maintained that his father considered his most important deed in the Philippines to have been "bringing refugees out of Hitler's Germany."<sup>57</sup> Indeed, Morton I. Netzorg played a vital role in saving the life of Cantor Cysner.

According to Jock Netzorg, businesses from the American mainland began to arrive with increasing volume in 1920. Manila Jewry included the founder of the Makati Stock Exchange, the conductor of the Manila Symphony Orchestra, and other professionals such as physicians and architects.<sup>58</sup> The Frieder brothers, another instrumental family in saving German-Jewish refugees in the late 1930s, arrived in 1921 and expanded their family's state-side cigar business into a lucrative venture in Manila. Economic prosperity, along with a high level of societal interaction, precluded the need for strong Jewish institutions. Eberly describes their Jewish society:

There was little Jewish flavor in this 19<sup>th</sup> century lifestyle of the very rich. The Jewish families did go to the Temple for special occasions, and the existence of the adjacent social hall [did] serve to centralize and focus Jewish interrelationships and concerns, but it was all very low-key.<sup>59</sup>

Even though Temple Emil was built in the 1920s primarily through the generous contributions of the Bachrachs, Netzorgs, and Frieders, the only services conducted on an annual basis were the High Holidays, when a visiting Rabbi or Cantor from Shanghai officiated the services.

Shanghai had two distinct Jewish communities in its history. The earlier was Sephardic Jewish merchants and the later was primarily Ashkenazi Jews, who were refugees from the wars and pogroms of Russia and of Nazi Europe. The Sephardic community developed there as a result of migrations of Jews from Baghdad (via India), which extended from the latter half of the 19th century to World War I. This group of approximately 700 included a number of prominent business families, but most were employees. An Ashkenazi community of Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe had settled in Shanghai as a result of four waves of migration, beginning in 1895 and ending in 1939. During these decades Jewish immigrants included ex-soldiers, political exiles, escapees from Siberian exile, adventurers, and refugees. The Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews each had their own synagogues. The Jewish community of Shanghai, formed initially under British rule, was a much larger version of its Pacific neighbor in Manila, which was an American colony. The Jewish community of Manila continued to gradually increase in size in the 1920s and early 1930s as businessmen and merchants from America and the Middle East, along with political refugees from Russia and other parts of Europe, began filtering into the Far East.<sup>60</sup>

By 1936, the Jewish community in the Philippines had a distinctly cosmopolitan makeup with a total population of about 500 persons. The threat to European Jewry by the Nazi government in the 1930s sparked a renewed Jewish consciousness. The small, decentralized and

secularly-minded Jewish Community of Manila took heroic steps to save its fellow Jews from sure destruction. As Bachrach's niece Gaberman told Eberly in 1975: "We only really became Jewish-conscious in a deep way when this terrible threat came out of Europe, and suddenly there were Jews in desperate need of help."<sup>61</sup>

### **U.S. / Philippine Institutions**

Appreciating the accomplishment of the Jewish Refugee Committee of Manila in rescuing hundreds of Jews from Europe requires an understanding of the political atmosphere and bureaucratic machinery of its host country, the Philippines, and its supreme overseer, the United States Government. Upon the acquisition of the territories ceded to the United States by Spain in 1898, the U.S. government created an agency on December 13, 1898 called the Division of Customs and Insular Affairs within the Office of the Secretary of War. This agency was charged with all customs issues and civil affairs pertaining to the Islands of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines.<sup>62</sup> The name of the agency was changed in 1900 to Division of Insular Affairs, and then changed again in 1902 by the Philippine Bill to Bureau of Insular Affairs, which administered over all civil governments in the U. S. island possessions and was subject to jurisdiction of the War Department.<sup>63</sup> The Bureau of Insular Affairs administered the civil government of the Philippines continuously for the entire 41 years of its existence. It primarily served as an advisory liaison between the governments in the Philippines and in the United States.

The highest local governmental authority in the islands was the Philippine Commission, which was dominated by American appointees until 1913. The chairman of the Commission was the American Governor-General of the Philippines, who was appointed by the President of the



United States and was regarded as the chief executive of the colonial administration. Included in this executive level was a Vice-Governor, four secretaries heading executive departments, members of the Philippine Commission, and members of the Philippine Supreme Court, all appointed by the President with the consent of the U.S. Senate. The Philippine Commission had the task of putting a modern civilian government into place that literally wiped away 300 years of Spanish feudalism. Nearly 500 statutes established a code of law, a judicial system, and elected municipal and provincial governments. A second, lower house of the Philippine Commission, called the Philippine Assembly, was comprised of eighty Filipino members elected by popular vote. America's colonial era in the Philippines allowed the Filipinos an ever increasing share in the operation of their own government. The Jones Act of 1916, which carried forward provisions of the Organic Act of 1902, provided for an elected Philippine Senate to replace the appointed Philippine Commission and the former Philippine Assembly was renamed the Philippine House of Representatives. However, the Governor-General of the executive branch remained an appointed position by the U.S. President until the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth, which was inaugurated on November 15, 1935.<sup>64</sup>

The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, also called The Philippine Independence Act, outlined the terms of the Philippine Commonwealth and its ten year transition period into the fully independent Republic of the Philippines, which was predetermined for July 4, 1946. The Tydings-McDuffie Act authorized the Philippine Legislature, now one body called the National Assembly, to draft a constitution for the government of the Commonwealth.<sup>65</sup> The executive power of the new government centered in an elected Filipino President, as stipulated by Article VII of the Commonwealth Constitution, which was ratified on May 14, 1935. Another important

provision of the Tydings-McDuffie Act was the creation of the Office of the U.S. High Commissioner to the Philippines. The U.S. High Commissioner had no direct administrative powers in the Philippines, but was concerned primarily with protecting American interests in the new commonwealth nation. This office superseded that of the American Governor-General. The relationship between these newly invested offices and the U.S. War Department was never really clarified until Philippine Supreme Court Justice George A. Malcolm composed an official statement to the High Commissioners Office on January 9, 1939. His official opinion clarified "the relationship of the office of the High Commissioner to the Philippine Islands and the War Department."<sup>66</sup>

Malcolm's treatise explained that three agencies were provided to act as representatives of the President of the United States in the execution of his duties as the supreme commander over the Islands of the Philippines, as provided by the Tydings-McDuffie Act. In the Philippines proper, that representative was the U.S. High Commissioner to the Philippines. At the U.S. Capital, as pertaining to the foreign affairs of the Philippines, that agency was the Office of Philippine Affairs within the Department of State. Certain other affairs of the Philippines continued to be administered by the Secretary of War through the Bureau of Insular Affairs. All three of these executive representative agencies played a significant role in the immigration of Jewish refugees to the Philippines.

The Office of Philippine Affairs within the State Department was created on December 12, 1936, for the sole purpose of carrying out the directives of the State Department as pertaining to foreign affairs issues in the Philippines. Whenever situations demanded communication between the Philippines and the State Department concerning immigration, the practice was to

transmit the message to the War Department via the Bureau of Insular Affairs, who would then forward the message to the designated agency, whether that was the High Commissioner or the Office of Philippine Affairs. In this manner, the Secretary of State advised the High Commissioner of the Philippines on issues of foreign affairs, and "the views of the Secretary of State [were] accepted as conclusive."<sup>67</sup> Within just a few months of Malcolm's official opinion, the functions of the Bureau of Insular Affairs were transferred to the Department of the Interior on July 1, 1939, and combined with those of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions.<sup>68</sup> It was nearly 40 years after the cessation of hostilities between United States forces and revolutionaries of the Spanish-American War that the Philippines were no longer under any jurisdiction of the U.S. War Department.

### **An American Holocaust Haven**

It was during the era of the Philippine Commonwealth, 1935-1946, that Jewish refugees from Europe sought safe harbor in the port city of Manila. The migration of Jews escaping Europe between 1935 and 1941, which included Cantor Cysner and his mother, was the last major immigration of Jews to the Philippines. The first German Jews of this period to arrive in Manila did not come directly from Europe, but rather from the Jewish community in Shanghai.<sup>69</sup> With the renewal of hostilities between the Japanese and Chinese in 1937, which resulted in the occupation of Peking by Japanese forces, the four million inhabitants of Shanghai were potentially endangered. Germany's shift of alliance from China to Japan at this time alarmed German Jews in Shanghai, as they feared German pressure on Japan to adopt Nazi discriminatory policies. The Manila Jewish community feared for them as well, and the Jewish Refugee Committee of Manila (JRC), comprised of influential and affluent American members

of the Jewish community, formed with the intention of rescuing German members of the Shanghai Jewish community. These Jews had already been deprived of their German citizenship, and the Gestapo presence that was taking root in Japanese areas threatened Jewish existence in Shanghai as well.

When the Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, the JRC received a telegram from Shanghai asking for assistance for Shanghai's refugee Jews. Immediately a sum of \$8000 was raised by the small Jewish community at Manila, but before the money could be dispatched, it was determined that the wealthier Sephardic Jews of Shanghai were in a position to care for the needs of the refugees on their own. The JRC, under the leadership of Philip Frieder in Manila, decided to hold the funds in escrow to meet some future need. In a memorandum of a conversation on November 28, 1938 in New York City between Joseph Hyman, director of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and Morris Frieder, brother to Philip Frieder of Manila, it was recorded that Manila had received 30 German Jewish refugee families from Shanghai:

The German government sent a boat to Shanghai to remove all German nationals from the war zone. In so doing they also took aboard about 30 German Jewish families. All of these German nationals, including the refugees, were deposited in Manila and the German government signed an agreement with the [Philippine] government to the effect that these people removed from the war zone would not become public charges. At that time the German Consul in the Philippines suggested to Mr. Philip Frieder that it would be well for the Jewish community to take charge of the German Jewish refugees. This suggestion was adopted and the refugees were placed in various Jewish homes and eventually jobs were found for all of them.<sup>70</sup>

This rescue established a precedent for a later immigration program in Manila that would involve efforts to also rescue members of Europe's Jewish communities—efforts that saved Cantor Cysner and over 1000 others.<sup>71</sup>

The rescue of German Jews from Shanghai came to the attention of the Refugee Economic

Corporation (REC),<sup>72</sup> which was headquartered in New York City, by way of the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden (HDJ), the Association for the Aid of Jews in Germany. The REC was founded on November 20, 1934 and specialized in creating Jewish settlements in countries that agreed to absorb Jewish refugees. When the German aid association for Jewish refugees (HDJ) learned that German Jews had found asylum in Manila, information spread rapidly to the REC that the Philippines could be a safe haven for further Jewish immigration. Thus began the notable correspondence between Charles Liebman and Bruno Schachner of the REC in New York, with Paul V. McNutt, the U. S. High Commissioner for the Philippines Commonwealth, Philip Frieder, of the successful merchant family in the Philippines and director of the Jewish Refugee Committee in Manila, and Joseph Hyman, the Executive Director of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), also headquartered in New York. The JDC, founded in 1914 to provide relief for Jews in Palestine and Eastern Europe, was the primary organization for the distribution of funds from the American Jewish community to Jews in Germany. It had a virtual monopoly on overseas aid. A general trend in American Jewry against unification of Jewish relief organizations existed during the years between the world wars. These agencies divided into Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox persuasions, along with innumerable political, social, and cultural distinctions. Therefore different Jewish relief agencies, all seeking for more information on immigration opportunities in the Philippines, pressed the Philippines for answers to their inquiries.<sup>73</sup>

Liebman of the REC dispatched a message sometime in the early months of 1938 to McNutt, High Commissioner of the Philippines, inquiring "whether it would be possible to allow 100 German Jewish families to settle in the Philippines."<sup>74</sup> Commissioner McNutt took the

request to the leaders of the Jewish community in Manila, who convened conferences to discuss the proposition.<sup>75</sup> McNutt informed the synagogue members that "if the Jewish community could assume the responsibility for these families, he would be glad to allow them to enter."<sup>76</sup> As McNutt himself wrote on May 18, 1938, "the Commonwealth officials [were] quite sympathetic to the idea of receiving those who can be absorbed."<sup>77</sup> Commissioner McNutt's willingness to work with the many agencies involved in this rescue effort was key to the success of the program.

McNutt's appointment as High Commissioner to the Philippines came in 1937 and he served in this capacity for two years—the most crucial years of Jewish Immigration into the Philippines. McNutt, when still in his mid-thirties, was appointed dean of the Indiana University law school and in 1932 he was elected governor of Indiana, the first Democratic governor after a long line of Republican governors. As governor, he built a political machine dedicated to his presidential ambitions. But when Franklin Roosevelt decided to forego presidential custom to retire after two terms, McNutt had to stand aside at the peak of his political career while FDR won a third and fourth term. After his service as High Commissioner, McNutt filled other governmental posts in the Roosevelt Administration and later returned to the Philippines as the first U.S. Ambassador to the New Republic in 1946.

From McNutt we learn that the quota act of the U.S. Immigration Laws of 1921 and 1924 did not apply to the Philippines.<sup>78</sup> With the inauguration of the Commonwealth era, the Philippines were exempted from the restrictive American immigration laws imposed by the U.S. Congress in 1924 because the Philippines were in the process of establishing autonomous rule. The Philippine Government would not write its own immigration laws until 1940. Therefore

during the first five years of the Commonwealth Government, the island nation had greater freedom in allowing refugee immigration.<sup>79</sup> Absorption of Jewish refugees into the Philippines was therefore dependent on the economic ability of the existing community to support the increasing population rather than an imposed quota limitation.

According to Commissioner McNutt, the Commonwealth officials planned to adopt and enforce those immigration policies that excluded aliens who were likely to become public charges. They had seen the poverty of the Shanghai community and felt that future immigration plans to receive potentially thousands of refugees depended on the economic contribution of the initial incoming refugees to the overall well-being of the Philippines. It was vital that they not become a drain on their host nation. Therefore the leaders of the Jewish community in Manila, led by the Frieder brothers, composed and sent to McNutt a list of needed professionals who could be absorbed immediately into the community. McNutt's correspondence reflected how sincerely he supported the efforts to rescue German Jews:

The members of the committee suggest that this list of approximately one hundred families be divided into three parts, and that the sailing be from thirty to sixty days apart. If the experiment with the first group is successful, then it may be possible to absorb another 100 families. . . . I am deeply interested in the solution of the problem of caring for political refugees and I am anxious to have any experiment in the Philippine Islands succeed.<sup>80</sup>

Whether McNutt's magnanimous position reflected a genuine altruistic attitude, or whether he felt it would serve some political or economic exigency, his cooperation was crucial.

Because Germany's emigration policies restricted the amount of assets that Jews could take out of the country to a mere ten marks, it was necessary for the different agencies involved with the rescue effort to support the incoming refugees until they could become self-supporting. McNutt informed Liebman that subsistence for a single person for a seventy-five day period

amounted to about \$50.00; \$75.00 for a family of two; and about \$90.00 for a family of three.<sup>81</sup>

Meanwhile, as the various agencies worked to put the program into play, refugees started arriving in Manila independently. Most were en route to Shanghai, but disembarked at Manila to seek asylum on American soil, hoping that residence there would lead to quota status for eventual immigration to the United States. The memorandum of the conversation held in New York on November 28, 1938 between Mr. Hyman of the JDC and Morris Frieder, brother to Phillip Frieder of Manila, summarized past events and the circumstances of the refugees:

Approximately 350 refugees have arrived in Manila independently. Most of these are totally without funds and are constituting a serious problem for the Jewish community there. There are, all told, about 60 Jewish families in Manila, (the American Jewish Yearbook lists the Jewish population of the Philippines as 500) of whom Mr. Frieder says there are only about 6 Jewish families who are in a position to contribute. It costs about .50 cents a day to maintain each of the 350 refugees there.<sup>82</sup>

Jock Netzorg told his interviewer, Michael Onorato, how the community practiced the principle of tithing to support the refugees who arrived before financial support was received from the JDC.<sup>83</sup> By this means the Jewish community of Manila raised on an average of \$2000-\$2500 monthly for the refugee rescue efforts. Once the initial funds were pledged by the REC in May 1938, notification about potential immigration for Jewish refugees was sent in early June 1938 by the REC in New York to the HDJ in Germany:

Gentlemen:

We are informed by the United States High Commissioner for the Philippine Islands, who in turn bases his opinion on information furnished him by leaders of the local Jewish community, that there could be absorbed in the Philippine Islands, within a relatively short time, the following persons:

- 20 Physicians, among whom should be one eye, ear, nose and throat specialist,  
one skin specialist, and one or two surgeons.
- 10 Chemical Engineers
- 25 Registered Nurses
- 5 Dentists, who should have their own equipment
- 2 Ortho-Dentists
- 4 Oculists



- 10 Auto Mechanics
- 5 Cigar and Tobacco Experts
- 5 Women Dressmakers, stylists
- 5 Barbers - men and women
- 5 Accountants
- 5 Film and Photograph Experts
- 20 Farmers

1 Rabbi, not over forty years of age, conservative, married and able to speak English. We are trying to organize the immigration of these people, and we should be indebted to you if you could meanwhile prepare a preliminary list of people meeting the requirements outlined above. As soon as we have completed arrangements, we will proceed with a final selection . . . In view of the delicacy of the negotiations involved, we expect you to keep this matter entirely confidential, and under no circumstances to give it any publicity whatsoever. . . <sup>84</sup>

For McNutt and others, it was vital that entrance into the Philippines follow a controlled organized plan so that indiscriminate immigration would not overload the community and scuttle the plan.

McNutt urged State Department officials to halt all visa applications into the Philippines, except for those who would receive approval for immigration according to this plan. The McNutt-Frieder program, as it will be referred to hereafter, was a prime example of Jews selecting Jews for eventual escape from Europe.

After the McNutt-Frieder list began circulating through synagogues in Germany, applications from German candidates began pouring into the REC, which forwarded them to the Philippines, where a three man committee from the Jewish community, led by Frieder, evaluated them. The committee checked their prerequisites for immigration, including current passports, applicant background information, former professional or other activities, available funds to offer temporary sustenance, and the likelihood of eventual successful assimilation into the current community. When the committee had the assurances it needed, it recommended the issuance of visas by name and address of the applicants in the form of an affidavit, which Commissioner McNutt then radioed in code to the War Department via the Bureau of Insular Affairs. The War Department then forwarded the translated communiqué to the State

Department, who then contacted the appropriate consuls in Europe requesting that they issue visas for the named refugees.<sup>85</sup> In this manner, immigration of Jewish refugees into the Philippines was largely under the control of the Jewish Community in Manila, which did all that they could to accommodate as many applicants as possible.

In June 1938, Frieder told the REC that "if money were available, the Philippines could take in 200-300 people monthly."<sup>86</sup> A later communiqué from Frieder again to the REC on October 31, 1938, the same day that Cantor Cysner and others were transported to the Polish border and then relocated to the detainee camp in Zbaszyn, illustrated the precarious position of the community, as immigrants arrived almost daily:

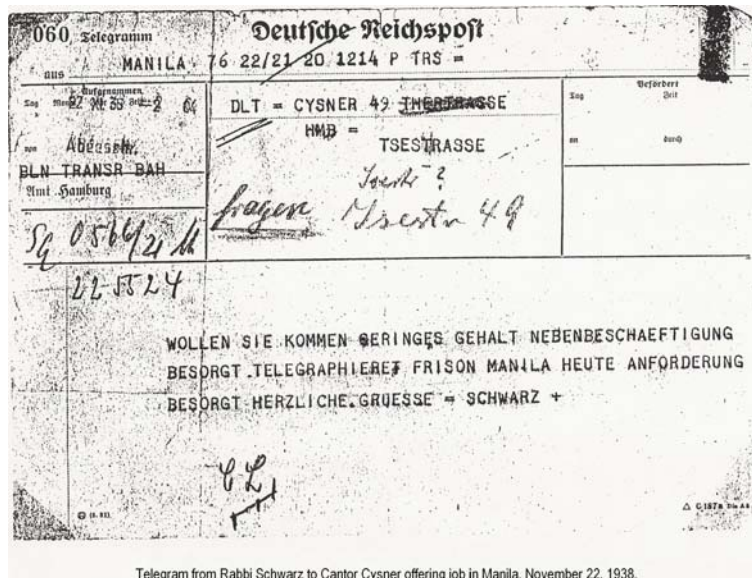
Every steamer that is coming here from Europe is bringing refugees without visas to enter the Philippine Islands. We do everything possible so that they can stay here but all this requires money as none of them have any funds whatsoever. Last week one of the Italian steamers brought 150 enroute to Shanghai. Fourteen of these remained. About fifteen did the same thing a few days before. We now have so many here that in a short time it will be impossible for us to take care of them. We are advised that another steamer, due this week, is bringing sixteen. We are placing them as fast as possible, but they cannot be absorbed so quickly. Therefore, we must support them and our small community here cannot do this. For this reason, I telegraphed you last week asking for financial assistance. The Philippines are still open, but it won't be long if these refugees are not taken care of without government assistance.<sup>87</sup>

This situation limited the ability of the Manila Jews to offer financial support for the masses of refugees that were soon to arrive from Europe. Funds from the other U.S. Jewish refugee organizations were crucial. The JDC allocated \$5000 in 1938, another \$5000 in 1939, and the REC also donated \$5000, all for the temporary support of refugee families immigrating to the Philippines.

The first wave of immigrants conforming to this McNutt-Frieder program began arriving in Manila in September 1938, with the anticipated arrival of a German Rabbi. Of foremost importance on the list was the request for a conservative Rabbi, who could speak English, was

married, and under the age of forty. When the list was circulated by the HDJ in Germany, a Rabbi named Joseph Schwarz from Hildesheim answered the call. Schwarz, who had worked with Cantor Cysner in 1933 to 1937, soon played a crucial role in bringing Cysner to Manila. Schwarz's settlement in the Philippines marked a historic moment, for he was the first ordained rabbi ever to reside and serve in the Philippines.<sup>88</sup> He faced a significantly diverse community of ethnicities, languages, cultures, religious practices, and especially economic status.

Bringing religious unity to this conglomerate of differences required the presence of an element of worship that promoted uniformity. Rabbi Schwarz urged the Temple's board of directors to create a position for a cantor to officiate at religious services and who would also teach Sunday School, train choirs, and organize other musical programs.<sup>89</sup> Having obtained



Telegram from Rabbi Schwarz to Cantor Cysner offering job in Manila, November 22, 1938.

permission, Rabbi Schwarz cabled his friend Cysner on November 22, 1938 at his last known place of employment, the Jewish Synagogue at Hamburg. Amazingly, the telegram made its way to Poland and found Cysner in Zbaszyn. The English translation read: "Do you

want to come? Modest Salary. Side jobs provided. Wire Manila today. Send response. Heartfelt greetings. Schwarz."<sup>90</sup> As Cysner worked to obtain the necessary papers to secure his release, from September 1938 till the end of 1939 the Jewish community at Manila continued receiving Jewish refugee families selected by Frieder's committee. When Cysner arrived in Manila in May

1939, the Philippine Jewish Community had been augmented by about 750 refugees, bringing the Jewish population to well over 1000, the largest number of Jews in Manila as yet ever assembled. The successful implementation of the McNutt-Frieder program inspired another venture that sought to assimilate over 10,000 refugee families on the Philippine Island of Mindanao.

### **Mindanao Resettlement Proposal**

A press conference held in Washington D.C on Wednesday, April 27, 1938, revealed the formation of an international committee to deal with Austrian and German refugees.<sup>91</sup> President Roosevelt called for the international conference shortly after Hitler annexed Austria in March 1938, which increased the refugee dilemma.<sup>92</sup> At President Roosevelt's behest, the first intergovernmental meeting on the political refugee crisis opened at Evian, France on July 6, 1938 to facilitate the emigration of refugees from Germany and Austria. Delegates from 32 countries met at the French resort to establish an international organization to work for an overall solution to the refugee problem. Roosevelt chose Myron C. Taylor, a businessman and close friend, to represent the U.S. at the conference. The American committee of this international contingency was commissioned to "do as much as possible in this country through private organizations and groups for the refugees."<sup>93</sup> During the nine-day meeting, delegates from all the nations expressed sympathy for the refugees but offered plausible excuses for refusing to increase their immigration quotas. The Evian Conference offered little or no relief for the refugees.

However, one positive outcome of this international conference was the organization of the new Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees (IGC) in August 1938.<sup>94</sup> The IGC's

main purpose, as stipulated by the text of the resolution adopted on July 14, 1938 at the Evian Conference, was to "improve the present conditions of exodus and to replace them with conditions of orderly emigration," and to "approach the governments of the countries of refuge with a view to developing opportunities for permanent settlement."<sup>95</sup> The committee's pleas to the international community to relax immigration restrictions in order to fulfill its resolution fell on deaf ears and the IGC declined into inactivity. Even America's immigration quotas remained immutable due to political pressures by congressional restrictionists. Apparent anti-Semitic attitudes held by U.S. State Department officials played a role in the failure to admit more refugees. Because of the Great Depression, many Americans also believed that refugees would take away their jobs and overburden U. S. social assistance programs for the needy.

With the Zbaszyn deportations in October 1938, followed by the massive destruction of Jewish life and property during the *Kristallnacht* pogroms in November, American public opinion, sympathizing with the refugee issue, prodded Roosevelt to press the IGC for results.<sup>96</sup> The attention of the IGC focused on several potential havens of rescue for the growing refugee problem. A radio address on November 25, 1938 by Myron C. Taylor, Vice Chairman of the IGC and leader of the American delegation to the Evian Conference, revealed that the director of the IGC, George Rublee, had been actively conducting a world-wide search for possible places of settlement.<sup>97</sup> By December 1938, more than fifty different worldwide resettlement projects had been proposed for investigation.<sup>98</sup> The Philippines, along with Alaska, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Palestine, were among the more than fifty different worldwide resettlement projects proposed for investigation.<sup>99</sup> The irony is that these resettlement considerations transpired at the same time that Cantor Cysner and 10,000 other displaced Jews

languished in Zbaszyn.

On Dec. 2, 1938, prior to the London IGC meeting scheduled for January 1939, J. E. Jacobs, Chief of the Office of Philippine Affairs and acting for the Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, cabled commissioner McNutt inquiring about the number of refugees the Commonwealth Government of the Philippines had already absorbed and how many more it felt it could handle. Jacobs stated that he was sure that the question of the Philippines as a place of refuge would certainly arise at the next IGC conference.<sup>100</sup> A responding radiogram by McNutt the following day disclosed that 205 refugee Jews had already arrived and that the local Jewish Committee had cared for their needs.<sup>101</sup> McNutt also revealed that President Quezon "has indicated willingness to set aside virgin lands in Mindanao for larger groups of Jewish refugees who wish to engage in agricultural enterprises."<sup>102</sup> The coded message disclosed that the Philippine National Economic Council was about to approve a colonization plan for Filipinos on the southern island of Mindanao in an effort to relieve overpopulation on Luzon.

On June 16, 1936, Quezon had announced a plan to develop the southern region of Mindanao by systematically resettling Filipinos from the crowded areas of Luzon and Visayas onto tracts of land in the less populated areas of Mindanao. The Commonwealth Government declared huge acreages of lands public domain and made them available for purchase by foreign and domestic investors. It was believed that this program would be materially aided by colonization plans for Jewish refugees.<sup>103</sup> This is yet another example of Jewish rescue being facilitated for politically and economically convenient reasons. Nevertheless, rescue is rescue, and McNutt relayed that the local Jewish Refugee Committee and the Refugee Economic Corporation of New York were prepared to submit a plan for the colonization of refugees in

Mindanao to the Commonwealth officials in the Philippines. He believed the settlement of refugees in Mindanao could be successfully inaugurated if approval came immediately from Secretary of State Cordell Hull. The ensuing message exchanges between the State Department, the office of the High Commissioner of the Philippines, and the REC of New York exposed an escalating battle between humanitarian expediency and State Department reticence.

Jacobs immediately drafted a reply to McNutt, which stated that "there is no objection on policy grounds to the Commonwealth authorities giving considerations to the matter of colonizing in Mindanao refugees from Germany or elsewhere in Europe."<sup>104</sup> However, Jacobs cautioned McNutt to avoid any difficulties for the Commonwealth or for the United States "which would result if a large number of refugees were hurriedly settled in Mindanao and the colonization plan were found to be unworkable."<sup>105</sup> Jacob revealed his skepticism for the project. A few days later a telegram was sent to Rublee, Director of the IGC in London, under the signature of Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles. It appears the message was composed by Theodore Achilles, Acting Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Political Refugees of the European Division, and not by Jacobs, which accounts for the supportive tone of the message. Achilles revealed that immigration into the Philippines, while governed to a certain extent by the Act of 1917, was "not subject to numerical limitations."<sup>106</sup> Rublee was informed that the Commonwealth Government had been requested to consider how many refugees it could absorb annually and Achilles assured Rublee that more specific information about mass immigration into the Philippines would be available in time for their upcoming meeting. Achilles also stated that large sums of money were available for general development due to the plans of the Commonwealth Government to also colonize Mindanao with its Filipino citizens. He further

explained how the island was sparsely populated and climatically favorable and capable "of supporting a very considerable population."<sup>107</sup> Achilles informed Rublee that the U.S. had approved of the project and that the State Department hoped to supply more specifics in time for the January meeting of the IGC.

Meanwhile, McNutt had contacted Frieder and organized a luncheon with Philippine President Manuel Quezon and most of the members of the Jewish Refugee Committee in Manila on December 5, 1938. At this gathering, Quezon approved of resettling as many of the refugees as possible in Mindanao, "willing to give them all the land that they wanted, build roads for them, and do everything in his power so that they could re-establish themselves." Herbert Frieder, brother of Philip and member of the JRC in Manila, summarized the discussions at that luncheon and told Schnachner of the REC in New York that Quezon . . .

would be happy if we could settle a million refugees in Mindanao . . . If this plan goes over and if the refugees want to settle in Mindanao, it will be a bigger project than Palestine. The land is more fertile than Palestine . . . it is the richest land in the Philippines-virgin soil. This is such an enormous proposition that one can hardly visualize the potentialities of same<sup>108</sup>

Following further discussions between McNutt and Quezon about the refugee colonization in Mindanao, McNutt telephoned the State Department, spoke with Jacobs long distance on December 16, 1938, and stated "that President Quezon and the Commonwealth authorities are prepared to admit during 1939 some 2,000 families of Jewish refugees into the Philippines for colonization on the Island of Mindanao, and about 5,000 families annually until a total of 30,000 families has been reached."<sup>109</sup> Mindanao quickly went to the top of the list as a potentially successful haven for refugee resettlement.

However, these remarkable totals alarmed a number of officials in the State Department



and certain key men sought to discredit the plan. Jacobs advised the Secretary of State on December 17, 1938 that such a large colonization plan had a number of "elements of danger."<sup>110</sup> His list of eight reasons why such a large colonization effort would be ill advised contained derogatory tones that demeaned the ability of Jewish refugees to adapt. Those arguments stated that climate conditions were unsuitable to white settlers; that a current lack of roads prohibited the convenience of modern travel; that the ability to produce cash crops may not be sufficient enough to appease a European style of living; that there was a questionable ability of white labor to grow tropical products; that the ability to initially finance these settlers until they could maintain themselves by their own efforts was questionable; that the U.S. really didn't want to inject a "German and white element of this size" into a strictly racially Asian area; that there was a potential "refugee problem of grave proportions" should the resettlement plan fail; and the final objection was that such a "grandiose plan" would lessen the interest of other countries of the world in assuming their proper share of the responsibility of rescue. Therefore the official recommendation of the U.S. Office of Philippine Affairs was to wait on any stipulation of immigration numbers "pending further study."<sup>111</sup> Jacob's opinions resonated with other State Department officials.

Meetings then ensued between Jacobs and Francis B. Sayre, Chairman of the Interdepartmental Commission on the Philippines. Sayre was the son-in-law of Woodrow Wilson and a career State Department Diplomat who was appointed High Commissioner to the Philippines immediately after McNutt in 1939. Sayre characterized Quezon's offer as a "scheme" that was "utterly impracticable" and, if a failure, would ultimately be laid on the State Department's doorstep.<sup>112</sup> On that same day, Jacobs immediately radiogrammed McNutt and the

Commonwealth Government concerning Quezon's "generous" offer. Jacobs informed the Commonwealth officials that any communication of this offer to the IGC Conference in London "would do more harm than good." In Jacob's opinion, to suggest such inflated numbers, potentially as high as 30,000 immigrant families, would only arouse hopes that could ultimately go unfulfilled and actually deter other nations of the world from taking in larger numbers of refugees on their own, since this American-led plan proposed to take in "almost one-fourth of all the Jews in Germany."<sup>113</sup> These State Department officials worked at altering Quezon's offer. Jacobs suggested a proposal for the IGC Conference to reflect a newer, more restrictive representation of the Philippine Commonwealth's stand on the refugee resettlement issue. His proposal allowed for a possible 500 "able-bodied" professionals in 1939 and then an indeterminate number of refugees to arrive in subsequent years, provided that the first wave of immigrants to Mindanao proved themselves adaptable to the life style and had provided adequate support for themselves and their families. These numbers were considerably lower than Quezon's original offer. The draft further advised that "the Commonwealth Government cannot estimate the number of settlers who could thus be absorbed," only that the number "may be large." State Department skepticism appeared to win out over humanitarian expediency.<sup>114</sup>

President Quezon considered the revisions and cabled back a more conservative appeal for the Jewish resettlement plan on Mindanao to the U.S. State Department through McNutt's office on December 23, 1938. He expressed his humanitarian concern for the refugee problem and offered an amended plan that suggested as many as 1,000 persons could be successfully admitted annually until no more than 10,000 persons had been admitted.<sup>115</sup> Quezon judicially outlined cautionary conditions of settlement that mimicked State Department concerns about

further studies and information being needed. Quezon's compromise was conditionally accepted. Plans immediately ensued to open a dialog between the State Department and private organizations to determine how much the refugee agencies were prepared to finance. Achilles related information to Welles on December 30, 1938, concerning a meeting of various national Jewish relief agencies that was to be held in Baltimore on January 18, 1939. The Council of Jewish Federations, which was heading up the meeting, intended to open a drive to raise 20 million dollars for relief purposes throughout the world in 1939. Achilles suggested that the State Department inquire of the organizations as to how much in the way of relief funds they could provide for Mindanao.

Meanwhile, a formal address to be delivered to the IGC Conference, slated for January 26, 1939 concerning a resettlement plan in the Philippines, was adopted by the State Department and cabled to McNutt and Quezon on January 7, 1939 for their compliance. Its cautious wording affirmed the willingness of the Commonwealth Government to cooperate with the United States in finding a solution to the refugee problem and disclosed that refugees had been arriving in the Philippines since May 1938. The formal directive adopted most of President Quezon's amended remarks made in his December 23<sup>rd</sup> cable, along with his assessment that 1,000 refugees could be admitted annually under the existing immigration plan. Resettlement on Mindanao was at a stall.

State department variations on Quezon's proposition acknowledged that perhaps more refugees could eventually be settled on the Island of Mindanao, but only if certain conditions were met. Those conditions required that a satisfactory plan be submitted for their initial financial support; that the settlers' subsistence farming not interfere with the interests of the

Philippines; that the refugees take out naturalization papers with the intent of becoming Philippine citizens; that they reside only in those areas designated for their habitat until they are citizens; that the number of refugees admitted will be in accordance to the stipulations the Commonwealth would eventually set; and that the plan be subject to all applicable immigration laws then in force or that would be passed by the National Assembly of the Philippines. The address deliberately omitted any specific limitation to immigration numbers and instead implied that immigration figures would depend of the progress of the Philippine National Economy. Welles remarked in his attached letter that the representative to the IGC could actually mention the number of 10,000 in passing, but for "illustrative purposes" only.<sup>116</sup> President Quezon complied and cabled his approval of the address through the proper communication channels. His anxious willingness to further the cause of the rescue of Europe's refugee is better understood when scrutinized against the history of Mindanao Island.

The Island of Mindanao, described by Quezon as the southernmost part of the Philippine Archipelago with an area of 37,000 square miles, sparsely inhabited, climatically favorable, and



believed to be capable of supporting a very considerable population, was not as unpopulated as one would believe from his description.<sup>117</sup> As the second largest island in the Philippines, Mindanao was one of three island groups in the country, with Luzon and Visayas being the other two. Luzon, in the north, was home to a vast urban population of Christian Filipinos and other nationalities

in and around the capital of Manila, as well as a harbor for the U.S. Armed Forces. Mindanao, in contrast, was sparsely populated, primarily rural, and home to almost all of the country's Muslim or Moros population. Accumulated bitterness between the Moros inhabitants and the ever increasing Christian Filipino population on Mindanao resulted in an acceleration of violence throughout the decade of the 1920s. The Muslims rejected Filipino government officials as the U.S. appointed more and more Philippine nationals to civil service positions in Mindanao. The creation of the Philippine Commonwealth Government in 1935 gave complete control of Mindanao over to the Commonwealth Officials, a political condition vehemently opposed by the Muslims.<sup>118</sup>

Throughout these opening decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, all Western colonial powers with Muslim populations feared the impact of Islamic insurrections in their territories. Muslim leaders in Mindanao threatened secession from the Philippines if religious guarantees for their Islamic laws, customs, and traditions were disregarded. Muslims were offended as their own religious tribunals to adjudicate legal matters under Islamic law were shut down. As Christian Filipinos from the northern islands continued to settle in the thinly populated areas of Mindanao, tensions grew and Quezon was anxious to find solutions to what he perceived was an ever present problem of Muslim dominance in the south. President Quezon's "generous" offer to resettle Jews on Mindanao was another proposal with political overtones that sought to place the Jews as a buffer between the Christians and the Muslims. It was also thought that the presence of the refugees could also countermand the thousands of Japanese settlers, whose presence in the southern region of the Philippines posed another threat to the Commonwealth government. There was the potentiality that the refugees would be merely going from one type of persecution into

another, but their usefulness to the overall future of the area, along with their immediate resettlement needs, seemed to outweigh other considerations.<sup>119</sup> Quezon and the Commonwealth Government believed a program to settle large numbers of refugee Jews would help further their own plans to resettle Filipinos from the northern areas of Luzon and Visayas and it was believed that both groups would stimulate the economy in the south and protect the area from Muslim dominance and Japanese infiltration.

Plans therefore progressed for studying, locating and purchasing suitable plantation lands on Mindanao Island for Jewish refugee habitation. Dr. Isaiah Bowman, then president of John Hopkins University and Director of the American Geographical Society, prepared a preliminary report that was delivered to George Warren of the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees on January 21, 1939. His conclusions stated that "Mindanao seems to offer sufficient possibilities to guarantee a successful future for selected groups of European settlers."<sup>120</sup> Findings determined that the southern island contained 31% of the land area of the Philippines but had only 10% of the total population. On January 23, 1939 a meeting convened with Charles Liebman from the Refugee Economic Committee in New York (REC), Phillip and Morris Frieder from the Jewish Refugee Committee in Manila, and Jacobs and Achilles from the Office of Philippine Affairs. Phillip Frieder inquired concerning the State Department's "attitude towards colonization in Mindanao," and those in attendance received emphatic assurance that the State Department was committed to settling in Mindanao "the largest numbers of refugees compatible with their own interests and those of the Philippines."<sup>121</sup> Liebman of the REC advised sending a mission of experts to Mindanao as soon as possible to further study and develop the plan.

A Philippine scientific mission formed, under the auspices of the President's Advisory Committee of Political Refugees, with Isaiah Bowman as advisor. The scientific mission, named the Mindanao Exploration Commission, consisted of five experts who began assembling in Manila in the first weeks of April, 1939. On April 21<sup>st</sup>, commission chairman O. D. Hargis and the other members of the committee, Dr. Stanton Youngberg, Dr. Robert L. Pendleton, Dr. Howard F. Smith, and Captain Hugh J. Casey, began their evaluation of lands in the Philippines for mass refugee resettlement. Hargis, chairman of the group, worked in the agricultural division of the Goodyear Rubber Company and had 25 years of experience in the Panama Canal Zone, in Sumatra, Java, and on Mindanao in the Philippines. He had specialized in large-scale plantation operations. Dr. Youngberg had served as director of the Philippine Bureau of Agriculture from 1925 to 1932 and was on the staff of the Philippine Governor-General in 1933 as an advisor on agricultural issues.<sup>122</sup> Dr. Pendleton came to the commission directly from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Dr. Smith represented the Public Health Service and Captain Casey, from the Army Engineer Corps, went as the hydroelectric expert. This commission of experts spent several weeks investigating all aspects of massive refugee resettlement and its plausibility in the Philippines.

During the commission's exploration, the McNutt-Frieder program still continued to accept pre-selected immigrant refugees into Manila, as well as those who came independently. By the end of January 1939, 402 refugees had been granted visas for immigration to the Philippines since October 1, 1938. Cysner had obtained his release from Zbaszyn in April, booked passage of the German passenger liner *Scharnhorst* in April 1939 and arrived in Manila on May 15, 1939. As with all refugees who arrived in Manila, his immediate needs were

provided for by Morton Netzorg, whose job it was to house and feed new arrivals, and to make their transition into Philippine life as easy as possible. With the arrival of Cantor Cysner to the rapidly expanding Jewish community of Manila, a further blossoming of Jewish worship and pedagogy ensued.

Cysner's unique talents and abilities enhanced the religious life of the community in many ways, from conducting religious services at the temple, to forming and training choirs, teaching religion classes, and training young Jews for their bar mitzvahs. As Griese wrote, under the tutelage of Rabbi Schwarz and Cantor Cysner,

Jewish life in Manila flourished . . . the Sunday school was revived, a Chevra Kadisha (funeral and grave committee) was founded, a Jewish debating club brought those interested in discussing Jewish art and science together, a Youth Club was founded, regular performances were given by a Musical Club and a Dramatic Club, and a Woman's Auxiliary was formed to assist in Jewish welfare work. In addition, a community home was founded in Marikina for the aged and indigent. Numerous social gatherings served to bring the Community together.<sup>123</sup>

The flourishing Jewish community of the Philippines became even more concerned to save its fellow refugees from European persecution, as hundreds of applications for asylum in the Philippines arrived every month. Frieder maintained that another 500 or 600 people could easily be absorbed into the economy and very favorable applicants could be immediately assimilated, but the funds had been depleted and more monies were required.<sup>124</sup>

International agencies were stretched thin as other refugee areas of the world required funding as well, especially the community of Shanghai, where the nearly 20,000 Jewish refugees arrived without any means of support. As one potential refugee solution after another was abandoned due to economic, political, and geographic considerations, the Mindanao Resettlement Proposal advanced slowly but steadily to actual fruition. A radiogram from the



commission in Manila and addressed to the State Department conveyed a brief summary of the final commission report, which would not be finalized until October 1939. This preliminary report maintained that "several hundred thousand acres" were available for "large scale European settlement" on the Bukidnon Plateau and it "[recommended] action be initiated looking towards acquirement by purchase of land leases."<sup>125</sup> Prior to their departure from the Philippines in July and August of 1939, the Mindanao Exploration Commission met with President Quezon to discuss their findings. Commission members' apprehensions concerning anti-Jewish sentiment among certain members of the Philippine Assembly and their hesitancy over making leased government lands available for refugee colonization were summarily dismissed by Quezon:

He [Quezon] immediately told us in unequivocal terms that we could have all the land we needed, not only for the 10,000 persons, but for 30 or 50,000 and that he would personally see to it that thousands of hectares more of private leased lands would be surrendered to us by transfer . . . He again repeated that he could see in this development a distinct benefit to the country as well as a haven for the refugees.<sup>126</sup>

Frieder's assessment of this meeting relates that ulterior motives other than strictly rescue of the refugees lay at the heart of the massive resettlement proposal.

The Commission felt confident that with Quezon's personal assurances for the success of the operation that it could, with "absolute certainty," present Washington with a highly favorable recommendation for refugee resettlement on Mindanao. Intending that the settlement of Jewish refugees on Mindanao would be a wholly American solution with monies solicited from the private Jewish relief organizations in the U.S., both the REC and the JDC Agro-Joint proceeded with the plan to purchase an existing plantation. Replete with buildings, livestock, and fruit orchards it was ideal for the initial settlement of selected engineers, agriculturalists, and construction contractors, who could begin the implementation of the Mindanao resettlement

plan.<sup>127</sup> The official "Report of the Mindanao Exploration Commission " was forwarded on October 2, 1939 to James G. McDonald, chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees, with a summary recommendation "that negotiations be undertaken at once " to purchase lands on Mindanao for the "establishment of a refugee colonization project."<sup>128</sup>

With report in hand, the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees met October 13, 1939 to discuss the viable settlement projects that were still pending. Topics included with Mindanao were the Dominican Republic and Guiana. Memorandums of conversations between State Department officials prior to that meeting revealed some disturbing sentiments. Robert Pell, from the European Division within the State Department, was advised concerning the upcoming meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> by George Warren, the Acting Secretary for The President's Advisory Committee. Warren expressed to Pell how anxious Dr. Bowman was that the Philippine Project be given very serious consideration because Bowman felt that Jacobs, from the Office of Philippine Affairs, "was not very favorably disposed toward the enterprise."<sup>129</sup> Pell then had a conversation with Jacobs just five days later, in which Jacobs expressed his wish not to attend the meeting because he felt his involvement in the matter didn't warrant his attendance. Jacobs' recollection of events and conversations from the winter of 1938 concerning Mindanao contained some troubling misrepresentations.

Jacobs related to Pell that when the IGC was hunting for locations for refugee settlement projects in 1938, he, Jacobs, had been directed by Welles to send inquiries to the Philippines per the IGC's request. Jacobs then stated that the Commonwealth Government had replied that there could be opportunity for the assimilation of about 1,000 persons in total and that Mr. Welles had considered the offer to be inadequate.<sup>130</sup> Jacobs further distorted the facts by asserting that

Quezon only inflated the immigration number to 50,000 when Welles urged him to make a better offer.<sup>131</sup> The motivations for Jacobs' obvious misrepresentation of Pres. Quezon's refugee settlement offers are unknown. Quezon's offer to admit 2,000 refugee families in 1939, and then 5,000 families annually until 30,000 or more families had been reached was deliberately squelched back in December 1938 by Jacobs and Sayre. Jacobs neglected to tell Pell that it was he, Jacobs, who had suggested a far more moderate number of perhaps 2000 refugees total over many years, to which Welles had responded that it was not enough. The final wording of the proposal to the IGC omitted any exact number of refugees that could be admitted into Mindanao, leaving that to the discretion of the Commonwealth Government at the time of the implementation of the plan. But numerous documents from McNutt and Quezon affirm that these Commonwealth officials constantly urged higher numbers than the State Department, namely Jacobs and Sayre, wanted to approve.

The disavowal of the Mindanao Resettlement Plan by these two State Department officials was noted by Pell when he stated that "Welles had been very much in favor of going forward with a big project while Mr. Sayre and he [Jacobs] had opposed it."<sup>132</sup> Under-Secretary of State Welles, one of FDR's most trusted advisors and a long-time friend, enabled the project to proceed and negotiations for the purchase of the land began in October 1939. Liebman, of the REC, informed Pell and the State Department on November 29, 1939, that a check on account for the purchase of two pieces of property, called the Day and Worcester Ranches on Mindanao, had been made. He also went on to say that the central committee had asked the various countries to gather dossiers on prospective immigrants to the Philippines.<sup>133</sup>

While waiting to obtain title on the land, some serious obstacles arose in the Philippine

National Assembly of the Commonwealth Government. On February 23, 1940, Youngberg, secretary of the Philippine Exploration Commission, who had recently been engaged by the REC to be the general manager of the Mindanao Resettlement Program, informed Liebman that he had obtained some "disquieting" information that accounted for the "slowness of action on our Mindanao project." The Philippine National Assembly was in the process of drafting and passing a new immigration bill and there was "strong opposition to the annual national quota of 1000," which was the proposed annual number of Jewish refugees to be allowed entrance into the Philippines for colonization purposes. It was also voiced by the opposition parties, that if Quezon wanted the bill to pass, he had better compromise with a much lower number of 500 on a national basis. Youngberg inquired if the opposition stemmed from any anti-Jewish sentiments of the assembly members. He was told "that there is and that it is deep, quite extensive, silent but powerful." The opposition in the Assembly believed that Quezon had acted impulsively when he offered Mindanao lands for a massive Jewish resettlement plan because he had not sufficiently consulted with the leaders of the National Assembly. Youngberg closed his letter with his own misgivings about the future of the Mindanao plan.<sup>134</sup>

Due to this unfavorable sentiment and its resultant legal delays in the Philippine government, the project proceeded at an extremely slow pace and the site for the absorption of Jewish refugees was not ready until the spring of 1941. No one knew that by the end of the year the ability to bring Jewish refugees out of Europe would be eliminated by the entrance of Japan into the war with the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the occupation of the Philippines by Japanese forces.

Mindanao was the last hope for a mass resettlement strategy aimed at aiding the tens of

thousands of Jewish refugees victimized by Nazi Germany. At the Wannsee Conference in January 1942, Hitler's plan for massive Jewish deportation mutated into one of extermination, which was executed over the next three years. With the failure of the West to provide a successful mass rescue operation for Europe's Jewish population, "thousands of Jews entered the cattle cars bound for Auschwitz, under the impression that they were being resettled in the East."<sup>135</sup> The irony of the "Final Solution" lies in its mimic of the Western World's failed attempt to rescue through resettlement. "The decision to murder followed directly from the failure to resettle."<sup>136</sup> Mindanao ended a long list of resettlement schemes considered at one time by the international community that failed to rescue.

As with the Mindanao plan, which sought to use the presence of the Jews as a cultural leverage against Muslim insurrection in the Philippines, other proposed places of refuge also had ulterior motives, other than mere rescue alone, in accepting a substantial Jewish population. Settlement in Costa Rica, it was suggested, could offer added security at the Panama Canal. Economic advantages seemed to spur suggestions for colonization in the Caribbean, Brazil, and Haiti as American businessmen such as Henry Ford and William Randolph Hearst, since considered anti-Semites, measured rescue from a purely capitalistic standpoint. A resettlement plan for Alaska saw a mass influx of labor as advantageous for that under-populated and economically stagnated territory. These proposals, and others, ultimately died on the vine because rescue was not their primary aim—therefore economic or political implausibility won out over humanitarianism. One after another these ventures failed to reach fruition. Only with Mindanao had an actual implementation of a viable mass resettlement plan been realized. But Japan's entrance into the war, which in turn created a state of war between the U.S. and

Germany, brought all rescue efforts to a halt.

### **Japanese Occupation**

In spite of economic limitations and travel difficulties, the Jewish community of Manila swelled with European refugees beyond all expectations, reaching its maximum population of about 2,500 members by the end of 1941. Samuel Schechter, president of Temple Emil Congregation, noted on September 1, 1940 in a board of directors' communiqué that "our community has increased about eight fold since the advent of Jewish persecution in many countries of Europe."<sup>137</sup> During the height of its immigration years, the Philippines benefited from the arrival of such renowned Jewish refugees as Dr. Herbert Zipper, who became conductor of the Manila Symphony Orchestra, and his wife Trudl Zipper, who taught modern dance to many Filipino performers. Dr. Eugene Stransky, a specialist in blood disorders, and Ernest Kornfeld, an accomplished architect, augmented Philippine life with their professions. Cantor Cysner secured an additional position as a music professor at De La Salle College in Manila and developed a reputation for his classical music training, performing for President Quezon on numerous occasions. Eberly records the testament of Paula Brings, who arrived from Austria in March 1939 with her husband, Dr. Theodor Brings, who became a professor of physics at the University of the Philippines: "You could never find as generous and solid a group of people anywhere else in the world. They gave . . . unstintingly in times of crisis; they have never neglected the needs of the destitute and the sick."<sup>138</sup>

This once American-dominated Jewish community that had saved the lives of well over 1000 European Jews from potential extermination faced an unexpected persecution of their own.

An amazing turn of events put the fate of the American Jews into the hands of the German refugee Jews when the Japanese entered Manila in December 1941 and summarily interned all "enemy alien" civilians in Santo Tomas University.

### **Life Under Siege**

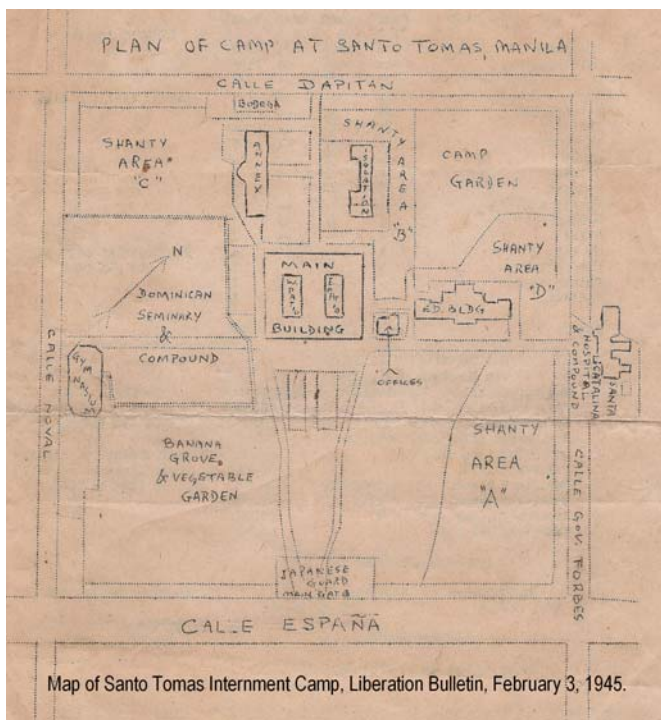
The Japanese entered Manila without encountering resistance when General MacArthur retreated with the American forces and declared Manila an "open city" on December 26, 1941. Three weeks prior, the "day that will live in infamy," Japanese forces devastated the U.S. Fleet at Pearl Harbor and prompted the U.S. to enter WWII. Few people realize that the naval base at Honolulu was not the only U.S. military base destroyed that day. The events on December 7, 1941 in Hawaii were December 8, 1941 in the Far East. On that day numerous U.S. installations in the Philippines were attacked from the air by the Japanese: Davao City in Mindanao, Camp John Hay at Baguio, Clark Field in Pampanga, the airfield at Iba, Zambales, and Nichols Field near Manila.<sup>139</sup> Unlike Pearl Harbor, Japanese forces made shore landings on all four sides of Luzon, the island home of Manila. With forces outnumbered and military installations destroyed, MacArthur's forces were left with little choice but to retreat in order to fight another day. Manila was left to the designs of the occupying Japanese forces.

On January 2, 1942, three battalions of Japanese soldiers entered Manila from the north while another battalion and a regiment entered from the south. The Japanese immediately set up points of registration and ordered all civilians to file their nationalities.<sup>140</sup> Within a matter of days, every American, British, British Commonwealth, Dutch, Polish, Belgian, or other citizen of a country at war with Japan or Germany, began to be bused to Santo Tomas University for immediate internment.<sup>141</sup> The University of Santo Tomas had been founded in Manila in 1611,

roughly 25 years before the founding of Harvard College in the American colonies.<sup>142</sup>

Established by Spanish Dominican Fathers, the university consisted of several large buildings with spacious grounds on about 50 acres of land. Before the opening of Los Banos Camp, which received several hundred internees from Santo Tomas, it had been the temporary residence of nearly 5000 civilians, held in worsening conditions of disease, filth, starvation, and torture.<sup>143</sup>

Initially the Japanese Imperial Government incarcerated 7,300 Americans in the



Philippines in January 1942. This marked the first time in U. S. History that American civilians were captured and interned on American soil and subjected to three years of malnutrition and progressive starvation by an alien power. Of the three main internment camps from 1941 to 1945, the largest numbers of internees (85%) were held in Santo Tomas University. One-third of these internees were later

transferred in 1943 to the second largest internment camp, Los Banos in the Laguna Province area, 35 miles south of Manila. The old Bilibidi prison in Manila was the site of the third large internment camp. Other small internment sites included Baquio on the island of Luzon, and places on the islands of Cebu and Mindanao.<sup>144</sup>

The Japanese did not perceive a difference between German nationals and German Jews



so the majority of the Jewish Community at Manila, which had been augmented with hundreds of German Jews during the last few years did not face internment at Santo Tomas University. However, about 250 other members of the Jewish community, including the more influential American members such as Morton Netzorg, a leader of the Jewish Refugee Committee, and Samuel Schechter, president of the synagogue, were immediately incarcerated. Having spent five years freeing hundreds of German Jews from Nazi oppression, the Manila American Jewish community now faced its own dire threat. Cysner, who held a Polish passport, was also imprisoned. Already familiar with forced internment by the Nazis, Cysner drew on past experiences to sustain himself and others in the civilian detention camp.

Several firsthand accounts about the details of camp life have been written over the years, but few of them discuss specifics concerning the experiences of the Jews in camp. We can only assume that the general state of affairs at the camp pertained to all. A. V. H. Hartendorp authored a definitive two volume account of life in Santo Tomas, having personally experienced life in the camp. He was appointed camp historian by the internee executive committee and kept a clandestine typewritten account for the entire three years that the camp was in operation. He recorded how leaders of the camp were appointed from among the prominent American businessmen to form a Central Committee.<sup>145</sup> The most pressing problems of camp life addressed by the committee were sanitation and health, food, lodging, and discipline. The Japanese left the camp members to their own designs to solve these and other problems. Morton Netzorg took an immediate role in camp life by serving on the camp religious committee.<sup>146</sup> Samuel Schechter authored the chapter on Judaism in the larger work by Frederic Harper Stevens, who also wrote a

firsthand account on Santo Tomas Internment Camp.

Both Schechter and Netzorg remained interned with the other Jewish members for the full three years until the end of the war, but Cantor Cysner obtained an early release after eight months. Rabbi Schwartz, who took over the leadership of the Jewish community in Manila, convinced the Japanese Religious Section that Cysner's elderly mother, who was not interned, required her son's support, and the religious services at the synagogue could not continue without their cantor.<sup>147</sup> His release was eventually obtained and he resumed his life of service to both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities of Manila, while assisting Rabbi Schwartz and the other German Jews in their efforts to aid the imprisoned Jews with food and other approved provisions.

Frank Ephraim, a refugee who arrived as a young boy with his family from Berlin in March 1939, remembered Cantor Cysner's efforts on behalf of the devastated Jewish community. Ephraim recounted how services continued at the synagogue with only thirty to fifty people in attendance, due to travel and curfew restrictions.<sup>148</sup> Following his release in September 1942, Cantor Cysner organized a male choir to prepare music for the High Holidays. Temple Emil celebrated Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, on September 22, 1942, nine months into Japanese occupation of the islands. Ephraim recorded the events of that afternoon:

About 1 P.M. there was a flurry of whispered voices and subdued commotion inside the sanctuary as Cantor Cysner, facing the Ark of the Covenant, which stood at the head of the temple, was chanting the early afternoon prayers. Suddenly the double door of the sanctuary began to slowly open, and there appeared Morton Netzorg, the former secretary of the Manila Jewish Refugee Committee. He was followed by more than fifty of the internees, including Samuel Schechter, former president of the congregation. They had been allowed to leave the internment camp to attend Yom Kippur services. The atmosphere was electric. The choir could see what was happening because they faced the congregation, but Cantor Cysner, fully absorbed in his liturgical passages, turned his head . . . he immediately saw what was happening, and with a nod here and a hand signal there, the most holy services were interrupted to an emotional welcome for the interned brethren.<sup>149</sup>

Their stay was all too short, only a few hours, and they returned to their imprisonment, enriched

by the brotherhood they again enjoyed, as Europe's refugees succored their former American and British patrons. Cysner continued his ministrations as he conducted classes for school children in his home, along with piano and Hebrew lessons for children and adults. He also resumed his teaching at the Catholic De La Salle College, advancing to the post of choirmaster. As Ephraim described it, Cysner's house was a "beehive of activity," as he labored to maintain some kind of normalcy in the lives of his congregants during the harshest conditions of the occupation.<sup>150</sup>

Life inside and outside the internment camp bore its own hardships. The inmates at Santo Tomas vied for floor space on which to sleep, cramming 40 or 50 persons in a room and sleeping across desktops when available. Meanwhile, residents of Manila struggled to find work and to pay for basic staples of life, while trying to assist their friends and family who had been interned. American and British companies, the largest employers on the islands, went out of business when their owners and executives joined the rank and file of common laborers on the food lines in camp. The Central Committee of the camp placed everyone in some kind of job, without bias of gender, age, or income. From working in the kitchen, either cooking or washing dishes, to sanitation and pest extermination details, or to gardening and laundry duties—everybody worked. School was set up for the children and teenagers who were interned with their parents and infirmaries handled simple first-aid cases, deferring the more serious medical problems to the local hospital.

While camp inmates battled malnutrition, disease, and exposure (many built shanties on the campus grounds in order to have some kind of family residence), citizens of Manila tried to adapt to life under Japanese occupation. Houses and businesses were searched and seized without warning, providing lodging for the Japanese forces while making their owners jobless

and homeless. Suspicion and fear became a part of everyday life as informant organizations, under strict Japanese orders, reported violations of mandatory restrictions. Punishable offenses included use of typewriters, listening to overseas radio broadcasts, stealing, and teaching concepts other than the "propagandized" Japanese versions of academic subjects. Japanese penalties were both swift and brutal, administered through beatings, hangings, imprisonment, starvation, torture, and executions.

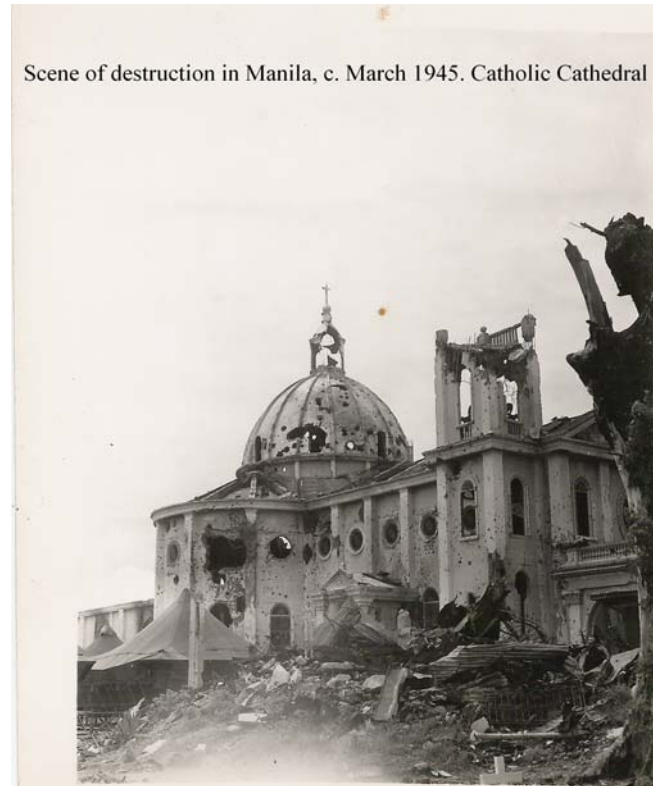
January 1943 brought a new, and yet an old, threat to the Jewish Community of Manila as anti-Semitic persecution targeted the non-interned German Jews. Without prior notice, Japanese leaders began running notices in the local papers, warning that Jews in the Philippines would "be dealt with drastically."<sup>151</sup> Their age-old rhetoric described the Jews as "parasites" and outlined trumped-up charges of hoarding commodities to raise prices, exploiting native women, and even espionage. Nazi diatribes had found their way to the Philippines via German alliance with the Empire of Japan. One year later, in January 1944, the German ambassador to Japan, Heinrich Stahmer, assisted in the appointment of a new German Nazi Party overseer, Franz Josef Spahn, to the German Community of Manila. Rumors about forcing the German Jews into a ghetto began to circulate. Spahn called for the immediate internment of aliens guilty of "acts inimical to the peace, security, and interest of the Republic of the Philippines."<sup>152</sup> By falsifying the facts concerning the abandonment of the Mindanao Resettlement Project and claiming that the Jews sabotaged the plan with the intension of dominating the Philippine urban economy, the Nazi Party in the Philippines targeted the Jewish community.<sup>153</sup>

Griese maintains that this imminent danger to the German Jews was averted by the more influential leaders of the Jewish community, including Rabbi Schwartz and Cantor Cysner, who

negotiated with the Japanese leaders.<sup>154</sup> While the Japanese could not be bothered with Nazi plans to establish a Jewish ghetto in the Philippines, they did not object to episodes of abuse randomly waged against members of the Jewish community by their own soldiers. Ephraim recounts the torture and death of a German Jew who was arrested for "aiding the enemy" when he gave an American prisoner a pack of cigarettes.<sup>155</sup> This and another dozen incidents of German Jews suffering at the hands of the Japanese illustrated the horror of the time. In June 1944, news that American forces had landed on Saipan, 1500 miles west of Manila, gave a renewed hope to all.

### ***Repatriation***

From June 15, 1944, when the American forces first landed on Saipan, it was another nine months until the final release of the Philippines from Japanese control. Those were the most destructive months of the war. During that time, exiled Philippine President Quezon died, having never seen the fruition of his efforts to advance colonization on Mindanao with Jewish refugees. As American forces began bombing raids in October 1944 on strategic Japanese locations in and around Manila, Japanese troops seized and expelled all Jews from their synagogue and social hall and converted the buildings into ammunition depots. Various members throughout the city rescued the holy artifacts, the sacred lamp, prayer books, pulpit coverings, and the Torah Scrolls. The homes of Cantor Cysner and Rabbi Schwartz became new religious centers for the community.<sup>156</sup>



As war in the Philippines persisted, the situation in Manila deteriorated rapidly. All civilians were viewed as subversive guerillas and many fled the city into the mountains to escape retaliation.<sup>157</sup> The "Battle for Manila," which officially began on February 3, 1945 and lasted for one month, left the city in total ruins. Retreating Japanese forces destroyed everything in their wake, including Temple Emil and Bachrach Hall. The residence of Cantor

Cysner and his mother was destroyed as well.<sup>158</sup> A pattern of Japanese massacres ensued, as they machine-gunned citizens trying to save homes and buildings from the fires. Historian William Craig described the scene: "For nearly one month, into late February, Manila was a slaughterhouse, the scene of multiple atrocities, as Japanese marines fought insanely to defend the strategically unimportant city."<sup>159</sup> Random shootings killed without discrimination of age or gender—many children were brutally shot. On February 10, 1945 Japanese soldiers massacred eight Jewish refugees along with numerous others in the Red Cross building, mistakenly leaving one wounded Jewish survivor as a witness to the atrocity.<sup>160</sup>

Carnage continued unchecked as Americans advanced closer and closer to the heart of the city. Eberly recalls a "fear of mass execution by the Japanese as the liberating armies approached Manila."<sup>161</sup> Civilians fled to elude the destruction and many died in the process.

Over one thousand Jews escaped the holocaust of Manila by crossing the Pasig River to the north, leaving sixty-seven of their members dead and more than two hundred wounded.<sup>162</sup> When the inmates of Santo Tomas Internment Camp and the prisoners of other camps, who had been freed by the American forces, rejoined their community, the site of the destruction was overwhelming. Ninety percent of Manila's Jews were homeless, along with most of the city's population.<sup>163</sup> William Manchester, biographer of General Douglas MacArthur, stated that "the devastation of Manila was one of the great tragedies of World War II. Of Allied cities in those war years, only Warsaw suffered more."<sup>164</sup> Ephraim recorded the testimony of Jewish army chaplain Dudley Weinberg, in a letter written to the Frieders: "I have never seen such sadness, such destruction and such desolation. Pick up your bible and read the Book of Lamentations and you will have the story."<sup>165</sup>

### **Epilog**

The returning internees joined with the remaining refugees to try to rebuild their devastated community. All had been victimized by the Japanese occupying forces. Since their liberation, three more members of the Jewish community died, bringing the total dead to seventy.<sup>166</sup> The upcoming Passover season of March 1945, celebrating Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage, carried a new meaning for the Philippine survivors. The American military took heroic steps to assist the Jewish community in its recovery. U.S. soldiers provided food, water, supplies, and medicine for the victims. Cantor Cysner restored cultural activities, religious services, and youth groups. On March 23, 1945 a posting on the U.S. Army bulletin board announced a Passover Seder to be held in conjunction with the surviving members of the Jewish community in Manila. Jacques Lipetz, a Belgian Jew who arrived in Manila as a young boy with

his family in May 1941, remembered how U.S. Army jeeps provided "bumpy and dangerous" transportation back and forth from the Seder for the Jewish civilians.<sup>167</sup> On March 28, 1945, the racetrack bleachers, capable of seating thousands, were filled with U.S. military personnel and all the Jewish civilians who were able to attend. Ephraim described that night:

To the liberated Jewish refugees, the event was truly staggering. Mingling and talking to the thousands of Jewish soldiers, sailors, and airmen was a thrilling experience—something we had never dreamed of. The servicemen and women were equally surprised to find Jews in this part of the world. They gave us all their C-rations and K-rations, their cigarettes, and the ubiquitous small bars of Hershey "tropics proof" chocolate . . . Down on the racetrack, Cantor Cysner sang into a micro-phone over the din of thousands of conversations, his rich voice penetrating above the noise.<sup>168</sup>

Lipetz also remembers Cantor Cysner, "the wonderful chazzan," and this memorable Seder service: "I doubt however that anyone since the Exodus had so sweet a Pesach."<sup>169</sup>

Cantor Cysner (in black) officiating at Memorial Service, Nov. 9, 1945, Manila



During the reconstruction period of the Philippines, Manila's Jewish community was augmented by hundreds of American military personnel, who donated \$15,000 for the rebuilding of Temple Emil synagogue. On November 9, 1945, Cantor Cysner conducted a memorial service in the bombed out

ruins of the old synagogue to commemorate the planned reconstruction.<sup>170</sup> But the devastation was so severe that many who could no longer earn a living in the ravaged city immigrated to the United States. With the destruction of the synagogue and the Catholic De La Salle College,

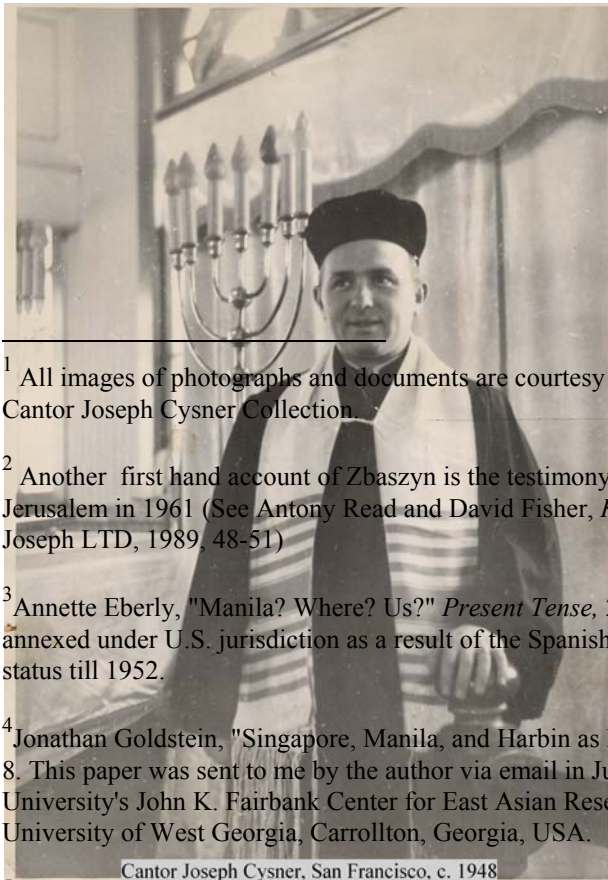


Cantor Cysner joined the ranks of the hundreds of Jews who again sought a new life in a new land. With the departure of the American Jews, who wanted only to return to their home country, and the European refugees, who counted on the American-held businesses for most of their livelihood, the community membership decreased by 30% at the end of 1946. Fewer than 250 European Jewish refugees could be counted among the estimated 600 Jews who remained in the Philippines by the end of 1948.<sup>171</sup> By 1954 the Jewish community of Manila counted a total of 302 members.

This closes the remarkable story of how one small American community of Jews in the Far East managed to do what so many more capable nations of the world were reluctant to do—save Jewish lives. It is remarkable because they managed to circumvent the highly restrictive U.S. Immigration quotas of the time and nearly quadruple the population of their Jewish community. By rescuing over 1000 Jewish refugees, this American Commonwealth saved them from the fate of the six million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust. While 1000 Jews, when compared to twelve million victims of Nazi atrocities, are not so many, to those hundreds who found a haven in Manila, each individual life was significant, as was Cantor Cysner's.

For over seven years, Cantor Cysner shared his "golden voice, personal warmth, and infectious spirit"<sup>172</sup> with the members of the Temple Emil Congregation, touching the lives of its members through his unique abilities as a teacher, a director, and a mentor. Cantor Cysner and his mother left Manila for the United States in the spring of 1946, where he accepted a position with Temple Sherith Israel in San Francisco. Having emerged from Zbaszyn confinement, Santo Tomas imprisonment, and the Japanese destruction of his home and synagogue, his story of deliverance merged with that of his childhood friend from Bamberg, Sylvia Nagler. Fifteen year

old Sylvia escaped Germany in December 1938, while, unbeknownst to her, Cysner was interned at Zbaszyn. She spent the war years in England. They reunited and married in San Francisco in August 1948. Final release came for Cantor Cysner with his death in San Diego on March 3, 1961 at the age of 48. Communities around the world mourned his death: Bamberg, Hildesheim, Hamburg, Manila, San Francisco, and San Diego. Rabbi Schwartz had delivered these words to the congregation at Manila when Cantor Cysner first arrived in 1939—they are fitting words still: "Blessed shalt thou be, when thou comest in. May your prayers edify our Congregation, may they inspire our people, may they heal the wounds inflicted by these times."<sup>173</sup> The greatest legacy of both Cantor Cysner and the Holocaust Haven he helped to create will always be this—



<sup>1</sup> All images of photographs and documents are courtesy of the Jewish Historical Society of San Diego (JHSSD), Cantor Joseph Cysner Collection.

<sup>2</sup> Another first hand account of Zbaszyn is the testimony given by Sendel Grynzspan at the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1961 (See Antony Read and David Fisher, *Kristallnacht: Unleashing the Holocaust*, London: Michael Joseph LTD, 1989, 48-51)

<sup>3</sup> Annette Eberly, "Manila? Where? Us?" *Present Tense*, 2:3 (Spring 1975): 60. Puerto Rico was another country annexed under U.S. jurisdiction as a result of the Spanish-American War, but it did not acquire its commonwealth status till 1952.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Goldstein, "Singapore, Manila, and Harbin as Reference Points for Asian 'Port Jewish' Identity," 2002, p 8. This paper was sent to me by the author via email in June 2003. Dr. Goldstein is a Research Associate of Harvard University's John K. Fairbank Center for East Asian Research and a Professor of History [East Asia] at the State University of West Georgia, Carrollton, Georgia, USA.

<sup>5</sup> Goldstein, 6-9.

<sup>6</sup> Eberly, 61.

they healed wounds inflicted by the worst of times. As Cysner wrote in his memoir upon his departure from Zbaszyn: "My brothers and sisters I head for a new world."<sup>174</sup> **Endnotes**

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<sup>7</sup> For further information on the Jewish Community of Shanghai, see Ernest Heppner, *Shanghai Refuge: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, 1993; David Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis, & Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945*, Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1988.

<sup>8</sup> William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964*, New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1978, 482-483.

<sup>9</sup> A. V. H. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines, Vol II*, Manila: Bookmark, 1967, 604-606.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Lemay and Elliott Robert Barkan, *U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Laws and Issues*, Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1999, 128-135.

<sup>11</sup> Lemay, 128.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>13</sup> David Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis, & Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945*, Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1988, 30-31.

<sup>14</sup> Lemay, 130.

<sup>15</sup> Robert D. Schulzinger, *The U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 164.

<sup>16</sup> H. H. Ben Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976, 1022.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 860

<sup>19</sup> Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust*, New York: Franklin Watts, 1982, 59.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Read & David Fisher, *Kristallnacht: Unleashing the Holocaust*, London: Michael Joseph LTD, 1989, 44.

<sup>22</sup> Sylvia Cysner, interviewed by Bonnie Harris, January 24, 2004.

<sup>23</sup> Reiner Stratz, Online Database, transcribed by Naomi Teveth, created in Israel November 2002.  
<<http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Germany/Wurzburg.htm>> (November 25, 2003)

<sup>24</sup> Simon Wiesenthal Center Online Multimedia Learning Center, created 1997.  
<<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/pages/t029/t02973.html>> (November 25, 2003)

<sup>25</sup> Ben-Sasson, 1018.

<sup>26</sup> Bauer, 102-103.

<sup>27</sup> Read, 44.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>29</sup>Gerald Schwab, *The Day the Holocaust Began: The Odyssey of Herschel Grynszpan*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990, 59-65.

<sup>30</sup>Read, 46-51.

<sup>31</sup>Joseph Cysner, "Zbaszyn," English version of handwritten German memoir. JHSSD Archives, Cantor Joseph Cysner Collection, CJC02.01 My appreciation to Sylvia Cysner for the gift of her husband's paper to the archives of the JHSSD. Original German manuscript also in archives of the JHSSD.

<sup>32</sup>Schwab, 64-66. Author quotes press reports from *The Times*, London, 1938.

<sup>33</sup>Cysner, 3-5.

<sup>34</sup>See Map. Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of the Holocaust, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*, London and New York: Routledge, 2002, 26.

<sup>35</sup>Read, 50.

<sup>36</sup>Cysner, 5-6.

<sup>37</sup>Schwab, 1.

<sup>38</sup>Gerald Schwab's title to his book: *The Day the Holocaust Began: The Odyssey of Herschel Grynszpan*.

<sup>39</sup> Ben S. Austin, "Kristallnacht," *The Holocaust/Shoah Page*, created February 21, 1996. <<http://www.mtsu.edu/~baustin/knacht.html>> (November 21, 2003) Ben Austin is Professor of Sociology at Middle Tennessee State University since 1970 and has served on the Holocaust Education Committee at MTSU for 7 years.

<sup>40</sup>Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyr's and Heroes Remembrance Authority Website, "Zbaszyn" copyright 2003, [http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/search/index\\_search.html](http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/search/index_search.html) ( November 25, 2003)

<sup>41</sup>Cysner, 7.

<sup>42</sup>"Emmanuel Ringelblum's Notes of the Refugees in Zbaszyn", Yad Vahem Website, Documents of the Holocaust, part 1. Copyright 2003. From R. Mahler, "Mikhtavei E. Ringelblum mi-Zbaszyn veal Zbaszyn" ("Letters of E. Ringelblum from and about Zbaszyn"), *Yalkut Moreshet*, No. 2 (1964), pp. 24-25 (November 21, 2003) <[http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/about\\_holocaust/documents/part1/doc56.html](http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/about_holocaust/documents/part1/doc56.html)>

<sup>43</sup>Cysner, 9.

<sup>44</sup>Michael P. Onorato, *Jock Netzorg: Manila Memories*, Laguna Beach, California: Pacific Rim Books, 4. Interview date March 4, 1987.

<sup>45</sup>Cysner, 9-10.

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<sup>46</sup> John W. Griese, "The Jewish Community in Manila" (Master of Arts thesis, University of the Philippines April 11, 1954,) 21.

<sup>47</sup> Goldstein, 6. See also the *Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 13*. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972, 396.

<sup>48</sup> Griese, 19.

<sup>49</sup> Frank Ephraim, *Escape to Manila: From Nazi Tyranny to Japanese Terror*, Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2003, 11.

<sup>50</sup> Goldstein, 7.

<sup>51</sup> Eberly, 60. See footnote #3.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>54</sup> Goldstein, 7.

<sup>55</sup> Ephraim, 13.

<sup>56</sup> Onorato, 2.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>58</sup> Goldstein, 7.

<sup>59</sup> Eberly, 61.

<sup>60</sup> Griese, 23-24. See also Murray Frost, "The Jews of Shanghai," March 2002, J-Stamps Website, <http://www.goletapublishing.com/jstamps/0302.htm> (April 4, 2004).

<sup>61</sup> Eberly, 61.

<sup>62</sup> Kenneth Munden, compiler, "Records of the Bureau of Insular Affairs Relating to the Philippine Islands 1898-1935, A List of Selected Files," compiled October 1942, NARA I.

<sup>63</sup> George A. Malcolm, (Philippine Supreme Court Justice), "Opinion for the United States High Commissioner," January 9, 1939, NARA II, RG 126, Entry 1, Box #752, folders 9-7-17.

<sup>64</sup> Daniel Young, "Welcome to the History of the Philippines," <http://www.ualberta.ca/~vmitchel/fw5.html>, (accessed October 20, 2004).

<sup>65</sup> The Chan Robles Group, "The Philippine Independence Act (Tydings-McDuffie Act)," *Chan Robles Virtual Law Library*, <http://www.chanrobles.com/tydingsmcduffieact.htm>, (accessed August 10, 2004).

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<sup>66</sup>Malcolm, NARA II.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Franklin D. Roosevelt to Francis B. Sayre, September 7, 1939, "High Commissioner – Authority to the Philippines," RG 126, NARA II, Entry 1, Box #752, folders 9-7-17.

<sup>69</sup>See footnote #7.

<sup>70</sup>"Memorandum of Conversation Between Mr. Hyman and Morris Frieder of Cincinnati, Ohio on November 28<sup>th</sup> [1938] at 3:30 P.M." JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784.

<sup>71</sup>Ephraim, 22.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>73</sup>Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939-1945*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981, 24.

<sup>74</sup>"Memorandum . . . November 28<sup>th</sup> [1938] at 3:30 P.M." JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784.

<sup>75</sup>Paul McNutt to Julius Weiss, May 19, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

<sup>76</sup>"Memorandum . . . on November 28<sup>th</sup> [1938] at 3:30 P.M." JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784.

<sup>77</sup>McNutt to Weiss, May 19, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Goldstein, 8.

<sup>80</sup>McNutt to Weiss, May 19, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

<sup>81</sup>McNutt to Charles Liebman, June 24, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784.

<sup>82</sup>"Memorandum . . . November 28<sup>th</sup> [1938] at 3:30 P.M." JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784.

<sup>83</sup>Onorato, 3.

<sup>84</sup>Bruno Schachner (REC) to Hilfsverein der Juden in Deutschland, June 1, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

<sup>85</sup>Charles Liebman to Col. Julius Ochs Adler, December 27, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

<sup>86</sup>McNutt to Liebman, June 24, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

<sup>87</sup>Philip Frieder to REC, October 31, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #784

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<sup>88</sup>Ephraim, 31.

<sup>89</sup>Ephraim, 37.

<sup>90</sup>Telegram, Schwarz to Cysner, November 22, 1938, JHSSD, Cantor Joseph Cysner Collection, CJC02.01

<sup>91</sup> M. J. McDermott, "Memorandum of the Press Conference, Wednesday, April 27, 1938, Political Refugees" RG 59, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>92</sup> Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, New York: Holocaust Library, 1970, 22.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>95</sup> Department of State Press Release, "Text of Resolution Adopted July 14, 1938, By Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees At Evian, France" RG 59, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 22-44.

<sup>97</sup> Radio address by Myron C. Taylor, confidential press release, November 25, 1938, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 10.

<sup>98</sup> Herbert Druks, *The Failure to Rescue*, New York: Robert Speller & Sons, Publishers, Inc., 1977, 10.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> From Jacobs to McNutt, December 2, 1938, "Confidential", Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>101</sup> From McNutt to Hull, translation of radiogram, December 3, 1938, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> From Jacobs to McNutt, Draft, December 6, 1938, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> From Achilles to Rublee, Embassy London, December 13, 1938, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>108</sup> Herbert Frieder to Bruno Schachner, December 8, 1938. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #787a
- <sup>109</sup> From Jacobs to Wells, "Subject: The Colonization of Jewish Refugees in Mindanao," December 17, 1938, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.
- <sup>110</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>111</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>112</sup> Sayre to Welles, December 17, 1938, NARA I, RG 59, Visa Division, Entry 704, 811B.55/209-811B.55J/108, Box 245, Folder 1.
- <sup>113</sup> From Jacobs to McNutt, December 17, 1938, "Confidential" Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.
- <sup>114</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>115</sup> From McNutt to Hull, "Radiogram received December 23, 1938," Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.
- <sup>116</sup> From Wells to McNutt, January 7, 1939, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.
- <sup>117</sup> "Statement by President Quezon to the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugee Affairs," January 1939. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #787a.
- <sup>118</sup> Moshe Yegar, *Between Integration and Secession: The Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Burma/Myanmar*, New York: Lexington Books, 2002, 222.
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid., 231.
- <sup>120</sup> Isaiah Bowman, "Preliminary Draft of Memorandum On Settlement Possibilities on the Island of Mindanao," January 21, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines" NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>122</sup> From Bowman to Achilles, March 16, 1939, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6
- <sup>123</sup> Griese, 27.
- <sup>124</sup> Herbert Katzki, "Memorandum," June 22, 1939. JDC, Collection 33/44, File #787a
- <sup>125</sup> Memorandum, July 14, 1939, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.
- <sup>126</sup> Philip Frieder, Manila to Morris Frieder, Ohio, August 18, 1939. JDC, Collection 33/44, file # 787a.



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<sup>127</sup> "Appendix B Composition of Initial Refugee Group For Mindanao Settlement" from office of President, John Hopkins University to Charles Liebman, August 29, 1939. JDC, Collection 33/44, file #787a

<sup>128</sup> "Report of the Mindanao Exploration Commission," October 2, 1939, General Records of the Department of State, Visa Division, NARA I, RG 59, Box 246, Folder 1, 811.B55j/109 - 811B.55/6.

<sup>129</sup> Robert Pell, "Memorandum of Conversation with George Warren," October 4, 1939, Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>130</sup> Robert Pell, "Memorandum of Conversation, October 9, 1939" Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Pell, "Memorandum of Conversation, October 10, 1939," Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>133</sup> From Liebman to Pell, November 29, 1939," Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>134</sup> From Youngberg to Liebman, February 23, 1940, "Intergovernmental Committee of Refugees, Country Files, "Philippines", NARA II, RG 59, Lot 52D408, Box 6.

<sup>135</sup> Feingold, 90.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Schechter, "Temple Emil Congregation Calendar" September 1, 1940. JHSSD, Cysner Collection, CJC01.03. See also Eberly, 61.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Hartendorp, *Vol. I*, 2.

<sup>140</sup> Ephraim, 90.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>142</sup> Frederic Harper Stevens, *Santo Tomas Internment Camp*, Stratford House, 1946, 8.

<sup>143</sup> Several first hand accounts by survivors of Santo Tomas support this statement. In addition to Hartendorp's and Stevens's works, please see: Emily Van Sickle, *The Iron Gates of Santo Tomas: The Firsthand Account of an American Couple Interned by the Japanese in Manila, 1942-1945*. Chicago: Academy of Chicago Publisher, 1992; Bruce E. Johansen, *So Far From Home: Manila's Santo Tomas Internment Camp, 1942-1945*, PBI Press, 1996; Celia Lucas, *Prisoners of Santo Tomas*, London: Leo Cooper Ltd., 1975.

<sup>144</sup> Michael P. Onorato, interviewer and editor, "Henry Sioux Johnson: A Stranger in a Strange Land," Oral History Program, California State University, Fullerton, 1985, Appendix.

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<sup>145</sup> Hartendorp, *Vol. I*, 4-14

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 36ff.

<sup>147</sup> Herb Brin, "Cantor Cysner's Survival Story," *Southwest Jewish Press*, No.4, October 13, 1960, 1.

<sup>148</sup> Ephraim, 94.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, 101.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 103.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, 107.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid, 117.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Griese, 32.

<sup>155</sup> Ephraim, 124.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, 136.

<sup>158</sup> Personal documents from his life in Manila that Cantor Cysner was able to retrieve are now housed in the Archives of the Jewish Historical Society of San Diego, including documents from Poland, German, San Francisco, and San Diego.

<sup>159</sup> William Craig, *The Fall of Japan*, New York: Macmillan Co., 1955, 267.

<sup>160</sup> Ephraim, 148. Ephraim accessed documents from the war crimes trial of Yamashita, housed in the National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

<sup>161</sup> Eberly, 62.

<sup>162</sup> Ephraim, 165.

<sup>163</sup> Griese, 33.

<sup>164</sup> See footnote #8.

<sup>165</sup> Ephraim, 167.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 168.

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<sup>167</sup>Jacques Lipetz, "Witnesses" part of a Holocaust remembrance website, created by Cybrary Community April 25, 1995, <<http://www.remember.org/witness/lipetz.htm>> (June 20, 2003)

<sup>168</sup>Ephraim, 165.

<sup>169</sup>Lipetz

<sup>170</sup>Cysner, Photographic Collection JHSSD, CJC02

<sup>171</sup>Ephraim, 190.

<sup>172</sup>Ephraim, 192.

<sup>173</sup>Schwarz to Mr. Cysner. JHSSD, Cantor Joseph Cysner Collection, CJC01.03

<sup>174</sup>Cysner, 10.