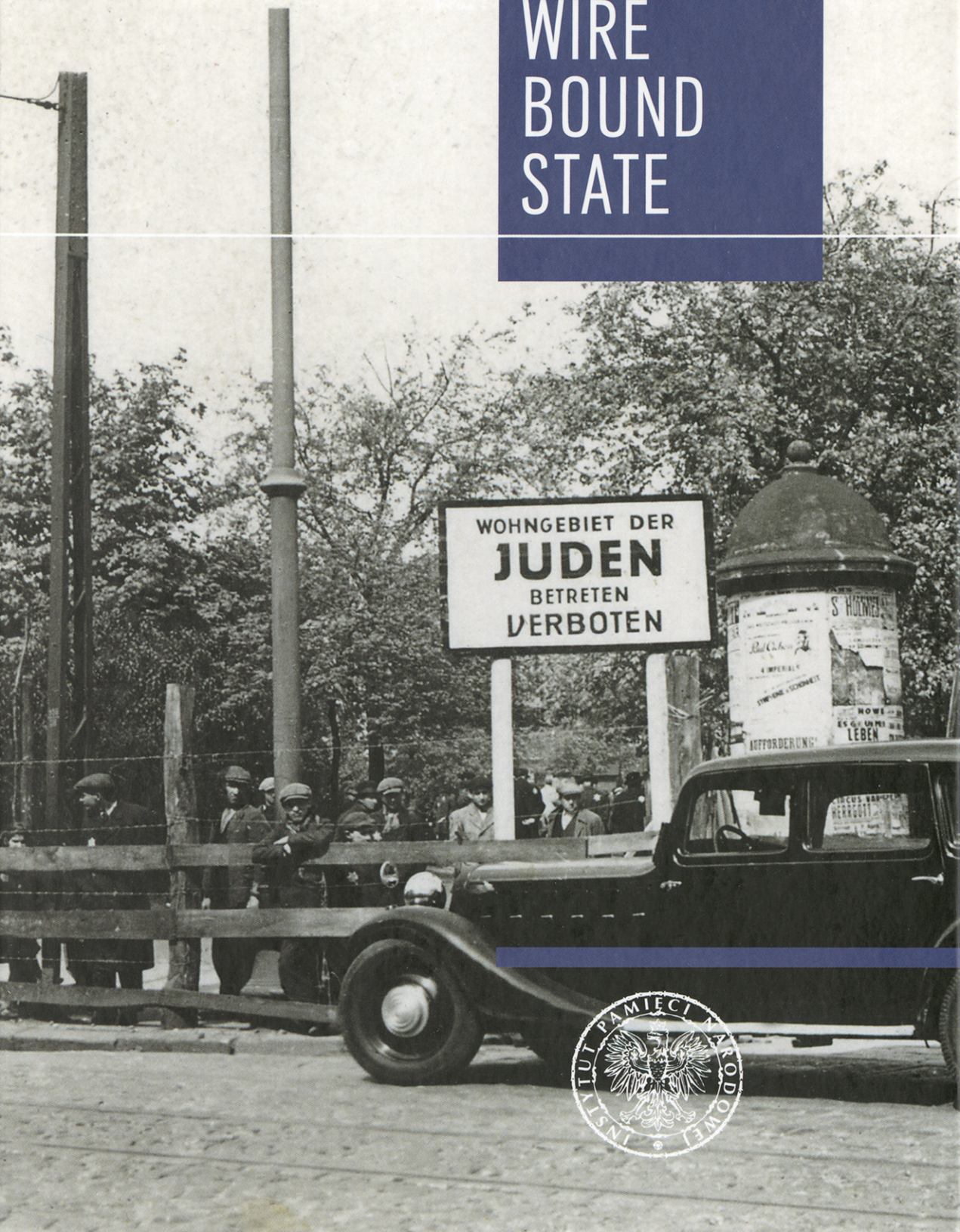
ADAM SITAREK

WIRE BOUND STATE



INSTYTUT PAMIĘCI NARODOWEJ

“WIRE BOUND STATE”

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE JEWISH ADMINISTRATION OF THE ŁÓDŹ GHETTO

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ADAM SITAREK

"WIRE BOUND STATE"

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE JEWISH ADMINISTRATION OF THE ŁÓDŹ GHETTO

Translated by Katarzyna Gucio

Institute of National Remembrance
Comission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation

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Revieved by
Prof. Grzegorz Berendt (University of Gdańsk)
Prof. Paweł Samuś (University of Łódź)

Proofreaded by
Christopher Pumphrey
Allan Ignaczak

Cover design by
Milena Romanowska

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Agencja Poligraficzna Sławomir Zych

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INTRODUCTION

"Today, September 6th, Rumkowski came from Łódź [...]. He said all kinds of outlandish things about the ghetto. Apparently, there is a Jewish state there [...]," Emanuel Ringelblum wrote ironically[1] after the visit of the Eldest of the Łódź Jews, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, to the Warsaw ghetto[2]. The "state" to which the murdered historian in 1944 alluded was the only entity of its kind. Rumkowski himself repeatedly resorted to that analogy. "My ghetto is a little statelet with all its advantages and disadvantages," he said to the representatives of Łódź *Landsmannschaft* during one of his visits in the Warsaw ghetto.[3] In the area of four square kilometers, where at the beginning of 1940 over 160,000 Jews from Łódź and the surrounding territory were forcibly resettled on the orders of the occupying German authorities, a new body was formed with an extensive administrative apparatus. The author of this volume has taken upon himself to describe its structure and function.

Compared to the historiography of the *Judenrats*,[4] which have been extensively researched,[5] the history of the administrative structures of the Łódź Ghetto was never to develop broader and deeper. The only exception in that regard has been research on the Eldest of the Jews – Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski.[6] An overview of the structure of the

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[1] Ringelblum made a deliberate reference to the title of the work by the founding father of Zionism, Theodor Herzl – T. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat. Versuch einer modernen Lösung der Judenfrage* [The Jewish State. Proposal of a modern solution for the Jewish question], Lepizig-Vienna 1896.

[2] E. Ringelblum, *Kronika getta warszawskiego*, ed. A. Eisenbach, Warszawa 1983, p. 1.

[3] "Referat sprawozdawczy przewodniczącego Rady Żydowskiej getta w Łodzi Chaima Rumkowskiego z 15.05.1941 r. wygłoszony przed przedstawicielami ziomkostwa łódzkiego w Warszawie" [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Losy Żydów łódzkich (1939–1942)*, transl. M. Polit, P. Kędziorek, p. 265.

[4] The concept of *Judenrat* (Jewish Council) is used commonly with respect to all forms of the administration of Jewish communities in occupied Poland, however, with regard to ghettos formed in Wartheland, including the Łódź Ghetto, the name *Ältestenrat* (Council of Elders) was used – A. Cała, H. Węgrzynek, G. Zalewska, *Historia i kultura Żydów polskich. Słownik*, Warszawa 2000, p. 141−142. The term "Council of Elders" appears for the first time in the wire sent by Reinhard Heydrich on 21 September 1939 to the commanders of the Security Police operational groups. In the area of the General Government, the legally binding regulation was the decree issued by Hans Frank on 28 November 1939 on the establishment of the Jewish Councils – *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów*, ed. T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, A. Rutkowski, Warszawa 1957, p. 21–25, 73–74.

[5] Cf. I. Trunk, *Judenrat. The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation*, Lincoln 1996; *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933–1945. Proceedings of the Third Yad Vashem International Historical Conference. Jerusalem, April 4–7, 1977*, ed. Y. Gutman, C.J. Haft, Jerusalem 1979; R. Hilberg, "The Ghetto as a Form of Government: An Analysis of Isaiah Trunk's Judenrat" [in:] *The Holocaust as Historical Experience. Essays and a Discussion*, ed. Y. Bauer, N. Rotenstreich, New York–London 1981. More in V. Wahlen, *Select Bibliography on Judenraete under Nazi Rule*, *Yad Vashem Studies*, no. 10, 1974, p. 277−294.

[6] M. Polit, *„Moja żydowska dusza nie obawia się dnia sądu". Mordechaj Chaim Rumkowski. Prawda i zmyślenie*, Warszawa 2012; S.F. Bloom, *Dictator of the Lodz Ghetto. The Strange History of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski*,

administrative apparatus of the closed district of Łódź can be found in the aforementioned monograph on the Jewish Councils by Isaiah Trunk and in another volume by the same author devoted to the history of the Łódź ghetto.[7] The description of certain aspects of the selected cells of the large administrative apparatus of the Łódź ghetto has also been the subject of works by Henryk Rubin,[8] Andrea Löw[9] as well as the studies by Julian Baranowski (albeit the latter provides only an outline).[10] Danuta Dąbrowska is the author of the most extensive analysis to date, which she presented in two articles published in the Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute.[11] However, all these texts discuss the administrative structures of the Łódź ghetto only up to December 1940. To some extent, the subsequent operation of the administration of the Łódź "closed district,"[12] limited to its specific institutions, has been addressed in articles on the Jewish police in the ghetto (called the Order Service),[13] the Central Prison,[14] as well as texts devoted to schools in the Łódź ghetto[15] and the response of the Jewish ghetto administration of the resettlement of Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate.[16] None of these texts, however, provide a comprehensive, or even sufficiently broad description of the subject. This volume is intended as a continuation of research begun by Danuta Dąbrowska, the necessity of which the author pointed out in the conclusion of one of the cited articles. The book has been modelled on the work Peter Klein, which is a highly reliable and detailed discussion of the German Board of the Łódź Ghetto.[17]

The subject of the volume is the structure and functioning of the administration of the Jewish ghetto of Łódź. The phrase "Jewish administration" has been chosen deliberately in place of the terms *Judenrat* (Jewish Council) or *Ältestenrat* (Council of Elders) used frequently in that sense, because in the case studied herein, unlike in many other ghettos created by the Germans on occupied Polish territories, the Council of Elders was merely

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Commentary, February 1949; Ph. Friedmann, "Pseudo-saviours in the Polish Ghettos: Mordechai Rumkowski of Lodz" [in:] *Roads to Extinction. Essays on the Holocaust*, New York 1980; M. Unger, *Reassessment of the Image of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski,* Jerusalem 2004.

7 I. Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto. A History*, transl. R.M. Shapiro, Bloomington 2008.

8 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi w Łodzi pod niemiecką okupacją 1939−1945*, London 1988.

9 A. Löw, *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto. Warunki życia i sposoby przetrwania*, Łódź 2012.

10 J. Baranowski, *The Łódź Ghetto 1940–1944 / Łódzkie getto 1940–1944. Vademecum*, Łódź 2009; idem, "Utworzenie i organizacja getta w Łodzi" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego 1940–1944*, ed. P. Samuś, W. Puś, Łódź 2006; idem, "Administracja niemiecka i tzw. samorząd w getcie łódzkim 1940–1944" [in:] *Dzieje Żydów w Łodzi 1820–1944. Wybrane problemy*, ed. W. Puś, S. Liszewski, Łódź 1991.

11 D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja żydowska w Łodzi i jej agendy w okresie od początku okupacji do zamknięcia getta (8 IX 1939 – 30 IV 1940)*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, no. 45/46, 1963; eadem, *Struktura i funkcje administracji żydowskiej w getcie łódzkim (maj – grudzień 1940)*, part 1, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, no. 51, 1964; eadem, *Struktura i funkcje administracji żydowskiej w getcie łódzkim (maj – grudzień 1940)*, part 2, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, no. 52, 1964.

12 In the volume, I use the term "closed district" as a synonym for the word "ghetto" without quotation marks.

13 A. Galiński, "Policja w getcie" [in:] *Getto w Łodzi 1940–1944. Materiały z sesji naukowej 9 VIII 1984 r.*, ed. J. Fijałek, A. Galiński, Łódź 1988; A. Löw, "Ordnungdienst im Getto Litzmannstadt" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego...*

14 A. Galiński, "Centralne więzienie dla Żydów w getcie łódzkim" [in:] *Dzieje Żydów w Łodzi...*

15 A. Sitarek, "Szkoły w Litzmannstadt Getto (1940–1941)" [in:] *Księga pamiątkowa XV Ogólnopolskiego Zjazdu Historyków Studentów*, vol. 2, *Z okazji 60. Rocznicy powstania SKNH UŁ*, ed. J. Walicki, Łódź 2008.

16 A. Sitarek, *W obliczu „trudnej konieczności". Administracja żydowska getta łódzkiego wobec wsiedleń Żydów z Rzeszy i Protektoratu (październik – listopad 1941), Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, no. 8, 2012.

17 P. Klein, *Die „Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt" 1940–1944. Eine Dienststelle im Spannungsfeld von Kommunalbürokratie und staatlicher Verfolgungspolitik*, Hamburg 2009.

a single unit, a marginalized one at that, of the vast administrative apparatus headed personally by the Eldest of the Jews,[18] Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski. The chronological scope of work covers the period from the establishment of the closed area in Łódź, ordered by the Police President on February 8th, 1940, until its liquidation on August 29, 1944. One exception has been made, however, from this time frame. Given the need to describe the evolution of the structures of the Jewish government into the administrative apparatus of the ghetto, it was necessary to include the history of the Jewish Community in the first months of Second World War, up until the ghetto was formed.

The volume aims to describe the system of structures of the Jewish administration organized in the ghetto in Łódź. These structures had no uniform origins: on one hand, they were a continuation of prewar institutions of the Jewish Community as well as private institutions and associations.[19] Others, in contrast, were created from scratch in response to the needs of the moment, engendered by the orders of the occupation authorities. They were not formed, however, in complete isolation from the context of the prewar experience of the Jews imprisoned in the ghetto – officials and employees of these structures.[20]

The author has also intended to demonstrate how the apparatus of the Jewish administration operated while the ghetto was being formed and after its closure. Its actions were determined by three groups of factors. The first, most important, was the policy of the German authorities. Following the suggestion of Raul Hilberg,[21] the subsequent stages of German anti-Jewish policy – expropriation, imprisonment in the ghetto and finally extermination – clerly affected the tasks that the Eldest of the Jews and his extensive administration faced. The second group was the response of the Jews – primarily Rumkowski – but also officials involved in the structures of the Jewish administration. In response to the changing situation, they were forced to propose solutions to meet the expectations of the occupying authorities while minimizing the effects of their implementation. In this case reference was made to earlier experiences of Jews as a community (using, for example the method Hilberg dubbed "anticipatory compliance,"[22] but also the experiences of the industrial history of Łódź (entrepreneurship, ability to face challenges) – many of the officials employed in the ghetto administration had been minor industrialists and factory owners before the war. Within this group of factors, the personality of the "Chairman" – as Rumkowski was called – and his own experience as a social and political activist were also important. The third, last group were economic factors. Resources in the ghetto – finances, infrastructure, labor – determined the framework for the operation of the administration of the closed district.

The volume is divided into four chapters. The first describes the history of the institutions of the local Jewish government in Łódź from the outbreak of the Second World War up until the establishment of the ghetto in the end of April 1940. The first section of

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[18] The term is a literal, albeit unfortunate translation of the German *Der Älteste der Juden* proposed by the Community officials in the autumn of 1939.

[19] Such agencies included the Department of Social Welfare, among others.

[20] An example is the Fire Brigade, which was organized by a professional firefighter Henryk Kaufmann, or the Jewish Order Service, whose organization in the first period was based on the pre-war structures of the State Police.

[21] R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, New York 1973, 54*ff*.

[22] According to Hilberg, this means that The victim, sensing danger, corn-batted it by initiating a conciliatory response before being confronted by open threats. He therefore gave in to a demand on his own terms. Ibid., p. 23.

Chapter One provides a brief overview of the Jewish residents of Łódź and their response to the outbreak of the Second World War. The second section characterizes the policy of the German authorities against the Jews of Łódź in the first months of the occupation. Repressive ordinances issued by the occupant gradually restricted the freedom of the Jewish population. The activities of the occupation authorities against the Jews of Łódź were dependent on the decision of the highest authorities of the Third Reich, first and foremost the plan to deport them from territories annexed to the Reich, and once it was abandoned – the decision to create a closed area for Jews in Łódź. The author found it necessary to outline these issues in the first two sections in order to portray fully the situation of the Jewish Religious Community in the autumn of 1939. The third section describes the operation of the Jewish representative bodies from September 8, 1939; that is, from the moment the German Army entered Łódź. Presented here are the actions taken by officials of the Religious Community in response to the policy of the German authorities. The section describes how prewar Jewish self-government structures coped in a new situation. Discriminatory regulations introduced by the occupation authorities and their policies of repression restricted the scope of activities of the Community. Another event that affected the organization was the escape of the Jewish community leaders – Lejb Mincberg, Chairman of the Board of the Community, and his successor Abram Pływacki. The appointment of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski as the Eldest of the Jews by the City Commissioner and granting him a broad scope of powers in relation to the Jewish population in the occupied city marked a new stage in the history of the Jewish self-government in Łódź. Rumkowski's activity in a time of growing repressive policy of the occupying forces has been presented in the fourth and final section. Its time frame has been determined by Rumkowski's appointment on the one hand and the closure of the borders of the ghetto, respectively.

The subsequent second chapter describes the organization of the administrative structures of the ghetto from its sealing in the autumn of 1941 − one of the key events in the history of Łódź closed district. The first section presents a description of the German police and civilian structures supervising the Jewish administration of the ghetto. In fact, they often had a direct impact on the structures of the Jewish administration and its operation. After the borders of the ghetto were sealed, the Eldest of the Jews was forced to organize the administrative apparatus in order to manage the closed district. Rumkowski approached the task with determination and in a short time, by the end of 1940, created the framework of the administration, which, with many modifications, survived until the end of the ghetto. This is discussed in the second section. The third section describes the organization of the work and production in the ghetto. Rumkowski soon concluded that productivization of prisoners of the closed district and expansion of the system of factories, the labor divisions, would provide an opportunity to purchase food supplies. He pursued this policy with the full support of the director of the German Board of the Ghetto Hans Biebow, who saw the development of the production as a way to ensure self-sufficiency of the ghetto. The fourth and final section presents the process of expansion and modification of the administrative apparatus in 1941. The second year of the ghetto saw the power of the Eldest of the Jews centralized, which affected the administration structures. Certain units were also reorganized, such as the provisioning system. 1941 marked the moment of maximum development of the administrative structures of the Jewish ghetto.

The third chapter describes the operation of the administration in the face of the "final solution of the Jewish question." The time frame is determined on one hand by the resettlement of groups of Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate to the ghetto at the turn of October and November 1941, and on the other − the liquidation of the ghetto in the summer of 1944. The decision to murder the Jews in Warthegau was made in mid-1941, and soon after, in early December of that year, the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner began operation. One of the elements of the extermination plan was the resettlement of nearly 20,000 Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate to the Łódź ghetto in the autumn of 1941. This event marked of the key moments in the history of the ghetto. The Jewish administration of the ghetto faced a number of tasks, which has been discussed in the first section. In the beginning of 1942 the displacement operation of the ghetto began. Gradually, subsequent groups of residents were deported to Chełmno on the Ner, where death awaited them. The expulsions were organized by the Jewish administration of the ghetto. Its operation at that time – from the January operation up until the *Allgemeine Gesperre* in September 1942 – is presented in the second section. After the displacement ended and the majority of people recognized by the German authorities as "counter-productive" were deported, the ghetto was virtually transformed into a forced labor camp, where almost the entire population worked for the German war economy. In the face of this situation, the administrative apparatus of the ghetto was reorganized once again, which has been presented in the third section. The fourth and final section describes the operation of the administration during the liquidation of the ghetto. At that point, once the inhabitants of the ghetto were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in August 1944, the administrative structures were disbanded. They were later reformed in a rudimentary form once the deportations ended, which is described in the conclusion of that section.

According to data collected by the Statistics Division of the ghetto, the administrative structure of the closed district in Łódź employed between 10–20 thousand people. This number varied depending on the period and ranged from 5,300 to 14,200 people.[23] The percentage of employees in clerical apparatus was relatively high throughout the entire time the ghetto existed and in the peak period amounted to over 17% of the total working population. The fourth, final chapter is on one hand an attempt to outline the biographies of individuals that played a key role in the ghetto, in particularly Rumkowski, to whom the first section is devoted. On the other hand, it is an attempt of providing a collective biography of the clerical apparatus of the Łódź ghetto – people who, in the extreme conditions of the ghetto – either voluntarily or under compulsion – were the heroes of "undoubtedly the darkest chapter of the whole dark story," as Hannah Arendt called the Shoah.[24] In the second section, Rumkowski's closes associates have been discussed – his co-workers, who often had a significant impact on the Eldest of the Jews. In mid-1942, when a third of the inhabitants deported of the ghetto were deported to their deaths, Rumkowski's position weakened; competitors to power emerged, skillfully inspired by the warring institutions of the German government supervising the ghetto. This conflict is the subject of the third and final section.

[23] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 309, table 8, p. 395, table 15.
[24] H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, New York 1968.

The source base of this volume are the materials collected in the State Archive in Łódź, primarily in the record group *Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów w łódzkim getcie* (the Eldest of the Jews in the Łódź ghetto) and another, devoted to the German of the Board Ghetto – *Gettoverwaltung*. The second group of documents are records of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York from the Nachman Zonabend Collection and a group of files from the archives of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, primarily *Łódzkie Getto* (Łódź ghetto). An important supplement is also the documents from the collections of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw and Łódź from the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Yad Vashem archives in Jerusalem and the Beit Lohamei Hagetaot Kibbutz. Supplementing these documents are accounts and diaries from the collections of these institutions, especially in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. Some of the documents used in the volume have been published as source materials. Particularly noteworthy is the publication of the documents and materials on the history of the German occupation in Poland, *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, mainly the third volume devoted to the Łódź ghetto.[25] Many interesting documents have been published in the collection *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej* (Extermination of Jews on Polish lands during the Nazi occupation)[26] and in the volume *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933−1945*.[27] A number of studies concerning the operation of the Jewish administration departments and labor divisions produced by archivists employed at the Department of Archives of that administration has been published in the fifth volume of *Kronika getta łódzkiego* (Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto).[28] The *Chronicle* itself is also a highly rich source for the researcher of the history of the administrative structures, as it provides a number of comprehensive descriptions of the various departments of the ghetto administration.[29]

Other sources of information include reports, journals and diaries from the Łódź ghetto, some of which were written by people employed in the administrative apparatus of the ghetto,[30] as well as the occupation press published in Łódź,[31] which has been proved helpful in restoring the chronology of regulations issued by the German authorities.

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[25] *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 3: *Getto łódzkie*, part 1, ed. A. Eisenbach, Warszawa–Łódź–Kraków 1946.

[26] *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów*, ed. T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, A. Rutkowski, Warszawa 1957.

[27] *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945*, vol. 4: *Polen. September 1939 – Juli 1941*, ed. K.P. Friedrich, A. Löw, München 2011.

[28] *Kronika getta łódzkiego / Litzmannstadt Getto 1940–1944*, vol. 5: *Aneksy*, ed. J. Baranowski et al., Łódź 2009.

[29] *Kronika getta łódzkiego / Litzmannstadt Getto 1940–1944*, vol. 1: *1941*, vol. 2: *1942*, vol. 3: *1943*, vol. 4: *1944*, ed. J. Baranowski et al., Łódź 2009.

[30] E.g. O. Singer, *„Przemierzając szybkim krokiem getto...". Reportaże i eseje z getta łódzkiego*, transl. K. Radziszewska, Łódź 2002 (German edition: O. Singer, *„Im Eilschritt durch den Gettotag...". Reportagen und Essays aus dem Getto Lodz*, ed. S. Feuchert et al., Berlin-Wien 2002); O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu noch Welt. Aufzeichnungen aus dem Getto Lodz*, ed. H. Loewy, Frankfurt am Main 1994 (English edition: O. Rosenfeld, *In the Begining Was the Ghetto. Notebooks from Łódź*, ed. H. Loewy, Evanston 2004); J. Poznański, *Dziennik z łódzkiego getta*, Warszawa 2002; *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, ed. L. Dobroszycki, Warszawa 1960.

[31] The official newspaper of the occupation authorities of the city was *Lodzer Zeitung*, from 12 April 1940 issued under the name *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*.

1

JEWISH SELF-GOVERNMENT IN ŁÓDŹ FROM THE OUTBREAK OF WAR UNTIL THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GHETTO

1. The Jews of Łódź and the Second World War

On the eve of the war, Łódź was the second largest urban center in the Second Republic of Poland with population of about 233,000 Jews, accounting for almost 35 percent of the city's residents.[1] Most of them lived in the northern part of Łódź as the result of a decree introduced by the governor in 1825, establishing a "Jewish quarter" that stretched from the southern frontage of the Old Town Square to the northern side of the streets Podrzeczna and Wolborska. Although the decree was eventually abolished, almost 40years later in 1862, the area became part of the Jewish district for good.[2] Until the end of the nineteenth century, its center slowly shifted south; according to the findings of Jacek Walicki, in the 1930s, Jewish life concentrated around Liberty Square (*Plac Wolności*) and the adjacent blocks between the streets Lipowa from the west, Zielona and Narutowicza from the south, Wierzbowa from the east and the Old Town (*Stare Miasto*) from the north.[3] Such arrangement of the Jewish Community is reflected in an account by a pre-war resident of Łódź:

> I'm going from the north down. The end of Zgierska Street – Polish.The tram to Zgierz – Polish-German. Then Bałuty, the streets: Zawiszy, Wolborska, Jakuba – all Jews. Only caretakers were Poles. We enter Nowomiejska Street and again, only Jews. From Liberty Square, Jews start slightly to mix with Polish society a little, they go from with one hundred percent to, say, ninety percent, and then even less, by Andrzeja Street, they make twenty per cent. The number of Poles is constantly growing and first Germans appear. [...] We reach Upper Market (*Górny Rynek*). Again, there are some Jews mixed in at the Upper Market. There are some Jews, Poles and a lot of Germans [...].[4]

The boundaries between different parts of the city were fluid, as was the conventional division between the said area, inhabited by the predominantly assimilated population,

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1 J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe spowodowane polityką okupanta w tzw. rejencji łódzkiej w latach 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1987, p. 31, table 7.

2 W. Puś, *Żydzi w Łodzi w latach zaborów 1793–1914*, Łódź 2003, p. 15–20.

3 J. Walicki, "Żydzi łódzcy przed wrześniem 1939 r." [in:] *Łódź w 1939 roku*, ed. T. Toborek, P. Waingertner, Łódź 2011, p. 68–69.

4 P. Spodenkiewicz, *Zaginiona dzielnica. Łódź żydowska – ludzie i miejsca*, Łódź 2006, p. 21–22.

mostly middle class, and the area of the Old Town and the southern part of Bałuty, populated in the majority by orthodox Jews and the poor.[5] The concentration of Jewish population in the northern part of the city had its consequences during the war – seeing as the area was already densely populated by the Jews, it was there that the German authorities decided to create a ghetto.

The body representing the Jews of Łódź was the Jewish Religious Community, led in the years preceding the war by the industrialist and politician Jakub Lejb Mincberg. He was associated with the orthodox party Agudat Israel, which he represented in the Sejm as a deputy.[6] As the administrator of the Community, he combined fidelity to tradition with a modern style of management. One of his colleagues described Mincberg's style of leadership as a "mosaic of dictatorship and liberalism, strict piety and cutting-edge technology." His penchant for curbing the influence of the socialist parties earned him an interesting moniker courtesy of Bund activists, namely "little Mussolini of the Łódź Agudas."[7] His position, however, was strong and despite the growing offensive from the Socialists and the Folkists, he remained head of the Łódź Kahal until its end, even though – as he admitted in one of the meetings of the Community Council in February 1938 – he was tired after 10years in office and would have resigned long before if he had been sure that "the leadership of the Community will fall into the right hands."[8] Eighteen months later, such a person was "found" by the German authorities. By that time, however, Mincberg had already left Łódź. Although the Community officially represented the Jews of Łódź, the majority of them were indifferent towards it. Even elections to the Community authorities, seemingly important to the citizens, failed to garner much interest, as evidenced by the number of votes cast.[9]

The growing tension in international relations and the increasingly real threat from Poland's western neighbor aroused patriotic sentiment in society. In the opinion of one investigator of the problem, the phenomenon was just as common among Poles as among Jews.[10] Łódź Jews were jointly involved in actions to support the Fund of National Defense and the Anti-Aircraft Defense Loan.[11] With growing concern, they listened to reports of anti-Semitic policy of the authorities of the Third Reich. Increasingly worrying signs of the deteriorating situation for Jews in Germany reached the city, and in the following years, also in Nazi-occupied Austria and Czechoslovakia. Members of the Łódź Kahal also expressed their concern. In the summer of 1932, the Community Board adopted a resolution protesting against Hitler's policy of persecuting Jews and calling upon the

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5 J. Walicki, "Żydzi łódzcy...", p. 68–69.

6 A. Kempa, M. Szukalak, *Żydzi dawnej Łodzi. Słownik biograficzny Żydów łódzkich oraz z Łodzią związanych*, vol. 1, Łódź 2001, p. 108.

7 R.M. Shapiro, *Jewish Self-Government in Poland: Łódź 1914–1939*, Columbia University 1987, doctoral thesis manuscript in the collection of the Jewish Studies Center of the University of Łódź, p. 168.

8 Ibid., p. 220.

9 Only fewer than 15,400 votes were cast in the 1931 election, meaning that less than 7.5% of Łódź Jews voted. Cf. ibid., table 3.35, p. 608, table 3.38, p. 611.

10 M. Trębacz, "«Wojna nerwów» – codzienność łodzian w przededniu wybuchu drugiej wojny światowej" [in:] *Łódź w 1939 roku...*, p. 122.

11 Unfortunately, this activity became one of the pretexts for anti-Semitic attacs of national parties. In this case Jews were accused of insufficient involvement, among other things. J. Walicki, "Wprowadzenie" [in:] *Sprawozdania miesięczne wojewody łódzkiego. Rok 1939*, part 1: *Legalny ruch polityczny i narodowościowy*, ed. J. Walicki et al., Łódź 2012, p. LXIV.

League of Nations and the Polish government to intervene. The Board sent a special letter to the League, in which it appealed for the international organization to "defend and care for the lives and property of Jews in Germany."[12] In the autumn of 1938, authorities of the Community faced a difficult challenge when Hitler decided to expel Polish citizens of Jewish faith from the territory of the Reich. The first deportees arrived in Łódź in November 1938. Gradually, in collaboration with private organizations, the Kahal managed to organize help for large groups of refugees who left the transit camp in Zbąszyń and reached central Poland.[13] It mainly consisted of providing shelter and food for the needy – one of several kitchens opened in the Community's building at 18 Pomorska Street. At the same time, the Jewish Committee for Aid to Refugees organized fundraising and collection of clothes and food. Mincberg was personally involved in establishing the Central Committee for Aid to Jewish Refugees from Germany, which was founded on November 4, 1938, in Warsaw with Professor Mojżesz Schorr as chairman.[14]

The Jews of Łódź were profoundly shocked by the news of the so-called Kristallnacht of November 9–10, 1938. Many communities voiced their protest against Nazi activities. One such circle that issued an official resolution was the local branch of the Bund: "The gathering of the Jewish Bund masses in Łódź sends their fierce protest against the savagery and carnage that your government has perpetrated upon the defenseless Jewish population in Germany. We demand that the government of the Reich cease to use terror and murder against the Jewish population."[15] The Jewish Community also expressed their opposition to the terror in the Reich. On December 4, 1938, the Board adopted a resolution condemning the actions of the German authorities. In harsh words, they protested against

> the barbaric acts of the Nazis, who lost the last vestiges of their humanity and surpassed the wild tribes in their brutality and sophisticated torture; because of the desecration of the most cherished temples, because of the burning of Jewish houses of worship, because of the destruction of Jewish property, because of the expulsion and destruction of thousands of innocent Jewish families, against making the Jews victims of the most hateful and vicious persecution.

The text conveyed words of encouragement for the victims of Nazi attacks, assuring them that they would not be abandoned and expressing hope there were still forces in the world capable of reacting and opposing "all the barbaric and brutal actions" of the Nazis.[16] Only a few weeks later, it became clear how vain such hope were.

As the external threat increased, anti-Semitic sentiments that had affected the Łódź Jews in the second half of the 1930s calmed dawn.[17] Nationalist groups, while still hostile

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[12] R.M. Shapiro, *Jewish Self-Government...*, p. 462–463.

[13] J. Walicki, "Żydzi łódzcy...", p. 80–81; J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe...*, p. 62.

[14] R.M. Shapiro, *Jewish Self-Government...*, p. 462–466.

[15] The resolution was meant to be sent to the German consulate in Łódź, ultimately though it was never done. Cf. *Sprawozdanie miesięczne wojewody łódzkiego z legalnego ruchu politycznego i narodowościowego za listopad 1938 r.* [in:] *Sprawozdania miesięczne wojewody łódzkiego. Rok 1938*, part 1: *Legalny ruch polityczny i narodowościowy*..., p. 314.

[16] Cited in R.M. Shapiro, *Jewish Self-Government...*, p. 468–469.

[17] More on the atmosphere and anti-Semitic incidents in Łódź in the late 1930s, cf. J. Walicki, "Wprowadzenie" [in:] *Sprawozdania miesięczne wojewody łódzkiego. Rok 1939,* part 1: *Legalny ruch polityczny i narodowościowy*..., p. LVII–LXV.

towards the Jews, in March 1939 shifted focus to the anti-German campaign, which the Jewish press also joined.[18] The attacks did not cease completely, however, and the National Party carried out anti-Semitic activities in the summer of 1939. Often, in response to the current events, they tried to combine their hatred of Jews and Germans. This led to a paradoxical situation in which nationalists on the one hand supported the Nazi policy of discrimination against Jews, while on the other hand, they criticized "Hitler's Germanness" after he made claims regarding Polish lands. They were not particularly concerned about such inconsistency, as evidenced during the Sea Days celebration when members of the party carried banners with the slogan reading: "The greatest external enemy: the German, the greatest enemy within: the Jew."[19]

The last days of August 1939 were marked by the digging of anti-aircraft ditches, which clearly contributed to the consolidation of society. Mincberg, chairman of the Community Board, urged residents to respond to the appeal of municipal authorities, calling the Jews "to participate in the collective works once again, thus proving their willingness to carry out all civic duties."[20] Representatives of various social groups answered his plea in droves. One witness noted in his diary at the time, "The lack of tools is no obstacle for the massive number of volunteers. All Jews (Hasids too), the old, the young, women, like all other citizens (except for the Germans), volunteer in droves."[21] The operation continued after the outbreak of war on September 1st, encouraged the city mayor Jan Kwapiński in a speech broadcast by Polish Radio Łódź.[22]

After Germany attacked Poland, Łódź was overcome with an atmosphere of uncertainty. Official messages broadcast by the state authorities spoke about successes in the battles of defense and the planned imminent retaliation of Western allies sharply contrasted with the reality and the defeats of the Polish army. However, they had an uplifting influence on the morale of citizens. One of the participants in the events recorded at the time:

> That day, they spread the most fantastic rumors about the alleged victories of the Polish army and their entry into the territory of Germany. Radio and newspapers broadcast messages that did not contain any specific data. There were a lot of fiery proclamations and speeches, while very few facts. [...] The idea that Germany invaded the territory of Poland and were moving forward hardly penetrated the consciousness.[23]

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[18] J. Walicki, "Żydzi łódzcy...", p. 76.

[19] *Sprawozdanie miesięczne wojewody łódzkiego z legalnego ruchu politycznego i narodowościowego za czerwiec 1939 r.* [in:] *Sprawozdania miesięczne wojewody łódzkiego. Rok 1939,* part 1: *Legalny ruch polityczny i narodowościowy*..., p. 150; M. Trębacz, "Wojna nerwów...", p. 116.

[20] Cited in M. Trębacz, "Wojna nerwów...", p. 113–114.

[21] D. Sierakowiak, *The Diary from the Łódź Ghetto*, ed. Alan Adelson, transl. Kamil Turowski, Oxford−New York 1996, p. 29; *„Dziennik" Dawida Sierakowiaka*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 15 I 1972, no. 3 (4039), p. 11. Cf. also A. Sitarek, "Bezpieczeństwo Łodzi w naszych rękach. Władze Łodzi wobec wybuchu II wojny światowej" [in:] *Łódź w 1939 roku...*, p. 210–212.

[22] A. Sitarek, "Bezpieczeństwo Łodzi...", p. 219–220.

[23] Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Warszawie [Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw] (henceforth: AŻIH), Archiwum Ringelbuma [the Ringelblum Archive] (henceforth: Ring) I/913, Fela Wiernik Testimony, p. 4.

German terror intensified and raids were conducted on the city from 2–4 September. These were large scale, however, they caused relatively minor damage.[24] Relations, however, show that for a large portion of the inhabitants, there was an impulse to understand the seriousness of the situation in which they found themselves. Fear of the use of poison gas by the Germans also played an important role.[25]

Gradually, over the subsequent days, refugees from the western and southern parts of the region began to arrive in the city. The information they brought about the successes and the brutality of the German army intensified the fears held by the residents of Łódź. More and more people decided to leave the city and flee to the east in the direction of Warsaw. Evacuation of city offices on 5th and 6th of September caused an outbreak of panic.[26] "There was a police station in our building, the police fled in panic. It was as if the world was ending for us," wrote one of the witnesses.[27] Dawid Sierakowiak recorded in his diary:

> God, what's going on! Panic, mass exodus, defeatism. The city, deserted by the police and all other state institutions, is waiting in terror for the anticipated arrival of the German troops. What happened? People run from one place to another, finding no comfort; they move their worn bits of furniture around in terror and confusion, without any real purpose.[28]

Similar descriptions of chaos and fear of imminent danger can be found in other accounts.[29] The signal for departure was the appeal of the head of propaganda in the headquarters of the supreme Commander, Colonel Roman Umiastowski, broadcast on the radio on the night of September 6th, calling upon all men under fifty years of age to retreat with the army. Evacuation of city and state institutions and the resulting panic also affected the morale of the Community's authorities. One of those who joined the long line of refugees leaving Łódź on September 6th was the head of the board of the Community, Mincberg.[30]

Not all Jews of Łódź decided to leave the city. Some of them stayed, refusing to believe the news about the brutality of Germans or considering it to be exaggerated, which was reminiscent of the response to reports about anti-Jewish pogroms, including the

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[24] Fist bombs were dropped on September 2, 1939. J. Wojtyński, *W Łodzi przed 6 laty. Jak miasto Łódź przeżywało pierwsze dni wojny 1–9 IX 1939 r.*, *Tygodnik Demokratyczny*, 1945, no. 12, p. 3; A. Sitarek, "Bezpieczeństwo Łodzi...", p. 215–216.

[25] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 31; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 12.

[26] A. Sitarek, "Bezpieczeństwo Łodzi...", p. 217; Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs of the Lodz Ghetto*, Toronto 2003, p. 1.

[27] Archive of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington (henceforth: USHMM), RG 02.021.01, Sophie Machtinger, *Recollections from my Life's Experiences*, p. 2.

[28] D. Sierakowiak, *Dziennik...*, p. 34; *„Dziennik..."*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 12.

[29] AŻIH, Ring I/913, Fela Wiernik Testimony, p. 3–9; J. Poznański, *Dziennik z łódzkiego getta*, Warszawa 2002, p. 13–14.

[30] Mincberg reached the territory occupied by the Soviet Union, to Vilnius, where he tried to apply for an exit visa from the Soviet government, albeit without success. After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war and the seizure of the city by the Nazis in the summer of 1941, Mincberg's wife was murdered. He himself left for Białystok several months later, where he worked in one of the factories and in the hospital as a janitor. He died in the Białystok ghetto in July 1943. – G. Bacon, *Mincberg Leib*, http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Mincberg_Leib (accessed on 21 Jan 2013); M. Balberyszski, *Stronger than Iron: The Destruction of Vilna Jewry 1941–1945. An Eyewitness Account*, Jerusalem 2010, p. 167, 187; B. Pełka, "Rumkowski Chaim Mordechaj" [in:] *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, ed. J. Rudowski, J. Rustejko, vol. 33, Wrocław 1991; S. Rudnicki, *Żydzi w parlamencie II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 2004, p. 417.

"Kristallnacht."[31] What was important here was the memory of German occupation during the First World War. Those who remembered those times believed that the upcoming war would be similar to the one in 1914−1918, and that soldiers marching on the city were "the same Germans from the First World War."[32] In the case of some of them, as their attachment to their home and property proved stronger than their fear of war, they decided to stay in Łódź. The lack of money was another factor,[33] as was the lack of means of transport.[34]

Accounts from that period indicate that the sight of retreating troops of the Polish Army was particularly depressing. One after one, groups of soldiers went through the city–first in an orderly manner, then chaotic. Local people lined up along the route, bringing soldiers beverages food and cigarettes:[35] "Around noon, the retreating Polish army came to the city. Standing on the balcony, I was watching how measly carts were slowly dragging, one by one, followed by miserable-looking, dirty, unshaven soldiers."[36]

Very little information survives on the Community's activity on the first day of September 1939. Records indicate that after September 1st, the Łódź kahilla continued its operation as usual.[37] In the first day of the war, the boards of the Community with Chairman Mincberg at the helm went to the Regional Office and submitted the declaration of "readiness to collaborate with state and social factors on behalf of the entire Jewish populace."[38] The following day, the local government officer of Łódź, Henryk Mostowski, informed the Community of a seizure warrant issued for the premises they had been using at 18 Pomorska Street.[39] Unfortunately, we do not know for what purpose the authorities planned to adapt the building of the Community.[40] On September 3rd, the kahilla board sent a letter to "all departments, offices and institutions of the Community," ordering them under the new wartime conditions to keep "utmost frugality and rational management and administration." The document also instructed that within two days, a selection of offices should be made from within the Community to be either disbanded or suspended. Unfortunately, no reply to the letter survives.

When municipal authorities imposed restrictions on the movement of vehicles in the city, the Kahilla board also sent a request to the Military Department of the City Board to issue passes for four funeral caravans, so that they could transport the dead to the cemetery undisturbed.[41] Both of the above-mentioned documents were recorded in the book of correspondence on September 4th, signed by Chairman of the Board Jakub Mincberg and

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31 AŻIH, Ring I/913, Fela Wiernik Testimony, p. 3.

32 USHMM, RG 02.021.01, Sophie Machtinger, *Recollections from my Life's Experiences*, p. 2.

33 A. Löw, *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto. Warunki życia i sposoby przetrwania*, Łódź 2012, p. 57.

34 J. Poznański, *Dziennik*..., p. 13.

35 T. Bojanowski, *Łódź pod okupacją niemiecką w latach II wojny światowej (1939–1945)*, Łódź 1992, p. 14–15; *„Dziennik..."*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 12.

36 AŻIH, Ring I/913, Fela Wiernik Testimony, p. 11.

37 September 1 fell on a Friday, so the Sabbath began that day. Work was resumed on September 3 (Sunday).

38 *Delegacja łódzkiej gminy żydowskiej, Kurier Łódzki*, 3–4 IX 1939, no. 234, p. 5.

39 Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (henceforth APŁ), Akta Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów w getcie łódzkim (henceforth PSŻ) 2, Dziennik korespondencji, p. 115.

40 APŁ, PSŻ 6, Pismo Zarządu Gminy z 3 IX 1939, p. 512.

41 Ibid., p. 514. Traffic restrictions on the streets: Piotrkowska, Nowomiejska, Zgierska and Pabianicka were introduced on September 1. They were designed to facilitate the movement of military units. *Zarządzenie Starosty Grodzkiego Łódzkiego z dnia 1 września 1939 r.*, *Kurier Łódzki*, 2 IX 1939, no. 242, p. 2.

Secretary of the Community Pinkus Nadel. Mincberg's aforementioned departure from Łódź and the increasingly difficult situation in the city did not affect the Community. The preserved documents indicate that in subsequent days it did not interrupt Community's normal operations, although they were carried out to a limited extent – some of these documents can attest to the letters to the Registry Office requesting to register Jewish births.[42] The Jewish refugees from Łódź were not forgotten either. Beginning September 8th, Dr. Jakub Schlosser[43] was in charge of organizing help for wounded refugees and transport for the deceased on behalf of the Community. Until German troops seized the city, the Community did not undertake any further actions.

In the last hours before the Wehrmacht troops entered, the city was at peace – "The beginning of the day was calm, too calm," Sierakowiak noted.[44] Air strikes and artillery fire ceased, solitary Polish soldiers passed quickly through deserted streets. "On Friday, everyone expected the Germans to enter at any moment," a resident of Łódź wrote. "Until noon, Polish troops were still dragging, then everything stopped and went silent. Around 7 o'clock in the evening, two cars with German officers arrived. A moment later, street lamps were lit for the first time in a week."[45]

On September 8th, when first Wehrmacht troops reached Łódź, a new phase began in the history of the Łódź Jewish Community. It was not long before all predictions and concerns regarding the occupier's policy were verified. Jankiel Nirenberg remembered that day: "The Germans entered the city on the Friday, the 8th of September. Poles and Jews reacted to their arrival with fear, while the German citizens greeted Nazi soldiers with flowers, welcoming them with joy. The following morning marked the beginning of hell for all the Jews who decided to stay."[46]

2. Policy of the German Authorities Towards the Jews in Łódź during the First Months of the Occupation

German units encroaching on Polish lands were adequately prepared to carry out operations in the conquered territory. On one hand, soldiers participating in the campaign against Poland were subjected to intensive indoctrination that depicted the Jews as "friends of Bolsheviks, imbued with hatred of the Germans."[47] Soldiers sent to the front were taught that "many Jews see the Germans as their personal enemies."[48] On the other hand, arriving in the wake of regular troops were operational groups of the Security Police and Security Service. Their main task was to fight all "hostile ele-

[42] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Dziennik korespondencji, p. 115.
[43] Ibid., PSŻ 6, Upoważnienie z 8 IX 1939, p. 511.
[44] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 36; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 11.
[45] F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia i przeżycia wojenne* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Losy Żydów łódzkich (1939–1942)*, ed. M. Polit, Warszawa 2013, p. 12.
[46] Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs...*, p. 1.
[47] J. Böhler, "Prześladowanie ludności żydowskiej w okupowanej Polsce podczas trwania zarządu wojskowego (od 1 września do 25 października 1939 r.)" [in:] *Zagłada Żydów na polskich terenach wcielonych do Rzeszy*, ed. A. Namysło, Warszawa 2008, p. 48.
[48] Ibid.

ments"– which referred almost universally to Polish Jews, representatives of Polish elites and the independence movement – within the occupied territories. According to the instructions of the highest command, all enemies were to be "silenced" by groups operating in concert with the Wehrmacht.[49] Rudiments of the German power structure on the occupied territory were established on September 21, 1939, at a conference of the heads of individual offices of the Reich Main Security Office and commanders of the Einsatzgruppen, later relayed by Reihnard Heydrich in a wire addressed to the commanders of operational groups of the Security Police (*Einsatzgruppen*). The message outlined the rules of conduct towards Jews in occupied Poland, distinguishing the unspecified "final goal" (*Endziel*) from short-term measures leading up to its implementation. Among them, Heydrich mentioned the further concentration of Jews in larger urban centers situated close to communication routes and the establishment of a Jewish representative body, the Councils of Elders,[50] which would be responsible for carrying out orders of the occupation authorities. Any actions against the Jewish populace were to be undertaken in collaboration with civilian and military authorities, and reports with detailed information on the Jewish people were to be sent directly to Heydrich. The document read, "the tasks that lie ahead cannot be laid down in full detail from here [i.e. by Heydrich – AS]. The instructions and guidelines below will at the same time serve the purpose of urging the chiefs of the Einsatzgruppen to give the matter their practical thought."[51] Under these guidelines, local authorities were given relative freedom in creating their own anti-Jewish policy.[52]

After the outbreak of the war, conquerors passing through successive occupied villages and cities perpetrated acts of terror directed against local Jews, among others. German troops marched through the country, marking their passage by assaulting, beating or humiliating Jews – i.e., cutting or ripping beards or sidelocks – and submitting them to forced labor, meaningless calisthenics, work to the point of exhaustion, and murder. Often, local German people sympathizing with the German invaders joined in and played an important role in these incidents. By this time in the war, a special phrase had already been coined to describe such "spontaneous" outbursts of violence: *Blitzpogrom*.[53] This was in sharp contrast with the assurances of the supreme commander of the German army, who had made false promises that the Jews could feel safe and that "all provisions of international law would be respected."[54]

When the first German units arrived in Łódź, both Poles and Jews reacted with dismay. The attitude of most local Germans, however, was markedly different, as they welcomed

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[49] Ibid., p. 47–48; R. Rhodes, *Masters of Death. The SS-Einsatzgruppen and the invention of the Holocaust*, New York 2003, p. 4–8; M. Wardzyńska, *Był rok 1939. Operacja niemieckiej Policji Bezpieczeństwa w Polsce. Intelligenzaktion*, Warszawa 2009, p. 64–66.

[50] Cf. Chapter 1.4.

[51] *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów*, collected and edited by T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, A. Rutkowski, Warszawa 1957, p. 21–29, doc. 1. Copies of the order were sent to the Supreme Command of the Army, the Office of the Four-Year Plan, the Ministry of the Interior of the Reich, the Ministry of Economy of the Reich and the Head of Civil Administration of the Occupied Territories.

[52] A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów*, Warszawa 1961, p. 144–145; R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, Yale 1961, p. 218–219.

[53] J. Böhler, "Prześladowanie ludności...", p. 50.

[54] Radio speech of the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army Walther von Brauchitsch of September 4, 1939, and his address of September 11, 1939, cf. A. Eisenbach, "Hitlerowska polityka...", p. 147–148.

the conquerors and lined up to greet them along the marching route. Indeed, there were quite a number of sympathizers of National Socialism in Łódź.[55] "The Grand Hotel, where the General Staff is expected to stay, is bedecked with garlands of flowers; civilians − boys, girls–jump into the passing military cars with happy cries of '*Heil Hitler!*' [...] Everything patriotically and nationalistically [German] that was hidden in the past now shows its true face,"[56] one of the witnesses recorded with horror. The Jews of Łódź quickly learned what this "true face" of Germans was.

The first weeks of the war were marked by increasingly brutal persecution and severe repression. German police forces, in collaboration with the local Selbstschutz branch, started arresting representatives of groups and organizations deemed enemies of the Reich based on prescription lists they had compiled earlier. Victims of these arrests, which reached a massive scale in November, were Poles and German socialists, but also Jews. In the lists of people arrested in the autumn of 1939 compiled by the Secret State Police (*Geheime Staatspolizei* – Gestapo), there were names of Jewish political activists from various parties, including thirteen Zionists, four of whom were shot, and eight members of the Bund, three of whom were shot. Aside from this, seven activists of various Jewish organizations were arrested, three of whom were murdered.[57]

The largest arrest operation was carried out on November 1st in the Astoria café at the junction of Piotrkowska and Staromiejska streets − the most popular meeting place of the Jewish intelligentsia. That day, Germans stormed the premises, fired several shots into the ceiling and took identification documents from everyone present. The Jews were told to report the following day at eight in the morning to the headquarters of the Security police at 116 Zgierska Street. Those who were arrested were then subjected to torture, including exhausting "gymnastics." According to one account, during these exercises Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski arrived in the prison (he had already been appointed the Eldest of the Jews by this time).[58] The Jews hoped that he would speak for the arrested, while in fact he came to intervene on behalf of another person. "Soon, however, the officer ordered Rumkowski the climb the stage in a fur coat, and perform exercises. In doing this, Rumkowski fainted. Earlier, he had only managed to communicate that he had medicine. He was laid down on the bench and given the drops. As soon as he recovered, he was ordered to keep on exercising."[59] In the end, Rumkowski was released after an intervention from the city Commissioner, Albert Leister.[60]

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[55] In the last local council elections in Łódź in December 1938 members of the pro-Nazi party Deutscher Volksverband in Polen and Jungdeutsche Partei, which ran jointly, received a total of 23,000 votes, which constituted the majority of the votes of the German voters. These parties won five seats (out of a total of 84) on the City Council – J. Wróbel, "Konflikty polsko-niemieckie w Łodzi i regionie łódzkim w przededniu II wojny światowej" [in:] *Łódź w 1939 roku...*, p. 132.

[56] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 36; *Dziennik...*, „Fołks Sztyme", 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 11.

[57] Murdered were, among others, Markus Marchew, deputy chairman of the General Zionist Organization in Łódź, and Aleksander Vogel, secretary of the organization, Icek Alter, Beniamin Gelbart and Izrael Judko, activist of Brith Gachayal – J. Baranowski, "Zbrodnie na inteligencji i grupach przywódczych ludności żydowskiej w pierwszych miesiącach okupacji" [in:] *Eksterminacja inteligencji Łodzi i okręgu łódzkiego 1939–1940*, ed. A. Galiński, M. Budziarek, Łódź 1992, p. 55–57.

[58] Cf. Chapter 1.3.

[59] N.N., *Z Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 62.

[60] Ibid.; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi w Łodzi pod niemiecką okupacją 1939–1945*, Londyn 1988, p. 172.

From the group of those arrested, six were selected and ordered to dig pits in the nearby Lućmierz forest. Then, fifteen people were chosen, who were later taken to these graves and shot. The author of this account cited above described the execution:

> The officer ordered [them] to kneel over the pits. Not all of them understood what was happening. Some thought it was only meant to scare them, and that was that. Others, on the contrary, wept terribly and recited 'Viduy.'[61] One of the kneeling, Mojsze Szałdajewski, was screaming so loudly that that his cries could be heard throughout the forest. [Szaldajewski] asked the officer why they were doing it to him, [he] has a wife and small children. The officer told him that it could not be helped. Those were the orders.[62]

Out of all the arrested regulars of the Astoria café, from 14 up to 46 people were murdered. Others had to pay bail to be released. The operation shocked the city, becoming a symbol of repression against the Jewish intelligentsia of Łódź. "With them, Astoria died," H. Auerbach wrote in 1946.[63]

On November 9th, at the first meeting convened at the request of Commissioner Leister, almost the entire First Council of Elders were arrested.[64] All members were taken from the Community building and brought to the prison organized in Michał Glaser's factory in Radogoszcz, from which − despite Rumkowski's tireless efforts − only nine people were released. Others, amounting to 20 prisoners, were killed in the following months, becoming victims of the German *Intelligenzaktion*.[65]

As a result of systematic arrests, cells were bursting with more and more prisoners. Initially, police and remand prisons located all over the city served as places of detention. Later, beginning November 7, 1939, the aforementioned transit camp was established in Radogoszcz for the purposes of the operation, supervised by the Protection Police (*Schutzpolizei* – Schupo). The conditions were abysmal; prisoners were beaten every day and subjected to sophisticated torture. In December, some of the prisoners were transferred to the Radogoszcz police prison, established not far away in the building of Samuel Abbe's factory.[66] The name Radogoszcz aroused fear not only among the arrested Jews, but also the entire population of the city, who heard the news about the fate of the imprisoned. Detained there were members of political parties, social organizations, members of the clergy, doctors, journalists and lawyers from Łódź and nearby towns, including, as has been stated above, members of the First Council of Elders. Many of them were sentenced

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[61] Confession of sins.

[62] N.N., *Z Łodzi...*, p. 62.

[63] H. Auerbach, *15-tu z Astorii*, *Nasze Słowo*, 12 XII 1946, p. 6; P. Spodenkiewicz, *Zaginiona dzielnica...*, p. 67.

[64] Cf. Chapter 1.4

[65] *Kronika getta łódzkiego / Litzmannstadt Getto 1941–1944*, ed. J. Baranowski et al., vol. 5: *Suplementy*, p. 274; Some quotations have been based on the abridged English edition: *The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto, 1941–1944*, ed. L. Dobroszycki, transl. by L. Newman, I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 172–173; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 16; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 65.

[66] AŻIH, 205/349, p. 309–310; M. Wardzyńska, *Rok 1939...*, p. 202–205; A. Ossowski, "Represje niemieckie wobec polskich elit miasta Łodzi (wrzesień–grudzień 1939 r.)" [in:] *Łódź w 1939 roku...*, p. 268–270; cf. also Z. Piechota, "Eksterminacja inteligencji Łodzi i okręgu łódzkiego (1939–1940) w materiałach śledztw OK BZH w Łodzi" [in:] *Eksterminacja inteligencji Łodzi...*, p. 12–13.

by the "summary court" that began operations in late November 1939 then murdered in executions in the nearby forest.[67] Among the victims, there were many outstanding representatives of the Jewish Community of Łódź, including Dr. Aleksander Margolis (director of the hospital in Radogoszcz and member of the Bund). After his arrest in early November 1939, he was detained in the prison at Sterlinga Street, then later transferred to the Radogoszcz prison. There, he was beaten and forced to perform humiliating exercises. An activist of the Polish Socialist party, Stanislaw Rapalski, who was imprisoned with Margolis, wrote that "despite everything, he was optimistic; he did not fear death but believed that the suffering would pass and we would all live on."[68] On December 20, 1939, Margolis was shot in the Lućmierz forest along with other prisoners of Radogoszcz.[69]

Repressions affected more and more people every day. The brutality of the new authorities could be observed on the streets from the first days of the occupation. "The panic that overcame the Jews was boundless, especially if [they] were eyewitnesses to the daily torment of men and women, young and old, on the streets of Łódź and in their homes,"[70] we read in one of the accounts.

Very soon after the occupation of the city, German troops and local Nazi sympathizers started looting Jewish property. Groups of several men, Selbstschutz members or simply criminals, surged houses under the pretext of looking for weapons, taking anything that caught their attention. On occasion, they settled for financial compensation. As a witness to these events noted, "these activities were not official, but only exploiting an opportunity to rob."[71] In the accounts of the period, there are many references to robberies of private houses and shops combined with physical violence against their owners.[72] The above-cited Dawid Sierakowiak wrote in his diary on September 12th:

> Very soon after the occupation of the city, German troops and local Nazi sympathizers joined the looting of property belonging to Jews. Several people described patrols composed of military members, or simply criminals, under the pretext of searching for weapons, carried out searches in their homes, taking advantage of properties which aroused their interest. Sometimes they settled for financial compensation. As one of the witnesses wrote, "It was not an official act, and the only point was for them to rob.[73]

In testimonies from this period, repeated robberies at private homes and shops were recorded along with physical violence against their owners.[74] Sierakowiak wrote further

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[67] AŻIH, 301/1023, Józef Saks Testimony, p. 3–9; p. N.N., *Moje przeżycia od mojego aresztowania 8.11.[1939] do obozu w Radogoszczy* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 82–88; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 331–332.

[68] S. Rapalski, *Byłem w piekle*, Łódź 1969, p. 56.

[69] *Wykaz rozstrzelanych w lasach podłódzkich (1939–1940)* [in:] *Eksterminacja inteligencji Łodzi...*, p. 133, item 139; M. Trębacz, "Aleksander Margolis. Lekarz, społecznik, polityk, Żyd" [in:] *Studia i szkice dedykowane Julianowi Baranowskiemu*, ed. E. Wiatr, P. Zawilski, p. 110–111.

[70] Samson, *Przeżycia robotniczej rodziny w Łodzi i w Warszawie od września 1939 roku do marca 1941 roku* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 20.

[71] N.N., *Z Łodzi...*, p. 63.

[72] [E. Gutkowski], *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 5; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 14.

[73] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 37; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 11.

[74] F. Wiernikówna, *Wspomnienia i przeżycia wojenne* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 14–15.

in his diary on September 12: "People are being seized again for forced labor; beatings and robberies. The store where my father works has also been robbed. The local Germans do whatever they wish." Several days later, he added: "The looting of shops continues. They carry away everything they can. At the Epsztajns' store in Reymonta Square, they stole the entire stock of jewelry and watches, the poor Epsztajns' barely managed to escape alive." Money and valuables were also taken from people stopped in the street under various pretexts.

For many people, the behavior of the Germans came as a shock. In spite of the increasing scale of looting, there were still Germans who were acting like normal customers. "Generally speaking, they were polite, sometimes for hours talking to shop assistants, paid for everything," the daughter of a shop owner wrote. "The sense of ownership was so deeply embedded in us that we could not fathom that they could take it [i.e., merchandise −AS] away from us, just like that."

So surprised were people with the behavior of the Germans that only a few of them decided to file an official complaint against the occupier with the Polish Citizens' Militia, which was still in operation until early October 1939. In one such complaint, Ruchla Klein described the seizure of property in her house:

> Today [September 21st – AS] at six in the afternoon, two soldiers entered my house and said that I was to give them weapons, when I said that I had no weapons, they said that they would have to search the house and during that search they took four 100-złoty banknotes from a drawer and 1,500 złotys in 20-złoty banknotes, even though I asked them not to take them because I would be penniless, up in which they said that they would shoot me unless I went away...[75]

Complaints to the Militia had no effect as the institution was powerless in the face of growing terror and the officers themselves were at risk of reprisals from the new occupation authorities.[76]

In addition to looting, another form of repression that was particularly painful for the Jews were roundups for forced labor, sometimes combined with cruel beating of those unfortunates as they were being taken to the place of work. The fear of roundups was enormous and the Jews soon stopped leaving their homes for fear of getting captured. Only those who had no other option ventured outside and the part of the city were many Jews were living quickly became deserted. One witness noted that the fear of Germans kept him inside until the feast of Sukkot, that is until September 28th, but he was still taken from his home for forced labor to Kaliska Station:

> Some Jews were sent to clean sheds and remove heaps of garbage that accumulated there; another, larger, group was ordered to do degrading and vulgar tricks while they were mocked and ridiculed. The Jews had to sing Jewish songs, and

[75] Cited in T. Walkiewicz, "Pierwsze tygodnie okupacji niemieckiej w świetle akt Komendy Milicji Obywatelskiej miasta Łodzi" [in:] *Łódź w 1939 roku...*, p. 252. Cf. also reports from that perios at APŁ, Komenda Milicji Obywatelskiej m. Łodzi 1939 (henceforth KMO).

[76] T. Walkiewicz, "Pierwsze tygodnie...", p. 253–254.

those who did not know any very quickly became familiar with German batons and whips. They were kept there until evening without a piece of bread or even a drop of water.[77]

In many cases, the invented tasks were meaningless; the main goal was to humiliate the captured. The wide range of sophisticated torture clearly indicates the sadistic tendencies in the perpetrators. Activities such as filling anti-aircraft ditches with their bare hands; scrubbing floors with their fingernails; wiping windows, floors or toilets with their own underwear; cleaning carpets with the toothbrush without bending legs; sharpening a pencil on a man's bald head; arranging people in two rows and forcing them to beat or spit on the person standing opposite them; carrying wet coal by hand from the basement; or "dancing" or singing songs about how it was the Jews who were to blame for the war were only some of the forms of humiliating the captured.[78]

Many unfortunates were taken out of the city to Zgierz and Pabianice, sometimes also kept in basements and factories for several days so their families also had to suffer as they had no news about what happened to their loved ones. Initially, only men were forced to work; quickly, however, anyone without exception could be rounded up and captured, men and women, the elderly and children.[79] After a day spent doing forced labor, Sierakowiak, a teenager at the time, wrote in his diary, "Humiliation inflicted by force does not humiliate. But anger and helpless rage tear a man apart when he is forced to do such stupid, shameful, abusive work. Only one response remains: revenge!"[80]

In many accounts, there is the recurring theme of the active participation of local populace in such excesses. In addition to soldiers or members of other uniformed formations, there are references to "non-uniformed" (Pol. *niemundurowi*, Ger. *Hakenkreuzlers*),[81] "civilians who had Hitlerite badges under the lapel," but also "a caretaker, a schoolboy, a rascal, sometimes a nine-year-old kid" or even German neighbors or acquaintances. Offers did not hide their bitterness when they mentioned the role of the local Christian population, who "pointed out those Jews that escaped the attention of the Germans due to their physical appearance."[82]

Unless they were recognized or reported, Jews who did not stand out because of their dress in the early days of the occupation had some chance of avoiding being captured for force labor or being beaten; however, the Orthodox followers of Judaism, and in particular rabbis, were extremely easy targets for those German soldiers who sought "entertainment." They were captured in the streets, for example while waiting in a line in front of a shop, and humiliated by having their beards cut. This happened to several Łódź rabbis.[83] Maurycy Goldman mentioned in his account that one day, Germans came to the

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77 Samson, *Przeżycia robotniczej rodziny...* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 20–21.

78 N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi...* [in:] ibid., p. 31; N.N., *Moja druga ucieczka z Łodzi* [in:] ibid., p. 23; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 8–9; AŻIH, 302/156, Dwojra Altman Testimony, p. 4; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 5 (4041), p. 12; E. Wiatr, *Sytuacja...*, p. 295; T. Bojanowski, *Łódź...*, p. 20, 35–37.

79 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 9.

80 D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 38; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 5 (4041), p. 12; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 60.

81 Probably the members of Selbstschutz and other formations wearing armbands with a swastika – Hakenkreuz.

82 Ibid., p. 11–12; N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi*..., p. 30–33; P. Spodenkiewicz, *Zaginiona...*, p. 34.

83 [S. Trajstman], *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 95; M. Cygański, *Z dziejów okupacji hitlerowskiej w Polsce*, Łódź 1965, p. 27.

public kitchen at Solna Street where he used to eat and set the beards of an elderly man on fire.[84] In spite of that, some Jewish man decided not to shave their beards and cover it with handkerchiefs as if they had a toothache.[85]

On November 10th, 1939, the Chief Rabbi of Łódź Josek Menachem Segał was brought by force to the synagogue on Wólczańska Street and forced to tear the Torah scrolls and trample the phylacteries. An eyewitness recalls what happened next: "Then [the German officer] took the Rabbi to the cantor's lectern and ordered [him] to spit first on the *shiviti*,[86] and then the shemmes in the face. He was told to dance in a circle, and finally thrown out."[87] This scene was described by Itzhak Katzenelson, who was living nearby:

And Rabbi Josełe... Where is our Rabbi?
He's running around the bimah, while the German with a thick riding crop stands aside
The Rabbi is old, the Rabbi is small, a little handicapped a little bit crooked,
Ugly, crippled... He bows low three times, runs falls without a word!
The riding crop falls straight at the hump – the Germans around choke with laughter...
Rise, Rabbi, your radiant face, strike them with shame... No hide it, hide it!
Your scared face! A great radiating light glows from it!
Don't let the light fall on them, and let the sun lessen its brightness!
Let Heaven reject its holiness, let it shine for them together with te sun!
You are more beautiful Rabbi than the Sun and brighter than the deceitful heavens!
Stop! Stop my Rabbi... The German becomes angry, orders you to stop, not to run anymore.
Orders you to open your mouth... And the shammes is supposed to spit into it, oh sacred Rabbi!
The Rabbi has opened his mouth wide and the shammes cries and folds his arms:
'How can I!? How could I, master!? How am I to do such a base thing?!...'
'Hurry up, quickly spit into his mouth! Stupid shammes, wy are you so slow?!'
And the shammes falls at the German's feet: 'I can't! How can I act so basely!'
It's Rabbi Josełe... cried out the Rabbi: 'Spit! He's taken his aim, he'll shot you!'
The shammes obeyed, pretended to spit... Till he is hit by the German with almighty blow:
'Look, you filthy Jew, and learn! Look how to spit, look quickly!'
And the German coughed up, and spat out straight into the rabbi's mouth: 'Swallow immediately!'
And the Rabbi swallowed, the German turns to the shammes, pointing at the rabbi:
'Do you see how obedient he is!'... The measure hasn't filled up yet...
The bullet hit the shammes in the leg. 'And now – away from here, Jew!'
The shammes is leading the Rabbi, he limps, but tries to walk faster...
Yet the Rabbi can only round the bimah – and can barely walk.
The shammes leads him to the cracks of the riding whip... The measure hasn't filled up yet...
It hasn't been filled until they both have gone – look, in broad daylight
Smoke goes straight up into the sky, the fire flashed with flame in the covers of smoke!
The synagogue is burning! The house of God is on fire! Aron ha-kodesh! The Pentateuch rolls are burning!
The Rabbi looks, the shammes holds him: Oh the measure... the measure is already filled![88]

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[84] AŻIH, 301/6379, Maurycy Goldman Testimony, p. 4; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 60.
[85] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 60.
[86] A verse from Psalm 16 placed above the cantor's desk: "I keep my eyes always on my Lord."
[87] [S. Trajstman], *Łódź...*, p. 97; I. (H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 172; P. Spodenkiewicz, *Zaginiona...*, p. 72.
[88] Y. Katzenelson, *The Song of the Murdered Jewish People (English and Hebrew Edition*), transl. N.H. Rosenbloom, Hakibbutz Hameuchad 1980; J. Walicki, *Synagogi i domy modlitwy w Łodzi (do 1939 r.)*, Łódź 2000, p. 73–74.

Harassment against the orthodox population took on other forms as well. German soldiers forced religious Jews to say prayers "for show" which they photographed and filmed. The registered footage was used for propaganda purposes: on one hand, it was intended as proof that the occupation authorities allow Jews to cultivate religious life, but above all, it was meant to be used in anti-Semitic film productions. In early November 1939, in the Old Town synagogue on Wolborska Street, a service was staged with students of religious schools and was photographed by the Germans.[89] At the same time, prayers were organized in the Wilker Shul synagogue on Zachodnia Street with a cantor, a choir, a lector of the Torah and a shofar; these were recorded for the film *Der ewige Jude*. Szymon Huberband, author of a study on the religious life of the Jews under the occupation, described the event:

> Kantor Winograd sang with the choir a number of passages from the prayers for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Then an order was issued to take out the Torah scroll and read it. [...] The reciter of the Torah, an intelligent Jew, said in Hebrew before reading from the scroll: "Today is Tuesday." It was information for posterity that they were forced to read the Torah because the Torah is not normally read on Tuesdays.[90]

The following day, scenes in the slaughterhouse were shot, wherein the shechita was forced to kill a calf while saying prayers and examine the internal organs of the animal.[91]

The culmination of the repression directed against the religious part of the Jewish Community of Łódź was the destruction of synagogues and prayer houses. Those buildings had already been devastated and looted since the first days of the occupation, and on September 14th, the Jews were ordered to give out the keys to the building; from that moment on, the occupation authorities had unlimited access to them.[92] The German authorities, however, decided to make a spectacular production of destroying these symbols of Jewish presence in Łódź. On the night of November 10th, 1939, almost exactly a year after the burning of synagogues in Germany during the Kristallnacht, they set fire to the largest Łódź synagogues. One account accurately describes the destruction of the synagogue in the Old City. Barrels of flammable substances were brought inside and used to douse the walls and floors of the building. The fire quickly engulfed the entire building, destroying the Torah scrolls and the *beit midrash* adjacent to the synagogue. The fire brigade that came were not allowed to extinguish the burning building, nearby streets were closed, and armed police guarded the entrance. The operation had a very depressing effect. "It was difficult for the Jews to pass that way. The mood in the entire city was not unlike the one that prevails after the death of the grade Jewish figure," the author of the cited account wrote. By the beginning of the 1940, the burnt out ruins were dismantled, but until the end of the war, the architectural details of the demolished building loomed

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89 N.N., *Tragedia staromiejskiej synagogi w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 99.

90 S. Huberband, *The Destruction of the Synagogues in Lodz* [in:] *Łódź Ghetto. Inside a Community under Siege*, ed. A. Adelson, R. Lapides, New York 1989, p. 70; J. Walicki, *Synagogi...*, p. 66.

91 S. Huberband, *The Destruction...*, p. 70.

92 [S. Trajstman], *Łódź...*, p. 95.

through a pile of rubbing which lay at 20 Wolborska Street, reminding people about the days of its splendor.[93]

A similar fate befell the reform synagogue at the intersection of Kościuszki and Zielona streets. Most likely set on fire on the same November night,[94] the flames quickly consumed the entire building and destroyed it almost completely.[95] The whole event was captured in photographs.[96] A Pole who was passing that way the following morning recorded a terrifying testimony of that act of barbarism,

> On Więckowskiego Street, there was a row of the Gestapo officers. [...] I was able to get through to Zielona along with others, where there were many gendarmes and soldiers. I stopped, not believing my eyes. The whole synagogue was in flames. From the depths of the walls the human moans came, so it was not difficult to guess who was pleading for pity, and who would not show any.[97]

The scorched walls were blown up, which is also documented in photographs, and then demolished at the beginning of 1940.[98]

Also in November, the Volhynia synagogue on Wólczańska Street where German Soldiers abused Rabbi Segal was destroyed and the Zionist synagogue Ohel Jakov on Gdanska Street. The latter had already been devastated by German soldiers in September as reported Szmuel Icek Kołton, in charge of the keys to the synagogue, in his complaint submitted to the Militia: "I have opened the synagogue for the German soldiers, they entered and wrecked the interior, breaking the benches inside, destroying the candelabra on the altar and ripping the curtains. These soldiers beat me up, demanding that I give them the scrolls. They said that if I did not give them the scrolls by the end of the day, they would hang me."[99] The scorched walls of both synagogues were demolished in the early 1940.[100]

Aside from the arrests, looting and physical harassment, the Jews were affected by the occupation legislation aimed against them. Indeed, from the very first days of the war without any prior orders, they were deprived of the protection of the law.[101] The first announcements issued by the occupation did not have any sinister overtones – they were

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93 N.N., *Tragedia staromiejskiej synagogi...*, p. 100–101; N.N., *Co łódzcy Żydzi stracili wraz ze spalonym bejt hamidraszem na Starym Mieście?* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 102–103; J. Walicki, *Synagogi...*, p. 35.

94 Walicki indicates that different dates of the synagogue's burning, such as 10, 11 or 15 November, are given. Cf. I. Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 172; T. Bojanowski, *Łódź...*, p. 228; S. Huberband, *The Destruction...*, p. 70. The operation of the burning of the Łódź synagogues seems to have been deliberately scheduled for 11 November, especially since the Tadeusz Kosciuszko Monument on Liberty Square was also destroyed on that day and the German press suggested that the synagogue was set fire by the Poles seeking revenge for its devastation, cf. N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi...*, p. 45.

95 J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 16; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 5 II 1972, no. 6 (4042), p. 12; J. Walicki, *Synagogi...*, p. 59–60.

96 Cf. *Łódź Ghetto...*, p. 68; *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto 1940–1944*, ed. J. Baranowski, S.M. Nowinowski, Łódź 2009, p. 12.

97 S. Baranowski, *Pamiętnik robotnika*, ed. T. Mrozowski, Łódź 1974, p. 95.

98 J. Walicki, *Synagogi...*, p. 74.

99 Cited in E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 291; APŁ, KMO 56, Meldunek, p. 17.

100 J. Walicki, *Synagogi...*, p. 74, 78.

101 A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 147.

Destroyed synagogue on Wolborska St. (winter 1939)
(State Archive in Łódź)

only calling to keep calm and continue working and established a curfew[102]. Gradually, however, the new legislation was becoming increasingly discriminatory. Its goal was clearly articulated at the conference in Łódź on November 7−8, 1939, by Arthur Greiser, governor of Reich District Poznan – it was a ruthless fight against the Jewish population. He repeated his statement at a rally, organized two days later. He assured the residents that the "Jewish problem was no longer a problem, also where we encounter it in such a mass form, like here. It is here for us to solve it and it will be solved."[103]

The Jews of Łódź were affected by a series of discriminatory regulations issued by decision-making centers. The first of such centers were the military and provincial authorities and the legislation they issued applied to Jews and the population in German-occupied Poland. The next center was the local authorities who issued ordinance directed specifically against the Jews in occupied Łódź and often repeated or clarified the higher level legislation.

The first discriminatory decision of the new government was the ordinance of September 13, 1939, banning the celebration of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur on September 13th and 22nd, respectively. German authorities ordered the rabbinate to make sure that all the synagogues were closed for the whole day. They also ruled that Jewish stores had to remain open during the holidays.[104] The regulation proved to be very severe. Sierakowiak wrote in his diary, not hiding his indignation, "This is the worst blow to the Jews here in centuries. Rosh Hashanah! Open stores! The same time, synagogues are to be closed. We have no chance to pray communally for mercy. All basic human freedoms are being destroyed."[105] On September 28th during the Sukkot holiday, the Jews were forbidden to build *Sukkah*. Despite this, many people illegally participated in holiday prayers nevertheless.[106]

The following day, by order of the civil Commissioner of the 8th Army, all Jews residing in the territory he was in charge of had their bank accounts and safe deposit boxes seized. They were only allowed to have 200 zł or 100 mk in cash and withdraw the maximum of 100 zł or 50 mk per week for current expenses. Larger sums for business purposes was only possible based on invoices.[107] It was the first of a number of ordinances undermining the fundamentals of economic existence of Łódź Jews. Soon, on September 16th, city Commissioner Albert Leister ordered that all Jews working for the Municipal Council and its institutions be dismissed without severance or compensation, regardless of their current religious denomination. In the face of paralysis that followed the implementation of that ordinance, on September 18th, an explanation was published which emphasized that the dismissal order did not apply to doctors and physi-

[102] From September 10, 1939, the curfew was in force between 8pm to 6am, from November 15, 1939 − between 5 pm and 7 am. AŻIH, 205/349, Sperrstunde, p. 363–364; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 66.

[103] Cited in E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 281; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 148.

[104] [S. Trajtsman], *Łódź...*, p. 96; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 11; E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 285–286.

[105] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 38; *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 22 I 1972, no. 4 (4040), p. 11; M. Cygański, *Z dziejów...*, p. 35.

[106] F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 15.

[107] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...* p. 170; Cygański erroneously cited September 18 as the date of the introduction of this ordinance. Cf. M. Cygański, *Z dziejów...*, p. 35.

cal laborers.[108] Similar operations of the dismissal of Jewish employees were carried out in most city institutions.[109]

The guidelines of Heydrich's order of September 21, 1939, also concerned Jewish economic life. Confiscation of businesses and personal property was meant to lead to the impoverishment of the population. Police authorities, however, advised the commanders of operational groups to take into account the role that the Jews were playing in economic life and cautioned them against harming German interests in the process of the Aryanization of companies. First and foremost, the needs of the Wehrmacht were to be treated as priority. Heydrich ordered commanders of the Einsatzgruppen to send him accurate reports on Jewish businesses in the occupied territories. Based on these guidelines, already during the early weeks of the war the heads of the German civil authorities operating with the army command issued regulations targeting the base of the economic existence of Jews in the occupied territory.[110]

Under the decree of October 13th, all raw materials and goods manufactured after September 10, 1939, were to be delivered to the trustee who was in charge of taking over raw materials in the textile industry. Several days later on October 18th, Jews were forbidden to trade in raw materials and finished products and shoemakers were not allowed to produce footwear. All their stocks of goods were to be immediately sold to Christians. "Thousands of families were ruined,"[111] Sierakowiak described the effects of this ordinance. The only branch of the economy in which the Jews were permitted to operate was rag trade.[112] On November 5th, plants were registered. By the power of Goering's decision of November 28th, all raw materials prefabricates and finished products were to be left at the disposal of the German war economy. This was facilitated by extensive confiscation of the property of Jewish residents of Łódź. In practice, the operation was carried out not only by authorized institutions, but also a number of party and state organizations. Thus, chief of the police Johannes Schäfer asked Himmler to issue an ordinance that would curb practices "disturbing the economic life" on the conquered territory. The introduction of the legislation led to the elimination of Jews from economic life.[113] With the ever-increasing costs of life, it brought many Jewish families to the brink of economic downfall.

Along with these draconian decrees aimed at pushing the Jews out of the economic life, the Germans sought social isolation of this population. Gradually, new restrictions were imposed on their freedom of movement in the city: on November 7th, they were forbidden from entering Piotrkowska Street – soon renamed Adolf-Hitler-Strasse – and from city parks. The same ordinance introduced the obligation to vacate the seats whenever there

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[108] APŁ, Akta miasta Łodzi (henceforth: AmŁ) 18038, p. 34–35; E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 286.

[109] Few, like Jakub Poznański, could keep their positions until the beginning of 1940. Cf. J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 17.

[110] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 27–28; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 183.

[111] *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 29 I 1972, no. 5 (4041), p. 12; E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 287.

[112] A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 185; E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 287.

[113] *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 3, part 1: *Getto łódzkie*, ed. A. Eisenbach, Warszawa–Łódź–Kraków 1946, p. 63–64. The order did not work, since on March 4, 1940, Regierungspräsident Friedrich Übelhör sent out information to all state and police authorities detailing who had the right to make the requisition. Himmler and his subordinate institutions were mentioned in the first place, followed immediately by the *Haupttreuhandstelle Ost* (HTO) and General Robert Bührmann's staff stationed in Łódź – ibid., p. 67–68.

was a uniformed Germans around.[114] The authorities also ruled that when using public transportation the Jews were only allowed to ride the second carriage.[115] On November 5th, the president of the police ordered Poles and Jews to give away their radios.[116] For many people, it meant that they were completely cut off from all sources of information. One witness noted, "With radios, the last source of more or less reliable information was gone, which triggered people's imagination. Even the most fantastical news was accepted at face value. People wanted to believe it, because it was the only consolation."[117] On November 13th, Wilhelm Koppe, a senior SS and police commander in Reichsgau Posen,[118] issued a decree forbidding poles and Jews from changing the place of residence and leaving the province.[119] On December 2nd, Jews were forbidden from using all types of vehicles on public roads.[120]

On November 9, 1939, when Łódź was ultimately annexed into the Third Reich, the Germanization of the city began very quickly.[121] On November 11, 1939, by order of the Commissioner Leister, all written signs in shops and businesses had to be in German language only, moreover, an inscription identifying the nationality of the owner had to be displayed in prominent place, while Jews who had to mark the businesses with the Star of David.[122] Especially humiliating was the regulation issued by president of *Regierungsbezirk Kalisch*, Friedrich Übelhör, on November 14th imposing the requirement to wear armbands colored "Jewish-yellow" by all Jews, regardless of sex and age. In addition, the Jews were forbidden to leave their houses between the hours of eight in the morning and five in the afternoon without special permission. Failure to comply with the regulation was punished with the death penalty.[123] "We are returning to the Middle Ages," Sierakowiak wrote several days later, continuing: "a gloomy mood pervades the city. It is hard to get accustomed to persecution."[124] The order was seen as extremely degrading: "We were ordered to wear the external sign of national inferiority, the mark offer pariah."[125] By order of the president of the *Regierungsbezirk* on December 11, 1939, the armband was replaced with a yellow Star of David, the so-called "patch," appliquéd on the right side of the chest and the back.[126] Marking the Jewish population with an external sign of humiliation also had a practical aspect, as the author of the cited

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[114] *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 29 I 1972, no. 5 (4041), p. 11.
[115] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 20.
[116] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 170.
[117] F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 16.
[118] On January 29, 1940 the province renamed Reichsgau Wartheland (Warta Country).
[119] E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 290; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 175.
[120] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 23.
[121] T. Bojanowski, *Łódź...*, p. 67. For the principles of the Germanization policy, cf. A. Sitarek, M. Trębacz, "Trzy miasta. Dzień powszedni w Litzmannstadt – wybrane problemy" [in:] *Przemoc i dzień powszedni w okupowanej Polsce*, ed. T. Chinciński, Gdańsk 2011, p. 457–463.
[122] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 71; *Dokumenty i materiały...,* vol. 3, part 1, p. 22.
[123] Ibid., p. 72–73.
[124] *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 5 II 1972, no. 6 (4042), p. 12; F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 18–19.
[125] N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi...*, p. 42. The author of the account cites jokes about the German decree circulating in the city,The Łodź Hasidim comforted themselves saying that these yellow patches – "gayle lates" would become "gile lates,", meaning "the armband of salvation." "When we put on the stars, someone in the office joked that Jews were walking Christmas trees" – ibid.
[126] AIPN, Ld 1/7770, Zarządzenie policyjne z 12 II 1940, p. 6; *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 23; [E. Gutowski], *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 6.

Susserman's Family Guest House marked with yellow Star of David with "Jude" inscription (late 1939)
(Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź)

account noted. From that moment on, it was much easier to identify Jews who illegally entered Piotrkowska Street, from which they had been banned, who could then be taken for forced labor directly from the street.[127]

This successively introduced anti-Jewish legislation, combined with the sense of imminent threat, was enough motivation for the growing number of Jews to attempt to leave the city. Many memoirs mention mass departures to the east, namely to Warsaw or to the Soviet Union. Already in the first week of the war, about 60,000 people had left Łódź, many of them Jewish.[128] However, a significant number returned home after the fighting in the Polish defensive had ended.[129] Until mid-November 1939, it was still possible to leave the city, although the German authorities did not organize deportations until the decision was made regarding the territorial attribution of Łódź.[130]

The departures intensified after Łódź was annexed to the Third Reich. "Everyone predicted the worst things. It was clear to the Jews that the Reich would be worse for them," Fela Wiernik wrote.[131] On November 13th, several days after the German authorities made a decision as to the assignment of administrative Łódź, Wilhelm Koppe issued an order forbidding Jews from changing their place of residence and restricting the freedom of movement in the province.[132] The German authorities needed there to be no disturbances so they could carry out the planned expulsions from those areas in peace.

On October 30, 1939, Heinrich Himmler, appointed Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood by Hitler, issued a decree on the resettlement of the population, according to which all Jews and the majority of Poles had to be expelled from areas annexed to the Third Reich and deported to the general government by the end of February 1940. Senior police and SS commanders were in charge of the operation in their respective provinces.[133] In a circular issued November 12, 1939, by Koppe, the purpose of the deportations from Warthegau was defined as "clearing and securing new German areas," where the authorities planned to bring German settlers from Baltic states, General Government and Eastern Europe. It was predicted that in Łódź itself, 30,000 Poles would be displaced during the first stage of the operation and as many Jews.[134] During the deportations, the Councils of Elders played an important role, according to the order of November 24th, they were to be the auxiliary body facilitating the operation.[135]

In December, the authorities started carrying out Heinrich Himmler's ordinance. One of its elements was a one-time operation of "voluntary emigration from the city," carried out from December 12th through 14th. In temperatures well below freezing, Jews living on Zgierska, Podrzeczna, Żydowska, Drewnowska streets and at the Old Market

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127 N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi...*, p. 42–43.
128 M. Cygański, *Z dziejów...*, p. 18.
129 *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 5 II 1972, no. 6 (4042), p. 12; [E. Gutowski], *Łódź...*, p. 6–8; F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 17–18.
130 This decision was taken by a senior SS and police commander in the General Government Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger – Ch. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution. The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939 – March 1942*, Lincoln–Jerusalem 2004, p. 114.
131 F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 17.
132 A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 155.
133 *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 29–30.
134 Ibid., p. 30–33; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, 154.
135 A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 155.

were evacuated. "The unexpected turn of events made a depressing impression on the population of the city, given the fact that the evacuated district [i.e., Old Town − AS] was inhabited 98% by Jews," the author of one account recorded.[136] At that time, and rumors started circulating that all Jews would be expelled from the city and Łódź would be "free from Jews" − *Judenfrei*.[137] The expulsions were carried out over the following days, affecting, among others, Jews who lived in the southern section of the city, the district of Chojny. A resident of that district wrote, "the Germans told us that we could go to Bałuty district or leave for General Government [...] Our family rented a wagon and went to Serocko. We did not want to go to Bałuty because we heard that a ghetto would be organized there."[138]

Forced evictions took the nature of expulsions from the city – people were dragged from their homes by force and transported to the assembly points, and then to the train station. The whole operation was accompanied by looting of property left by the expelled, who were allowed to bring only a small carry-on luggage.[139] The initiative of the Jewish Community involving the coordination of voluntary departures from the city did nothing to alleviate the situation.[140]

According to the occupation authorities of the city, in November and December, about 21,400 Jews left Łódź. This number, which Janusz Wróbel rightly notes, is probably underestimated. The highest number of departures was recorded in January 1940 – according to the calculations of the City Board, nearly 21,000 people left in that month alone. In the subsequent months, the number of Jews leaving Łódź decreased, which was associated first with the decision to established a ghetto in Łódź made in February 1940, as well as with the decision of the central authorities to discontinue the deportations. As a result of pressure by governor Hans Frank, who believed that the Jewish population brought from the west disorganized the economic life of the General Government and caused many problems for the local administration, and despite of Himmler's protests and objection from the authorities of the province represented by author Greiser, on March 23, 1940, the Reichsmarschall Hermann Goring issued a decree ordering that all deportations from territories annexed to the right to be stopped until further notice.[141] In general, as a result of the deportations and extermination carried out by the German authorities, by January 1940 the Jewish population decreased by about 23,200 – that is, 10% of the prewar size.[142]

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[136] AŻIH, 301/2099, Jerzy Roland Testimony, p. 6; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 14; J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe...*, p. 171.

[137] Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs...*, p. 4–5; E. Wiatr, "Sytuacja...", p. 284.

[138] AŻIH, 301/3017, Marian Honigman Testimony, p. 1.

[139] M. Rutkowska, "Wysiedlenia ludności polskiej z Kraju Warty do Generalnego Gubernatorstwa w latach II wojny światowej (1939–1941)" [in:] *Ludność cywilna w łódzkich obozach przesiedleńczych*, ed. J. Żelazko, Łódź 2010, p. 23–25. Rally points were at 4 Łąkowa Street and Independence Square, and buildings at the corner of Żeromskiego and Żwirki streets. Cf. J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe...*, p. 137.

[140] *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 5 II 1972, no. 6 (4042), p. 12; *Eksterminacja Żydów....*, p. 36–37; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 156–159; J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe...*, p. 172–173. More on the Community's activity in the face of expulsions cf. Chapter 1.4.

[141] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 167–168; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 161–163; J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe...*, p. 173–174; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 18; M. Alberti, "Nikczemna perfidia, niska, bezmierna chciwość oraz zimne, wyrachowane okrucieństwo – ostateczne rozwiązanie kwestii żydowskiej w Kraju Warty" [in:] *Zagłada Żydów...*, p. 73–76; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 180.

[142] J. Wróbel, *Przemiany ludnościowe...*, p. 176, table 39.

By the time the ghetto was sealed in early May 1940, the number of Jews was further reduced, amounting to 163,777.[143]

Deportations from Łódź did not yield the desired result for the German authorities, as the plan to expel such a large group of people turned out to be unworkable. Therefore, in December 1939, *Regierungsbezirk* president Übelhör proposed his own project of temporary concentration of the Jewish population in the ghetto.[144] He based it on Heydrich's telegram of September 21, 1939, which specified that "For the time being, the first prerequisite for the final aim is the concentration of the Jews from the countryside into the larger cities." Later, he states that that it should "be carried out with all speed" and recommends that cities designated for concentration be located near rail junctions or at least along the railway.[145] In a secret circular of December 10th addressed to the party, police, and economic authorities, Übelhör declared that "immediate evacuation" of the Łódź Jews, the number of whom he miscalculated at 320,000 people, would be impossible. Therefore, he recommended concentrating them in the northern part of the city. Later in the circular, he provided detailed instructions how all the close district should be established and who should be responsible for each individual stage. The establishment of the ghetto would also provide an opportunity for more looting of Jewish property, as houses outside of the area designated for the ghetto were supposed to be seized by the occupier, and the principle of the trade of foodstuffs and fuel was to be so that the Germans could "succeed in getting from the Jews all their hoarded and hidden items of value," as Übelhör emphasized.[146]

In the plans of the *Regierungsbezirk* president, creating a district for the Jews was to be only a temporary measure, as the idea of expelling all Jews was still taken into consideration. "I reserve to myself the decision concerning the times and the means by which the ghetto and with it the city of Łódź will be cleansed of Jews," wrote the president. "The final aim must in any case bring about the total cauterization of this plague spot."[147]

Information about the planned establishment of the ghetto reached the residents of the city as rumors in early 1940. Some of them decided to leave Łódź.[148] The official confirmation came on January 24, 1940, when the head of the station of the Fifth police district, Warnke, told representatives of the Community, that, according to the police chief Johannes Schafer, all expelled Jews were to be sent to the Fifth and Sixth police districts in the northern part of the city.[149] On February 8th, Schafer issued a written decree "on the right of residence and stay for the Jews," to which Warnke was referring, and which

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[143] Ibid., p. 180.

[144] It is uncertain whether the initiative to establish the ghetto was Übelhör's, as Alberti points out, or Governor Greiser's, as Browning suggests. The Regierungspräsident boasted later, calling the ghetto "altogether his own work," but there is no doubt that without the Poznan authorities' approval the project would not have been realized. Cf. M. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945*, Wiesbaden 2006, p. 149–150; Ch. Browning, *The Origins...*, p. 114. A. Löw also points out this problem, *Getto...*, p. 72.

[145] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 21–22.

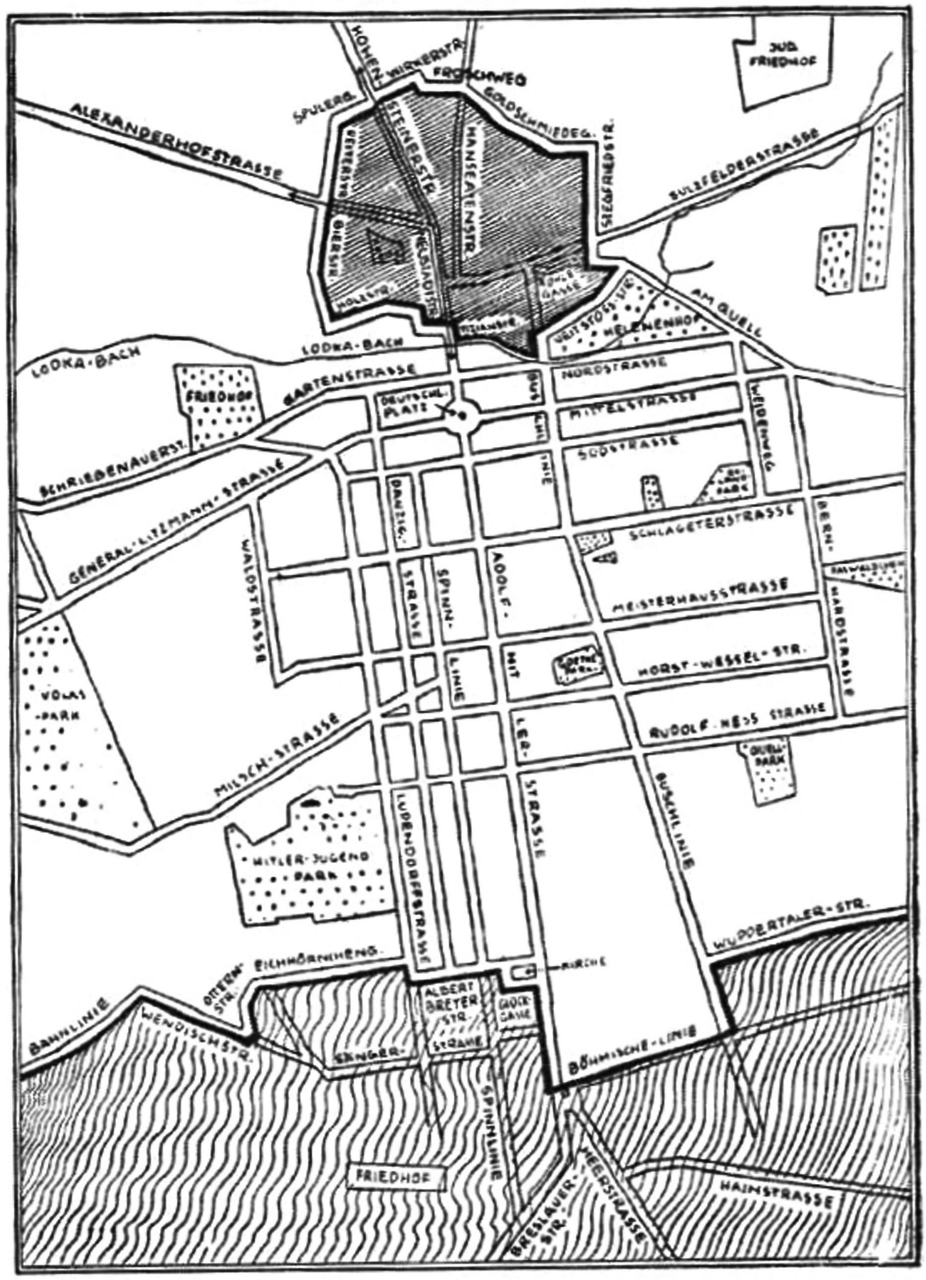
[146] Ibid., p. 79–80.

[147] Ibid., p. 80–81.

[148] AŻIH, 301/3017, Mariana Honigman Testimony, p. 1; D.T., *Organizacja getta w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 108; L.G., *Grudzień – styczeń 1939–1940 w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 113; Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs...*, p. 5.

[149] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 15–16; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 191; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 73. Cf. also Chapter 1.4.

Die Wohngebiete der Juden und Polen



Map of the planned ghetto area named “Wohngebiet” – “Residential District” (*Lodscher Zeitung*, no. 40, February 8, 1940)

was announced to the general population through the daily *Lodscher Zeitung*.[150] It specified the area in which the "residential district" for Jews was established, covering the old town and part of the Bałuty district. All Volksdeutsche and Poles had to move out of that area no later than February 29th.[151]

Upon hearing of the ordinance and the program of resettlement to the northern part of the city, the Jews of Łódź grew very anxious.[152] "It was as if everyone lost their mind hearing that horrible inhumane sentence."[153] People were perfectly aware of the living conditions in the Bałuty district. On the other hand, as a Community of official involved in making living arrangements noted, the news had a dimension that was both "both joyous and tragic"; after the brutal expulsions of December 1939, the Jews universally wished for the Germans to establish the ghetto, although they did not realize what it was." He also mentioned that upon hearing the news about the establishment of the ghetto in that part of the city, the residents of the Bałuty district were "happy beyond measure." They were the "lucky ones who could stay in their own homes."[154]

As scheduled, on February 12th, the resettlement of the Jews began – first from the southern part of the city, then closer to the planned closed area. The resettled were allowed to take only one suitcase with clothes and linens as well as family heirlooms. They had to go on foot to the site of the future ghetto, as all means of transport were reserved for the bedridden. Houses had to be locked and the keys delivered to the caretaker designated by the authorities. Originally, the authorities planned to carry out the expulsions in six compact groups per day, each numbering 300 people, but in the first week the size of each group was reduced to 150 people.[155] One of the resettled was Jakub Poznański, who had to leave his five room apartment along with his family.

> On Friday, February 16, 1940, about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, two uniformed Germans came and some civilian. Without further ado, they ordered everyone present to leave the apartment in 10 minutes. We were only allowed to take personal belongings with us.[156]

Having packed in a hurry, without any means of transport and in the piercing cold, line upon line of Jews expelled from successive quarters of the city headed north. "The moment when the home-made sled (ordinary board without skids pulled on a cord by the father or children) set off marked the beginning of the tragic history of those furniture and belongings," one of the participants recorded.

> The move made for a horrifying picture: younger children pulled a loaded sled, while older ones helped to carry furniture or even care some themselves. The husband was caring one part of the burden, while the wife held the other, or just one

[150] AIPN, Ld 1/7770, Zarządzenie policyjne z 8 II 1940, p. 22–23; *Lodscher Zeitung*, no. 40, 9 II 1940, p. 9–10.
[151] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 35–37.
[152] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 19–20.
[153] L.G., *Luty 1940 roku w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 114.
[154] D.T., *Organizacja...*, p. 109.
[155] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 35–45.
[156] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 20.

Forced transfer into the ghetto (February 1940)
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

board. A tailor was carrying a sewing machine, and other Jewish craftsmen [their appliances], even though taking workshop equipment was banned.[157]

The accounts say that some Aryan witnesses did not spare the expelled neighbors mockery and malicious comments, while soldiers standing along their route picked items that interested them from the sleds.[158] Moreover, just like during earlier operations, the expulsion was accompanied by looting of the property left at homes; therefore, many people hurriedly sold their belongings for a fraction of their value or left them for safekeeping with their Aryan friends. Despite strict prohibitions, many people returned to their homes for items that they had not been able to take with them during the displacement.[159]

The system of weekly scheduled displacement of people to the future ghetto was halted on February 24th, as it turned out not to be efficient and did not bode well for the quick expulsion of Jews to the northern districts of the city. Initially, the suspension of expulsions was taken as a sign that the operation was discontinued for good,

[157] L.G., *Luty 1940 roku w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 115.
[158] Ibid.; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 73.
[159] L.G., *Luty 1940 roku w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 116; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 21; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 193.

soon however, such predictions proved to be false. On February 20th, Jews living in the city center were rounded up and later detained in transit camps, such as the one on Łąkowa Street, where they were subjected to beatings and abuse. Their belongings were taken from them and a ransom was set. Those unable to pay it where deported to the general government, most likely Kraków and the adjacent area. The operation resulted in a number of fatalities.[160]

These events proved to be only a prelude to what happened several days later. On the evening of March 6th, the German army and police threw Jewish families still living on Piotrkowska Street out from their apartments in a particularly brutal manner. People were chased out to the streets, given only five minutes to take the personal belongings, and anyone who resisted or was unable to leave the was killed on the spot. One witness noted:

> There are no words in the human language to express the cruelty, barbarism and brutality of the Hitlerite beasts that calmly and skillfully murdered innocent people. Those who survived had all their belongings looted and left without as much as 10 marks to their name, as has been customary thus far during requisitions and evacuations. That night, several killed were children. The bodies of those shot were lying in pools of blood in their rooms and in the yard.[161]

The operation lasted through the following day and covered the northern section of Piotrkowska Street and adjacent streets, including Kościuszki Avenue. Many people fled in panic towards the planned closed district without waiting for the coming of the German police. "Bloody Thursday" became permanently etched in the memory of the Jews of Łódź.[162] The exact number of victims is unknown, it ranges between 200 and 1,500 people.[163] The effects fulfilled the expectations of the German authorities, as over the following several weeks the remaining Jews from the city moved to the area of the future ghetto. The Jewish administration was tasked with arranging housing for them.[164] Some Jews would use the last opportunity to flee the city before the ghetto was sealed.[165]

The area that the German authorities designated for the Jewish district proved to be too small to accommodate the masses of people displaced from the city, who continued to flock in after the March events. The Eldest of the Jews also pointed this out in his letter to the municipal authorities.[166] Therefore, on April 8th, the president of the police issued an ordinance about the expansion of the ghetto area to include areas north and north east from the old town; for example, from Marysin.[167] During that time, the

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[160] L.G., *Luty 1940 roku w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 116 – author of the account errounously cites the date February 20. Cf. also *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 33; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 21, I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 193–195.

[161] L.G., *Miesiąc marzec 1940 roku w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 117.

[162] Ibid., p. 117–118; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 21–23; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 194–195; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 74–75. Rubin and Löw cerronously cite the date March 5–6 1940 (Tuesday and Wednesday).

[163] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 194; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 75. Most accounts mention "several hundred" – N.N., *Wspomnienia z Łodzi i Warszawy* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 78; N.N., *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 120.

[164] Cf. Chapter 1.3.

[165] In March 15,878 Jews left Łódź, in the following month − 7896 Jews – J. Wróbel, *Przemiany...*, p. 173. Cf. also J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 18.

[166] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 49–50.

[167] *Lodscher Zeitung*, no. 99, 9 IV 1940, p. 8.

entire area was fenced with barbed wire and signs were placed along the border informing that crossing the line was banned. On April 30, 1940, Mayor Franz Schiffer sent Rumkowski a letter making him responsible for ensuring that the Jews complied with the ban on leaving the ghetto and for arranging the internal life of the closed district.[168] In fact, in practical terms, this meant that the ghetto was sealed. From that moment, no one could cross its borders without a special permit, and the president of the police Schäffer ordered in a special instruction issued on May 10, 1940, that weapons should be used against any who tried to leave the ghetto.[169] "Thus began the Jewish tragedy in the strict sense of the word," Jakub Poznanski wrote in his diary upon hearing the news that the ghetto was closed.[170]

3. Representative Bodies of the Jewish Community from the Invasion of German Troops until the Appointment of the Eldest of the Jews

When German troops entered Łódź, Jewish Community was facing a number of problems, in particular those resulting from insufficient staff. The majority of senior Community officials had left the city, including the chairman of the board, Jakub Leib Mincberg.[171] Nevertheless, those members of Kahilla who stayed did not abandon their obligations and on the afternoon of September 9, 1939, a meeting of the Community was convened at the initiative of Doctor Jakub Schlosser in order to discuss the current events. Some members of the board could not come, so the meeting was postponed to the following day, but once again the situation in the city made it impossible for everyone to arrive. "On Sunday, however, it was impossible to meet because we could not go outside. Horrible things were happening in the streets," Rabbi Szolem Trajstman, one of those invited, wrote.[172] Eventually, the meeting was organized on September 11th. Several members of the board came to the office of the Community at 18 Pomorska Street, including Abram Lejzor Pływacki, Szymon Światłowski, Dawid Stahl, Rabbi Józef Fajner, Rabbi Trajstman and Dr. Schlosser, as well as several who were not members of the supervising body such as Dr. Szwalbe, Dawd Segał, attorney Leon Rubin and his wife, and attorneys Regina Pływacka and Lewiter. At the meeting, it was decided to form three committees within the Community, one that would be responsible for contact with the German authorities, one that would provide assistance to Jews in the city, and one that would help those Jews of Łódź who had fled to nearby towns. The committees were to be officially established at another meeting of the Community, to be convened in three days' time. Their common motto was to be "bread for the living, traditional burial for the dead."[173] The following day on September 12th in the afternoon, another meeting of the Kahilla authorities was

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168 *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 84–85; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 52–53. Cf. Chapter 1.4.
169 *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 83–84.
170 J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 25.
171 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 2–3. Cf. Chapter 1.1.
172 [Sz. Trajstman], *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 94; N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 97–98.
173 Ibid., p. 94–95; N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 97–98.

held. According to the account by Rabbi Trajstman, an unnamed "head of the Gestapo"[174] appeared and ordered that a new Chairman of the board be elected, since the previous one, Mincberg, had escaped (the organizational system was to remain unchanged). The order was fulfilled "within three minutes."[175] Pływacki was appointed the new chairman, and an official nomination was sent to him that day. Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski and Szymon Światłowski remained members of the board. The latter and Stahl were obliged to hold the office at the Community headquarters daily.[176]

The escalation of the anti-Jewish policy of the authorities affected the Community. As a result of roundups in the streets, Community officials had problems getting to work: "The psychosis of forced labor overcame the Jews of Łódź to the point that even the work of the Community was overshadowed by that burning problem," one of the ghetto archivists wrote in the study *The history of the ghetto Litzmannstadt.*[177] Under such circumstances, the Community authorities developed a memorandum dated September 27th "on the forced labor of the Jewish population," edited by Dr. Schlosser. The memorandum suggested that the Community could deliver a specific quota of laborers which, according to the authors, would stop the roundups. The text was delivered to the commissioner of the city, the commander of the city, the head of the civilian board, and the Civic Committee by a delegation composed of Schlosser, Rumkowski and Szwalbe.[178] The German authorities accepted the proposal and the first ordinance on the forced labor of the Jews was issued one week later on October 5, 1939. Thus, the initiative of the Community preceded the official demands of the German authorities. On October 7th, a new unit was established in order to organize the work, named Labor Conscription Bureau (*Arbeitseinsatz*) and located in the building of the Community at 18 Pomorska Street. The head of the new unit was Michał Radzyner.[179] Having received the approval from the occupation administration, the new office immediately began drawing up a list of able-bodied people who could form groups of laborers. In early October, the Community ordered house owners and administrators to provide a register of Jewish tenants − men aged between 18 and 45[180] − they also carried out registration of all persons capable of physical work aged 18

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[174] Icchak Rubin suggests that it was Adolf Eichmann. Cf. I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 173. According to Rubin, this situation took place not in September, but in November 1939, which contradicts Trajtman's rather detailed account. Rubin further states that the officer was a colonel, but Eichmann never reached that rank – he was Lieutenant Colonel (*Obersturmbannführer*) until his death.

[175] [Sz. Trajstman], *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 95.

[176] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 117; Rubin cites Jakub Szulman saying that Rumkowski was named Pływacki's deputy, but in the documents from that period he is listed as a member of the board, just like Światłowski. (H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 151; *Jakub Szulman's Notebook* [in:] *Łódź Ghetto...*, p. 86.

[177] Study prepared in 1941 by the staff of the Archive Department of the ghetto administration, containing the history of the Community from November 1, 1939 until May 1, 1940, published as an annex to *Kronika getta łódzkiego*. Cf. *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 9.

[178] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 119; N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia...*, p. 97–98; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 9.

[179] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 9–10; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 3–4; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 9–10. Due to the increasing number of responsibilities, the Office moved several times to other addresses – at 10 Południowa Street and 19 Pomorska Street, where it occupied the entire floor of a tenament in the courtyard. In some documents, 17 Cegielniana Street also appears as the address of the first office of the Office.

[180] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 9.

to 60.[181] Information about the organization of the Bureau made public, which was meant to have a calming effect on the mood. Sierakowiak recorded this in his diary, writing with hope, "Maybe now they will stop rounding people up in the streets?"[182]

Four rallying points were created − at Południowa Street, 17 Zgierska Street, 6 Suwalska Street and 31 Lipowa Street − where, in accordance with the order of the head of the German civilian board at the supreme command of the 8th Army Harry von Craushaar dated October 13, 1939, the Community was required to deliver 150 people each day.[183] Then number quickly turned out to be insufficient and the demand increased to 3,000 people per day, and yet roundups continued. According to the guidelines of the authorities, laborers were to be sent from the rallying points to their assigned workplaces, although the whole group was not always sent to work. In some cases, after eight hours of waiting at the rallying point, the laborers returned home, considering that, as *The History of the Ghetto* recorded, "the duty of the Community has been fulfilled."[184] Working hours were defined by the authorities − laborers had to be ready between 7:30am−12:00pm and between 2:00−5:00am. The major durations of the work were not determined, however: "Work sometimes took two hours, sometimes 10, and sometimes the whole day."[185] Men were sent to a variety of cleaning work, unloading or earthworks, while women were sent to clean barracks, railway stations, or to wash windows or dishes in canteens, etc. The work was unpaid, although this depended on the people or institutions who employed the Jews. "Sometimes they would give us food and cigarettes, and in the hospital even dinners, but generally they treated us as slaves."[186]

The conscription technique developed by the Community involved sending the so-called "white paper" to the designated person one day before they were required to report. The messenger would deliver the summons to the caretaker of a house where Jews were living, who would distribute them among the residents; there were only 10 messengers employed by the Community, so it was impossible to deliver each summons in person. The designated persons had to report the following day with the paper and their ID to one of the rallying points. Once their work was finished, the German "employer" would write "*Obengenannter hat die Arbeit geleistet*"[187] on that paper. Those summoned did not always report in person; those who had cash paid others to report with the summons in their stead. For the German authorities, and thus for the Community, it did not matter whether the summoned came in person − all that mattered was the number of people at the rallying point. This became a method to earn some quick, although not always easy, money. It was described by one of the ghetto archivists,

> Whole legions of the unemployed [...] And those who want to earn some money cultivated that practice professionally, coming to the Community daily to ask which region would be summoned to work the following day. Having learnt what they

[181] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 3–4; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 9–10.
[182] *Dziennik...*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 29 I 1972, no. 5 (4041), p. 12.
[183] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 19.
[184] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 10.
[185] Ibid., Opracowanie o Arbeits Einsatz I, p. 84.
[186] Ibid.
[187] *Obengenannter hat die Arbeit geleistet* (Ger.) – The above listed completed the work.

needed, they would go to the interested parties before the latter even received their own summons, and made arrangements with them regarding the remuneration for the substitution.[188]

With time, the German authorities realized that there was a large group of paid substitute laborers. Thus, in the face of escalating persecution, it was decided that those who tried to avoid the work would be brought by force, earning extra abuse and beatings in the process. In addition, the person who paid a substitute would be responsible for all potential crimes the latter might commit, which was very risky as people hiring such laborers usually did not know them at all.[189]

The restrictions on freedom of movement in the city were particularly painful for the Community employees. In the face of the curfew introduced by the occupation authorities, a request was sent to the Civic Committee of the city of Łódź[190] asking for registered identification cards to be issued for the Community representatives, whose professional obligations placed them at risk of violating the ban on moving around the city at certain times.

In the subsequent days of September, the Community continued its activities, although in a much more limited scope. At the cemetery, burials were still organized in spite of difficulties such as the lack of canvas and boards for the funeral. In order to obtain such materials, the Community appealed directly to people or businesses that might still have some in stock.[191] When one wagon and two horses were needed for maintenance work at the cemetery, a request was placed with the 2nd Commissariat of the Citizens' Militia.[192] On September 16th, the Community lounged a kitchen for the poor on its premises. The original plan was to issue about 1,000 meals a day, and once again the Civic Committee was approached with a request for food supplies.[193] The Community continued to run a crèche (at 39 Północna Street, for 40 children), an orphanage (19 Pomorska Street, 43 pupils) and a shelter for the mentally ill (17 Wesoła Street, 46 patients), in whose name more requests for support were made.[194] The Community was also in charge of the building of the ritual bath at 75 Gdansk Street, rented from the mid-1930s, which continued to operate despite the growing problems with obtaining fuel.[195] The kahilla provided assistance to refugees who were not able to find accommodation on their own, paying for their stay in shelters run by charitable societies, including Linas Orchim.[196] The Rabbinical College was persuaded to continue its operation, and at the request of Pływacki, Rabbi M.N. Król was designated to hold office hours at the Community.[197]

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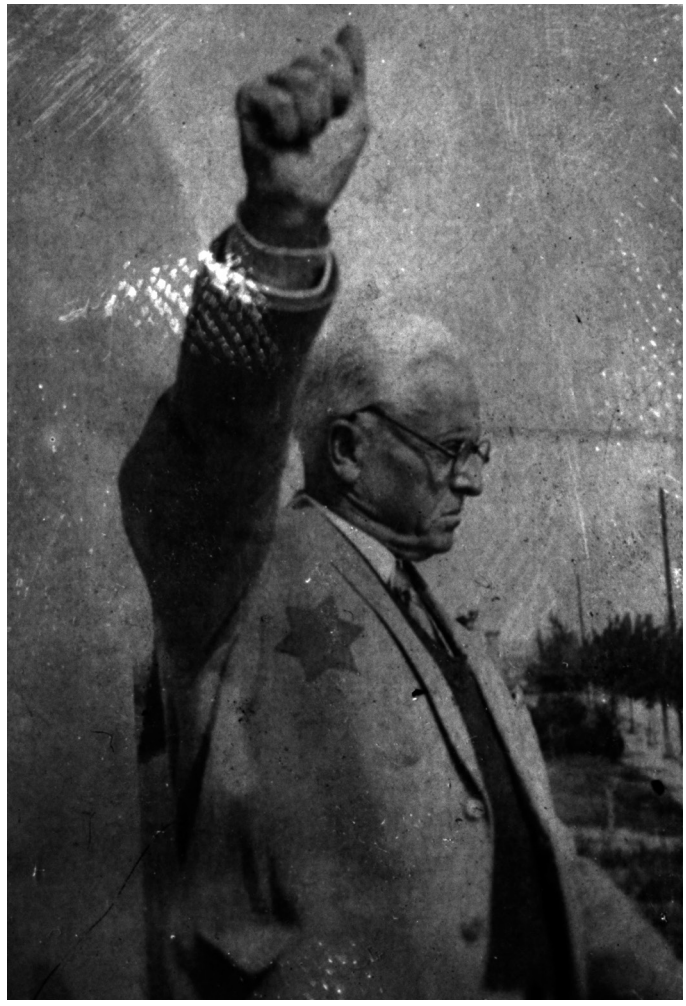
[188] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 10.
[189] Ibid., p. 10–11.
[190] Cf. M. Cygański, *Komitet Obywatelski m. Łodzi*, *Rocznik Łódzki*, 1959, vol. 2.
[191] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Dziennik korespondencji, p. 117–119.
[192] Ibid., PSŻ 6, Pismo Zarządu Gminy do II Komisariatu Milicji Obywatelskiej, p. 510.
[193] Ibid., Pismo Zarządu Gminy do Wydziału Aprowizacji Komitetu Obywatelskiego, p. 505.
[194] Ibid., Pismo Zarządu Gminy do Jakuba Icka Cytrynowicza, p. 478; ibid., Pismo Zarządu Gminy do Komitetu Obywatelskiego, p. 496.
[195] Ibid., Korespondencja Zarządu Gminy, p. 439–440, 483; ibid., Łódzka Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska (henceforth: ŁGWŻ) 379, p. 1; K. Badziak, J. Walicki, *Żydowskie organizacje społeczne w Łodzi do 1939 r*., Łódź 2002, p. 220.
[196] APŁ, PSŻ 6, Pismo Zarządu Gminy do Towarzystwa Linas Orchim, p. 509.
[197] Ibid., PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 118–119; ibid., PSŻ 6, Pismo Zarządu Gminy do Rabinatu, p. 488, 500.



Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski – the Eldest of the Jews in Łódź Ghetto
(State Archive in Łódź)

As previously mentioned, in the first weeks of the occupation, the Community had to cope with a number of difficulties. Particularly severe was the lack of funds in the Community's coffers. It was decided that a loan was needed was from the Łódź branch of the Warsaw Discount Bank[198], secured against the Air Defense Loan. Regina Pływacka was authorized to carry out the formalities. On October 13, 1939, the bank was notified about the commitment not to sell securities to the financial Committee of the city as collateral for the loan.[199] However, before the bank could respond, the situation of the Community was radically changed.

[198] N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 97.
[199] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 119.

4. Structure of the Jewish Administration from the Appointment of the Eldest of the Jews until the Closure of the Borders of "Wohngebiet Der Juden"

On October 13, 1939, city Commissioner Albert Leister appointed Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski the Eldest of the Jews (*der Alteste der Juden*).[200] In the letter appointing him to the office, Rumkowski was ordered "to carry out all activities of the German civil authorities with regard to the Jews in Łódź."[201] In order to carry out his tasks, Rumkowski was given the right to move freely throughout the city, access to the German administration, as well as consent to establish a Council of Elders, to publish his announcements and control Jewish work points. The actual appointment was issued the following day on October 14th. In the appointment, Leister ordered that from that moment on, all institutions of the religious Community report to Rumkowski or to the person he designated.

> All previously existing board councils offices or other administrative institutions must be disbanded, stripped of office and established from scratch. You will be required to inform me about all persons attempting to avoid carrying out their tasks. They will be arrested immediately. For all expenses needed to fulfill the tasks imposed upon you, you will have the right to repartition.[202]

The existing board of the Community was disbanded; former Chairman Pływacki was informed about this in a separate letter dated October 14th ordering him to cease all operations and release all assets and records of the Community to Rumkowski. Pływacki, however, was no longer in Łódź that day, as between October 10–13th, he had left for the city for Warsaw.[203]

By up appointing Rumkowski as the Eldest of the Jews and ordering him to form the Council of Elders (*Ältestenrat*[204]), the authorities followed the guidelines set up by Reinhard Heydrich in his telegram of September 21, 1939, cited above.[205] In the second item of the document, titled "Jewish councils of Elders," he specified how Jewish representation should be appointed and what form it should take. Heydrich recommended:

> In each Jewish Community, a Council of Jewish Elders is to be set up, to be composed, as far as possible, of the remaining influential personalities and rabbis. The council is to comprise up to 24 male Jews (depending on the size of the

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[200] The translation of the name comes from the Community and was used in documents from October 1939, and hence entered the literature of the subject.

[201] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 3; APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 119.

[202] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 3.

[203] N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 98; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 150–153. Pływacki allegedly stayed his wife in Warsaw until January 1943, when they were sent to the death camp during the selection in the brush-makers' workshop – AŻIH, 301/2493, Jochewed Kantorowicz Testimony, p. 4.

[204] Such name of the Council is used in Heydrich's telegram of September 21, 1939, but ghetto documents used it interchangeably with the term "Auxiliary Council" (*Beirat*). The term "Jewish Council" (*Judenrat*), taken from Hans Frank's decree of November 28, 1939 on the formation of Jewish Councils in the General Government, is also found in literature. More on the nomenclature in this regard, cf. I. Trunk, *Judenrat. The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe Under Nazi Occupation*, Lincoln 1996, p. 10–13.

[205] Cf. Chapter 1.2.

Jewish Community). The council is to be made fully responsible, in the literal sense of the word, for the exact punctual execution of all directives issued or yet to be issued.[206]

In addition, the newly formed councils were obliged carry out censuses of the Jewish population in their respective area, and participate in coordinating the planned resettlement of Jews to large urban centers.[207]

Heydrich's telegram only outlined in general terms what powers the Jewish representative body should have. The issue was specified in the nomination of the Eldest of the Jews of the of October 13 and 14, 1939; however, over the course of subsequent months, they were gradually crystallized further. Based on the model proposed by Danuta Dąbrowska, three concepts that the occupation authorities developed for the structure and function of the Jewish administration can be differentiated.

The first such concept was outlined in mid-November 1939 by Colonel unknown by name at the meeting in the Community's office organized after the first Council of elders had been arrested. He made the Community responsible for the implementation of all social activity, and all Jewish organizations and associations that were still active were required to give their assets to the new representation. The Community would open departments for social welfare, economy, food and education, and appoint heads. In the end, the colonel mentioned the plans of the district for the Jews, where they would have "full autonomy of culture and religion."[208]

The second concept was presented in the report of the Eldest of the Jews for the Gestapo dated November 13, 1939. Rumkowski outlined the administrative structures in response to requests from the authorities, who demanded that the Jewish representative body would cover the following areas:

The Social Welfare Department, responsible for providing food for the poor as well as money, clothing, burials, hospital care, nursing homes, medical services and homes for orphans; The Department of Employment (*Berufsstelle*) − to include the Labour Conscription Bureau − responsible for crafts, industry, trade and vocational training; the Resettlement Authority (*Wanderungsstelle*) − with the registration office and unspecified sections − dealing with the migration of the Jews; and the Cultural Department (*Kulturabteilung*), covering all matters pertaining to education, libraries, rabbinical office and vital records.[209] Some of the agencies listed in the report had already been organized, while others were at the stage of development or planning, but Rumkowski promised to launch them.

The third concept of the structures and functions of the Jewish administration was presented in the cited circular, issued by Übelhör on December 10, 1939. Developing the plan for the Jewish ghetto in Łódź, which was supposed to be a temporary solution until all Jews were removed from the city, the president of the Regierungsbezirk called for the creation of the Jewish self-government with the Eldest of the Jews and the Council of Elders (called "an extended Board of the Community"). According to the plan, the

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[206] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 26–27.
[207] Ibid.
[208] D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 114. Dąbrowska's conclusion is based on Wolf Jasny testimony *Di geszichte fun Jidn in Lodż in di jorn fun der dajczer Jidnojsrotung*, Tel Aviv 1960, p. 144–147.
[209] D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 115.

administrative apparatus was to be divided into six departments: the Provisioning Department, responsible for creating and maintaining social kitchens and the distribution of food and fuel; the Health Department, dealing with the creation and maintenance of the health care system, water supply, latrines and waste disposal, and burial of the dead; the Bookkeeping Department, dealing with payments for the supply of food to the ghetto; the Order Service and the fire brigade; the Housing Department, responsible for the allocation of housing and construction of residential barracks; and the Registration Department, tasked with keeping registration records and controlling the movement of the population.[210] In reality, after the ghetto was established, its administrative structure was vastly different from what had originally been planned in the documents cited above. The conditions made it necessary to create a much more elaborate administrative structure. The occupation authorities appointed the Eldest of the Jews as the person responsible for the creation and operation of that body.

Numerous interpretations have accumulated around the reasons for Rumkowski's nomination as the Eldest of the Jews. The one that seems the most likely is the fact that Rumkowski was the only member of the prewar board of the Community who stayed in Łódź and continued to be involved.[211] From this point of view, Leister's decision seems natural.[212] Nevertheless, soon after the nomination, a number of various theories emerged as to the exact motivation of the German authorities. On one hand, it was thought that Rumkowski's personal insistence was the decisive factor, as he had been actively pursuing the office.[213] According to Nirenberg, Rumkowski proved to be quite cunning in his attempts to obtain the nomination:

> The Germans kept pushing the representatives of the Jews to forum a Judenrat. Finally, two Jews [...] agreed between themselves that they would undertake that task and that they would take Rumkowski with them as a character witness. They introduced themselves to the chief of the police as representatives of the Jews of Łódź. The chief asked them to come to another interview. Rumkowski used that opportunity and went to the second meeting on his own, claiming that he was the only remaining representative of the Jews and that he was ready to take responsibility for them. He promised to be loyal and implement everything that was demanded of

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[210] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 79; D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 117–118.

[211] This version assumes that Pływacki and Światłowski had to leave Łódź earlier. In the absence of documents and contradictory accounts, it is very difficult to clearly establish details of the nomination. Cf. L. Dobroszycki, *Wstęp* [in:] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*, ed. D. Dąbrowska, L. Dobroszycki, vol. 1: *Styczeń 1941 – maj 1942*, Łódź 1965, p. xviii.

[212] Other researchers also accept this interpretation, cf. I. Trunk, *Judenrat...*, p. 8; M. Unger, *Reassesment of the Image of Mordechaj Chaim Rumkowski*, Jerusalem 2004, p. 9; J. Podolska, "Nie w naszej mocy przebaczać. Chaim Mordechaj Rumkowski, Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów w łódzkim getcie" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego 1940–1944*, ed. P. Samuś, W. Puś, Łódź 2006, p. 209–210. Rubin concludes that Rumkowski's nomination was "one of the elements of the rivalry between the Wehrmacht and Himmler, fighiting for power over occupied Poland." In his opinion, the Einsatzgruppen bosses, not civil authorities, had the exclusive right to appoint Councils of Elders. This seems to be an over-interpretation of Heydrich's above-mentioned wire, in which he addressed commanders of operational groups, but the text heads of civil administration in the occupied territory also received the. Trunk pointed out the inaccuracy of Heydrich's guidelines – I. Trunk, *Judenrat...*, p. 5.

[213] AŻIH, Ring I/915, Notatka o roli Chaima Rumkowskiego w getcie łódzkim, p. 2. Cf. also A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 64.

him. The chief of the police appointed him the Eldest of the Jews in Litzmannstadt-Ghetto. When the two aforementioned Jews approached Rumkowski about going to the chief of the police, he told them that he had been appointed already.[214]

On the other hand, some survivors believe that the only reason for the nomination was Rumkowski's dignified appearance − apparently, the silver-haired old man made the impression of a natural leader of the Jewish Elders.[215] Rumkowski himself, as one ghetto researcher noted, stated in a speech addressed to the Łódź *landsmanschaft* in the Warsaw ghetto that he had been forced to take that function, even though he believed that he was not suitable for it: "When the obligation to take over the Community in the Łódź ghetto was imposed on me, I believe that neither my health, nor my mind, nor my education make me a suitable choice for that position."[216] Although it is clear that Rumkowski was being exaggeratedly modest, his words confirm that he had indeed nothing to say regarding his appointment as the Eldest of the Jews.

One of the first things the eldest of the Jews did was to appoint all members of the Council of Elders, as the city Commissioner ordered him to do, on October 13, 1939. From among the representatives of the Jews of Łódź that remained in the city, Rumkowski selected 31 and sent them the following nominations:

> By order of the Commissioner of the City of Łódź, you are hereby appointed a member of the Council of Elders (*Altestenrat*) at the Jewish Community of the city of Łódź. Accepting the nomination is mandatory. The first meeting of the Council of Elders, to which you are kindly invited, will be held on Tuesday, [October] 17 at 4:30pm, in the premises of the Jewish Community of the city of Łódź, 18 Pomorska Street.[217]

However, not all nomination recipients were present in Łódź at the time, and some of those selected did not want to be involved in the Council's works.[218] In the end, the following persons were appointed: Abram Ajzner, Henryk Akawi, Edward Babiacki, Markus Bender, Dr. A. Damm, Samuel Faust, Director Artur Frankfurt, Pinkus Gerszowski, W. Glass, attorney Stefan Glatter, Jakub Gutman, Dr. Dawid Lajb Helman, Jakub Hertz, Mieczysław Hertz, Szmul Hochenberg, Ignacy Jaszuński, Jakub Lando, Jakub Leszczyński, Fiszel Liberman, Leon Mokrski, Chil Majer Pick, Jonas Rozen, attorney Leon Rubin, Dr. Jakub Schlosser, Dawid Stahl, Robert Switgal, Dawid Warszawski, Dr. Zygmunt Warszawski, Izydor Weinstein, Dawid Windman and Maks Wyszewiański. Rumkowski held the men he selected in high regard, and he believed them to be "100% social in their

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[214] Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs...*, p. 23.

[215] USHMM, RG-012*01, Sophie Machtinger, Recollections from my Life's Experiences, p. 12; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 14; R.F. Scharf, "Rola Ch. Rumkowskiego w łódzkim getcie" [in:] *Dzieje Żydów w Łodzi 1820–1944. Wybrane problemy*, ed. W Puś, S. Liszewski, Łódź 1991, p. 306. Cf. see more A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 63–64.

[216] AŻIH, Ring I/884, Referat przewodniczącego Rady Starszych m. Łodzi wygłoszony w dniu 15 V 1941 r. do przedstawicielstwa ziomkostwa łódzkiego w Warszawie, p. 1. Cf. A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 64. The text was also published in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1965, no. 54, p. 23.

[217] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 20; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 4.

[218] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 118; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 171.

attitude to the cause."[219] Rumkowski notified Commissioner Leister about the composition of the Council on November 5, 1939.[220]

The composition of the council lasted only until November 9th when, on the wave of arrests of Łódź intelligentsia, the majority of its members were detained.[221] According to one account, a group of soldiers stormed a meeting convened that day at the request of the city Commissioner and the commander seized the papers of the detainees and ordered them to stand facing the wall. The building of the Community was surrounded, and only those who had been summoned to the meeting but arrived late were allowed to enter. Next, they were asked about the function and those who are not members of the council were released. Aside from Rumkowski, the following men avoided arrest: Szmul Faust – head of the Welfare Department, Dawid Windman – head of Financial Department, and Dr. Dawid Helman – head of the Health Department.[222] The others were taken to the prison in Radogoszcz and placed with a group of arrested members of the intelligentsia. One prisoner remembered the abuse of attorney Rubin:

> The Germans summoned attorney Rubin − a well-known Jew, citizen, a war veteran. He was taken to the yard, blindfolded, made to stand by the wall, and ordered to face it. Behind him, soldiers slide up with their weapons raised. Through the open windows, we are watching, waiting for the command and the subsequent shot. Suddenly, we were all ordered to turn facing the wall of our room, and then lay face down on the ground. We lay like that for 20 minutes. One can easily imagine what we were experiencing. Even the anti-Semites, and there were some among us, lost consciousness. Then the command came to get up and close the windows. We breathed a sigh of relief. Several minutes later, attorney Rubin entered. His face was all black and yellow − he looked as if he had just come back from the dead. We were told that he had been sentenced to be shot but that he was pardoned.[223]

Rumkowski pleaded with the authorities to release detainees from prison, arguing that they were indispensable for the Community. According to one of the prisoners, he came to the Radogoszcz prison in early December where he nearly managed to persuade the camp commander to release the detained members of the council:

> One day, we saw Rumkowski through the window talking to the camp commander in the yard [...] Several minutes later, an order came for all the representatives of the Community to put on their coats as they were to be released within five

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[219] APŁ, PSŻ 1102, Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Doradczej z 24 III 1941, p. 108.
[220] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 171.
[221] N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 45; I. Trunk, *Judenrat...*, p. 23; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 243; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 16. Leon Szykier and Filip Friedman suggest that Rumkowski could have been involved in the arrest of the first Council, who, he felt, were interfering with his policies. Rumkowski's later efforts to free the arrested members of the Council, however, contradict these assumptions. Cf. AŻIH, 301/699, Leon Szykier Testimony, p. 1; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 66, footnote 68.
[222] N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 98; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 172.
[223] N.N., *Moje przeżycia od mojego aresztowania 8.11.[1939] do obozu w Radogoszczy* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 86–87.

> minutes. In my room, they were: Abraham Ajzner, Rozenberg[224], [Jonas] Rozen and others. Several minutes later, another order came for everyone to stay in their places. Rumkowski said that he asked for the release of those people because he needed them in the Judenrat. One officer almost agreed to let them go, but the other one would not be persuaded and in the end, he had his way.[225]

The Eldest of the Jews approached the Gestapo and the chief of the police on two more occasions on November 25th and December 7th, asking them in a letter to release the detained.[226] By that time, however, some of the arrested had already been murdered in the forest near Łódź,[227] while others were likely to have been transported to concentration camps.[228] The only members of the first Council to be released were: Damm, Frankfurt, Gerszowski, Mieczysław Hertz, Lando, Mokrski, Pick, Warszawski, Wyszewiański; aside from Rumkowski, the aforementioned Faust, Windman and Helman managed to avoid the arrest.[229]

After the autumn arrests, the Council of Elders virtually ceased to exist. The German authorities, however, demanded that a new one be appointed, outlining the scope of its competence.[230] Rumkowski had enormous difficulties arranging the second Council. Not without significance where the reports about the conditions in the Radogoszcz prison and the fate of prisoners. Some refused to accept the appointment or tried to buy themselves out from the duty.[231] Some people left the city around that time on the wave of mass escapes in December 1939.[232] Thus, the composition of the council was fluid, and the number of its members changed. The German authorities controlled the appointment process, for example, by ordering the number of Council members be increased to 67. Each nominee was summoned for an interview with the Gestapo officer that held office in the Community building and was forced to sign an obligation not to leave the city without the permission of the authorities, and to fulfill the orders of the Eldest of the Jews.[233] Leon Szykier, invited by Rumkowski to the second Council, claimed that he was forced to accept by the Gestapo.[234] Another of the designated members, Edward Reicher, refused to accept the position." Before my eyes, I had the fate of the first Council of ministers. I did not want to end up as Rumkowski's minister with a bullet in my head," he wrote.[235]

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[224] No one by that name was on the first Council of Elders.

[225] N.N., *Moje łódzkie przeżycia (obóz)* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 89.

[226] D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 22; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 174.

[227] Ibid.; J. Baranowski, *Zbrodnie...*, p. 58.

[228] This is indicated by Rumkowski's letter to the president of the police of December 11, 1939, in which he mentioned that most of the detainees had been transported from Radogoszcz to the camps. However, there is no certainty as to how Rumkowski could have known about it and if it was not just an excuse of the German authorities that were carrying out executions in the forrest near Łódź at the time. Cf. I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 174.

[229] It is not known whether Lando, Mokrski, Warszawski and Wyszewiański were arrested and released from the Radogoszcz prison, or if they had not come to the meeting. Cf. D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 120, footnote 22. Out of the members of the First Council only Pick and Windman survived the war.

[230] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 79. Cf. Chapter 1.5.

[231] I. Trunk, *Judenrat...*, p. 17; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 175.

[232] Cf. Chapter 1.2.

[233] D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 121.

[234] AŻIH, 301/699, Leon Szykier Testimony, p. 1.

[235] E. Reicher, *W ostrym świetle dnia. Dziennik żydowskiego lekarza 1939–1945*, Londyn 1989, p. 26.

However, Rumkowski persuaded him to accept the appointment. The ultimate composition of the council was established in the early February 1940.[236] The members included: Abraham Alter, Lejzer Baum, Stanisław Bęczkowski, Ber Częstochowski, Lewi Edelman, Dr. Ludwig Falk, Henryk Hersz Fein, Mosze Jehuda Friedrich, Zygmunt Goldberg, Dr. Dawid Lajb Helman, Mendel Krasucki, Józef Lipski, engineer. Grzegorz Łapp, Dr. Edward Reicher, Aron Hersz Szapiro, Dr. Leon Szykier, Wolf Ulinower, Dawid Warszawski, Chaim Mordka Winawer and Mosze Zażujer.

The second Council was smaller than the first, as it consisted of 21 people. Two of them, Dr. Dawid Helman and Dawid Warszawski, were members of the original Council. The newly elected men were not as recognizable as the first composition; Israel Tabaksblat described them as "third-rate sort."[237] As meetings were usually convened on the initiative of Rumkowski and held irregularly, one resolution concerned the need to organize meetings three times a week. On January 14th 1940, new members of the council were officially approved, and four days later another meeting convened, organized to discuss "urgent issues."[238] Several committees were formed within the Council, including the Financial Committee, whose task it was to collect money for "war tax" − most likely a contribution imposed by the authorities and amounting to 10,000 zł. "Those who did not pay had to reckon with the increase of the fee to 15,000 zlotys," the report noted.[239] However, no evidence of such contribution being requested has been found in the administration records. It was also planned to establish the economic committee, which would consist of two members of the Council and One Community Official, while all departments of the Jewish administration formed at the time were required to carry out the orders of the relevant committees of the Council of Elders.[240]

The role of the Council as an advisory body was quickly limited. On one hand, it was paralyzed by its dependence on the Gestapo, while on the other, its structure made it impossible to make necessary, sometimes immediate decisions. Thus, Rumkowski bypassed the Council in the decision-making process, with its members for the most part having no say regarding the policies he pursued.[241] Their position was further undermined by the fact that the German authorities only ever contacted the Eldest of the Jews as a person responsible for carrying out the ordinances. As he later admitted himself, justifying the need to appoint the Advisory Committee (*Beratungsstelle*),[242] "There already exists the Beirat, albeit [...] on paper only."[243]

Only a handful of members of both councils were directly involved in the emerging administrative apparatus. The first deputy of the Eldest of the Jews was Dr. Dawid Helman, who was also head of the Health Department.[244] In January 1940, Leon Szykier took over both positions.[245] Dr. Edward Reicher as a member of Health Department was in charge

[236] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 21–22.
[237] Citation from A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 66.
[238] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 121–122.
[239] N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 98.
[240] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 122; N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 45.
[241] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 122.
[242] Cf. Chapter 2.2.
[243] APŁ, PSŻ 1102, Protokół posiedzenia Komisji Doradczej z 23 II 1941, p. 108.
[244] Ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Helman Dawid Lajb, p. 111; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Helman Dawid Lajb, p. 177.
[245] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 352.

of the fight against infectious diseases.[246] David Windman, member of the first Council, served as the head of the Tax Department[247] and was later replaced by Wolf Ulinower.[248] Ber Częstochowski was responsible for charging the petitioners at the Housing Department;[249] Samuel Faust, a member of the first Council who managed to avoid arrest, was the head of the Department of Welfare;[250] while from the beginning, Mosze Zażujer served as the head of the Management Department.[251] The emerging foundations of the administrative apparatus required, however, the involvement of people with experience or those whom Rumkowski trusted. Therefore, he invited to meetings persons from outside the Council, such that eventually these assemblies were called "Community sessions" or "conferences" instead of Council meetings.[252]

As soon as he took over as the Eldest of the Jews, Rumkowski immediately started organizing the life of the Jewish Community in the occupied city. However, the administration units he formed were not established all at once, as originally planned. Many of them were transformed, disbanded, or the scope of their confidence was changed depending on the situation or on the orders of the occupation authorities. Some units were a direct continuation of the prewar structures of the religious Community, while others were formed from scratch. This makes it very difficult to establish the exact date when some of these agencies were formed. The administrative structures had competences of many prewar institutions of the council as well as various associations or private companies, hence the responsibilities extended beyond those of parallel institutions operating in regular, peacetime conditions. All agencies, with the Eldest of the Jews at the helm, served two functions: and one hand, they carried out the orders of the occupation authorities, while on the other, they sought to fulfill the needs of the Jewish population.[253]

The creation of the administrative palaces was facilitated by competences given to the Eldest of the Jews by the German authorities. Aside from the rights listed in his nomination of October 14, 1939, Rumkowski was also authorized to impose levies and to collect and keep money for the purposes of the Community,[254] which was still struggling with enormous financial problems. The net cash amounted to 20,000 RM in bills of exchange. In late October, the Community wrote to the Warsaw Discount Bank with a request to create a special account for the Eldest of the Jews.[255] At the same time, attempts were made to obtain cash needed for the Community's operation. In early October 1939, the Financial Committee of the occupation City Board offered the Community a loan of 3,000 zł for daily expenses; Regina Pływacka was authorized to collect it.[256] Due to restrictions imposed on the Jews, it was impossible to withdraw the entire amount at once – it was only paid after Rumkowski's intervention, who managed to secure from the City

[246] E. Reicher, *W ostrym...*, p. 26–27.
[247] N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 98.
[248] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 20.
[249] Ibid., p. 20–21, 86.
[250] N.N., *Z łódzkiego życia* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 98.
[251] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 51.
[252] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 123.
[253] Cf. ibid., p. 123–124.
[254] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 117.
[255] Ibid., p. 121.
[256] APŁ, PSŻ 6, Upoważnienie Zarządu Gminy, p. 473.

Commissioner an exemption from restrictions on cash withdrawals by Jews.[257] A special contribution was also announced, which, with the consent of the city Commissioner, could be allocated for education; however, this yielded very little, as many of those who were ordered to pay it had already left the city, while others simply refused to pay.[258] The Community also sought additional funds from people moving to the area of the future ghetto. In early 1940, the Tax Department headed by Wolf Ulinower introduced the system of special certificates issued only on the condition that all outstanding taxes were paid. Such a certificate was required to receive a housing allocation. Further fees were levied in the Housing Department. The person responsible for charging them was Ber Częstochowski, whose meticulousness led to enormous lines being formed and delays in the allocation of housing. Only when such fees were paid could one receive accommodation. This practice was criticized by the author of the cited *History of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto*: "Exploiting that moment was perhaps very beneficial for the Community from a financial point of view; however, it did not justify the manner in which these issues were handled by the two aforementioned gentlemen."[259]

In order to obtain tax arrears, the Department used the research carried out in Łódź by the NSDAP Office of Racial Policy (*Rassenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP*). According to the testimony of Jan Kapczan, a fugitive from Łódź, at the beginning of 1940, Rumkowski was instructed to provide a specific number of Jews for racial research to the building of the former Regional Office Ogrodowa Street. The research took about one week. Meanwhile, the Tax Department prepared a large number of summons to report for racial research the Office which were sent to people who had some outstanding taxes to pay. Each notice contained a warning that failure to report would be severely punished, along with the stamps that said his "name and address have been given to the German authorities." According to Kapczan, the method proved to be highly effective:

> The debtors were frightened and started reporting to the Community, were the theatre of horror is was played in front of them. So affected were they by it, that − as in Aeschylus − they experienced a catharsis: they paid their debts and... They were exempt from the research.
>
> It should be added that, as we later learned, within two months of the departure of the representatives of the Office of Racial Policy, the Łódź Community pocketed a huge sum of overdue fees. In this case, racism was useful for once...![260]

At the end of March 1940, the Tax Department was transformed into the Rent and Tax Department with Naum Samelson at the helm.

Despite the rights he obtained, Rumkowski still had problems securing funds for the Community's operation. It was particularly difficult to obtain the receivables from Jewish companies that had been passed into German receivership management − the

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[257] Ibid., Pismo Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów do Komisji Finansowej miasta Łodzi, p. 426.

[258] APŁ, PSŻ 2, Księga korespondencji, p. 121; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 19.

[259] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 21.

[260] J. Kapczan, *Materiały o gospodarce finansowej gmin żydowskich w czasie wojny* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma*..., p. 124–125.

explanation of the Chamber of Commerce and industry amounted to a statement that once the trustee was appointed, the company ceased to be Jewish and therefore had no obligation to pay taxes to the Community.[261] Another disappointment to the Community was the behavior of owners of small Jewish companies who left larger sums in their blocked accounts instead of transferring them to the Community. "It was an enormous mistake because at that time, there was still a chance to improve the financial standing of the Community, and thereby also stabilize the normal life in that first period," assessed after the closure of the ghetto.[262]

The Eldest of the Jews supervised and coordinated the emerging sections of the administration through the Presidential Department, also known as the Presidential Secretariat. It was one of the most important institutions, to some extent a continuation of the secretariat of the religious Community. Initially, the office was located in the building of the Community at 18 Pomorska Street and then at 4 Kościelny Square. The duties of the staff of the Secretariat included correspondence with the German authorities, periodical reports, and later the editing and publication of circulars and ordinances of the Eldest of the Jews, as well as issuing passes, special food vouchers and identity cards.[263]

The head of the Secretariat was initially Ch. I. Szper and, beginning January 1940, Stanisław Jakobson. Its employees included Regina Pływacka, Regina Wajnberger (later the wife of the Eldest of the Jews), and Roma Byteńska.[264] The Presidential Department had an auxiliary subsection named the Information Department, headed by Salomon Małkes. It was established on November 24, 1939, and its tasks included receiving supplicants and providing them with information on matters relating to departure from the city and certificates needed to receive money from outside the city. The Information Department also accepted applications for benefits from social welfare and directed supplicants to other departments in accordance with their competence. The Department was also responsible for forwarding all mail, circulars and regulations to other Departments.[265]

The attempts made by the Community to stabilize the financial situation were necessary for it to operate under the new circumstances. The largest expenses were generated by social welfare. From the first days of the war, more and more people came to the Community for help. After charity organizations were disbanded, it was the only remaining institution that had any possibilities of providing support. Thus, out of necessity, the structure of the Social Welfare Department and the Provisioning Department were among the first to be established.

On October 15th, one day after his nomination, Rumkowski ordered the organization of the Social Welfare Department, called Welfare for short. The structures were based on the committees operating in the Community from September 1939. The first head of the Department was Samuel Faust with T. Bunin as secretary. Initially, the Department was in charge of providing relief grants to people who reported to the Community and distributing

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[261] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 20.
[262] Ibid.
[263] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 131; ibid., Leksykon, p. 365; I. Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto. A History*, transl. R.M. Shapiro, Bloomington 2008, p. 39.
[264] AYV, O-34/637, unpaginated; Archive of the YIVO in New York (henceforth: AYIVO), 881, unpaginated; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Byteńska Romea, p. 25; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Byteńska Romea, p. 73.
[265] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 50–51.

medicine. As a study compiled in the ghetto puts it, "Everyone was in a hopeless situation, because they could not even dream about the former source of income, and they had not yet found any new ones. This is why the Social Welfare Department was so important at that time, as it was meant to save people from certain death."[266] Gradually, the scope of responsibilities of the Department expanded, as it took over the competences of disbanded social institutions and replaced initiatives that had been previously funded by the city. Welfare was responsible for the maintenance of the home for the disabled, the orphanage, the crèche and the home for the mentally ill, as well as for providing relief grants to the wives of Jewish reserve soldiers. Due to the extremely fast-paced pauperization of the population, the Department began issuing meals and food products to those in need. The Community took over the social kitchen at 20 Zachodnia Street, which before the war belonged to the Tomchay Orchim Association (its patrons were mainly members of the impoverished intelligentsia) and the former kitchen of the Nosen Lechem Association at 14 Solna Street, frequented mostly by the Jewish poor. Initially, the kitchens issued 500 servings of soup with 25 ten grams ration of bread for groszy (9 pf.) A day later, however, the number increased to several thousand meals a day. In order to accommodate growing needs of the population, the causes of which included the influx of refugees to Łódź, more kitchens were opened with new locations at Limanowskiego, 3 Nowomiejska, Piotrowska and Piłsudskiego streets, Reymonta Square, as well as Zakątna and 41 Żeligowskiego Street.[267]

The Social Welfare Department also organized assistance for refugees from Łódź. In December 1939, when occupation authorities agreed to arrange "voluntary departure" from the city, the Community carried out registration of all persons interested in leaving. At the same time, in order to encourage them to go, it was announced that anyone who wants to leave Łódź would receive 50zł in cash and a guaranteed place on the train. Some of those who initially registered change their mind and tried to avoid departure; however, it was noted that they were forced to go, as many accounts describe it "the matter was not a joke."[268] The operation was carried out from December 14th until the 18th with Henryk Neftalin and Willy Jeleń as supervisors. As a result, several thousand people left the city.[269]

After the head of the Department, Faust, left Łódź in January 1940,[270] instead of appointing a deputy, the management of Welfare Department passed to the Presidium consisting of Aleksander Binsztok and including two other members of the second Council of Elders, Mosze Jehuda Friedrich and Mendel Krasucki. The Department moved to the area of the future ghetto into the building at 33 Młynarska Street. However, the conditions were insalubrious; it was cramped and dirty. People who lived in the area of the closed district flocked to the Welfare offices becouse most of the kitchens were beyond

[266] Ibid., Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 46.

[267] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Opieka, p. 280–284; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 5–6; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 128–129.

[268] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 14.

[269] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Opieka, p. 280–284; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 14; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 129.

[270] Samuel Faust went to Warsaw, where he continued his social involvement. Adam Czerniakow mentioned Faust in his diary as one of the people who left the Warsaw ghetto and went to Lublin with gifts for workers – *Adama Czerniakowa dziennik getta warszawskiego. 6 IX 1939 – 23 VII 1942*, ed. M. Fuks, Warszawa 1983, p. 147–148.

boundaries of the ghetto. Therefore, people requesting assistance came to Młynarska Street and formed long lines. The Department was responsible for paying cash benefits issuing food and healthcare vouchers and exemptions from rent. Only those who received relief grants (*zasiłkowcy*) were entitled to free medical care. All those on the Welfare registry were exempted from paying rent. Other than this, assistance took on various forms, such as a referral to hospital, although in most cases it involved financial aid. Later, the Department was moved to a more comfortable building at 3 Krawiecka Street. Until the closure of the ghetto borders, the Department was in charge of the home for the disabled, which began operating in March 1940. On February 12th, three orphanages opened; on April 19th,− a home for the elderly; and in the end of April, the first canteen opened in the ghetto at 26 Zgierska Street, dubbed "the people's kitchen."[271]

The activities of the Social Welfare Department were related with another agency, namely the Provisioning Department. Rumkowski started organizing this unit almost immediately after his nomination. Officially, it began operation on the 16th of October, 1939. The employees included Department head Arnold Brawerman, Józef Asz and Josek Hecht. In mid-December 1939, after Brawerman left Łódź, Jakub Bender took his place. The main task of Provisioning, as it was commonly called, was providing necessary supplies to Community's social welfare institutions operating in Łódź.[272] In order to obtain them, the Eldest of the Jews repeatedly appealed to the city board. It was decided that the Community would receive 25% of all supplies arriving in the city.[273]

However, this did not cover constantly increasing demand. In addition, the allocations were issued irregularly and not always in full. There was some improvement in access to food supplies after permits were issued for the purchase of products within a radius of 100 km from Łódź. However, such excursions were very risky. The Community and people with authorization could also buy products from Christian wholesale providers which were unavailable to other Jews.[274] Sometimes, due to financial problems, the Community did not have sufficient funds to buy allocated products. In November 1939, after the purchase of 60 tons of sugar and salt, the required amount was paid by wholesale traders who later distributed the products at a small percent. Moreover, if a merchant wanted to purchase products outside the city, he had to pay for it through his own means as the Community did not have sufficient funds.[275]

The acquired products were delivered to the Community orphanage at 19 Pomorska Street, the crèche (39 Północna Street), or the shelter for the mentally ill (17 Wesoła Street), while flour was sent to designated Jewish bakeries. These bakeries, in turn, were obliged to provide baked bread to the maternity hospital (13 Sterling Street), the home for the disabled, and orphanages. The intermediary in transactions on behalf of the Provisioning

[271] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Opieka, p. 280–284; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 45–46; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 129.

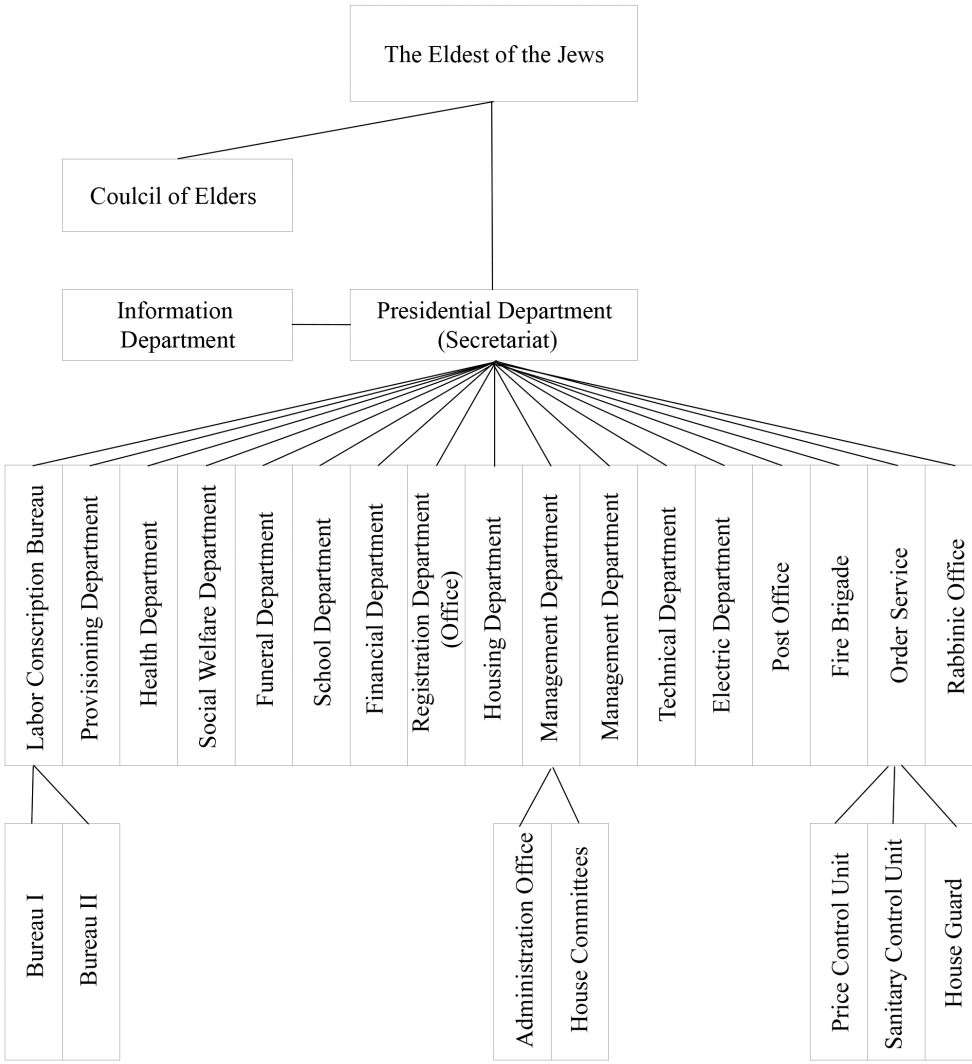
[272] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 6.

[273] An example ration from November or December 1939 provided by the City Board was 3 wagons of rice, 1 wagon of sugar, 3 boxes of matches, 50 bags of salt and 1–2 wagons of flour per week – *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 90.

[274] Purchases were possible, among others, in Łódź warehouses owned by Franciszek Gugla, "Społem," Karol Hilpert and Ska, A. Kelle, Józef Fetter and Ska.

[275] Ibid., p. 90–91.

Table no. 1
Structure of the Administration of the Ghetto in 1940



Source: D. Dąbrowska, “Struktura i funkcje...”, p. 116; APŁ, PSŻ 510, 511, *passim*.

Department was Mordechai Lajzerowicz.[276] Fearing abuse, Provisioning organized a system of supervision of bakeries: Wilner's bakery at Pomorska 3 Street was monitored for twelve hours a day by Benjamin Zylberberg and Moszek Grynoch. Some of the products were stored in warehouses at 46 Południowa Street.[277]

In November 1939 when the prison was established in Radogoszcz,[278] the Provisioning Department coordinated deliveries of products for Jewish prisoners detained there.[279] Zimmerman's bakery provided from 150 up to 500 kg of bread per day. The intermediary between the prisoners and the Community was Willy Jeleń, who, aside from products from the Community, also delivered food from individuals to the prison, most likely from the families of the detained.[280]

In January 1940, the Department was reorganized. On January 30th, the head was appointed as the head was Mendel Szczęśliwy, a prewar acquaintance of Rumkowski and his trusted friend.[281] The warehouses of the Department were moved to 12 Pilsudskiego Street, where the main office of Provisioning was also located. On March 25, 1940 – after the borders of the future closed district were established – the Department, along with the warehouses, moved to the buildings at 2 Brzezińska Street near Pilcera Square, the largest marketplace in the Old Town. Gradually, the Department became the sole distributor of food within the future ghetto.[282]

In addition to the system of welfare and provisioning, the Community was tasked with organizing health care. The occupation authorities made it more and more difficult for the Jewish population to access treatment facilities. Most private institutions ceased to operate or were subordinated to the Community; outpatient clinics and hospitals were affected by seizures of both equipment and medical supplies. The situation was further complicated by the fact that in the first months of the war, many doctors left Łódź, including a number of Jews. On October 20, 1939, Rumkowski established the Health Department, tasked with organizing medical assistance.[283] The head of the Department was member of the Council of Elders, laryngologist Dawid Helman, and the administrative director − Józef Rumkowski, brother of Mordechai Chaim.[284] In January 1940, Helman was replaced by internist Leon Szykier, also member of the council.[285]

First, the Eldest of the Jews ordered registration of all Jewish doctors remaining in the city, only 40 of whom could practice, and made necessary arrangements with owners of pharmacies regarding the distribution of free medicines for the needy. Organizing hospital

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[276] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Lajzerowicz M., p. 159; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Lajzerowicz M., p. 225.
[277] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 90–91.
[278] Cf. Chapter 1.2.
[279] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 14; N.N., *Moje przeżycia...* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 86; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 128.
[280] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 14.
[281] Ibid., Opracowanie o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 92; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Helman Dawid Lajb, p. 111; ibid., entry: Szczęśliwy M., p. 244–245; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Helman Dawid Lajb, p. 177; ibid., entry: Szczęśliwy M., p. 374–375; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 128.
[282] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 92; ibid., Leksykon, p. 326–327.
[283] *Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów w Litzmannstadt. Kalendarz na rok 1942 – 5702/5703* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 201.
[284] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Dyrektor, p. 98; ibid., entry: Helman Dawid Lajb, p. 177; ibid., entry: Rumkowski Josef, p. 349; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Helman Dawid Lajb, p. 111.
[285] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 352–353.

assistance proved difficult because the Community had only one hospital at its disposal, the Poznański hospital at 13 Sterlinga Street where Józef Rumkowski was the director.[286] This facility was insufficient for the needs of the Jewish population remaining in the city. Not only was a large section of the hospital occupied for military purposes (Polish POWs were treated there), but the authorities also opened the Jaw Surgery Department (*Kieferstation*) there with the German staff. To make matters even worse, on the 30th of October, 1939, the city board discontinued financial relief grants and refused to allow Christian hospitals, clinics and other institutions to provide care for the Jewish people. For a time, Jewish patients were still treated, and it such cases the Community had to pay for those patients' stays in advance. The only exception was made for infectious patients, whose treatment was financed by the City Board on the condition, however, that it would be reimbursed by the Eldest of the Jews.[287] As a result of this situation, on January 12, 1940, the city commissioner informed Rumkowski that the Poznanski hospital would be the only facility available to Jewish patients. Jews were banned from all other facilities, including the maternity clinic at 13 Sterlinga Street which belonged to the Community. The hospital had 400 beds in four wards: internal medicine, obstetrics, surgery and a ward for prostitutes isolated from other patients. After the patients from the nearby maternity clinic were transferred, the facility was overpopulated.[288]

The hospital did not have an infectious ward, so the Commissioner declared that special wards would be established in other facilities for such patients. Rumkowski, however, tried to obtain consent for a separate hospital to be established in the factory building at 12 Wesoła Street, located within the area of the future closed district. At the end of January 1940, after inspecting the building, the occupation authorities of the city urged the Community to launch a facility for infectious patients, ordering that it be opened by the 26th day of that month. Rumkowski was accused of failure to comply with the guidelines of sanitary authorities, which was assumed to have led to the delayed opening.[289] The medical advisor of the city board, Doctor Schultz, in a letter to the Eldest of the Jews, threatened him: "If my recent regulations will be carried out in such a careless manner, 200 Jewish hostages will be arrested. In addition, the guilty will be held accountable."[290]

At the beginning of 1940, Rumkowski has also made efforts to take over the two hospital buildings at the site of the planned ghetto at 75 Drewnowska and 34/36 Łagiewnicka. He succeeded in taking the former St. Joseph City Hospital on Drewnowska Street with 175 beds in the spring of 1940. This did not, however, satisfy the needs of the Jewish population. Negotiations on a second building – the pre-war *Kasa Chorych* (Sick Fund) hospital on Łagiewnicka Street – went on for several weeks. On April 5, 1940, Rumkowski wrote a letter to the head of the Health Department of the occupation City

[286] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Dyrektor, p. 98; ibid., entry: Rumkowski Josef, p. 349; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 129. Joel Taflowicz was the administrator of the hospital; from 1 March 1940 head of the dental clinic, described in the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* as "the only Jew who graduated from the State School of Commerce (in 1923)."

[287] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 5.

[288] Ibid., p. 31–32.

[289] City officials accused the Community of installing − against their recommendations − flush toilets in the hospital on Wesoła Street, which due to the nature of the facility could not be connected to the sewer system, and arranging special pits would delay the opening of the facility. It was therefore recommended to install dry passages – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 32.

[290] Ibid., p. 32–33.

Board, explaining the need to take over the building: "I have noticed that there are more and more of the cases of diseases in the ghetto and hence to ten people must be placed in one room [at the hospital – AS]. The air is very bad, and the danger of infection high. [...] The health of the entire city would be at risk."[291] The following day, Rumkowski approached the mayor, persuading him to expand the boundaries of the planned ghetto so that it included buildings that formed "islands" − meaning they were not at the disposal of the Eldest of the Jews, including the hospital on Łagiewnicka Street.[292] Finally, by order of the mayor dated April 27th, the hospital at Łagiewnicka Street was taken over by the Eldest of the Jews and formally subordinated to the Department of Health within the Jewish administration. All the remaining equipment was transferred there along with the staff and the medical library from the Poznański hospital. At the time of the acquisition, in the former *Kasa Chorych* building there were also two gas sterilizers, two laboratory desktops, two laboratory cabinets, heating and lighting equipment, and 25.5t of coal, for which the Community promised to pay within ten days.[293] The hospital housed the office of the Department of Health and since the building was one of the most modern in the Bałuty district, the Eldest of the Jews moved into the apartment in the hospital wing on the first floor.[294] Aside from hospitals, the health care system also provided outpatient clinics organized at 36 Łagiewnicka Street, 17 and 56 Zgierska Street, as well as the night emergency service at 13 Lutomierska Street, with Dr. M. Weiss as head.[295]

In organizing the health care system, the Health Department faced numerous difficulties. In spite of having three hospital buildings at its disposal, the lack of appropriate medical facilities as well as shortages of medicines and staff posed a very serious problem. Rumkowski appealed to the German authorities for consent to bring the equipment left in the apartments of Jewish doctors. Each time such instruments were located, he had to apply for permission to the Superior commander of the SS and police in Wartheland, Wilhelm Koppe. And so, for example, in April 1940, he applied for permission to transport x-ray equipment from the apartment of Doctor Barciński at 43 Gdańska Street because, as he justified it, "it was urgently required by the Jewish people."[296]

Another problem, just as acute, was the lack of equipment for disinfection, which, combined with the abhorrent sanitary conditions in the majority of buildings in the area of the future ghetto, posted a real risk of an outbreak of epidemics of infectious diseases. Indeed, in March 1940, in the collection point at 10 Jakuba Street where people waiting for the allocation of housing in the future ghetto were waiting, a typhus epidemic broke out. Five people fell ill and a further 20 were suspected to have been infected. Rumkowski appealed to the city authorities on several occasions asking them for assistance in purchasing disinfectants and parts needed for faulty devices. The authorities ordered him to submit relevant reports and demonstrate the operation of the disinfection and disinfestation system in the area for which he was responsible. In the report addressed to the health office at the city board dated April 17, 1940, Rumkowski described in detail the procedures he

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[291] Ibid., p. 34.
[292] Ibid., p. 49.
[293] Ibid., p. 33–34; ibid., Leksykon, p. 350–351.
[294] Cf. Chapter 3.1.
[295] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 45; ibid., Leksykon, p. 327.
[296] Ibid., Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 35.

adopted and pointed to the problems that could contribute to the increased risk of epidemic, such as placing wire alongside sidewalks, hampering the disposal of garbage and feces. Lewkowicz was in charge of carrying out disinfection, and engineer Borzekowski supervised the procedure and the devices used.[297]

At the same time, in order to maintain appropriate sanitary conditions, bathing facilities opened at 16 and 34 Wolborska, 10 Podrzeczna, and 68 Zgierska Streets as part of the Department of Health. The latter was lounged after the closure of the ghetto, as until then it had been in the hands of the Germans.[298]

Another problem faced by the officials of the Health Department was the lack of an adequate amount of medication. Until the end of April 1940, the Eldest of the Jews was in charge of four pharmacies: 56 Brzezińska Street, 54 Zgierska Street, 9 Stary Rynek, 37 Limanowskiego Street, and one at the hospital on Łagiewnicka Street. Rumkowski had to pay the city authorities 47,500 RM for the supplies. Although there were several more pharmacies in the area of the formed closed district, Rumkowski refused to take them over, asking only to be allowed to purchase the medicine they had in stock. Aside from the pharmacies managed by the Jewish administration, there was also a private one at 8 Kościelny Square, owned by Samuel Kon and A. Fajneman.[299]

According to the ordinances of the occupation authorities, Jewish doctors lost their license to practice in the city. After his nomination, Rumkowski registered all doctors in the city – after his intervention with the city authorities, only 40 out of 108 were granted permission to practice. A certain number of medical personnel were employed in the hospitals; some provided medical assistance to the groups of people expelled from the city and brought to the future ghetto. In January 1940, the occupation authorities allowed eight dentists to open practice in the area of the future ghetto. In the end of 1940, all Jewish midwives lost their licenses to practice medicine; they were, however, still allowed to receive deliveries.[300]

The staff was still insufficient given the needs of the Jewish population gathered in the northern part of the city, and the situation worsened in November with the arrests of members of the intelligentsia, which affected many doctors[301] as well as the December expulsions from the city. Therefore, on March 3, 1940, Rumkowski appealed to the President of the occupation Medical Council, Dr. Merkert, asking him to halt expulsions of city doctors working for the Community, release the ones that were detained and grand all doctors the right to free movement in the city and the use of trams and horse-drawn carriages to visit the sick. In response, the medical adviser of the city board issued a permit allowing Jewish doctors to practice and medicine to be purchased by the Jews. As for the cessation of expulsions, Rumkowski had to appeal to the president of the *Regierungsbezirk*, while the release of those arrested was the responsibility of the Łódź Gestapo.[302] The situation remained unchanged until the ghetto was established.

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297 Ibid., p. 38–43.
298 Ibid., p. 42.
299 Ibid., p. 44–45; ibid., Leksykon, p. 272.
300 Ibid., Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 28, 31, 35–36; J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka zdrowotna w Łodzi do roku 1945. Studium organizacyjno-historyczne*, Łódź 1990, p. 483–484.
301 Dr. Alexander Margolis, director of the Radogoszcz hospital.was arrested, and then murdered. Cf. Chapter 1.2.
302 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 37–38.

The Health Department collaborated with another unit, specifically the Funeral Department. It was a direct continuation of the Funeral Department of the Community. Initially, it was headed by Lejzor Baum and Benjamin Russ, who had been in charge of the institution since 1934.[303] The office of the Department was located at 7 Zgierska Street, where all formalities for the funeral were arranged. The employees were responsible for the burial of the dead and the maintenance of the cemetery, as well as drawing up reports on the number and cause of deaths for the authorities. After the ghetto was closed, its structure expanded, and the Department was incorporated into the Civil Registry Office as the Division of Deaths.[304] The rabbinate office kept a separate registry of deaths.

With the increasing demand for Jewish labor force, the Labor Conscription Bureau (*Arbeitseinsatz*),[305] operating since October 7th, was also expanded. Quotas of Jewish workers sent to labor arranged by the office Jewish grew steadily, from an initial 600, up to even 3,000 people per day. Resulting from this situation, in December 1939, the Eldest of the Jews appointed another unit responsible primarily for providing forced laborers, the Labor Conscription Bureau (*Arbeitseinsatz II*). Its offices were located at 17 Cegielniana Street.[306] The head of the new agency was Zygmunt Reingold, who had just returned from German captivity that same month.[307]

Bureau I and II operated simultaneously and their activities complemented each other to a certain extent, although the division of competences between the two units was evident. Bureau II, being more expanded, was in charge of matters related to the registration of Jews capable of work, sending summonses, providing lists of people summoned for Labor and monitoring them, receiving complaints and substitution fees, as well as supervising settlements with the substitutes. After the ghetto was established, it also assigned all urgent work in that area. Bureau I was responsible for checking the attendance of persons assigned for labor, forming teams of laborers, and sending them to specific details including those within the future ghetto.[308]

At Reingold's command, the first task of Bureau II was to set up records of all able-bodied Jews residing in Łódź. For that purpose, at the beginning of December 1939, all owners and administrators of houses received letters calling them to send lists of Jews of both sexes aged 18 to 60 to the office. The records compiled by the end of December made it much easier to control persons assigned for Labor. At the same time, the aforementioned system of substitutes was sanctioned. Thus, it was decided to create the position of official substitutes, paid by the Community from funds collected from those who were summoned but failed to report. Already by mid-December 1939, about 1,000 such substitutes were registered. Each of them received one- or seven-day laborer vouchers, which later took the form of walk cards; the employer would write relevant information

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303 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Russ Beniamin, p. 234; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Russ Beniamin, p. 351.

304 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Stanu Cywilnego, p. 130; ibid., Leksykon, p. 365; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 130.

305 Cf. Chapter 1.3.

306 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 11; ibid., Opracowanie o Arbeits-Einsatz, p. 84; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 126–127.

307 He was imprisoned in the Luckenwalde camp and in Krakow – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Reingold Z., p. 199–201; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Reingold Z., p. 319–321.

308 D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 126.

on the card concerning the labor done. For each day of substitution work, men were paid 1.75 RM by the Community, and women 1.25 RM.[309]

Although the competences of both offices were sorted out, their operation was affected by the hectic situation in the city; orders for laborers with chaotic roundups for labor did not stop and even affected the office itself: "Soldiers and officers of other formations came to the Community and, disregarding the fact that laborers lined up in the Community yard had already been designated to a certain workplace, took them somewhere else," one of the authors of the *History of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto* wrote.[310]

Rumkowski intervened with the Mayor of the city and the Gestapo, however, in vain. Only a meeting with the representative of the Social Welfare Department (Fürsorgeamt) at the City Board Heidrich yielded some effects. The Community was represented by lawyer Henryk Neftalin, Rumkowski's trusted associate.[311] The result of "a series of conferences," the employment of Jews was regulated and permanent contact was established between the city authorities and the Community, for which Neftalin was responsible.[312] The procedure of using Jewish laborers was specified by the ordinance of the Commissioner of the city dated December 27, 1939, which indicated that the only entity where the demand for the Jewish labor force should be submitted was the Social Welfare Department of the City Board, located at 11 Zawadzka Street. Orders from other institutions were not recognized. The Department then sent a report to the Eldest of the Jews, who was responsible for allocating laborers. In practice, each day until five in the afternoon the Community received information about the demand, including a list of facilities where laborers were to be sent the following day.[313]

Every day, groups of Jewish laborers were sent to about 100 work details. The largest recipient was the Łódź Gestapo, which demanded on average that 1,000 laborers be sent each day, who were later used for "dirty work." Gradually, the quota required by the secret police was reduced to 200–300 people per day, and their attitudes to the hired Jews improved slightly. From the point of view of the Community, the latter issue was very important − "What it meant at that time, only those can understand who experienced it or who were eyewitnesses!" the above-cited history of the ghetto recorded.[314] The agreement with the Social Welfare Department also regulated the issue of the Community paying wages of Christian workers − before this, when there were no qualified Jewish workers available, the Community had to hire non-Jewish ones at their own expense. On January 11, 1940, Heidrich issued an order which stated clearly that "the Jewish headquarters" (i.e. the Community) is not required to pay wages of Christian or Polish workers."[315]

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[309] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 3–4; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 9–10; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 12.

[310] Ibid.

[311] In Henryk Neftalin's biography in the Encyclopedia of the Ghetto there is information that in talks with the occupation authorities he was acting on behalf of Rumkowski, who was "seriously ill" at that time. "Chairman's" illness is not mentioned enywhere else – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 179–181; AŻIH, entry: Neftalin Henryk, 205/349, p. 272–274.

[312] Ibid.; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 12.

[313] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 13.

[314] Ibid.

[315] Ibid.

Table no. 2
Statistical data concerning forced laborers compiled by the Labor Conscription Bureau II for the period December 15, 1939 − January 5, 1940

Number of persons conscripted for labor	30,060	100%
Paid for replacement labor	10,590	35%
Sent for labor	4492	15%
Appealed to be released	4564	15%
Failed to report for labor	10,402	35%

Source: *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 13.

The statistics of the Bureau II indicate that at the end of December 1939 and in early January 1940, only a small percentage of those summoned reported for work. The majority of their substitutes or did not respond to the summons. The above table clears the statistics from daily reports compiled by Reingold, head of the Labor Conscription Bureau II.

At the time the closed district was organized, the activity of the Labor Conscription Bureau was brought into question. On the 1st of March, 1940, the chief construction director of the city (*Stadtoberbaudirektor*) notified Rumkowski about the ban on hiring Jews outside the area of the future ghetto, with the exclusion of any person who would be stationed and provided board at the expense of companies who hired them. The order was compliant with the idea outlined in the circular of the president of *Regierungsbezirk* dated 10 December 10, 1939, in which Übelhör wrote, "They [i.e., able-bodied Jews – AS] must be formed in labor troops and put their work and watched in [...] designated blocks of barracks."[316] As a result of the ban, the Labor Conscription Bureau significantly reduced its activities and Rumkowski planned to ask the mayor to permit him to disband that unit. A surviving draft of the letter contains some concerns, indicating that the Jewish administration doubted whether dissolving the Office was justified and whether it would not have an adverse effect on the Jews:

> Should we apply for a complete abolition of the Arbeitseinsatz? Should this issue be even raised, because if the Department is closed they can start roundups for real and put several thousand Jews in barracks. If their issue is raised, will they not deny the request for ghetto passes for Jews who reside there and for people from the city who came to the ghetto?[317]

It is not known whether such a letter was sent to the mayor in March. Rumkowski, however, returned to the issue less than a month later on April 5th, when he sent Marder a proposal to employ Jewish workers. Given that in the future closed area there were

[316] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 80. D. Dąbrowska also points this out in "Administracja...", p. 127.
[317] Cited in D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 127, footnote 36.

about 8–10 thousand skilled workers of various specialties, Rumkowski proposed to hire them in workshops in the closed district working for the German authorities. In order to organize this work, he proposed a special department be established. In order to avoid disrupting production, he also requested to be released from the obligation to provide quota of laborers outside the ghetto and asked that roundups stop in the streets of the future closed district.[318] However, the mayor did not respond to the request of the Eldest of the Jews, and on April 11, 1940, the Bureau resumed its operation and both units of the *Arbeitseinsatz* opened their departments in the area of the future ghetto − Bureau I located at 11 Lutomierska Street and Bureau II at 10 Podrzeczna Street.[319] In a letter to Rumkowski dated April 30, 1940, the mayor emphasized that the Eldest of the Jews should make sure that *Arbeitseinsatz* in particular was in order.[320]

The emerging administrative structures were also responsible for areas which had been beyond the competence of the Community before the war. One of them was Jewish education. From the first week of the war, there was a number of problems in that area, in particular with appropriate facilities. In many cases, buildings and rooms that housed schools were seized by either German authorities. This was the case with, for example, the male Jewish secondary school at 5/7 Anstadta Street, which the Gestapo seized on September 12th. The school moved to the building of the female secondary school at 18 Południowa Street. Also the premises of Kacenelson's comprehensive school were requisitioned, and as a result, the school moved to the building at 8a Legionów Street. In some cases, representatives of the authorities entered schools during classes, ordering everyone to leave the building and announcing its acquisition. Seizures also affected Polish schools, which sometimes resulted in a situation wherein the Polish school was moved into a building that belonged to Jewish one, thus forcing the latter to vacate the premises.[321] Only two Jewish schools stayed in the original buildings up until the ghetto was established. These were the aforementioned female secondary school (Jaszuńska-Zeligmanowa) and the school at 30 Narutowicza Street.[322]

Another major concern was the situation of members of the teaching faculty. As in other areas, schools were understaffed. The reason for this included mobilization, mass migrations and displacement, as well as the arrests of the intelligentsia in the autumn of 1939. When the city was occupied, the German authorities sought to separate the Aryan population from the Jews. This was manifested in banning Jewish students from attending Polish schools, and the subsequent regulation of October 18, 1939, under which all Polish

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[318] AYIVO, 241/44, Pismo Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów do nadburmistrza, p. 1–2; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 127; M. Unger, "Jewish Forced Labor in the Lodz Ghetto and its Influence on German Policy" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego...*, p. 170.

[319] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 3–4; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz I, p. 9–10; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 272.

[320] AYIVO, 241/48, Pismo nadburmistrza Litzmannstadt do Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów z 30 IV 1940, p. 1–2; *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 84; cf. Chapter 2.2.

[321] AYIVO, 241/845, School system in the ghetto, p. 8. Cf. also F. Wiernik, *Wspomnienia...*, p. 15.

[322] H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo żydowskie w Łodzi w czasie okupacji niemieckiej w latach 1939–1945*, manuscript in the collection of the Center for Jewish Research, University of Łódź, p. 1; A. Sitarek, "Szkoły w Litzmannstadt Getto" [in:] *Księga pamiątkowa XV Ogólnopolskiego Zjazdu Historyków Studentów*, vol. 2: *Z okazji 60. rocznicy powstania SKNH UŁ*, ed. J. Walicki et al., Łódź 2008, p. 273–274.

employees of Jewish institutions were dismissed.[323] According to the law, they were paid the advanced salary for September and a compensation. The order concerned 17 head teachers, 26 teachers and 40 caretakers.[324] Jewish employees were similarly dismissed from their positions in Aryan schools, but they received neither salary nor severance.[325] They were left without any means of making a living, which was particularly difficult during the first months of the occupation. Inability to practice their profession was not the only problem affecting education workers − roundups for labor, described above, often prevented teachers from reaching their place of employment.

At the time, occupation authorities were not favorably disposed towards Jewish education, essentially striving to liquidate it. Rumkowski's negotiations with the Commissioner of the city were meant to obtain permission to keep the schools. The Eldest of the Jews argued that providing education for children and youth would prevent their demoralization. If the German authorities agreed, Rumkowski declared that he was ready to take all responsibility for the behavior of young people.[326] On October 25th, the Commissioner approved Rumkowski's request and made him responsible for launching Jewish schools, authorizing him to impose a special tax for the Jewish population to cover the costs of creating the educational system.[327]

The latter powers proved to be very important because, as described above, the Community had been struggling with financial problems; the cost of launching schools was estimated at 130,427 zł, but the lack of funds forced the Community to save on virtually everything. First of all, teachers' salaries were reduced, leaving them with only the so-called "minimum of existence," which amounted to between 115 to 185 zł per week, depending on their experience. Head teachers received an additional 50 zł. As a result, the weekly budget was reduced to 45,445 zł.[328] Further savings would be provided by the introduction of the school fee in the amount of 4 zł per week collected from each student.[329]

In late October 1939,[330] Rumkowski formed the School Department[331] headed by Dr. Marcus Braude and composed of poet Icchak Kacenelson, journalist Jehoszua Ugier, Michał Brandstätter, Rabbi Gerson A. Fryderson, Eliasz Tabaksblat and Michał Gincburg.[332] The office of the department was located at 27 Franciszkańska Street. The composition of the Department changed frequently and by the end of 1939, Kacenelson, Braude and

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[323] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 4; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 7.
[324] H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 2.
[325] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 4; H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 2.
[326] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 7; H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 2.
[327] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 7–8; Eliasz Tabaksblat, later head of the School Department, cites October 17 in his study, however, it is not confirmed in the documentation − AŻIH, 301/2847, E. Tabaksblat Testimony, p. 2.
[328] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 5–6.
[329] APŁ, PSŻ 1627, Pismo Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów do kierowników szkół, p. 2.
[330] Eliasz Tabaksblat gives the date of October 18, Danuta Dąbrowska − October 26, and the calendar of the Eldest of the Jews − October 31, 1939. – D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 130; AŻIH, 301/2847, E. Tabaksblat Testimony, p. 2; *Kalendarz z getta...*, p. 202.
[331] Other names appearing in documents: Rada Szkolna (School Council), Komisja Szkolna (School Committee), Wydział Oświaty (Education Department).
[332] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 5; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 130; A. Sitarek, "Szkoły...", p. 275.

Brandstätter had left the city, and Ugier was arrested and then murdered.[333] Initially, the Department was divided into lay education with Tabaksblat in charge (appointed inspector for Jewish schools by Rumkowski on October 31st) and religious education with Fryderson and Sonnenschein. Ultimately, on May 1, 1940, Samuel Lew took over as the head of the Department, with Tabaksblat and Mojżesz Karo as his associates and Szmul Bunin and Abraham Kamieniecki as school inspectors.[334]

During one of the first meetings of the authorities of the Department, there was a serious disagreement. The majority of its members argued that there was no point of an educational system in the conditions of occupation. "Not all members of the School Council appreciated the significance of schools. There were among them those who tried to dissuade Rumkowski from that intention," Tabaksblat recorded.[335] Rumkowski, however, did not intend to give up the privileges he had just received, so he decided that schools would be opened. A study on the school system in the ghetto describes the characteristic behavior of the Eldest of the Jews:

> It seemed that the matter of opening [of schools] was over. Until the Chairman spoke. Hitting the table with his fist, he put a stop to futile debates, and in his typical manner declared briefly, "I am your curator and inspector. I shall think about the curate later. The schools will be opened immediately. I am taking them under my care, along with teachers." That settled the issue.[336]

In November, registration of high school students started in the building of the Linas Hacholim Association at 18 Południowa Street. When it was completed, subsequent facilities were gradually opened. There were 40 comprehensive schools; in addition, student could enroll at one of four schools, a secondary school for boys on Piramowicza Street and for girls at 28 Południowa Street, the industrial school, or the religious school at 50 Kilińskiego Street. Those were also an institutions for the deaf, mentally handicapped, and two kindergartens. The facilities employed 376 teachers, 271 of whom worked in public schools, 67 in secondary and industrial schools, and 38 in the religious school.[337] Gradually, vacant positions of teachers and head teachers were also filled.[338]

Aside from the educational function, schools provided additional food and medical care for all children and adolescents attending them. The person responsible for the organization of health care in schools was Dr. Stanislaw Guttenberg, before the war chief school medical officer of the City Board. He served that function until December 1939, that is until he was expelled from the city. He was replaced by Dr. Zeligson, and when she was expelled, by Dr. Holenderska-Śpiewak. In November 1939, there were four doctors on duty employed in schools, and from December until the closure of the ghetto − 55 doctors

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[333] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 131; A. Sitarek, "Szkoły...", p. 275, note 13.
[334] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 11; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 130–131.
[335] AŻIH, 301/2847, E. Tabaksblat Testimony, p. 3. Tabaksblat adduces any arguments against opening the schools.
[336] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 5. Nowhere else has this description of Rumkowski's speech been preserved.
[337] AŻIH, 301/2847, E. Tabaksblat Testimony, p. 3–4; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 131.
[338] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 8.

and one nurse.[339] Many schools opened kitchens supplied by the Provisioning Department. In November 1939, they prepared meals for nearly 8,000 students.[340] Meals were also prepared for teachers, who in addition could buy products in cooperatives organized specially for them.[341]

Table No. 3
Jewish educational facilities on the day the ghetto was sealed (May 1, 1940)

L.p.	Facility	Address
1.	Comprehensive School No. 114	70 Zgierska St.
2.	Comprehensive School No. 121	70 Zgierska St.
3.	Comprehensive School No. 122	2 Młynarska St.
4.	Comprehensive School No. 123	53 Łagiewnicka St.
5.	Comprehensive School No. 125	53 Łagiewnicka St.
6.	Comprehensive School No. 126	53 Łagiewnicka St.
7.	Comprehensive School No. 127	25 Limanowskiego St.
8.	Comprehensive School No. 128	13 Żabia St.
9.	Comprehensive School No. 130	13 Franciszkańska St.
10.	Comprehensive School No. 131	25 Młynarska St.
11.	Comprehensive School No. 132	70 Zgierska St.
12.	Comprehensive School No. 134	25 Limanowskiego St.
13.	Comprehensive School No. 135	25 Limanowskiego St.
14.	Comprehensive School No. 136	11 Urzędnicza St.
15.	Comprehensive School No. 138	13 Żabia St.
16.	Comprehensive School No. 143	25 Limanowskiego St.
17.	Comprehensive School No. 144	41 Brzezińska St.
18.	Comprehensive School No. 146	13 Franciszkańska St.
19.	Comprehensive School No. 147	15 Rybna St.
20.	Comprehensive School No. 148	11 Urzędnicza St.
21.	Comprehensive School No. 149	25 Limanowskiego St.
22.	Comprehensive School No. 149a	45 Limanowskiego St.
23.	Comprehensive School No. 150	2 Młynarska St.

[339] Ibid., p. 11.
[340] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 131.
[341] AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 14.

24.	Comprehensive School No. 151	25 Młynarska St.
25.	Comprehensive School No. 154	53 Łagiewnicka St.
26.	Comprehensive School No. 155	13 Żabia St.
27.	Comprehensive School No. 157	15 Rybna St.
28.	Comprehensive School No. 159	2 Młynarska St.
29.	Comprehensive School No. 160	15 Rybna St.
30.	Comprehensive School No. 162	41 Brzezińska St.
31.	School for the deaf	45 Limanowskiego St.
32.	Creche No. 1	45 Limanowskiego St.
33.	Creche No. 2	34 Zgierska St.
34.	Talmud Torah No. 1	26 Goplańska St.
35.	Talmud Torah No. 2	10 Jakuba St.
36.	Middle School (Gimazjum)	53 Łagiewnicka St.
37.	Secondary School (Liceum)	53 Łagiewnicka St.

Source: AYIVO, 241/845, Wykaz szkół, p. 17, 19.

At the time when the closed district was created, school buildings located within its area were secured for the purposes of the educational system − in total 17 buildings and one dormitory for teachers at 14 Dworska Street. Gradually, all Jewish schools operating in the city were moved there. Out of 31 Jewish comprehensive schools, only eight had been located in the area of the future ghetto. They also had the best conditions for teaching classes. The conditions of schools that were moved at the earliest were relatively good, as they could take buildings vacated by Polish or German schools, often with all of their equipment. The list of schools in the area of the ghetto at that time of its closure is presented in the table above.[342]

On January 24, 1940, at a meeting with Warnke, head of the police station for District V, representatives of the Community, Henryk Neftalin and Dora Fuchs, were informed about the plans for creating a Jewish district in the northern part of the city.[343] The Commissioner showed them the regulation of the chief of the police, ordering all Jews expelled from various regions of the city to be escorted north. Resettlement started that same day. One of the officials present at the meeting recorded:

> The [German] Commissioner informed us very politely that at that very moment dozens of Jewish residents were being removed from their homes and that they would need to have housing allocated in the Jewish district (as he put it). We had been summoned to organize it. He showed us on a map streets would belong to the ghetto. Terrified on one hand, and happy on the other, we took the information

[342] AŻIH, 301/2847, E. Tabaksblat Testimony, p. 4; AYIVO, 241/845, Szkolnictwo w getcie, p. 17.
[343] Cf. Chapter 1.2.

about the establishment of the ghetto in Łódź. Terrified, because the sudden and unexpected idea of establishing the ghetto evoked associations with the Middle Ages in all of us, when our brothers and sisters were thrown into dark dungeons and we, the Jews, suffered beyond measure. Happy because we were being moved from one part of the city to another and we would not have to wander from city to city, homeless and broken, like survivors of a shipwreck.[344]

Neftalin, who was present at the meeting, received information from Commissioner Warnke about the planned borders of the Jewish district and in a short time prepared a group of officials who, equipped with relevant permissions from the authorities, set off to collect information on vacant housing at the site of the planned ghetto. Before they returned to the police district headquarters, the first of the expelled began to arrive. "They came caring a small suitcase, backpack, or some other bundle," *The History of the Ghetto* notes.[345] The Community official cited above recalled how the displaced looked:

> We have seen shocking images of Jewish families – weeping, fainting, carrying backpacks. Escorted by gendarmes, they entered the police station.
>
> These people were our first brothers and sisters to be expelled from their homes in Łódź in the twentieth century [...] and pushed into the poor, narrow streets of the Bałuty district, later called the ghetto.[346]

Displaced persons were registered on site and gradually, as suitable premises were found, they were guided to the designated housing. The operation was coordinated by a specially appointed Housing Department (headed by Henryk Neftalin) that had a small office at 19 Południowa Street. In the first period, the main task of the Department was to prepare reports on vacant premises with information about facilities and movables available there. This information was supplied by a specially designated scout. Furthermore, the Registration Division carried out registration of the displaced persons and handed them allocation cards that entitled them to their designated place. In order to be allocated housing in the area of the planned district, one had to provide evidence that he or she was expelled from their home in the form of a relevant document.[347]

In December 1939, during the allocation of houses of persons expelled from a section of the Old Town,[348] members of those families appeared, demanding to be allocated those apartments along with the property that was left there. In order to check each case to avoid irregularities, the Old Housing Division was appointed. Scouts working in the field did not always manage to check buildings carefully enough, so in some cases the designated housing was completely inhabitable. Sometimes, they put down the apartment as vacant while there was actually someone living there. Certain houses were occupied without

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344 D.T., *Organizacja getta w Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma*..., p. 108.
345 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 16.
346 D.T., *Organizacja...*, p. 108–109.
347 Ibid., p. 16–17; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 179–181; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 272–274; L.G., *Relacja o wydarzeniach w Łodzi (grudzień 1939 – marzec 1940 r.)* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma*..., p. 113.
348 Cf. Chapter 1.2.

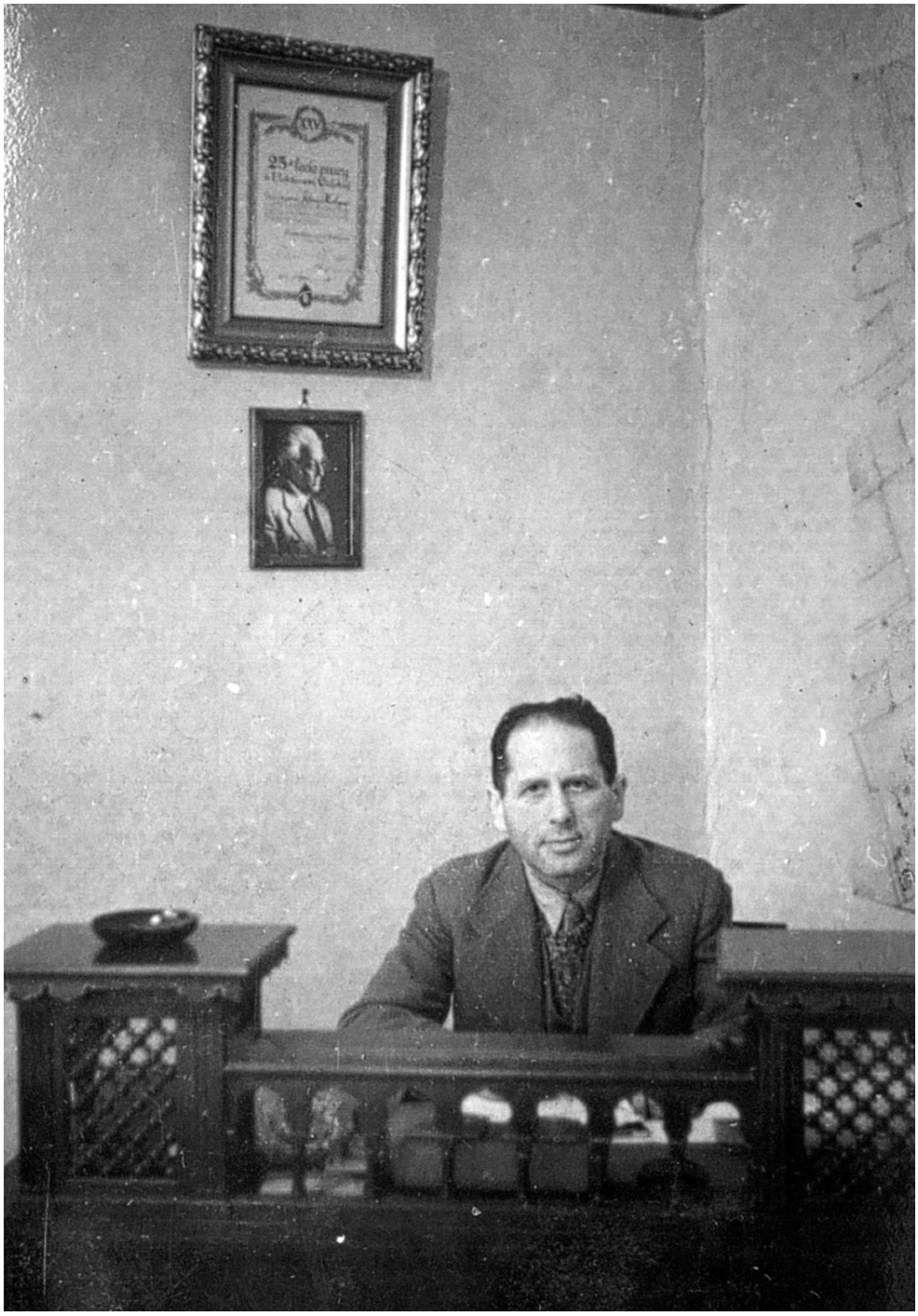
relevant permissions, but proving this was difficult for the Department's officials. Finally, there were also cases when the resettled were assigned housing directly from police authorities, bypassing the Housing Department; as a result, one apartment could be allocated to two different families. Complaints Office was established to solve such problems.[349]

In the first period, the number of the displaced was not too high, so some of them reported to the Community and registered at the Department and then moved temporarily with their relatives or friends waiting for allocation there. The Housing Department officials were involved in organizing groups for the resettlement. Sometimes, they would arrive before the police authorities and inform residents about the planned expulsion and the location of assembly points. They helped the elderly and the infirm to load their belongings onto wagons and guided groups in the transport to assembly points arranged in schools at 25 Limanowskiego, 15 Rybna, 10 Jakuba, 13 Franciszkańska and 2 Młynarska Streets. From there, the resettled were directed to their assigned housing, provided, however, that they had a certificate confirming payment of back taxes, meticulously checked by Wolf Ulinower from the Tax Department. It was also verified that they had paid the fee for the housing department, collected by Ber Częstochowski from the Division of Finance, dubbed the "quarantine, through which each applicant had to pass."[350] As mentioned above, the activities of the two men, members of the second Council of Elders, was negatively assessed, though it was acknowledged that they are highly effective in raising funds for the Community.[351]

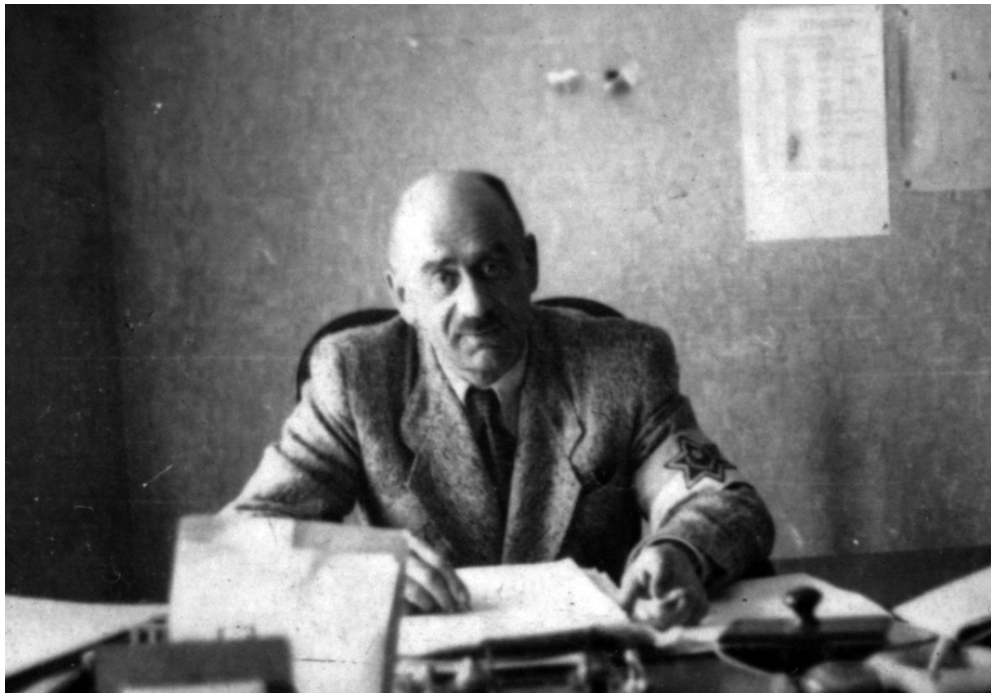
With the increasing number of people reporting to the Department, a problem emerged as to what to do with the ever-growing lines. The office at 19 Południowa Street consisted of one room on the first floor of the outbuilding, which housed more than a dozen officials and where groups of applicants came, which made the work difficult. Another issue was that the office was outside of the planned ghetto, which was not without significance. After the German authorities announced the establishment of the residential district on February 8, 1940, it was decided to move the office of the Department to the former building of the bus station at 13 Lutomierska Street. The new office opened as early as February 10th.[352]

Soon after, the structure of the Department w reorganized, since the office was flooded with increasingly larger groups of the displaced, including persons expelled from the city after the Bloody Thursday of March 7, 1940. Henryk Neftalin remained head of the Department and Herbert Grawe, prewar social activist and entrepreneur, was appointed his deputy.[353] The structure of the Department was still based on a network of divisions: Housing Control Office, headed by Eng. Haneman and responsible for finding available housing; the Intelligence, which checked whether the displaced could move in; Registration Office, headed by Eng. Jakobson, which was in charge of registration books on the basis of which housing was assigned to petitioners; and the Complaints Office, headed by J. Warthaftig. At the time of the mass influx of people, Allocation Committees were established, with offices at the buildings on the streets Rybna, Jakuba, Franciszkańska Młynarska and Limanowskiego. The housing allocation system improved considerably

[349] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 17–18.
[350] Ibid., p. 20.
[351] Ibid., p. 21; ibid., Opracowanie o działalności pierwszego Wydziału Mieszkaniowego, p. 86.
[352] Ibid., Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 21.
[353] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Grawe Herbert, p. 101; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Grawe Herbert, p. 161.



Julian Weinberg – head of the Electric Department
(State Archive in Łódź)



Leon Rozenblat – head of the Order Service
(State Archive in Łódź)

because the committees distributed keys to the premises received from German officials at the registration and disinfection point at 2 Brzezińska Street. Prior to this, the keys had been left by Poles leaving the site of the planned closed district.[354]

As the date of the closing of the ghetto approached, the number of the resettled increased and "a great hunt for houses began."[355] The Department went through a reorganization once again, the purpose of which was to shorten the procedures of housing allocation, thereby increasing efficiency. 30 scouts who checked between 500 and 600 apartments per day identify their efforts, and each day about 2,000 people were given a roof over their heads. The Registration Office was merged with the Control Office, and the materials compiled by them were sent to the Allocation Committee. It was also possible to legalize a vacant apartment found on one's own, although this led to a situation when people paid Poles or Germans to leave them the keys to the apartment they were vacating, disregarding the Housing Department.[356] In order to curb such practices, Rumkowski issued a notice warning residents against unauthorized renting of housing (Announcement No. 27 of April 25th) as the Housing Department in charge of that, and charging or paying for vacating

[354] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o działalności pierwszego Wydziału Mieszkaniowego, p. 86–87; D.T., *Organizacja...*, p. 110.
[355] Ibid., p. 109.
[356] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o działalności pierwszego Wydziału Mieszkaniowego, p. 87; D.T., *Organizacja...*, p. 110.

Policeman from the Order Service (winter 1939/1940)
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

the apartment (Announcement No. 28 of April 28th). Failure to comply with the orders was severely punished.[357]

The system of housing allocation was considered unfair by some, and officials of the Department were seen as corrupt. "*Judenrat* was supposed to provide housing for the expelled. What in fact happened is another story, steeped in Jewish tears shed by those unfortunates who were expelled. It is also the story of raging bribery and corruption of most employees of the Housing Department created in the ghetto at the time," one report noted.[358]

In the last days before the ghetto was closed, the number of displaced persons decreased significantly, which led to a reduction of the staff in the Department – out of 100 officials employed in March, only 16 remained at the beginning of May 1940. On May 3rd, Rumkowski allowed all those who still did not have housing allocated at the moment of the sealing of the ghetto to occupy one-room premises without special permission. The Department was dissolved by the Eldest of the Jews on May 6th.[359]

As people settled in the future closed area, house committees started to form spontaneously, taking over the duties of former landlords, such as cleaning of the house and

[357] AŻIH, 205/455, Rok za drutem kolczastym (Na marginesie obwieszczeń Pana Prezesa Ch. Rumkowskiego), p. 4.
[358] L.G., *Relacja...*, p. 113.
[359] Ibid.; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 133.

courtyards, maintenance work, hiring caretakers and paying the Management Department for waste disposal and chimney sweeping. Beginning March 26, 1940, the Committees were created compulsorily under the command of the Eldest of the Jews.[360]

Another entity that played an important role in the resettlement to the future ghetto was the Order Service (*Ordnungsdienst*), established by the order of the authorities. It had been announced by the president of the *Regierungsbezirk* in the above-cited circular of December 10, 1939.[361] After the regulation to establish the closed district was issued, the mayor of the city ordered Rumkowski on February 10, 1940, to organize the Order Service, which was to be used during the planned resettlement. Within two days, the order to form the *Ordnungsdienst* was received by the eldest of the Jews, and so the office was officially inaugurated on March 1st.[362]

The head of the formation was Leon Rozenblat, a lieutenant of artillery in the Polish Army before the war.[363] The Order Service was organized based on the model of the prewar State Police, including the ranks. Jewish policemen wore distinctive hats and yellow-white armbands and were armed with a wooden truncheon. The area of the future ghetto was divided initially into four districts of the Order Service, in which stations were located: Districts I at 27 Franciszkańska Street 27, Districts II at 56 Limanowskiego Street, Districts III at 61 Łagiewnicka Street, and Districts IV at 69 Marysińska Street. The order service reported directly to Rumkowski and before the ghetto was closed, consisted of several divisions. The Sanitary Control Unit, operating from the 8th or 10th of March, 1940, was headed by Samuel Berkowicz and later (April 1940) by Abram Gutman The main task of that division was supervising the sanitary conditions of property and monitoring compliance with sanitary regulations in collaboration with the Management Department. On April 1, 1940, the Sanitary Control Unit was established, also under the leadership of Berkowicz, tasked with the combat against profiteering and counterfeiting forward products as well as monitoring the compliance with regulations on the trade of foodstuffs. Both units had offices at the headquarters of the Order Service at 1 Lutomierska Street. Another formation within the service was the House Guard, operating from late 1939, which was charge of guarding wooden structures from being demolished for fuel as well as protecting shops and social kitchens from robberies and theft.[364]

The formation played an important role in the resettlement to the future ghetto. A squad of Polish men under the command of Henryk Kaufmann was assigned to the Housing Department. From February until the end of April 1940, these policemen escorted columns of the expelled and guarded the ban on leaving the closed district.[365] In a speech on the anniversary of Order Service in March 1941, Commander of the Order Service Rozenblat mentioned these tasks, "In those extraordinary times, which required significant fortitude,

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[360] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 172; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 133.
[361] *Eksterminacja Żydów...*, p. 79.
[362] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, annex to the Bulletin dated March 1,1941, p. 110; ibid., vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 21–22; ibid., Leksykon, p. 343; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 133–134.
[363] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Rozenblat Leon, p. 216–217; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Rozenblat Leon, p. 336–337.
[364] *Spis wydziałów i placówek administracji żydowskiej w getcie łódzkim* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 131; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, annex to the Bulletin dated March 1, 1941, p. 110; ibid. vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 343–344; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 134.
[365] L.G., *Relacja...*, p. 114–115; N.N., *Łódź* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 120; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 362.

we were encouraged by one thing only, namely that we were bringing relief to our brothers and sisters, deprived of a roof over their heads."[366] A different, decidedly negative image emerges from testimonies of the displaced.[367]

The decision to create a closed district resulted in a reorganization of the Management Department, beginning operations in October 1939. Prior to this, it was a small unit within the Community, but in February 1940, it received a number of new tasks. It was made in charge of the disposal of waste and feces from the site of the future ghetto as it was no longer covered by municipal services. Workers employed in the Department were responsible for urgent renovation works and repairs, for example, in buildings that were adapted for hospitals. The Department also handled construction materials, and for a time, office supplies.[368]

In charge of the Department was a council with Mosze Zażujer, a member of the second Council of Elders, as the chairman and Maurycy Goldblum and Jakub Gonik as his associates.[369] The Department had subsections, namely the Agriculture Office, founded in mid-April 1940, as well as the Administrators Office.

The Agriculture Office, located at 14 Dworska Street, was managed by a committee composed of Eng. Stanislaw Gliksman, Emil Dąb, Zygmunt Grynszpan and Zylberbogen. The division dealt with a first pertaining to all gardens and farmland in the area of the future closed district. It did not operate in full until the closure of the ghetto.[370]

The head of the Administrators Office was Pinkus, with Naum Byteński as his associates. On April 24, 1940, the mayor granted Rumkowski the powers of the Board of Trustees on all realty located in the area of the future ghetto and the right to collect rents from residents. In the same letter, the mayor made the Eldest of the Jews responsible for property maintenance and regular payment of city taxes on their use. The tax obligation and the right to charge it began on April 1st.[371] The following day, Rumkowski issued notice No. 26 calling local residents to pay the rent to him.[372]

Administrators Office employed about 100 officials responsible for the cleanliness and condition of property in 104 areas. They were also obliged to handle registration, appoint committees for the estimation of rent-related issues, determining the amount of rent due, and evaluation of exemptions from these charges. In cases where tenants were seeking grants or allowances for meals from the Social Welfare Department, administrators adjudicated on their financial situation. They were in charge of organization and supervision of house committees, mediating disputes between residents, monitoring caretakers, checking for violations such as evasion of rent, renting housing without authorization, burglary or theft. They compiled reports about the elderly, the sick or children in the property they supervised. The office kept "records of timber in the whole of ghetto," but his registry of all wooden fixtures and equipment in individual apartments and properties,[373] as well

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366 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, annex to the Bulletin dated March 1, 1941, p. 111.
367 AŻIH, 302/11–13, Leon Hurwicz Diary, p. 26–27.
368 D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 134.
369 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 51; ibid., Leksykon, p. 361; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gonik Jakub, p. 99, 100; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gonik Jakub, p. 155, 158–159.
370 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 365; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 136.
371 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 48–49.
372 AŻIH, 205/455, Rok za drutem..., p. 4; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 49.
373 It was marked whether the parts were whole (C), damaged (U) or incomplete (B).

as lists of all current limiters, vacant premises as well as active or inactive wells in the area of the district.[374] The Administrators Office had an arbitration court, which helped to solve conflicts between officials.[375]

The Management Department collaborated regularly with the Electrical (Electrotechnical) Department, established on March 11, 1940.[376] Its director was Eng. Julian Weinberg, who before the war was head of the Łódź power plant.[377] The staff of the Department was responsible for the supervision and maintenance of the electricity network in the closed district, control of and accounting for electricity consumption, as well as selling light bulbs.[378]

In March 1940, arrangements were made to organize a fire brigade in the future ghetto, initially affiliated with the Management Department. Its formation was announced in a circular of the president of *Regierungsbezirk* dated December 10, 1939, because all municipal services withdrew from the ghetto area. This made it necessary to appoint a unit that would be stationed on site and could react in the event of a fire hazard. In early April 1940,[379] Rumkowski officially established the Fire Brigade Department. Appointed as the head was Henryk Kaufmann, professional firefighter, who up until that point was responsible for escorting the resettled to the future ghetto.[380] The process of forming the unit began in March 1940 when Kaufmann, at the time employed in the Housing Department, was authorized by Henryk Neftalin to recruit future firefighters from among people who used to work in the profession before the war, trained workers of industrial plants, and those who had military training and were licensed to drive. Thus, the office of the Fire Brigade was located in the barracks of the former bus station, near the housing department at 13 Lutomierska Street.[381] What proved to be a particular difficulty was assembling appropriate equipment, and until the ghetto was sealed, only a small number of hand pumps were available.[382]

The residents were not particularly fond of the firefighters, and a study on the fire brigade compiled by the ghetto archivists reports, "Legends and jokes about the firefighters that until recently have been circulating in the ghetto point to the attitude of people to that institution, which was indifferent at best."[383] At the same time, Kaufmann started recruiting chimney sweepers, which was not an easy task. As the author of the study cited above noted, "While there were trained firefighters among the Jews, there were no Jewish

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[374] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 50; ibid., Opracowanie o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 108–109; D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 135.

[375] AYV, O.34/637, entry: Byteński N., unpaginated; AYIVO 881, entry: Byteński N., unpaginated.

[376] March 1, 1940 is also cited – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Weinberg Julian, p. 282.

[377] Ibid.; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Weinberg Julian, p. 436; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 357; B. Kowalska-Wajnkaim, *100 lat łódzkiej energetyki*, Łódź 2007, p. 75, 90.

[378] D. Dąbrowska, "Administracja...", p. 135.

[379] Different dates are cited in document: April 9, 10 and 15, 1940 – APŁ, PSŻ 511, Protokół lustracji, p. 139; ibid., PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 139; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 347.

[380] APŁ, PSŻ 1097, Straż i kominiarze Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów, p. 3; ibid., PSŻ 511, Protokół lustracji, p. 139; ibid., PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 139; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Straż i kominiarze, p. 78.

[381] APŁ, PSŻ 511, Protokół lustracji, p. 139.

[382] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Straż i kominiarze, p. 79.

[383] Ibid., p. 78.

sweepers in Poland and they had to be trained from scratch."[384] However, the formation was established after the closure of the ghetto.[385]

After the decision to create a ghetto in Łódź was announced, the German post stopped delivering letters and packages to Jewish addressees, sending them to the office of the Eldest of the Jews at 19 Południowa Street. Rumkowski authorized David Warszawski, member of the Council of Elders, to segregate the incoming mail, thus making it possible for the addressees to collect it. They also organized a group of paid carriers who distributed letters for a small fee. On March 15, 1940, the unit moved to the future area of the ghetto and set up its office at 4/6 Kościelny Square. On April 1st, Herbert Grawe was appointed head of the Post Office, and Mojżesz Gumner was one of the employees.[386] By the end of April 1940, another branch of the Post Office was established at 1 Rybna Street, but it was not expanded until the closure of the ghetto.[387]

The Rabbinic Office, operating continuously from the outbreak of the war, was formally subject to the Eldest of the Jews. It served as a link between the Community and the rabbinate, the latter of which was a strictly religious institution. Rabbis appointed by the Community held office at 4/6 Miodowa Street, adjudicating on religious matters and participated in events required by the ritual, such as weddings, divorces and funerals. Members of the rabbinate included Eliasz Józef Fajner, the Rabbi of the Polish Army before the war, and the rabbis Abram Sylman, Dawid Łaski, Kiwa Niger, Hersz Fiszow, Aron Bornstein, Luzer Lipszyc, Eliasz Fleiszhaker, Zelig Rozenstein, Jochenen Lipszyc, Mendel Rozenmutter, Mordka Dąb, Mojżesz Weiss, Salomon Jakubowicz, Symcha Uberbaum and Alter Chemia. They were paid from the budget of the Community for the work.[388]

The majority of Jews in Łódź held the rabbis in high regard, so the Community used them to alleviate the mood of the population. When the deportations from Łódź began in winter 1939, Rumkowski sent out rabbis who were tasked with "telling people the rumored cleansing was untrue and to emphasize the negative consequences of mass panic caused by fleeing the city."[389] One of the aforementioned rabbis was Szlomo Trajstman, who, upon the announcement that the resettlement operation was discontinued, "was applauded and carried on people's shoulders."[390]

Representatives of the occupation and authorities, unfamiliar with the situation, sometimes treated the rabbinate as the representation of the Łódź Jews, which is evidenced, for example, by letters addressed to them. One account mentions that the German authorities, when considering the project of the ghetto, first approached Rabbi Trajstman, who was said to have accepted the idea:

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[384] Ibid., p. 79.
[385] APŁ, PSŻ 511, Protokół lustracji, p. 139; ibid., PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 139.
[386] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Grawe Herbert, p. 101, 102; ibid., entry: Gumener Mojżesz, p. 107; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Grawe Herbert, p. 160, 161; ibid., entry: Gumener Mojżesz, p. 165.
[387] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 364; *Poczta w łódzkim getcie 1940–1944*, exhibition catalogue, Łódź 2004, p. 6.
[388] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 52; ibid., PSŻ 1, Lista członków Rady Starszych, p. 80; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 310–311.
[389] N.N., *W okupowanej Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 47.
[390] L.G., *Relacja o wydarzeniach w Łodzi (grudzień 1939 – marzec 1940 r.)* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 113.

> When the idea of its [the ghetto's – AS] creation first appeared, the authorities summoned Rabbi Trajstman, who was still in Łódź, and proposed to him to accept and sign one of two solutions: either all Jews would be sent from Łódź, or are ghetto will be created for them. Rabbi Trajstman told them, "you can do anything you want with us Jews. You can send us away, you can close us in the ghetto, you do not need our approval. I cannot sign the death sentence for the Łódź Jews." Then, he went to the Community and recounted what had just happened. Obviously, Rumkowski was present. Upon hearing the rabbis report, Rumkowski jumped and said, "we must not do that, we must seek compromise with the authorities. We must accept the ghetto so that the Jews would not be sent away. This is the best solution." Then he went to the authorities and signed the project of the ghetto.[391]

Nevertheless, the account seems unreliable, as the German authorities did not give anyone the right to choose what the fate of the Jews of Łódź would be. Until the closure of the ghetto, the Rabbinic Office operated as before the war.

[391] It is difficult to assess the reliability of the account, the author is, however, decidedly unsympathetic towards Rumkowski.

2

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE ŁÓDŹ GHETTO

1. Supervision over the Administration of the Jewish Ghetto in Łódź – the Board of the Ghetto (*Gettoverwaltung*) and Police Institutions

After German troops occupied the city, Łódź was taken over by the military administration headed by Harry von Craushaar, who reported to the command of the German 8th Army. On September 16, 1939, he created the office of the city commissioner and appointed Albert Leister, prewar mayor of Bergzabern in the Rhineland. Leister served until the end of November 1939 when he was replaced by Franz Schiffer, former functionary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Reich and landrat of Sulechów county in Prussia. His deputy was Karl Marder, prewar mayor of Opole.[1] The administrative structures inherited from the Polish Republic were gradually adjusted to the Nazi model. First, the ethnic composition of the administrative staff changed after all Jews and the majority of Poles were removed from its ranks; then, the German language was introduced in the offices. In early November, Łódź was incorporated into the Third Reich and became part of the Kalisz *Regierungsbezirk*. When on January 1, 1940 German municipal law was adopted, the former commissioner took the position of mayor of the city. Łódź became an independent urban county.[2] This moment concluded the first period of Germanization of the administrative structures of the city.

Civil Authorities – German Board of the Ghetto (*Gettoverwaltung*)

At the beginning of 1940, new units of the City Board were established based on the German model. The basis of the structure became boards (*Verwaltungen*), which were not, however, independent units of administration and only served as elements of the new internal organizational order.[3] As part of a series of new departments of the occupation City Board, the unit temporarily put in charge of economic issues related to the Jewish population was the Department of Provisioning and Economy (*Ernährungs- und*

[1] M. Cygański, *Z dziejów okupacji hitlerowskiej w Łodzi*, Łódź 1965, p. 122; P. Klein, *Die „Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt" 1940 bis 1944. Eine Dienststelle im Spannungsfeld von Kommunalbürokratie und staatlicher Verfolgungspolitik*, Hamburg 2009, p. 33–34.

[2] J. Wasiak, *Organizacja okupacyjnego Zarządu Miejskiego w Łodzi (1939–1945)*, *Rocznik Łódzki*, 1981, vol. 30, p. 70.

[3] T. Bojanowski, *Łódź pod okupacją niemiecką w latach II wojny światowej (1939–1945)*, Łódź 1992, p. 73.

Wirtschaftsamt), headed by Johannes Moldenhauer. Hermann Göring's regulation of March 23, 1940, ordering the deportations to be stopped made it clear that "cleansing" Łódź of Jews was impossible. At the beginning of April 1940, Arthur Greiser tried to intervene; however, in the face of express opposition from Hans Frank, he failed to persuade the authorities in Berlin to change their decision.[4] Therefore, it became necessary to establish a new institution responsible for the management of the emerging closed district.

German authorities were assigned specific competencies regarding the ghetto during a meeting held on April 27, 1940, attended by *Regierungspräsident*, the mayor, the president of the police and representatives of the Central Office of the Trust and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It was decided then that the president of the police would be responsible for maintaining peace and order while the city board would be in charge of supervising the ghetto and regulating inner and economic life.[5]Therefore, on April 29, 1914, even before the ghetto borders were sealed, the mayor of Litzmannstadt urgently ordered Moldenhauer to establish a branch of the department that would be responsible for all matters related to the newly established ghetto. The unit was to be called *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto* (EWG).[6] It had its own budget independent from the city and the specially dedicated bank account number 700 in the Municipal Savings Fund, with the deposit of 20,000 RM. Head of the unit was Moldenhauer, and his deputy, Aleksander Palfinger, was in charge of the purchase and supply of food for the Jews imprisoned in the ghetto. The unit was responsible for supplying the closed district with food, fuel and medicine, as well as handling all financial settlements with the city. These competences were gradually expanded, corresponding to the tasks that the German authorities set for Łódź Jews. Expenses incurred by *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto* were covered from a special tax of 15% on all market prices, levied on all goods that reached the ghetto.[7]

On May 5, 1940, Hans Biebow, a merchant from Bremen, was appointed head of the unit. He had been recommended to Maher Karel for the position by the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in occupied Łódź.[8] Upon his arrival in the city, Biebow had already accumulated considerable experience running a business. He had started out as an insurance agent and official in companies trading cereals, and from the mid-1920s he had his own trading and profit company. Soon before the war broke out, his company Julius Biebow, Streithorst & Co. had a monthly turnover in the amount of about 1 million RM and employed 250 people.[9] He was a member of the NSDAP from 1938 and, by his own admission, his decision to accept the new office in Łódź was motivated ideologically, not politically.[10]

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4 *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 3: *Getto łódzkie*, part 1, ed. A. Eisenbach, Warszawa–Łódź–Kraków 1946, p. 167–169; A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów*, Warszawa 1961, p. 163.

5 *Dokumenty i materiały*..., vol. 3, part 1, p. 74.

6 Ibid., p. 249; P. Klein, *Die Gettoverwaltung*..., p. 84–86.

7 Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (henceforth: APŁ), Prezes Rejencji Łódzkiej (henceforth: PRŁ) 428, Sprawozdanie, p. 1–4; ibid., Gettoverwaltung (henceforth: GV) 115, p. 448–450; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi w Łodzi pod niemiecką okupacją 1939–1945,* Londyn 1988, p. 222–223.

8 Ibid., p. 222, 230; J. Pietrzak, "Hans Biebow – portret oprawcy" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego 1940–1944*, ed. P. Samuś, W. Puś, Łódź 2006, p. 186.

9 *Dokumenty i materiały*..., p. 252; J. Pietrzak, "Hans Biebow...", p. 186; P. Klein, *Die Gettoverwaltung*..., p. 86–87.

10 Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (henceforth: AIPN), Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce (henceforth: GK) 261/4, Proces Hansa Biebowa, p. 54; J. Lewiński, *Proces Hansa Biebowa*, Warszawa 1999, p. 39; J. Pietrzak, "Hans Biebow...", p. 186.

Hans Biebow – head of the Ghetto Board (*Gettoverwaltung*)
(Institute of National Remembrance)

Biebow could choose his closest associates on his own, which facilitated the organization of the office and was important since his collaboration with Alexander Palfinger was not going smoothly. In the fall of 1940, in a letter sent to mayor Marder concerning the plans for reorganization of the board of the ghetto, he communicated that "dissonances that appear almost daily are an obstacle, preventing me from carrying out my tasks."[11] Even before the end of the year, on October 29, 1940, the *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto* was promoted to the rank of an independent department of the city board, named Ghetto Board (*Gettoverwaltung*). At the time, Biebow employed his close associates, whom he had known before the war – Friedrich Wilhelm Ribbe, his colleague of over ten years, who was appointed Biebow's deputy; Josef Hämmerle, who was the financial director of the newly established unit; and Wilhelm Quay, appointed head of the Gettoverwaltung office.[12] The main office of the Board was located outside the closed district at 11 Cegielniana Street (156 Moltkestrasse).

Directly reporting to Biebow was the Jewish administration established in the ghetto, with Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski at the helm – the Board of the Ghetto was the only intermediary between the Jewish administration and the city authorities. The unit had its office at Bałucki Market where the offices of the Community were also operating – the so-called Central Secretariat of the Eldest of the Jews as well as the Goods Receiving Point and the disinfection station. As a result, Bałucki Marketsquare became the most

[11] AIPN, GK 261/4, Proces Hansa Biebowa, p. 41–42.
[12] Ibid.; *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 256–257.

important place in the ghetto, although in fact it was separated from the closed district with barbed wire, forming an exterritorial area. There were two gates leading inside: the first one facing Zgierska Street, which led out into the city and which could only be crossed with a special pass, and the other one from Łagiewnicka Street, leading to the ghetto, available only to persons employed in offices at Bałucki Market and employees of the administration of the Eldest of the Jews wearing bands on their left arm. "As a result of the location of both the most important offices – the Gettoverwaltung and the Central Secretariat of the Jewish administration – the name 'Bałucki Market' became a symbolic description of the seat of the government, such as Wilhelmstrasse or Downing Street," one of the archivists of the ghetto wrote.[13]

New competences of the office headed by Biebow were confirmed at a session of the City Board, held on May 27, 1940. Aside from representatives of city authorities – Marder, Moldenhauer and Biebow – it was attended by officials from the Main Trustee Office for the East (*Haupttreuhandstelle Ost*). During the meeting, the financial plan of the ghetto was established, making Biebow's unit the sole administrator of funds. The cost of all food supplies for the ghetto would be covered from the EWG account – where all cash deposits made by Rumkowski were registered – along with the earnings of Jewish craftsmen employed in workshops in the ghetto and workers outside of it. If that proved insufficient, which, according to Marder's estimates, would happen as early as mid-July 1940, the discrepancy was to be covered from the sale of goods confiscated from the Łódź Jews and stored at the Goods Trading Company (*Litzmannstädter Warenhandelsgesellschaft*). During the same meeting, the mayor recommended that all correspondence concerning the ghetto pass through Biebow, thus granting the latter the exclusive right to represent the city when dealing with the ghetto.[14]

The Łódź ghetto was not the only field of activity for the ambitious official of Brahman. The closed district, gradually formed in the area of the Łódź *Regierungsbezirk*, quickly found themselves under his supervision.[15] Biebow was interested in exploiting Jewish labor, obtaining orders from German companies and controlling their implementation. In conjunction with his involvement in requisitioning Jewish property, he hoped to make a considerable profit.

Police Forces – Protection Police (Schutzpolizei) and Criminal Police (Kripo)

The ghetto was supervised by civil authorities with the mayor of the city at the helm. However, he did not have police authority over the closed district. The latter was held, according to the competences, by the Protection Police (*Schutzpolizei* – Schupo), Criminal Police (*Kriminalpolizei* – Kripo) and the Secret State Police (*Geheime Staatspolizei* – Gestapo). Even the establishment of the ghetto, as has been mentioned earlier, was carried out based on a decision of *Polizeipräsident* Johannes Schäfer; all crucial documents – that is, the regulation on establishment of the closed residential district for the Jews

[13] Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Warszawie (henceforth: AŻIH), 205/349, entry: Baluter Ring, p. 28–30.

[14] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 223–224.

[15] Cf. A. Sitarek, "Rola niemieckiego Zarządu Getta w Łodzi w eksterminacji gett prowincjonalnych w Kraju Warty" [in:] *Zagłada Żydów na polskiej prowincji*, eds. A. Sitarek, M. Trębacz, E. Wiatr, Łódź 2012, p. 295–307.

dated February 8, 1940 – executive regulations for that regulation, as well as the plan of resettlement to the ghetto, were issued by *Polizeipräsident*. Execution of the regulation, coordinated by Brunon Flies from the department for Jewish issues of the staff of the *Polizeipräsident*, was the task of the police and the SS in Łódź.[16]

The responsibilities of *Polizeipräsident* Schäfer and his deputy Karl Albert included isolating the ghetto from the rest of the city, maintaining order and looting the property of imprisoned Jews. The task of guarding the ghetto was carried out by the Schupo commander and other units that reported to him, such as the command of the northern section, police districts organized in the ghetto and in its vicinity, the Protection Battalion, as well as the Jewish Order Service.[17]

The commander of the Protection Police was initially Walter Keuck, later replaced by Richard Dressler. The formation had a subsection (district unit – north) with Röchner at the helm. Both units had special cells for Jewish issues, marked with the symbol "1a(J)", directed by Ottomar Roese (Schupo Command) and Küntzel (district unit – north).[18] Near Bałucki Market at the junction of Limanowskiego and Zgierska Streets, there was the station of the 6th Schupo District with Schultz in command, in charge of the area of the closed district. The District commander had special privileges in relation to the Eldest of the Jews, the Order Service and other bodies of the Jewish administration. He was also in charge of German police sentries guarding the borders of the ghetto − the head of the District received reports on the use of weapons by police officers. There was another Schupo station at Bałucki Market with Sargent Jäger as the commanding officer, who received transports of Jews sent to the ghetto and searched the newly arrived in collaboration with Gestapo officers.[19]

Ghetto borders were guarded by police officers from the 101st Police Battalion of Hamburg[20] and more than 240 officers from the Auxiliary Police (*Hilfspolizei* – HiPo). Later, the 101st Battalion was replaced by the Polizei Reserve Batallion Getto in the strength of about 600 officers stationed in five sentries around the borders of the ghetto.[21] If necessary, there were also SS Totenkopfverbände troops available and stationed in Łódź as well as mounted police squadron stationed in the north of Łódź in the area of Julianów on Stefana Streets, as well as police officers of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th, and 24th Police Districts, whose operational area was adjacent to the borders of the ghetto.[22]

In 1942, Karl Albert participated in talks of organizing the deportation of Jews from the ghetto to the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner. On his orders, the aforementioned Polizei Reserve Batallion was dispatched to Łódź during the deportations in early

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[16] A. Galiński, "Policja w getcie" [in:] *Getto w Łodzi 1940–1944. Materiały z sesji naukowej – 9 VIII 1984*, eds. J. Fijałek, A. Galiński, Łódź 1988, p. 31.

[17] Ibid., p. 32; *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 81–82, 86–87.

[18] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 203–204.

[19] A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 32–35.

[20] Ch.R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York 1992, p. 41–42. The Police Battalion 101 stationed in Łódź from 28 November 1940 until 7 April 1941.

[21] A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 36. One police company stationed in each guardhouse, they were located on Drewnowska Street and Zachodnia Street (Guardhouse 1), on the corner of Kilińskiego Street and Smugowa Street (Guardhouse 2), Sporna Street and Boya-Żeleńskiego Street (Guardhouse 3), Inflancka Street and Zagajnikowa Street (Guardhouse 4), Okopowa Street and Franciszkańska Street (Guardhouse 5).

[22] Ibid., p. 39.

Schutzpolizei guard
(Institute of National Remembrance)

February 1942. In October 1942, after the period of expulsions had ended, the number of stationing officers was reduced. Given the reduction of the number of police patrols, the Jewish Order Service was gradually increasingly engaged in guarding the ghetto.[23]

After May 19, 1940, a station of the Criminal Police, or Kripo, was established in the ghetto, called *Sonderkommando* and marked with the symbol "K II/5 – Getto" and later renamed *Kriminalkommisariat – Getto*. It was located in the former parish building at 8 Kościelna Street, known as "the red house."[24] Its commander was Bruno Obersteiner who was later replaced by Wilhelm Neumann; Ludwig Sievers was his deputy (until 1941). Principal members of the staff were Alfons Sutter, formerly a manufacturer of stockings from Aleksandrów who spoke Yiddish, and Erich Marschner from Łódź, former activist of Volksverband.[25] The task of the Kripo was to combat smuggling and regular crime in ghetto. Gradually, the main activity of the criminal police became finding and confiscating property ghetto inhabitants. For this purpose, an extensive network of informers and agents was used. Their number is difficult to establish, however, their involvement increased the efficacy of confiscations. One of the witnesses mentioned, "There were many informers [...], as the fear of being sent away from the ghetto and dying of starvation often brought people to such measures, which the Hitlerite authorities

[23] M. Cygański, *Policja kryminalna i porządkowa III Rzeszy w Łodzi i rejencji łódzkiej (1939–1945)*, *Rocznik Łódzki*, 1972, vol. 16, p. 52–53.
[24] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 314; M. Cygański, *Policja kryminalna...*, p. 33.
[25] M. Cygański, *Policja kryminalna...*, p. 36–37.

Gestapo post on the corner of Zgierska St. and Limanowskiego St.
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

exploited."[26] Information about hidden property was very often taken by force under torture; some of the interrogated people died during questioning, in which case a heart attack was given as the cause of death.[27] Beginning in 1943 when Kripo was combined with the security police, their scope of competence expanded, covering activities thus far reserved for the Gestapo.[28]

Gestapo

The main role in supervising the ghetto was played by the Gestapo. The headquarters of this police force responsible for the closed district was located in the station of the 6th Districts at the junction of Limanowskiego and Zgierska Streets. The staff was composed of officers from the Jewish division of the Łódź Gestapo. The head of the division,

[26] A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 40–41.
[27] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, p. 314.
[28] In January 1945, on the order of the head of the Kripo station, the remaining inhabitants of the ghetto were to be executed after the liquidation. Eventually, the Red Army's quick occupation of the city thwarted the Germans' plans. Cf. J. Poznański, *Dziennik z łódzkiego getta*, Warszawa 2002, p. 263–264.

marked with the symbol "II B 4" and later "IV 4b" was Günter Fuchs, and later Gerhard Müller. The deputies were Albert Richter and Franz Walden, respectively.[29]

The whole purpose of the unit was to facilitate the implementation of the principle objective, namely the "final solution of the Jewish question." This required involvement in three areas: securing peace and order in the closed district, supervision of the resettlement of people into the ghetto, and murdering people imprisoned in the ghetto in the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner and later in the Auschwitz- Birkenau camp.[30]

In carrying out their tasks, the Gestapo collaborated with the Jewish Order Service, in particular with the Special Department of the Order Service (*Sonderkommando, Sonderabteilung*) which was established on the orders of the Gestapo on July 1, 1940.[31] The secret police had an extensive network of agents in the ghetto, some of whom were high-ranking officials in the structure of the Jewish administration. Gestapo agents were, for example, Dawid Gertler and Marek Kligier – heads of the Sonderkommando.[32] One of the methods of carrying out their policy was terror aimed against residents of the closed district – public executions, arrests, and ruthlessness during deportations.[33]

Officers of the Gestapo were also involved in looting Jewish property, although this was not a priority for them.[34] The Gestapo collaborated in that regard with civilian authorities headed by Biebow, who wanted to take full control over captured property. At that point, the interests of Gettoverwaltung coincided with the interests of the Gestapo. Biebow wanted to limit the involvement of Kripo in the confiscations and replace it with the Jewish administration. This was meant to facilitate forcing ghetto inhabitants to give up remnants of their property through the structures organized by Rumkowski, such as the Bank of Purchase and the Sonderkommando. In addition, the Gestapo was interested in eliminating all signs of disturbance from the ghetto and turning the anger of the population away from the occupants and towards Rumkowski. If the Kripo was out of the picture, the Gestapo would have access to profits from looting, which seems to be the main reason for clashes between the two police formations.[35]

The conflict reached the supreme authorities of the Regierungsbezirk in the summer of 1940, along with the memorandum prepared by Richter for the meeting at the Re-

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[29] M. Cygański, *Gestapo w Łodzi*, Łódź 1974, p. 18–19; A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 42–43.

[30] M. Cygański, *Gestapo...*, p. 37; A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 43.

[31] Cf. Chapter 2.2.

[32] AIPN Ld, Pf 3/61, Sprawa ewidencyjno poszukiwawcza: Gertler Dawid, unpaginated; ibid., GK 164/60, Akta w sprawie: Gerler Dawid, *passim*; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 299, 310; M. Cygański, *Gestapo...*, p. 36.

[33] Günter Fuchs himself allegedly shoot dozens of people in such operations. – cf. G. Zorn, *Nach Ostland geht unser Ritt*, Berlin 1980, p. 162; A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 44. Albert Richter, deputy director of the Gestapo in the ghetto, took part in the selections conducted during the so-called General Curfew in September 1942, which was described by one of the chroniclers of the ghetto, "We are being examined by Untersturmführer SS Richter is. We have to march in fron of him at a slow pace. He carefully watches each man one by one and touches them. Anyone who feels his hand on his shoulder knows that everything is fine. But he grabs his victims with a sure grip and pulls them out of the line like a trembling rabbit from its cage. Without a word, with one single gesture of the hand, he decides human fate" – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 223–224.

[34] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 300; A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 45. The Gestapo's capacity in that regard was greatly limited by the competence of the Gettoverwaltung, which gradually became the only institution entitled to manage the confiscated property – cf. A. Sitarek, "Rola...", p. 302–304. More about looting by officers of the German police – J. Adamska, "Grabież mienia mieszkańców getta przez funkcjonariuszy hitlerowskich" [in:] *Getto w Łodzi...*, p. 81–97.

[35] Such thesis was put forward by Henryk Rubin – I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 233–237.

gierungsbezirkpräsident on August 28, 1940. In his letter, he included information that Kripo officers were no longer combating smuggling in the ghetto but took to confiscating goods, the majority of which they took out of the closed district without notifying the civilian administration at Bałucki Market. Richter pointed out that such conduct violated the order of the *Polizeipräsident* of May 10, 1940, which had defined competences of individual police formations.[36] Aside from this, the staff of the criminal police acted against Biebow's instructions, which had clearly stated that the confiscated property belonged to the civilian authorities that supplied food to the ghetto. The author of the memorandum was also concerned that textile goods taken away from the closed district were not disinfected, which was a violation of sanitary regulations and posed a risk of the spread of infectious diseases in the city. He also cited evidence that the Kripo issued false passes, allowing people to take away valuables from the ghetto on the orders of the criminal police. He received this information from a Pole captured on the 24th of August who had nine passes issued for Jewish surnames and confirmed that he had been acting on Kripo orders for some time. Richter believed that officers of the criminal police were sabotaging the Gestapo unit under his command, undermining his collaboration with the Jewish administration. He also demanded that all seized goods be immediately returned and that in the future, the Kripo carry out all such matters in consultation with the civilian authorities.[37]

Richter's intervention was not particularly successful; the deputy of the *Regierungsbezirkpräsident*, Walter Moser, in an ordinance dated September 2, 1940, ordered that all goods and valuables requisitioned in the ghetto be sent to warehouses at Bałucki Market – that is, to the German civilian authorities with Biebow at the helm. All objects, with the exception of textile products, were to be logged and sold via the *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto*, and textile goods, after disinfection, were to be sold to *Litzmanstädter Warenhandelsgesellschaft* at prewar prices.[38]

In spite of the intervention of the *Regierungsbezirk* authorities, officers of the Criminal Police continued to confiscate property of significant value. The long dispute ended with an agreement of October 23, 1940, signed by Biebow and the head of the Kripo in Litzmannstadt, Walter Zirpins. Based on the agreement, all items confiscated in the ghetto were to be given to the Gettoverwaltung, however Kripo retained the exclusive right to carry out requisitions. The Kripo representatives could participate in conferences of civilian authorities with the Eldest of the Jews concerning issues that were of interest. The agreement was confirmed on February 17, 1941, in a contract signed between the criminal police and the Board of the Ghetto concerning the transfer of valuables, clothes and goods looted by the Kripo to the Gettoverwaltung.[39] From that moment, the agreement was implemented in practice which, however, did not change the policy pursued by Criminal Police officers in relation to the population of the ghetto.

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[36] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 83–84.

[37] Ibid., p. 97–98.

[38] Ibid., p. 99. According to Rubin, Moser secured also his own business, because as the head of the General Trustee's Office in the Regierungsbezirk he secured a share in the profits for the Litzmannstädter Warenhandelsgesellschaft, which he controlled – I. (H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 237.

[39] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 100–101; M. Cygański, *Policja kryminalna...*, p. 37.

2. Expansion of the Administrative Apparatus after the Closure of the Ghetto (until the End of 1940)

Having accepted the position of the Eldest of the Jews, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski started the process of expanding administrative structures of the Community. On one hand, he restructured the existing bodies and based on these, established new cells, while on the other hand, he created a number of completely new institutions, the existence of which was forced by the situation of Łódź Jews.

The main task of the administration until the end of April 1940 was the organization of the resettlement of the Jewish population from the city into the future closed district. In spite of many difficulties, the task was carried out according to the demands of the authorities. The closure of the ghetto borders meant a number of new challenges for Rumkowski and the entire administrative apparatus, the implementation of which was commenced immediately after the ghetto was separated from the rest of the city. As a result of the isolation of the ghetto, further changes in the network of institutions of the Jewish administration were undertaken.

Closure of the ghetto – collage made by Statistical Department
(State Archive in Łódź)

From the first months of the closed district until the end of 1940, the principal structure of the administrative apparatus in the ghetto was formed, which survived (albeit with many modifications) until the liquidation of the ghetto in 1944. The end of 1940 also marked the moment when local German authorities had to accept the fact that the Jews in the ghetto would not be deported out of Litzmannstadt, and so the ghetto would continue to exist. This resulted in the transformation of the German administration supervising the closed district – instead of the unit of the *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle* Getto, an independent department was formed within the City Board responsible for these affairs, named the Board of the Ghetto (*Gettoverwaltung*). This affected a number of areas of life in the ghetto itself, such as provisioning and employment. This, in turn, led to a change in the shape and function of some of the institutions operating in the ghetto.[40]

According to a letter from the mayor of the city to Rumkowski dated April 30, 1940, from that day onwards, no one was allowed to leave the area of the ghetto – in accordance with the regulation of the *Polizeipräsident* dated April 8th that year, the borders of the district were sealed. The same document authorized Rumkowski to "carry out all activities required to maintain an organized community life in the Jewish district, as well as do anything else that it might require."[41] The Eldest of the Jews was responsible for guaranteeing that economic issues would be regulated within the ghetto, providing food and work for the population imprisoned in the ghetto, as well as establishing a system of health service. All Jewish property, aside from what was necessary for their survival, was to be logged and secured by the Jewish administration. Moreover, the mayor ordered Rumkowski to organize registration points responsible for keeping records of the ghetto population, which should contain information about their religious affiliation and national identity. In order to carry out these tasks, Rumkowski was authorized "to undertake all measures necessary" and to issue ordinances that would be executed through the Order Service that reported to him. He was the only person authorized to communicate with the German authorities. All "activities of general nature" required written (or spoken, but only in unique situations) consent of the mayor. Such a significant dependence on civilian authorities did not affect the privileges of police authorities, which the mayor emphasized.[42] Characteristically, the letter was addressed to Rumkowski and made no mention about the potential competences of the Council of the Elders – from the point of view of occupation authorities, the Eldest of the Jews played the main role, while the Council of the Eldest was practically of no significance.[43]

On the same day, Rumkowski convened a meeting in the office of the Community Kościelny Square with his closest associates, which was also attended by members of the Council of the Elders including Mosze Zażujer, Dr. Leon Szykier, Dr. Dawid Helman, Dawid Warszawski, Pinkus Gerszowski, Henryk Neftalin, Stanisław Jakobson, Maurycy Goldblum, Ruwen Kenigsberg, Uszer Białodworski, Wolf Zbar and Beniamin Perlsztajn. The Eldest of the Jews presented his plan for the organization and economy of the ghetto.

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[40] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje administracji żydowskiej w getcie łódzkim (maj – grudzień1940)*, part 1, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1964, no. 51, p. 41.

[41] *Dokumenty i materiały*..., vol. 3, part 1, p. 74–75.

[42] Ibid.; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, p. 52–53. Cf. Chapter 2.1.

[43] Also noted by A. Löw, *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto. Warunki życia i sposoby przetrwania*, Łódź 2012, p. 83–84.

Citing his motto, "I shall be an honest guardian of the ghetto,"[44] he gave a speech. One of the participants[45] recorded a fragment:

> Starting today, the ghetto is going to be sealed. We will be imprisoned inside, without any income and without any opportunity to earn a living. When a representative of the authorities asked me how I imagined solving the problem of ensuring existence for so many thousands of ghetto residents, I responded, "Our currency is our work." We have to use [our] capacity for labor in order to ensure the livelihood for as many people as we can. We should not harbor any illusions and count on the speedy and of war, quite the opposite; we have to do everything we can to provide work for us many Jews as we can. In order to execute this plan, we have to introduce, even on a miniature scale, a number of new offices and forms of governance, like any state would. Do not laugh at me for saying this but we will start with establishing the most important ministries: labor, health, provisioning, finances and economy. As for others, life will show us in the coming days what officers are going to be needed. We have our own police, our own administration and post office, we shall have our own currency.[46]

Emerging from Rumkowski's cited speech is the main line of his policy: the principal place is given to organizing Jewish labor which will provide sustenance for the ghetto.[47] This was the core element around which the Eldest of the Jews planned to create a network of offices organizing the life in the closed district.

In this speech, which "made an enormous impression on those present," a discussion started. Several of those present declared that they would be willing to cooperate in establishing the administrative apparatus. On behalf of the Community officials, Zygmunt Reingold made such a declaration. After the meeting, Rumkowski departed into his office, asking everyone to remain in the room. Next, he summoned them one by one, appointing each person to his specific position or transferring him from one unit to another. According to the report, when appointing people, Rumkowski "used the principle of dualism of superior authorities." This meant that in each institution, aside from the head, the patron was appointed, member of the Council of Elders Rumkowski himself, who had the right of vote on crucial issues.[48] In practice, the principle increased the control and influence of the Eldest of the Jews over the work of each administrative institution.

Based on the decisions taken during the meeting, the positions in crucial institutions were given as follows: at the Provisioning Department − the current head, Mendel Szczęśliwy; and Salamon Ser who took over as the head of the Main Cashier − a newly established institution reporting to the Central Secretariat − was responsible for financial issues of the ghetto. In both the above-mentioned institutions, Rumkowski himself was

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[44] *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego na rok 1942* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Losy Żydów łódzkich (1939–1942)*, ed. M. Polit, Warszawa 2013, p. 189.

[45] It was most likely Henryk Neftalin. The account was recorded in German.

[46] APŁ, PSŻ 1093, [Ghetto history], p. 337–338; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 81.

[47] Cf. Chapter 2.3.

[48] Ghetto Fighters' House Archive (henceforth: GFH) 267, 30 April 1940, p. 4; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Łapp Grzegorz, p. 162; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Łapp Grzegorz, p. 245.

the patron; Herbert Grawe continued to serve as the head of the Post Office, and Dawid Warszawski, who had worked in that department previously, was appointed the patron of the institution; Leon Rozenblat continued to command the Order Service, Grzegorz Łapp was appointed as the patron of the Jewish police; Mosze Zażujer remained in the Economic Department, while Maurycy Goldblum was appointed the patron; the Financial Department, called the Financial Commission in the minutes,[49] had a three-person leadership, composed of Pinkus Gerszowski, Ruwen Konigsberg and Benjamin Perlsztajn. In case of two institutions, Rumkowski decided not to appoint a patron, because Leon Szykier and Henryk Neftalin, head of, respectively, the Department of Health and the housing department, whether closest associates of the Eldest of the Jews, whom he trusted. Aside from the above cited departments, also listed was the unit in charge of "registry of professionals," headed by Uszer Białodworski and Wolf Zbar.[50] The unit was put in charge of organizing workers in labor divisions, formed from the first days of the ghetto. In the minutes, it was emphasized that Rumkowski retained "control over internal and 'foreign' matters" of the ghetto.[51] Thus, the superior power of the Eldest of the Jews over the entire apparatus of the Jewish administration of the ghetto was confirmed.

Central Secretariat at Bałucki Marketsquare

During the aforementioned meeting on April 30, 1940, another decision was made concerning the reorganization of the main authority coordinating the administration apparatus, namely the Presidial Department. It was divided into several units. At the beginning, the Central Secretariat (*Centrala*) was formed, with the office opening on May 7, 1940, in one of the barracks at Bałucki Marketsquare. This unit, managed by Dora Fuchs, gradually became one of the most important offices in the ghetto. The entire correspondence sent to the Eldest of the Jews by the German authorities went through the Secretariat and vice versa, along with the internal correspondence of Rumkowski. The office was confidential, meaning that it was meant exclusively for the eyes of Rumkowski and his closest associates at the Central Secretariat.[52] The Secretariat also collected reports from individual units of the Jewish administration, compiling and storing the orders of the German authorities and the Eldest of the Jews. At different times, *Centrala* also carried out other tasks, such as collecting reports on the movement of employees, delivering foreign currency seized by the *Sonderkommando* to the occupation authorities, along with the property purchased from the ghetto residents on the orders of the authorities.[53]

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[49] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Perlsztajn Benjamin, p. 186, 187.

[50] GFH 267, Protokół posiedzenia 30 April 1940, p. 3; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Białodworski Uszer, p. 36–37; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Białodworski Uszer, p. 55.

[51] GFH 267, Protokół posiedzenia 30 April 1940, p. 4.

[52] Central Secretariat headed by Dora Fuchs was inaccessible for the archivists from the Archive Department – AŻIH, 301/2841, Relacja Bernarda Ostrowskiego, p. 3. Cf. also K. Radziszewska, "Centrum dokumentacyjne getta. Autorzy »Kroniki« i ich tekst" [in:] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, p. 233.

[53] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje*..., part 1, p. 43–44; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 286.

Dora Fuchs – Head of the Central Secretariat
(State Archive in Łódź)

The Central Secretariat employed several people – secretaries and office assistants. Aside from Dora Fuchs, another employee of *Centrala* was Estera Daum,[54] who was responsible for all issues related to provisioning that went through the Secretariat, and typists Alicja Puterman, Mary Schiffnger and Bronisława Schwebel.[55] On June 1, 1941, Regina Wajnberger, later Rumkowski's wife, was employed in the Secretariat as legal adviser.[56] One of the secretaries working in *Centrala* described the atmosphere as follows, "The Charman's Secretariat was a hotbed of intrigue. All it took was a denunciation and Rumkowski, without checking its validity, could even order the accused to be arrested, often unfairly, for personal reasons."[57]

The Central Secretariat was one of the few institutions in the ghetto that were connected to the city phone line and had several internal phone numbers. Rumkowski's office had a separate phone line (extension 81), as did Dora Fuchs' secretariat (extension 82), the room where Schiffnger and Daum worked (extension 83) and information (extension 26;

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[54] In Poland in 2008 the book *Byłam sekretarką Rumkowskiego. Dzienniki Etki Daum*, based on Etka Daum testimony was published.

[55] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje...*, part 1, p. 44; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Oblicze getta we wrześniu 1943, p. 68.

[56] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Wajnberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 271; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Wajnberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 419.

[57] AŻIH, 301/4006, Alicja Puterman Testimony, p. 2.

later, the number was the "extra phone" of Regina Rumkowska, the wife of the Eldest of the Jews).[58]

Having become the location of most important ghetto institutions – the Gestapo station, the Schupo District, the office of the German Ghetto Board and the Jewish *Centrala* – Bałucki Marketsquare was the heart of the closed district.

> Here, in the Precinct, and in the modest barracks, the fate of the ghetto is decided, here decisions are made that often leave an indelible mark on the lives of inhabitants of our little world. Here, the most important issue of the ghetto is regulated – provisioning, here the production of divisions is decided. From here, all rations, all "Auftrags"[59] are sent to divisions, and here from all sorts "Gzaiers"[60] are reaching us. In a word, Bałucki Marketsquare regulates our daily life and decides our existence. Bałucki Market is the brain of the ghetto,

a ghetto archivist recorded.[61] This place, which was the only entrance into the ghetto, was often seen as the substitute of the free world. Bernard Heilig, another employee of the Department of Archive of the Jewish administration of the ghetto, described that most important point of the closed district,

> People of the ghetto pronounce the name of Bałucki Marketsquare solemnly. This was the proper residence, 'the government district,' a fortress, separated with barbed wire from the ghetto proper, as if out of its reach. Access was only allowed for officials wearing a yellow band, and in exceptional cases civilians escorted by the Order Service. The rest of the area behind the barbed wire was a land of hopeless poverty, hunger, sadness and doubt.[62]

Aside from Rumkowski's Secretariat, there was the technical secretariat, also at Bałucki Marketsquare, called the Presidential Secretariat. The institution, headed by Szulim Cygielman, was initially located at 4 Kościelny Square and later moved 1 Dworska Street. The Presidential Secretariat was divided into several sections: the secretariat, correspondence office, typists' office, hectograph, telephone exchange (extension 79) and a group of officials "for special orders of the Chairman." Some of the competences from the period before the closure of the ghetto did not change; however, new tasks were gradually added. In the orders of the German authorities and the Eldest of the Jews, the Secretariat prepared periodical reports on the operation of various units of the ghetto, on the health status and movement of the population in the district, as well as lists of valuables sent to the Board of the Ghetto. Various prints and forms were compiled and copied, questionnaires were developed and sent to the printing house in the ghetto. A variety of odd office jobs were done there according to current demand, such as issuing passes, food vouchers, referrals to doctors, and confirmation of identity before that function was taken over by the Passport

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58 *Wykaz adresów i telefonów* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 213.
59 *Auftrag* (Ger.) – order, commission.
60 *Gzaiers* (Yid.) – misfortune, calamities.
61 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Bałuckim Rynku, p. 75.
62 Ibid., Pierwsze siedem miesięcy w getcie Litzmannstadt, p. 211.

Barracs on Bałucki Marketsquare
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

private persons.[63] Aside from Cygielman, working in the Secretariat were, among others, Regina Wajnberger – later transferred to *Centrala* at Bałucki Marketsquare – and Roma Byteńska. In general, there were 35 office employees and 11 laborers.[64]

Given the growing volume of correspondence sent to the Eldest of the Jews from the residents of the ghetto, it was decided to establish a unit responsible for receiving letters and applications. On October 15, 1940, a separate Secretariat for Requests and Complaints was established, taking office in the building at 1 Pomorska Street. The head of the office was Regina Wołk[65] (the new institution was often dubbed "Miss Wołk's [Wołkówna] Secretariat." The personnel consisted of four officials and four controllers. During the first six months of its operation, the Secretariat received about 20,000 various applications and over 6,700 requests. In order not to paralyze the office, on February 14, 1941, a special box was installed at the building at 27 Łagiewnicka Street, where residents could place their requests and applications.[66]

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[63] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 116; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 365; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje...*, part 1, p. 44; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 216.

[64] APŁ PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 116; ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Byteńska Romea, p. 25; ibid., entry: Wajnberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 271–273; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Byteńska Romea, p. 73.

[65] Regina Wołk was a ward of the orphanage in Helenówek where Rumkowski was the director – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 357.

[66] *Sekterariat ojf Dworska 1 – baj der arbet*, *Geto-Tsaytung*, 2 V 1941, no. 10, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 342.

The reorganization of the Presidial Department and the division into two separate secretariats after the closure of the ghetto also resulted in a change in the Information Department. Afterwards, it operated under the changed name of the Information and Interviews Department with Solomon Malka still at the helm, located at 4 Kościelny Square; at the end of 1940, the office was moved to 1 Pomorska Street (phone number 79). The Department was divided into the Section of Information, Section of Interviews, and Section of Expedition. The first section was responsible for receiving applicants who were provided with information relating to various issues; for example, the possibility of a departure or certificates needed to collect money sent from outside the ghetto. Aside from this, it took applications and directed said applicants to other departments according to their competences. The Section of Interviews was in charge of sending controllers, called "evaluators," who checked the material status of persons applying for a certificate of poverty needed to submit an application for grant relief. The controllers also visited persons who applied for a certificate of morality and a place in the house of the elderly, the orphanage or a crèche. They also carried out interviews on the order of other departments, such as the Health Department, the Funerals Department, the Schools Department and the Presidial Department. Also, a number of official matters were settled in the Information Department, sent there by the authorities through the central office. The expedition section sent out post, circulars and regulations from *Centrala* to all departments of the Jewish administration.[67]

The Information and Interviews Department employed 10 white-collar workers – including one head, three officials and six evaluators – and six blue-collar workers, including two caretakers and four runners. The best evidence of the scale of their tasks is the number of interviews carried out – 637 in October 1940; in subsequent months this number increased, as two additional controllers were employed.[68]

The Central Secretariat also supervised the Personnel Department, established on June 10–11, 1940, separate from the Presidial Department. Over office of the unit, headed by Nachum Szpet, was located at number four Kościelny Square (extension 29).[69] Its competences included all matters related to Jewish administration officials. Initially, the main task of the department was to carry out the registration of all officials employed in the ghetto and verify them, next also the issues of employing new officials, transferring and firing them. The department was also in charge of payment, issuing accounting books and introducing relevant changes. The department supervised all other cells in that regard. Initially, matters pertaining to the personnel were controlled exclusively by Rumkowski, who decided himself whether a specific official was to be employed and how much he would earn; however, along with the expansion of the administrative structure, the Personnel Department became independent in that respect.[70]

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[67] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 50–51; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje...*, part 1, p. 44; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 210.

[68] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 50.

[69] *Spis wydziałów i placówek (z adresami) administracji żydowskiej w getcie łódzkim* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 130; *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 185; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 215.

[70] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 115; ibid., Leksykon, p. 364; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje...*, part 2, p. 41–42.

Police and Judiciary[71]

One of the first measures undertaken by Rumkowski after the ghetto was closed was to announce on May 1st Announcement No. 30, in which he announced the establishment of the Order Service.[72] The unit had existed before since the end of February 1940,[73] but Rumkowski most likely decided that it should be introduced one more time to the residents of the closed district along with its competences. The character of the Order Service changed dramatically after the closure of the ghetto – initially a formation in charge of keeping order and assisting during the resettlement, it became a para-police formation with broad powers. The Eldest of the Jews emphasized that the Order Service had been established "to defend the Jewish population" – however, the announcement did not make any specific mention as to what dangers the Jewish police would prevent to protect the residents of the ghetto. Further on, Rumkowski called for an "absolute subordination" and "carry out his orders," under the threat of punishment. Moreover, the police officers were also urged to observe strict discipline and proper behavior.[74]

The basic task of the Order Service, commanded by Rozenblat, was keeping "law and order" in the ghetto, which meant in practice, for example, suppressing protests against Rumkowski.[75] Aside from this, the formation was responsible for escorting food transports and guarding the borders of the ghetto from inside. The latter task was particularly demanding, as in the initial period of the closed district smuggling was booming.[76]

A unit of the Order Service (consisting of seven officers) was also assigned to the German Criminal Police, for which it served performing auxiliary tasks such as guarding

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[71] The author is aware of the unfortunate use of the term "justice system," as in this case the term "system of injustice" would be more fitting, but for the sake of clarity of the text he has decided to use it without a quotation mark.

[72] Polish version of the notice uses the name Order Guard, while the German one – Ordnungsdienst, that is the Order Service. Inconsistency in the naming of various departments of administration occurs much more often, which is confusing and sometimes makes it difficult to properly identify the institution. Any case of such inconsistency will be explained in the relevant footnote.

[73] Some of the authors follow the notice and cite May 1st as the date of the establishment of the Order Service – A. Galiński, "Policja w getcie" [in:] *Getto w Łodzi 1940–1944. Materiały z sesji naukowej – 9 VIII 1984 r.*, eds. J. Fijałek, A. Galiński, Łódź 1988, p. 46. There is no doubt, however, that the organization operated from March 1, 1940 – Cf. Chapter 1.4; cf. A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 89, footnote 34.

[74] APŁ, PSŻ 111, Rozporządzenie z 1 V 1940, p. 19; ibid., GV 29211, Rozporządzenie z 1 V 1940, p. 18; AŻIH, 205/455, Rok za drutem kolczastym (Na marginesie obwieszczeń Pana Prezesa Ch. Rumkowskiego), p. 5.

[75] Such protests broke out for example in June, August and September 1940. Rumkowski used the Ordering Service to suppress them, and when that failed, German police were summoned to the ghetto. As a result, two people died. Traces of the protests are found in Rumkowski's announcements No. 74 dated 2 July 1940 and No. 104 dated 12 August 1940 – AŻIH, 205/455, Rok za drutem..., p. 10, 13; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 328.

[76] APŁ, PSŻ 113, Raport Schutzpolizei z 16 VI 1940, p. 289. In 1940, Rumkowski himself paid noted the smuggling and considered it a crime, and not a form of assistance to the ghetto, unlike the head of the Judenrat of the Warsaw ghetto, Adam Czerniaków. In his report of June 12, 1940, Rumkowski presented his struggles with this problem, "Smugglers are interested in working on their own, so I have undertaken the harshest measures to prevent it and thus prevent price increases. It has been very difficult to expose a small group primarily dealing with smuggling and cleverly hiding their activity, because it was assisted by people outside the ghetto who supplied them with various foods at inflated prices. However, with the help of the office [i.e. Service Order – A.S.] I have been able to put an end to that and return normal conditions." – APŁ, PSŻ 1093, [Historia getta], p. 290. Rumkowski's assessment of his effectiveness was exaggerated, as evidenced by the German reports on smuggling from a later period. Cf. D. Siepracka, *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w Łodzi podczas okupacji niemieckiej* [in:] *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warszawa 2006, p. 699–701, 736–762.

the Kripo station at Kościelna Street.[77] The tasks of the Jewish police were defined in the regulation of the *Polizeipräsident* dated July 16, 1940, which outlined the principles of guarding the gates along Zgierska Street and reminded of the ban on contacts with German guards from *Schutzpolizei*.[78]

The number of police officers increased gradually – in the spring of 1940, there were 250, then by the end of the year the number had increased to 717.[79] Working for the ghetto police was considered prestigious, which is not to mention that the officers had the right to extra food rations. The number of people volunteering to work was so high that in Announcement No. 99 dated August 9, 1940, Rumkowski had to announce that the recruitment for the Order Service was suspended, such that "submitting applications and enquiries is pointless and shall be left without a response."[80] Some members of the Order Service were demoralized, prone to abuse of power and accepting bribes. Rumkowski repeatedly intervened with Rozenblat, ordering him to punish the officials who broke the law. In letters sent to the commander, the Eldest of the Jews emphasized that "the Order Service must be of good repute to earn respect and recognition of the population."[81] The inhabitants of the ghetto, however, were not fond of police officers, and their brutality or pride is cited in the number of accounts.[82]

After the closure of the ghetto, the area was divided into four districts of the Order Service, with their headquarters at 27 Franciszkańska Street (District I, headed by Samuel Berkowicz beginning January 1, 1941[83]), 56 Limanowskiego Street (District II, headed from the end of April 1940 by Julian Grosbart, who was also the deputy commander of the Order Service,[84] with Józef Kohl as his deputy beginning September 1, 1940[85]), 61 Łagiewnicka Street (District III, from the end of 1941 headed by Samuel Berkowicz, who was replaced by Ajzyk Feld and Izaak Perle), 69 Marysińska Street (District IV, headed from the beginning of 1940 by Salomon Gepner[86]). In November 1940, the District V was established in Marysin, with headquarters at 36 Łagiewnicka Street, the head of which was Abram Józef Chimowicz.[87] The office of the Commander of the Order Service was located at 1 Lutomierska Street, and until mid-1940

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77 Archives of the YIVO Institute in New York (henceforth: AYIVO), RG 241/19, Letter of the Police President to the Eldest of the Jews dated 17 April 1940, p. 1; A. Löw, *Getto*..., p. 89; photo 59 in *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto 1940–1944*, eds. J. Baranowski, S.M. Nowinowski, Łódź 2009, p. 102.

78 *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 85–86.

79 APŁ, PSŻ 789, unpaginated; A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 46–47; A. Löw, "Ordnungsdienst im Getto Litzmannstadt" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego 1940–1944*, ed. P. Samuś, W. Puś, Łódź 2004, p. 157.

80 AYIVO, RG 241/224, Anouncement No. 99, p. 1; A. Löw, "Ordnungsdienst...", p. 159.

81 Cited in A. Löw, "Getto łódzkie...", p. 91. Korespondencja Rumkowskiego z Rozenblatem – APŁ, PSŻ 146, p. 25–26, 121.

82 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 344–345; A. Löw, "Getto łódzkie...", p. 92.

83 Before the ghetto was sealed, Samuel Berkowicz held the position of the Head of the Division of Price Control and the Sanitary Division of the Order Service – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, p. 40; AŻIH 205/349, p. 48.

84 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 302–303.

85 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Kol Józef, p. 130; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Kol Józef, p. 208.

86 Salomon Gepner initially worked in Area II in the rank of *aspirant* (NCO) – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gepner Salomon, p. 89; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gepner Salomon, p. 139. Before the war, Łódź press reported that Gepner had a court sentence for unlicensed use of the title "Chemical engineer" – *Nieprawnie używali tytułu inżyniera*, *Orędownik*, 26 October 1938, p. 7.

87 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Chimowicz A. Josef, p. 47; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Chimowicz A. Josef, p. 80.

Policemen from the Order Service
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

the Reserve of the Order Service Command operated in the office of the Community at 4 Kościelny Square.[88]

In 1940, the Order Service was also in charge of the Price Control Unit and the Sanitation Control Unit, and along with the House Guard, established before the closure of the ghetto. On May 24, 1940, the Auxiliary Order Service was established (*Hilfs-Ordnungsdienst* – HIOD), which employed 122 of its officers. The units operated until November 3, 1940. On September 15, 1940, the Police Emergency Service was established (Überfallkommando) and tasked with suppressing demonstrations. In the end of 1940, the unit was transformed into the Guard Unit (*Wachabteilung*), stationed at Bałucki Market; the head was Józef Gutman, previously employed at the Überfallkommando.[89] This unit was responsible for guarding the area of Bałucki Marketsquare and escorting food supplies; it also mediated contacts with the German police. From May 5th until September 1940, the Order Service had also its Legal Office, headed by Jakub Piczele. The Department employed eleven people, and its office was located at 22 Gnieźnieńska Street. As a result of complaints, the Office was disbanded, and replaced by the Investigation Bureau, which was the only instance of judiciary in the ghetto until the Court was established. The office was headed by Zygmunt Blemer and his deputies were W. Markus and R. Rozenson.[90]

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[88] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Kol Józef, p. 130; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Kol Józef, p. 208; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 344–345; A. Galiński, "Policja...", p. 46–48.

[89] Archive of the Yad Vashem Institute (henceforth: AYV), O-34/637, entry: Prochownik Mojżesz, p. 1; AYIVO RG 241/881, entry: Prochownik Mojżesz, p. 1.

[90] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 344–345; A. Löw, "Ordnungsdienst...", p. 157; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 47–48.

Auxiliary Order Service sign
(State Archive in Łódź)

Earlier, beginning July 1, 1941, the Special Unit of the Order Service (*Sonderabteilung*, *Sonderkommando*, also called the Sondner) was organized on the initiative of Salomon Hercberg, who took the position of the head of the department. In the announcement establishing the unit, Rumkowski formulated its tasks: exposing and confiscating goods and items needed for the general populace and carrying out special orders. Although formally the department was part of the Order Service, in fact, it followed the orders directly from the German Criminal Police and the Gestapo.[91]

The first head of the division, Hercberg, was originally a shady figure from the demimonde, and before the war had contacts with criminal circles. Immediately after the department was launched, he started his involvement in exposing valuables hidden by ghetto residents. For this purpose, a network of numerous informers was used. Not even one month later, Herzberg was arrested by the Gestapo – a number of packages with the requisitioned items, appropriated by the ambitious official, were found in his apartment. In his place, Rumkowski appointed Zygmunt Reingold, who retained the position until the end of 1940.

Several days after the information about the formation of the Order Service was announced, another one of Rumkowski's announcements appeared on the ghetto walls in which he emphasized that the organization of internal life of the ghetto was solidly in his hands. He reminded inhabitants about the competences given to him by the German authorities, under which he could take "all necessary measures," including issuing orders

[91] APŁ, PSŻ 146, Rozkaz powołania Sonderkommando z 26 VI 1940, p. 19–20; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 324.

which he would implement using the Order Service that reported to him. He also emphasized that he was responsible for everything that was happening in the closed district.[92]

Departments of Records

In the weeks following the closure of the ghetto, Rumkowski continued restructuring the administrative apparatus. On May 5, 1940, the Housing Department was disbanded because it was decided that it had fulfilled its task of providing accommodation for people arriving into the area of the closed district and based on Rumkowski's decision, starting May 3, 1940, people could occupy one-room apartments without the involvement of the Housing Department.[93]

Two months later, on July 15th, the Presidial Department was reactivated, albeit with a slightly different function. The main task of the department, headed by Boruch Praszkier, was administrating the residential economy in the closed district, both for private persons and administrative bodies. The Department was divided into two branches – Translocation and Allocations. The staff of the Department were responsible for searching for accommodation for Jews brought into the ghetto as well as for premises for new departments and labor divisions, including moving residents from houses designated for the use of the administration – for example, those with connections to the gas line, which were used for public kitchens.[94]

In December 1940, the department employed in total 19 people, including the head. The offices were located at 6 Rybna Street and had a connection to the internal telephone network (extension 20).[95] In October 1940, the department was connected to the structure of the Department of Finances and Economics, which was an assembly of many institutions, related to land and property of economy in the closed district – this will be discussed further in this book.

In the early May 1940, the Registration Office was founded, whose first task was to organize a census at the request of the German authorities. As a result, the permanent registration of the population was introduced, continued without interruption until the end of the ghetto. The office, opened on May 10th, was headed by Henryk Neftalin. It was divided into the Current Registration Section and the Registration and Address Files, where registration cards were stored containing information about individual residents of the ghetto and their places of residence.[96] Initially, the department was located at 4 Miodowa Street, later moved to 4 Kościelny Square (extension 74), where the majority of departments dealing with registration population were later located.[97]

On June 4, 1940, there was also the Section of Statistics within the Office, whose task was to prepare a statistical list of the population according to gender and age based on

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92 APŁ, PSŻ 111, Announcement dated May 3, 1940, p. 21; A. Löw, *Getto*..., p. 83.

93 *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, p. 87.

94 D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura*..., part 1, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, no. 52, 1964, p. 44.

95 *Wykaz adresów i telefonów*..., p. 214.

96 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 179–181; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 272–274; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura*..., part 1, p. 45.

97 *Spis wydziałów i placówek (z adresami) administracji żydowskiej w getcie łódzkim* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma*..., p. 130; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów*..., p. 211.

Signs of Civil Registry Office, Registration Office and Statistical Department on 4 Miodowa St.
(State Archive in Łódź)

materials collected by the Registration Office. Moreover, the section was responsible for providing the German authorities and the Eldest of the Jews with daily reports on births, deaths and the number of the population. From July 1940, the Graphic Office was founded, where boards with statistical data were developed, and in August that year, the Photographic Office, whose staff took photos for practical and archival purposes. The section was headed by Samuel Bronowski with Sucher Ehrlich as his deputy, who in September

1940 took over as independent head of the section after Bronowski was transformed into the newly established Court. That same month, the section was transformed into an independent Statistical Department.[98] Just like the Registration Bureau, the Department was initially located at 4 Miodowa Street, and then was moved to 4 Kościelny Square, where it was connected to the internal phone network (ension 22).[99]

From July 6, 1940, both the Registration Bureau and the Statistical Department reported to Registration Office, headed by Henryk Neftalin. This reorganization was meant to facilitate the work of all cells responsible for the statistics concerning ghetto residents. For that purpose, a joint secretariat was established however, retaining leadership in each of the institutions.[100]

Beginning July 10, 1940, the Civil Registry Department operated under the Census Department, also suggested by Neftalin. However, from the beginning, the new unit had to cope with many difficulties. Given the fact that, based on the so-called Nürnberg Laws, it was banned for Jews to get married in the territory of the Third Reich, the occupation authorities questioned whether the Department made any sense at all. If the institution of marriage was rendered invalid, no child born to a Jewish couple would be acknowledged by the law, and thus could not be entered into the birth records under the father's name. On the other hand, the occupation authorities demanded that the Jewish authority provided regular reports on births and deaths. Therefore, Neftalin deemed it necessary to bring the registry of marriages, deaths and births from the Civil Registry Office in Litzmannstadt to the ghetto. For that purpose, he asked the Eldest of the Jews to apply for these records to be brought in. In a letter to Rumkowski dated June 4, 1940, Neftalin wrote,

> In regards to your order to organize the Civil Registry Office for the population of the ghetto, I hereby inform you that it would be possible only if we receive records from the municipality of Litzmannstadt, that is the vital records (certificates of births, marriage and deaths). Otherwise, each time when preparing a new certificate we need to ask the applicant for documents (previously issued certificates), which provokes protestations and is the waste of time. I would like to use this opportunity to mention that there are cases that people are not able to provide their specific date of birth. As the head of the department, I hereby ask you to submit an application in the municipality for the records to be sent to us.[101]

Unfortunately, the reply of the German authorities to such a request is unknown. In a study on the Department by the archivists of the ghetto, it was noted that the occupation authorities cited the so-called Nürnberg laws and presented "a whole series of legal reservations." Ultimately, however, the consent was granted and on July 10th new unit was lounged. "That way, in spite of the Nürnberg laws, the Civil Registry Department was formed in the ghetto, playing at significant role in the tangle of anti-Jewish legislation," the aforementioned study notes.[102]

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98 AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Statistische-Abteilung, p. 366–368.
99 *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 130; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 211.
100 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 368; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 45–46.
101 AŻIH, 205/341, Pismo do Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów z 3 VI 1940, p. 7–8.
102 Ibid., p. 8–14; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Stanu Cywilnego, p. 127–128.

The Department was divided into several offices: Marriages, Births, Deaths, Identification Cards (Passports) and the General Division.[103] In the first month, the Marriage Offices registered 155 new marriages and legalized 463 existing marriages.[104] The procedure of registration was based on the prewar Polish law, namely: the betrothed couple came to the division with their identification documents, and after filling the forms, banns were announced in the synagogue and on the walls of the closed district.[105] After two weeks, if there was no objection, the couple was granted permission to marry.[106] After officiating the marriage, the Rabbinate placed a special note in the certificates[107] which the young couple brought back to the Marriage Office, who ultimately confirmed that the marriage had been concluded. As for earlier marriages, the process required the testimony of witnesses, followed by banns. In that case, the marriage certificate included names of children, thus legalizing them as well.[108] There was a fee established for each procedure, 3Mk for the banns and 3Mk for inclusion in the registry. For the unemployed who were entitled to a relief grant, the *zasiłkowcy* (relief takers) fee was reduced to 1Mk and in individual cases could be reduced further, to 50fen. Issuing a certificate of marriage cost 1Mk for the first copy and 50fen for each subsequent copy.[109]

Marriage was also a religious institution, therefore the Rabbinate had to be involved. Reorganized on July 17, 1940, the Rabbinate was a link between the civilian administration and the religious structures. It was divided into the Rabbinical College, consisting of fifteen rabbis[110] responsible for matters pertaining to the religious ritual, and the Rabbinical Office, operating from August 20, 1940, a secular institution responsible for keeping the registry of marriages, deaths and births, as well as coordinating the Rabbinate with the works of the Civil Registry Department.[111] Formally, from October 16, 1940, Henryk Neftalin served as head – as asked directly by the Rabbinate.[112] Another institution within the Rabbinate was the *Takunat Agunot* commission, which issued permission to remarry

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[103] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 45.

[104] By the end of 1940 173 weddings were registered – APŁ, PSŻ 928, Statystyka ślubów z 2 I 1941, p. 27.

[105] Before the war it was customary to announce three banns.

[106] Civil Registry Department specified obstacles that could prevent marriage: age under 13 for men, under 12 in women, direct kinship, lateral kinship up to the fourth degree of canon law, direct kinship without restrictions, lack of consent of either party, in minors – lack of parental or guardian's consent, conviction for murdering one's spouse or the spouse of the partner with intention to marry, "widow's time" − ten months, existing marriage, mental illness, religious differences, gender identity – APŁ, PSŻ 928, Przeszkody w zawarciu małżeństwa, p. 2.

[107] In some cases wedding was officiated by rabbis from outside the College, and such marriages were not registered. Rabbis in the College called on the people to act in accordance with the procedures, while asking the authorities to curtail the activities of rabbis who refused to cooperate with them. Finally, it was decided that only marriage ceremonies held in the wedding hall at 6 Miodowa were valid – APŁ, PSŻ 936, Protokół z posiedzenia rabinatu z 13 XI 1940, p. 125; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Stanu Cywilnego, p. 128.

[108] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Stanu Cywilnego, p. 128.

[109] APŁ, PSŻ 928, Okólnik w sprawie opłat przy rejestracji ślubów z 10 XI 1940, p. 9.

[110] These were: Abram Sylman, Dawid Łaski, Kiwa Niger, Hersz Fiszow, Aron Bornstein, Luzer Lipszyc, Eliasz Fleiszhaker, Zelig Rozenstein, Eliasz Józef Fajner, Jochenen Lipszyc, Mendel Rozenmutter, Mordka Dąb, Mojżesz Weiss, Salomon Jakubowicz, Symcha Uberbaum and Alter Chemia.

[111] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 52–54; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 296, 310–311; *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 194.

[112] APŁ, PSŻ 935, Pismo rabinatu do Henryka Neftalina z 13 X 1940, p. 409; ibid., PSŻ 936, Pismo Henryka Neftalina do Kolegium Rabinackiego z 16 X 1940, p. 163.

Building at 4 Kościelny Square – the headquarters of the Census Department
(State Archive in Łódź)

for women whose husbands were missing.[113] The office of the Rabbinate was located At 4/6 Miodowa Street and later moved along with other institutions of the Department of Records to 4 Kościelny Square (extension 74).[114]

Another section within the Civil Registry Department was the Births Office. It was based on Rumkowski's Announcement No. 117 of September 2, 1940, in which the Eldest of the Jews called for mandatory reporting of births within seven days at the offices of the Civil Registry Department. The registration procedure was as follows: the father of the child or next of kin had to report to the office along with the witnesses who were of age and had identity papers with them, along with a set of documents of the parents, namely their marriage certificate and the documentation from the hospital or the midwife who delivered the baby. The obligation applied to all children born after the 1st of March, 1940, who had not been previously registered. In case of failure to report the birth, the consequences included withholding allocations as well as some unspecified punishment for the child's parents.[115]

During the first eight months, 1,696 newborns were registered, including 650 children "legalized," that is born prior to the new regulation. Upon the registration, parents received a special certificate entitling them for milk allocation from the Provisioning Department. Children were given their father's surname, as long as the marriage had been recognized by the Civil Registry Department.[116]

The Deaths Office took over the powers of the former Funeral Department of the Jewish Community. This institution was formed on July 15, 1940, when the first death certificate was issued. In the first weeks, in addition to the daily registration of deaths – the number of which amounted to approximately 35−45 per day[117] – at the request of the German authorities, the division began to draw up a list of deaths in the period between May 1st and July 15th, when the ghetto was closed. This task was completed in August 1940. The procedure for reporting the deceased followed a certain pattern: each person who reported with a "gray" death card issued by the doctor first had to notify the Department about the deceased, where half of the card was cut off as a means of confirmation. Next, this person had to bring the issued documents and two witnesses to the Deaths Office where the death certificate was prepared, and then go the Rabbinical Office where, based on registration books, witness statements and document confirming the identity of the deceased, a notice of death was issued, which was then sent to the German authorities, while an official of the Deaths Office recorded the information in the register of deaths kept by the Rabbinate.[118]

The Identity Cards Office, later called the Passport Office, was responsible for issuing certificates of identity. In the first months of the war and during the resettlement to the ghetto, many people lost their identity documents. Living conditions in the ghetto

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[113] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 45. Documentation indicates that the committee commenced operations in June 1942 – APŁ, PSŻ 935, Pismo Kolegium Rabinackiego do kierownika Kancelarii Rabinackiej z 19 VI 1942, p. 65.

[114] *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 130; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 216.

[115] AYIVO, RG 241/240, Announcement no. 117 dated September 2, 1940, p. 1.

[116] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 129.

[117] There was a typhoid epidemic at the time.

[118] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Stanu Cywilnego, p. 130.

and its organization required that they had such documentation; for example, in order to collect parcels or money at the post office. Identity papers were indispensable for those were sent to work outside the ghetto – aside from medical examination, a document with a photo was required. Initially, such documents were issued by the Presidial Department, however, as a result of the growing number of applications related to the increasing number of people reporting to work outside the ghetto, the Identity Cards Office took over that task. Identity papers were issued based on the testimony of witnesses (who had to have their own identification documents), registration books and other documents submitted by the person seeking to obtain a new identity document. By the end of 1940, 2,202 new documents were issued, and by the end of April 1941 the number had increased to 5,317.[119]

The final section within the Civil Registry Office, the General Office, dealt with all other issues that did not fall within the competence of the above-mentioned divisions while still subject to the Department. These included, among others, marriage certificates for persons from outside the ghetto, even from other countries, or applications for authorization of children residing outside the closed district. The Office was also responsible for correspondence with the Civil Registry Department in Litzmannstadt and the German Board (via the Central Secretariat), as well as administrative and personnel issues of the Departments of Registration – "here, in fact, all strands of this rather complicated department come together."[120] It was here that "rules of internal operation" of each division were compiled, which made work more efficient as the division of responsibilities was made clearer. The solution was very well received:– "Such rules of procedure of office have never been used before and this important innovation is essential because it removes any doubt and greatly facilitates the work."[121] The head of this section was Albert Merenleder, one of Neftalin's associates in the Housing Department.[122]

Another section of the Census Department was the Archive Department, headed by Józef Klementynowski,[123] formed on November 17, 1940, at the behest of the Eldest of the Jews. Rumkowski was also responsible for defining the tasks of the new department: "In accordance with the Chairman's order, the institution was tasked with quietly collecting material for a future description of the history of the ghetto, as well as compile the appropriate notes."[124] An internal authority within the department was the Censorship Commission, which verified all materials prepared by archivists "from many angles" before they were included in the archive. The commission consisted of Henryk Neftalin, Abraham Kamieniecki and Mojżesz Karo.[125] The department had its office together with other sections at 4 Miodowa Street before moving to 4 Koscielny Square.

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[119] Ibid., p. 130–131.
[120] Ibid., p. 131–132.
[121] Ibid., p. 132.
[122] Ibid., Opracowanie o pierwszym Wydziale Mieszkaniowym, p. 86.
[123] Ibid., Leksykon, p. 310.
[124] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Archivum, p. 13.
[125] Ibid., p. 15.

The Judiciary

The closure of the ghetto posed a number of new challenges for the leadership of the Jewish administration. One of them was crime within the closed district. German police authorities rarely interfered in the case of petty crimes, limiting their involvement to criminal cases and political affairs. Thus, a need arose to establish some sort of a justice system in the closed area. Initially, the Investigation Office of the Order Service dealt with such matters, which operated until the autumn of 1940. In August, Rumkowski ordered Stanisław Jakobson, who served head of the Community Secretariat as at the beginning of 1940, and Henryk Neftalin to organize a court in the ghetto.[126] It was established on September 22nd[127] with Jakobson as head and Neftalin as his deputy. First, Jakobson established the Codification Commission, which was tasked with forming the basic structures of the "judiciary." The organization was modeled partially on the prewar Polish judiciary. Cases in the first instance were heard by one person; appealing to the second instance was possible only in cases where the disputed amount exceeded 50Mk or if the misdemeanor or felony was punishable by more than a week's detention.[128] The court mainly sentenced the accused to unpaid work with prison food rations; for example, feces disposal. In the case of serious crimes, the penalty was imprisonment in the Central Prison.

The Court, whose offices and courtrooms were located in the building at 22 Gnieźnieńska Street, was divided into several cells: the Penal Department – headed by Samuel Bronowski, the Civil Department, the Housing and Disputes Department, and the Presidential Chancellery led by Szaja Pachter. The Court was also in charge of the Central Prison, whose staff consisted of members of the Order Service. The investigative function was held by the aforementioned Investigation Bureau of the Order Service. In December 1940, the Court employed 42 people, including nine judges (among others Helena Motyl, Mojżesz Prochownik, Naum Byteński and Beno Lewenberg) and a group of three prosecutors and two known defenders, Rachela Cygielman and Regina Wajnberger.[129]

The Central Prison, where convicts were serving the sentences given by the ghetto Court, was established on November 18, 1940, in the complex of the building at 14 Czarnieckiego Street in Marysin. Justifying the creation of the prison, Rumkowski said that he had organized it for "politicized rebels."[130] It is likely that the command to create this facility came from the German authorities, however, no confirmation has been found in the form of a written order.[131]

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[126] AYV O-34/637, entry: Stanisław Jakubson, unpaginated.; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, p. 179–181; AŻIH, 205/349, p. 272–274.

[127] Other dates are listed: June 1940 and 3 or 18 September 1940, however, according to *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*. p. 198 it was 22 September 1940 – AYV, O-34/637, entry: Stanisław Jakubson, unpaginated; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 341; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 50.

[128] AYV, O-34/637, entry: Prochownik Mojżesz, unpaginated.; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 341.

[129] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Cygielman Rachel, p. 29; ibid., entry: Lewenberg Beno, p. 154; ibid., entry: Motyl Helena, p. 171; ibid., entry: Wajnberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 271–273; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Motyl Helena, p. 264; ibid., entry: Wajnberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 420–422; AYV O-34/637, entry: Byteński N., unpaginated; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 51.

[130] *Referat przewodniczącego Rady Starszych miasta Łodzi wygłoszony w dniu 15 V 1941 do przedstawicieli ziomkostwa łódzkiego w Warszawie* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 262.

[131] A. Galiński, "Centralne więzienie dla Żydów w getcie łódzkim" [in:] *Dzieje Żydów w Łodzi 1820–1944. Wybrane problemy*, eds. W. Puś, S. Liszewski, Łódź 1991, p. 325; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 247.

Central Prison at 14 Czarnieckiego St.
(Institute of National Remembrance)

The prison was surrounded by a high wire fence. The gate from Czarnieckiego Street was guarded by the Order Service. The first warden was Salomon Hercberg, head of the *Sonderkommando*.[132] Upon launch, the facility employed 29 officers. The Central Prison was divided into two sections: Section I, which served as the main place of detention of prisoners, and Section II, probably meant for juvenile convicts. In the records, there are references to Section IV, but there is no information on the location of that division, or even the date of its operation. Additionally, the prison had an infirmary, bath, boiler room, kitchen, a school for juvenile prisoners, solitary confinement and food storage. The prison had its own secretariat, as well as a room for religious purposes.[133]

The first prisoner was taken to the facility on November 18, 1940. Inmates were called *haftlings* – the word, derived from the German,[134] entered the ghetto language and replaced the previously used term "inmate" or "prisoner." They wore special berets with a red stripe, upon which was inscribed "*Haftling des ältesten der Juden*," and a yellow band on the left arm with the same inscription.[135] In the first year, over 2,321 people, including 240 women, served sentences there on the basis of judgments passed by the Court in the ghetto, but also on the command of Rumkowski – in the first year, 331 people found

[132] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 305.
[133] A. Galiński, "Centralne...", p. 326–328.
[134] *Häftling* (German) – inmate.
[135] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Haeftlinge, p. 172.

themselves imprisoned in this way, including 81 women, some of whom without a valid sentence. The German authorities also decided when someone should be imprisoned: at the request of the Gestapo, 59 people were sent to the Central Prison in the same period, including 19 women, while the German Criminal Police ordered the imprisonment of 129 people, including 26 women. On average, there were about 200 people detained at a time on Czarnieckiego Street.[136]

Prisoners performed works in the ghetto, for which they received only reduced rations. In the first year of the facility, inmates worked a total of 7,064 workdays in the Jewish cemetery and the 9414 workdays in other places; for example, disposing of feces, unloading or loading of goods at the Radegast railway station and working in labor divisions. They also worked as porters, carrying fruit and vegetables for the price of 1,984Mk, and in weaving workshops, making 1,575 shrouds used for the burial of deceased residents of the closed district. Severe sanitation conditions, combined with starvation on reduced food rations meant that disease was rampant among prisoners – in the first year, the prison infirmary assisted over 7,620 people, 13 of whom died, and one prisoner committed suicide.[137] In subsequent years, the facility was expanded, gaining many new features which will be discussed later in this work.

Economy and Finance of the Ghetto

A separate group of units of the Jewish administration of the ghetto were the cells responsible for the establishment and supervision of the economic life of the closed district. One such institution was the Tax (Financial) Department, directed by Wolf Ulinower. After reorganization on March 23, 1940, it operated under the name of Tax and Rent Department with Naum Samelson at the helm.[138] One of the studies by the Archive Department describes the tasks of the Financial Department: "It was the beginning of the ghetto, some people have managed to save some of their belongings, so it was meant to improve the finances of the Community at the expense of more wealthy Jews."[139]

The closure of the borders of the ghetto brought about another reorganization of the Financial Department, as Rumkowski was not satisfied with the work of officials employed there. The activist cited above describes the situation as follows: "At the financial height, the department at the community was directed by several people, more or less capable, and if some of their actions were not brilliant – it was rather the incompetent executors were to blame, because the thought itself at that time was absolutely salubrious."[140]

The reorganized Financial Department was divided into three offices: Rent, Tax and Execution. The first office, as the name suggests, was in charge of settlement of rent paid by the inhabitants of the ghetto, the Tax Office meted income tax for owners of private shops and other businesses[141] and collected other taxes from ghetto residents,

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[136] A. Galiński, "Centralne...", p. 328–329.
[137] Ibid., p. 332.
[138] Cf. Chapter 1.4.
[139] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 105.
[140] Ibid.
[141] This category included owners of bakeries, restaurants, candy manufacturers, soda producers, dental clinic owners, bathing facilities owners, printers and engravers, cigarette paper manufactures, lenders of gas cookers, gardeners,

and the Execution Office was in charge of collecting outstanding taxes including rent and other charges for the other departments. In December 1940, the department had 60 employees, including Azriel Uryson, who later became head of the Public Works Department.[142]

Another institution in charge of the finances in the closed district was the Financial Committee, also called the Financial College, operating from early May until December 1940. Its members were Pinkus Gerszowski, Reuben Kenigsberg and Benjamin Perlsztajn. The committee supervised the finances and the tax administration of the ghetto[143] and served as both the superior body and the court of appeal for the Financial Department.[144]

In autumn 1940, the Financial Department was incorporated into the reorganized Economic Department, which henceforth bore the name of the Economic and Finance Department. Apart from these, the conglomerate of departments dealing with matters of economy in the ghetto consisted of the Central Control Office, Housing Department, Agricultural Department, and Public Works Department. The head of the expanded structure was Maurycy Goldblum, member of the management of the Economic Department.[145]

Financial activities related to the ghetto were also handled by the Bank. It was launched with the consent of the German authorities, perhaps on the initiative of Rumkowski,[146] on June 26, 1940. Its headquarters was located at 71 Marynarska Street, and on July 8, 1940 a branch was established on 56 Limanowskiego Street. In August 1940, both institutions were transferred to 7 Ciesielska Street. The head of the Bank was Pinkus Gerszowski, Rumkowski's trusted friend.[147] The Bank was established on the basis of Announcement No. 71 of June 24, 1940, which reported that as of June 29th, administration units would no longer accept German marks, but only mark receipts (*Markquittungen*, dubbed *Rumki* or *chaimki*). German marks, pfennigs and 1zł coins were to be exchanged at the Bank.[148] On July 9th, mark receipts became the only means of payment in the ghetto.[149] The introduction of the internal currency in the ghetto was meant as a method to seize whatever savings the residents of the closed district kept. Seized money was booked in the accounts of the Gettoverwaltung.[150] Banknotes were printed in denominations of 5 and 10Mk, later also in higher denominations of 50Mk. Coins were minted from electron metal sheet waste. Initially, 1.4 million Mk was issued. The ghetto currency was negatively assessed by its residents, which they took as a manifestation of Rumkowski's megalomania. Aside from this, it was pointed out that

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shop owners and owner of the pharmacy S. Kon i S-ka – AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gasküchen, p. 136–137; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 111.

142 D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 44.

143 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Kenigsberg Ruben, p. 127; ibid., entry: Perlsztajn Beniamin, p. 186; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Kenigsberg Ruben, p. 203; ibid., entry: Perlsztajn Beniamin, p. 294.

144 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 112; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 44.

145 AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Goldblum Maurycy, p. 155; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 42.

146 It is unclear whether the exchange of money in the ghetto and the associated launch of the facility was ordered by the authorities or proposed by Rumkowski – D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 51.

147 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 92.

148 AYIVO, RG-241/197, Announcement no. 71 dated June 24, 1940, p. 3.

149 Ibid., Announcement no. 70 dated June 24, 1940, p. 1.

150 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 326; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 51.

it would significantly hamper smuggling and contacts with the outside world, deepening the isolation of the ghetto.[151]

Until 1940, the Bank was still in charge of to the Antrag Section, dealing with applications to collect outstanding payments owed to ghetto inhabitants from Łódź and the surrounding area on behalf of the German Board of the Ghetto. The ultimate structure of the agenda was based on two departments – the Exchange Department and the Collection Department. The former handled exchange of currency for mark receipts, recorded issued mark receipts, withdrew destructs from circulation and supplied the money market in German coins after the withdrawal of Polish zlotys and groszy. The Collection Department took over the powers of the Antrag Section – it paid out compensation in mark receipts for debts collected by the Board of the Ghetto. In addition, it paid the equivalent for remittances or annuity sent to the ghetto inhabitants, exchanged damaged German banknotes, and purchased foreign currency as well as Polish and foreign securities.[152]

On August 16, 1940, in response to a proposal by Hans Biebow, head of the Ghetto Board, Ankaufstelle was launched and called the Bank of Purchasing, the second bank branch responsible for the purchase of valuable items. Rumkowski had announced its formation in his Announcement No. 105 of August 13th. As his reason, the Eldest listed the need to regulate the purchase of items and help destitute people selling their personal belongings so they would not have to use the help of the Social Welfare Department. The purchase point, headed by Jakub Szkólnik and Jehuda Izraelski,[153] was located at 71 Marynarska Street next to the headquarters of the Bank. It accepted jewelry, gold and silver, precious stones, furs, securities, wardrobe for men and women, and linens.[154] Another facility was opened at 7 Ciesielska Street on September 1, 1940, as reported in Announcement No. 114 of August 29th.[155] Gradually, an obligation to report items to purchase was introduced[156] and the list of objects for purchase expanded, including items such as cameras, typewriters, curtains, carpets, etc. Their value was estimated on the basis of assessors-experts employed by the Bank for Purchase and a special committee determined the purchase price in mark receipts.[157] Some objects were passed to other agencies of the administration of the ghetto, for which a fee of 15% was levied. However, the vast majority went to the Board of the Ghetto, who treated the purchase operation as another means to plunder that property of Jews imprisoned in the ghetto.[158]

The purchase of valuables was also carried out independently of other institutions established for this purpose. On July 10, 1940, the Central Purchasing Office was organ-

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[151] E. Reicher, *W ostrym świetle dnia*, London 1989, p. 25. Cf. also A. Rudnicki, *Kupiec łódzki. Niebieskie kartki*, Warszawa 1963, p. 21.

[152] Such as Polish zloty from the new issue, sent to prisoners of war from POW camps as a return of deposits. *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 13 January 1941, p. 11; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 51–52.

[153] The Bank of Purchase had its Management Board, whose chairman was Henryk Szyffer, and members were Perec Blaugrund and Henryk Fajner – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Szyffer Hermann, p. 256; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Szyffer Hermann, p. 387; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 12 January 1941, p. 5–6.

[154] AYIVO, RG-241/229, Announcement no. 105 dated August 13, 1940, p. 1.

[155] Ibid., RG-241/237, Announcement no. 114 dated August 29, 1940, p. 1.

[155] Ibid., RG-241/301, Announcement no. 179 dated December 17, 1940, p. 1.

[156] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 277; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 52.

[157] The experts were J. Opatowski and Szoel Brajtsztajn, Aron Englard was member of the estimation committee. – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 12 January 1941, p. 5–6.

[158] Ibid., p. 4–9; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 277; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 52.

ized – an institution whose task was to supply labor divisions with the necessary raw materials. Its organizer was Chaim Łajb Lipnowski, who, after the Office was launched on September 8, 1940, was made one of the heads along with Gustaw Gerson.[159] The purchase price was determined based on estimates prepared by experts or, in urgent cases, based on the assessment by heads of relevant offices.[160]

Regardless of the purchase of goods for labor divisions established in the ghetto, the administration continued the purchase of valuable items remaining in the hands of the ghetto inhabitants. On August 4, 1940, the establishment of the Point of Purchase of Old Materials was announced, located at 73 Brzezińska Street.[161] From September 1940, the cell was headed by Izrael Krauskopf, who had experience in that field.[162] This point purchased and sorted rags, scrap metal, bones, glass, bottles and bags. Probably from 1940, the unit was associated with the Central Purchasing Office. On August 30, 1940, the Point of Purchase of Cookware was established at 7 Zgierska Street.[163] It accepted all new and old kitchen utensils. The demand for such items was so high that in October 1940, Announcement No. 142 specified what kind of appliances were desirable.[164] In the same month, Rumkowski announced Ghetto Board that he would launch the Point of Purchase of Feather and Down, where the material was sorted and cleaned for further production of quilts. On October 5, 1940, Szmul Zak was appointed the head.[165] Purchased items were mostly directed to the Board of the Ghetto, only part of which was used for the needs of the district.[166]

The Management Department continued its activities from before the merger. Beginning May 1940, its director was Mosze Zażujer, member of the Council of Elders and at the same time head of the Social Welfare Department.[167] The Department was divided into the following cells: the Administrators' Office, the Caretakers' Office, the Chimney Sweeps Brigade and the Fire Brigade (together called the Fire Brigade and Chimney Sweeps Department), the Renovation Section, the Gas Kitchens Office, the Renovation Section and the Storehouses Section. Housed at 11 Lutomierska Street, the Administrators' Office was established in the second half of April 1940 and its activity did not change after the sealing of the ghetto. Throughout 1940, Pinkus managed the Office, whose competences have been discussed in the first chapter of this work.

The Caretakers' Office dealt with all matters related to the caretakers of buildings located within the closed district. The head was Fiszbajn, member of the Presidium of the Economic and Financial Department. In the first period from the closure of the ghetto until the end of October 1940, the vast majority of caretakers was paid by the house com-

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159 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gerson Gustav, p. 90; ibid., entry: Lipnowski Chaim Lajb, p. 143; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gerson Gustav, p. 140; ibid., entry: Lipnowski Chaim Lajb, p. 239.

160 D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 54.

161 AYIVO, RG-241/222, Announcement no. 97 dated August 4, 1940, p. 1. The point was initially at 30 Łagiewnicka Street.

162 In the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* it was stated that "before the war he was trading in waste on a large scale"– APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Krauskopf Izrael, p. 132; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Krauskopf Izrael, p. 221.

163 AYIVO, RG 241/239, Announcement no. 115 dated August 29, 1940, p. 1.

164 Ibid., RG 241/265, Announcement no. 142 dated October 16, 1940, p. 1.

165 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Zak Szmul, p. 291; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Zak Szmul, p. 454.

166 D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 53–54.

167 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 51; ibid., Leksykon, p. 274–275.

Chimney Sweeps Brigade. In the middle with the white jacket Henryk Kaufman – head of the Brigade (Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

mittees (1,430 of 1,659); others (229) received salary in cash from the administration of the Jewish ghetto. On November 1, 1940, all caretakers were employed by the Economic and Financial Department and their number was reduced to 1,096 in December 1940. As a result of including caretakers in the structure of the administration, all issues handled by them henceforth had to go through the Economic and Financial Department, which considerably slowed down the decision-making process "because the department is characterized by a specific bureaucracy," as one of the authors of the study compiled by the Archive Department euphemistically put it.[168] In winter 1940, the situation resulted in many problems: "And so, during the long and harsh winter months, the buildings were swamped with snow and dirt, because caretakers completely ignored the orders of their tenants," stated the above-cited text.[169] The competence of the Office included inspection of property. From April until December 1940, 133 inspections were carried out in 2,269 residential buildings. "No need to ponder over the meaning of all these inspections, the numbers speak for themselves enough," the author judged sternly. This cell was also in charge of garden guards, who over time passed under the Order Service. [170] The situation changed only after the reorganization of the Office.

The Chimney Sweeps Brigade was established on May 28, 1940. Initially, the sweeps were paid, like caretakers, by house committees, but on November 7, 1940, they were employed by the Economic and Financial Department and formally became its subordi-

[168] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 118.
[169] Ibid.
[170] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 43.

nates, like the Fire Brigade. The director of both of these formations was Henryk Kaufman. The crew consisted of 43 chimney sweeps, although it was difficult to find them as there were no Jews in that profession. Therefore, the chimney sweeps were recruited mainly from tinsmiths who knew how to work at height and had dealt with chimney sweeps in the past. Additional training was organized, resulting in a well-functioning division of chimney sweeps.

In the division, a special record file was created[171] of all buildings in the ghetto based on their districts of the Order Service. Each building had a card, on which the chimney sweep noted comments on required repairs, as well as renovations done. Each of the chimney sweeps also had his work book, in which house caretakers recorded every job. The work of the chimney sweeps was also monitored by a group of five controllers, employed by the division, and the documentation was also verified by the German authorities. In the absence of proper equipment, all instruments were made by the chimney sweeps in the ghetto.[172]

The Chimney Sweeps Brigade shared the leadership with the Fire Brigade. As mentioned in the previous section, the unit was formed before the closure of the borders of the ghetto in March 1940 and approved by Rumkowski on April 1st. The main organizer of the Fire Brigade was Henryk Kaufman. In fact, the formation began operations June 18, 1940, with a crew of 100 men.

Obtaining appropriate firefighting equipment was a serious problem, and after the closure of the borders of the ghetto, the situation only deteriorated. In the first months, the brigade managed to acquire and renovate a truck, turning it into a fire truck and fitting it with appropriate equipment. Later, the Fire Brigade obtained a renovated motorcycle with a sidecar. At the end of August 1940 after a visit of the German fire department inspector in the Warthegau, the brigade received an additional tanker, pumps and ladders.[173] Firefighters wore a special cap, similar to those worn by the Order Service, and a yellow-white arm band with appropriate insignia.

Just like in the division of chimney sweeps, the Fire Brigade also had its own records of all buildings in the ghetto, kept in the office of the head. When firefighters received a call, they could check what type of building required intervention, where the entrance was, or whether there was a well in the vicinity. The brigade also developed a special procedure. Within thirty seconds of the announcement of the alarm, firefighters had to be ready to leave. By the end of August 1941, nearly 380 incidents of fires were recorded. In addition, on five occasions, firefighters participated in the operation of retrieving suicide victims from wells and toilets. The command of the Fire Brigade organized food for the crew and eventually started to issue meals for poor children. With time, the number of meals increased to 2,000 daily. This operation was carried out until the end of 1940.[174] In September 1941, the Fire Brigade and Chimney Sweeps Department was taken over by the Order Service, and thus separated from the Economic Department.[175]

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171 The records partially survived – APŁ, PSŻ 451.

172 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Straż i kominiarze, p. 78–80.

173 Ibid. There are preserved photographs featuring firefighting equipment, some of which have been published in *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto 1940–1944*, eds. J. Baranowski, S.M. Nowinowski, Łódź 2009, p. 74–75.

174 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Straż i kominiarze, p. 80–82.

175 D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 43; I. Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto. A History*, ed. R.M. Shapiro, Bloomington 2008, p. 44.

The Economic and Financial Department was also in charge of the Waste Disposal Office. Initially, the disposal of garbage and feces was the responsibility of house committees, which paid people who provided such services. Probably in autumn 1940, during the reorganization of the Managment Department, managing municipal utilities fell within its competence, too. The division kept records of the disposal of waste and feces as well as a register of owners of water carts and garbage trolleys. The Office did not have its own employees, but hired people who provided the service of waste disposal.[176] Carts had special numbers registered in the Department's documentation, and based on them controllers checked whether the jobs were done. The ghetto was divided into zones, to which hired fecalists and garbage disposal workers were allocated. The order to organize waste disposal was issued at the request of the administrator, and the execution of the work was confirmed by the caretaker.[177]

Hiring people to carry out waste disposal was a serious burden for the budget of the department, but on the other hand it provided employment for hundreds of people without other sources of income, who otherwise would have to ask for help to the Benefits Department, which would entail further expenditure for the Community.[178]

The Gas Kitchens Office was established in order to settle the matter of renting gas cookers by the hour by residents of several houses connected to the municipal network. People renting out access to the cookers paid special tax as other "private" entrepreneurs. Their role, however, was taken over by the discussed unit of the Economic and Financial Department, which deprived approximately 100 families of income. The newly organized communal gas kitchens employed about 300 people. This restriction of private initiative was very badly received by the inhabitants of the ghetto. "All of this could be explained if it had brought some relief for the population, but it is the exact opposite! The decision was probably the most unfortunate, because no approach from the bureaucratic point of view to this issue can match private initiative," wrote one of the employees of the Archive Department.

The introduction of fixed opening hours and special tickets for access to gas was meant to limit abuse – private owners started charging exorbitant prices for access to the kitchen. In fact, it contributed to a reduction of access points.

"At 38 Zgierska, there are two gas points [...] When I recall the functioning of these points when they were privately operated, I am full of admiration for those organizers. I was not aware of it and I would certainly never notice it, if not for this terrible chaos and disorder at these points since they have been taken over by commissioners,"[179] says the same study prepared for the Archive Department. Despite negative reception, gas kitchens continued to operate throughout 1941.

The Economic and Financial Department was in charge of the Renovation Section, responsible for carrying out maintenance work in administration buildings, the repair of chimneys and furnaces, ghetto fence maintenance, the repair of roofs and wells, as well as the demolition of wooden objects. Requests for repair were sent to the Section by caretakers, then administrators, having examined them, sent out repair crews. From

[176] In 1941 the fees ranged from 1 to 2 mk for a trash cart and 1.2 to 5.5 mk for a waste wagon.
[177] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 107.
[178] Ibid., p. 107–108.
[179] Ibid., p. 106.

May to December 1940, 1,086 applications were submitted for necessary repairs.[180] The division had to cope with serious problems – as a result of the catastrophic condition of the infrastructure in the ghetto, there were so many calls that the repair crews were unable to reach everyone on time. Another problem was the lack of suitable materials. Also criticized was the "bureaucratic attitude" of officials from the Economic and Financial Department, which resulted in a delay in carrying out repairs.[181]

Apart from the Renovation Section, on July 1, 1940, the Public Works Department was established, which replaced the Vocations Office. This unit, headed by Eng. E. Waldman, was divided into the Construction Section and the Work Allocation Section. It was responsible for earthworks as well as cleaning and demolition within the ghetto. In addition, employees of the Department were responsible for shoveling snow in the streets, removing ice from wastewater, grubbing at the cemetery, digging graves in the winter and carrying out sanitary works (preparing and cleaning latrines and garbage disposal sites). The Department was also responsible for setting up the gardens on the former landfill on Smugowa Street. It took over the Vocations Office with regard to providing quotas of workers who were taken by the German authorities to work at Bałucki Marketsquare and outside the ghetto. After the Economic and Financial Department was established, the Renovation Section was combined with the former Public Works Department into one Public Works and Renovation Department.[182]

It is unclear how exactly the above institution was associated with the Construction Department, operating from June 10, 1940. In the end of 1940, both units operated in parallel.[183] The head of the construction Department was a well-known Łódź architect, Eng. Ignacy (Izaak) Gutman.[184] The offices were located at 8 Ceglana Street. The institution was responsible for the reconstruction, building and general repairs of all public buildings, such as the offices of various departments, orphanages, hospitals, schools, kitchens, the cemetery and labor divisions. The Construction Department was also responsible for erecting wooden footbridges over Zgierska and Limanowskiego Streets in the first half of 1940 as well as the refurbishment of the seat of the Board of the Ghetto, located outside the ghetto on Cegielniana Street.[185]

The Department was divided into the Central Office located at 8 Ceglana Street, which housed the Secretariat, accounting, warehouses and workshops: ironworks, blacksmith, carpenter, sheet-metal, manufacturer of refractory ovens, as well as the Construction Section and the Sanitary Installation Section. The Construction Section employed two technicians – Harry Olszer,[186] responsible for the area of Marysin, and E. Tyller, supervis-

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[180] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 43; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 108–109. Repair sections also operated in other departments, including the Provisioning Department and the Kitchens Department, they will be discussed with relevant institutions.

[181] Ibid., p. 109.

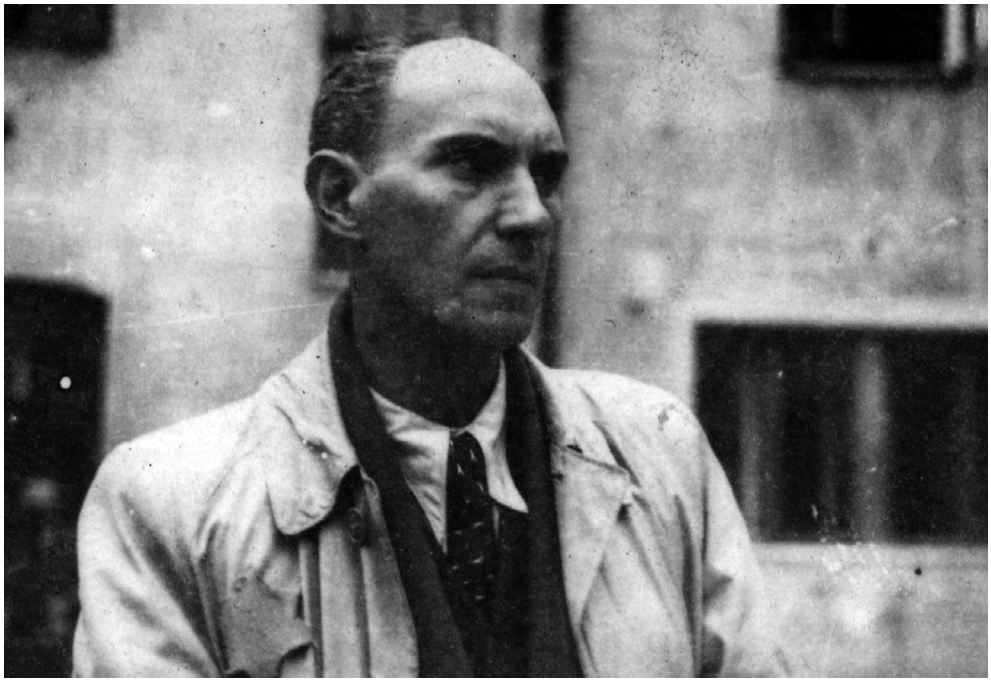
[182] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 41.

[183] *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 132–133.

[184] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gutman Izak, p. 108; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gutman Izak, p. 167. After the war, the Civil Court at the Central Committee of Polish Jews heard a case against Gutman. In its course the vast majority of witnesses confirmed that Gutman was held in high regard – AŻIH, 313/39, Izaak Gutman, p. 1–79.

[185] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 11 May 1941, p. 196; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 359. Renovation of the tenement house at 157 Moltkestrasse started in May 1941.

[186] *The Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* describes Olszer as "one of the most capable engineers in the field of construction"– APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Olszer Harry, p. 182–184; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Olszer Harry, p. 278–279.



Ignacy Gutman – head of the Construction Department
(State Archive in Łódź)

ing construction sites. The Sanitary Installation Section was headed by Eng. Berman and divided into two sections: central heating and sewage. In the end of 1940, the Electrical Department was organized. The head of the Department was also in charge of individual work details, the number of locations of which was variable, dependent on the ongoing work. At the end of 1940, the Department employed approximately 530 people, including about 350 unskilled workers.[187]

As previously mentioned, the conglomerate of the Economic and Financial Department included the Agricultural Department. It was created out of the converted Plantation Department, in operation beginning April 17, 1940, and subject to the Economic Department. After the ghetto was sealed, the unit continued to be managed by the committee consisting of Emil Dąb, Eng. Stanislaw Gliksman, Zygmunt Grynszpan and Zylberbogen.[188] On June 14, 1940, the division was reorganized and converted into the independent Agricultural Department. Appointed as the new head was agronomy engineer Jakub Poznański and the office was moved from 14 Dworska Street to 27 Franciszkańska Street. The Department was divided into three sections: Gardening and Plantation, Agricultural, and Hachshara.[189]

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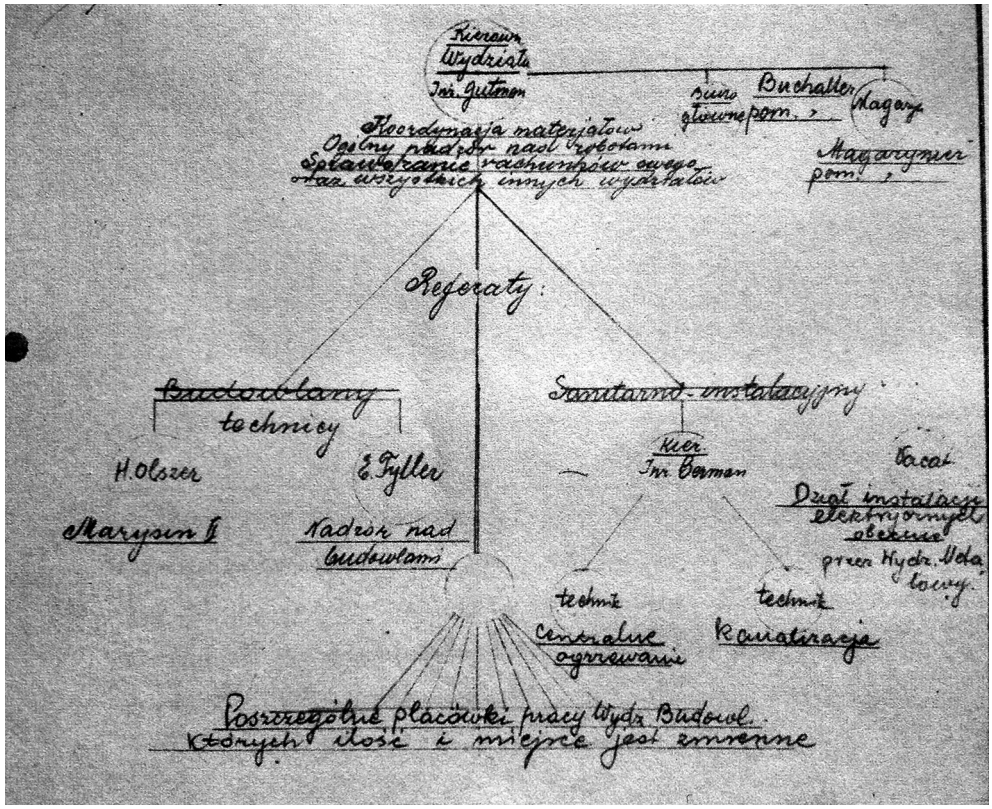
[187] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 23–24.

[188] Poznański reports that another member of the management team was Emil Blum, "a landed squire from the Poznań region." However, we have been unable to find any more information about him – J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 27.

[189] Hachshara (Heb.) – education. Youth movement focused on vocational training and preparation for life in Palestine. After the closure of the ghetto, youth and children groups were in Marysin, associated with the Zionist party and the socialist Bund, which established agricultural collectives as part of Hachsharas − a form of kibbutz, based on



Organizational chart of the Construction Department from December 23, 1940 (State Archive in Łódź)

The Hachshara Section was founded in May 1940, thus before the Agricultural Department became independent. Its creator, Jakub Poznański, noted in his diary that the main motivation for the establishment of such a body was "to overcome the monotony of the gray days in the ghetto," and to create a place for young people who wanted to learn farming. Very quickly, he managed to gather a large group of young people, primarily associated with the Zionist movement, although there were also representatives of other groups, including the Socialist Bund. These groups were divided according

plots received from the Department of Agriculture. Members of the group organized meetings, political debates and school activities (Hebrew, Jewish history, Palestine geography), as well as cultural events. There were about 1,000 young people involved in Hachsharas. The activities of all groups were coordinated by the Kibbutz Execution Board (Vaad Hakibbutzim). They were supervised by the 5th Area of the Order Service operating in Marysin. Hachsharas were dissolved by Rumkowski in early 1941 – in January the Bund kibbutz was disbanded, followed by the remaining groups in March. According to Izrael Tabaksblat, the reason was that Rumkowski saw Hachshara as a competitor and a potential source of opposition. Rumkowski was also unable to exercise complete control over the movement, despite the efforts of the 5th Area of the Order Service, robberies and unlawful demolitions occurred in Marysin, and the youth was out of control in general – AŻIH, 301/634, Relacja Izraela Tabaksblata, part 2, p. 7; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 157–166; I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 330–333; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, p. 129; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 303––304; Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs of the Lodz Ghetto*, Toronto 2003, p. 11–13; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 45–46.

to a system created by Poznański. Zionists, who were divided internally according to political orientation, were marked with letters of the alphabet. Such an option was chosen "to disclose in the assembly even the smallest differences when it comes to politics provoked problems." Non-Zionist groups were labeled with Roman numerals. The third group consisted of children – secondary school students, labeled with Arabic numerals. The division kept records of about 30 youth groups representing various ideologies.[190] The agricultural Department allocated these groups plots of land and sometimes designated spaces in nearby buildings where they organized agricultural collectives. Aside from learning how to work the land, they carried out educational and political activity.[191] Some young people grouped in Hachsharas were employed at the Agricultural Department in exchange for full board.

As mentioned above, in June 1940, the department was reorganized. According to Poznański, the reason was the growing conflict between the management of the institution:

> Meanwhile, conflicts and intrigue started within the committee itself [i.e, the management of the former Gardening and Plantation Section] [...] Gliksman demanded to be called the chairman started fighting against Zylberbogen, who in turn tried to remove the former from power. Both of them were slandered and denounced by Grynszpan and Dąb, either in cahoots, or separately. One of them appropriated the title of the superintendent, the other [...] engineer.[192]

Another problem was the chaos in their financial records, as well as the fact that their heads did not have any control over subordinate officials nor any knowledge of their work. The Department saw many abuses with the lease and distribution of seedlings, as well as allocation to work on land owned by the Department. Plantations were in fact an opportunity to earn money, and above all, extra produce.[193]

On June 14, 1940, Jakub Poznański was made head of the institution, and it was his initiative that resulted in the unit being promoted to the rank of a Department. At his request, Rumkowski ordered the takeover of all gardens that were still in private hands.[194] Aside from the existing Hachshara Section, the Gardening and Plantation Section was formed with Gliksman at the helm, as well as the Agricultural Division, directed by Emil Blum. The competence of the Gardening and Plantation Section included handling matters related to gardens and plantations owned by the administration as well as supervising private plots. Agricultural Section was responsible for matters related to land cultivation

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[190] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 27–28; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 303–304; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 157–158.

[191] Political activity was one of the factors that eventually led to dissolution of Hachsharas. Cf. footnote 162.

[192] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 28. The phenomenon of adding titles to the ghetto was so frequent that the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* compiled in the Archives included the entry "Gettoingenieur" ("Ghetto Engineer"): "Moniker of people who were given the courtesy title of 'engineer' even though they were not entitled to use it" – AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gettoingenieur, p. 146.

[193] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 29; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 293–294.

[194] The largest plots of this type were at 40 Limanowskiego Street, 90 Marysińska Street, 20 Bracka Street, 12 and 19 Tokarzewskiego Street and in the area of the former rubbish dump on Smugowa Street.

and animal husbandry. This latter area turned out to be so important, as there was a number of farm animals in the ghetto, including goats.[195]

On September 11, 1940, Rumkowski dissolved the Agriculture Department and Poznański was ordered to fire all employees. The dissolution of the Department was to be carried out by the Liquidation Committee composed of Bączkowski, Nudelman and Miller, with Zylberbogen as financial advisor. Poznański accused Gryszpan and Dąb of denunciation, pointing out their numerous abuses, including the fact that they took Hachshara workers to work on their private plots without registering them in the Department.[196] The Department was dissolved[197] and its competences were taken over by the demoted Plantation Section, reporting to the Economic and Financial Department. The Agricultural Department was re-established in its original form in spring 1941, which will be discussed later.

On September 12, 1940, the Breeding Department was separated, which took over part of the competences of the liquidated Agricultural Department. The department had five stables with about 1,000 goats, 11 cows and about 10 horses owned by the Jewish administration.[198] At the beginning of 1941, the institution was completely reorganized and given a new name: the Animal Husbandry Department.[199]

Control Authorities

The final unit operating under the Economic and Financial Department was the Central Control Office. It was created on August 1, 1940,[200] as an independent institution directly reporting to the Eldest of the Jews, which Rumkowski announced in his Announcement No. 102.[201] It was only in November 1940 that the office was transferred to the Economic and Financial Department. The headquarters of the office was located at 10 Podrzeczna Street,[202] and its managers were Janot Lewy and engineer Seweryn Landsberg. Also employed there were Fajwel Hertz, Włodzimierz Luboszyc and Izaak Szuster.[203]

The study on public kitchens prepared at the Archive Department eloquently defined tasks of the situation as "reaching to the true sources of poverty and helping."[204] In fact, the

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[195] At the beginning of July 1940, several hundred goats were brought to the ghetto, which were placed in stables at 21, 48 and 56 Marysińska Street. According to Poznański's diary the goats were in terrible state, and many of them died as a result of an epidemic of foot-and-mouth disease, which broke out soon after the animals were brought to the ghetto – J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 30–31. Cf. also APŁ, PSŻ 801, Stan pogłowia zwierząt w getcie, p. 1.

[196] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 33.

[197] D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja żydowska w Łodzi i jej agendy w okresie od początku okupacji do zamknięcia getta (8 IX 1939 r. – 30 IV 1940 r.)*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1963, no. 45/46, p. 136.

[198] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 45.

[199] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 366.

[200] The study on the Economic and Financial Department prepared in the Archive Department also cites July 1st as the day of the establishment of the Central Control Office – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 113.

[201] AYIVO, RG 241/226, Announcement no. 102 dated August 1, 1940, p. 1.

[202] *Spis wydziałów...*, p. 132.

[203] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Herc Fajwel, p. 114; ibid., entry: Luboszyc Włodzimierz, p. 140; ibid., entry: Szuster Izaak, p. 254; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Herc Fajwel, p. 178; ibid., entry: Luboszyc Włodzimierz, p. 243; ibid., entry: Szuster Izaak, p. 385; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 117, 119.

[204] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 190.

first task of the office was giving out vouchers for dinners, which were issued in the communal kitchen at 26 Zgierska Street. Gradually, the scope of its activity expanded, gaining control powers. Using specially developed questionnaires distributed by the controllers, the office enquired about housing, material and sanitary conditions as well as the operation of self-help institutions – house committees and kitchens. The office was authorized to receive any complaints about their activities. Based on questionnaires, records were compiled, consisting of notebooks containing information about all houses and families living in them, arranged according to the numbering of apartments. Any changes were registered there. At the same time, an alphabetical register of residents was created.[205]

The scope of competences of the situation is described in a report of the inspections carried out by the office from July 1st until the end of October 1940. Over that period, it inspected 2,369 homes in terms of the number of children, the elderly and the sick, the number of people using social welfare, the number of the poor not using social welfare, the number of those who were better, had income, or were employed in the Jewish administration, as well as the efficiency of house and block committees and the sanitary condition of the building. Statements summarizing the carried out inspection were sent to the relevant administration departments – Sanitary (316 cases), Health (79), Economic (328), Provisioning (87), Housing (24) and Sanitary Police (10).[206] In that period, the office received 830 complaints about the activity of house and block committees, most of which concerned incorrect distribution of food products and their appropriation, as well as driving up the cost of waste disposal.[207] The office also conducted periodic audits at the request of other departments, including the Social Welfare Department, Civil Registry Department, the Personnel Department and the Public Works Department.[208]

In August 1940, the office took complete control over the distribution of meal vouchers because of numerous cases of trafficking. In order to establish who was in need of free vouchers, a registration was carried out, which helped to determine the exact number − 82,812 people. This group was then divided into categories of "needy," "very needy" and "most needy," and on that basis, distributed 48,376 vouchers for free meals were distributed in September 1940.[209]

At the request of the Civil Registry Department, the institution inspected the financial situation of the parents of newborn children asking for a reduction or waiver of fees for birth and identity certificates. Sometimes, after examining the financial status of the petitioners, they received medical vouchers or a referral for a bath.[210]

The study on the Central Control Office done at the Archive Department asserts that reports compiled by the institution where more than passionless official narrative: "Reading reports of the inspectors of the Central Control Office is a pleasure, because they are not dry descriptions of facts, but passionate personal interventions. Each inspector, having

[205] Ibid., vol. 5, p. 113, 190–192; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 47.
[206] Most likely a reference to the Sanitary Control Division of the Order Service.
[207] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 113–114.
[208] Between 22 July and 19 September 1940, 4355 declarations were audited at the request of the Department of Social Welfare. Between August 1st and October 31st 1940, 3445 questionnaires of the Public Works Department were checked – ibid., p. 115.
[209] Ibid. The division into categories was as follows: people in need – 16,177, people urgently in need – 25,535, people most urgently in need – 41,100.
[210] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 115.

found the actual state of affairs, passes his judgement, mostly marked by sincere sympathy for the poor he had just surveyed, and in most cases asks the executives of the Central Control Office to make the necessary steps in the authoritative instance." At the end, the archivist added, "This is completely different than the traditional bureaucratic inspection, which currently some controllers of the Financial Department are carrying out."[211]

To be able to carry out all their tasks, the Central Control Office was divided into two sections, which were further divided into divisions. The Control Department included the General Division, House Committees Division, House Kitchen Division, Division of Orders from/ by Other Departments. Within the Food Department (Food Aid), there was the Food Allocation Division and the Control Division.[212]

Notwithstanding the above departments, another part of the Central Control Office was a small unit in charge of "aria" property left in the ghetto, operating as the Control Committee for Property Left in the Ghetto by Germans and Poles. The Committee, whose offices were located at 20 Dworska Street, employed three officials, including the head, lawyer Abraham Schwebel, who had been deported from Vienna in the autumn of 1941. The institution handled the transfer of movables to the offices of the German Management Board of the Ghetto at Bałucki Marketsquare, collecting rent arrears for former "Aryan" owners for the period until the sealing of the ghetto, providing advanced promissory notes and checks, processing applications for reimbursement of debts incurred by ghetto inhabitants submitted by Germans and Poles, and subsequently sent by the German authorities to the Committee, interviewing debtors and witnesses in these cases and handling the correspondence with the German authorities (via the office). Contingent on the approval of the German authorities, the Committee also decided to grant various units of the ghetto administration individual items of "Aryan" property or equipment located in the closed district. The Committee was disbanded in December 1942.[213]

Gradually, the scope of competence of the Central Control Office expanded, covering house committees and operating since the spring of 1940.[214] Previously associated with the Economic Department, the committees developed in the first half of 1940, focusing tenants of the property (house committees), the entire block (block committees) or the area of the ghetto (district committees). Members of the committees elected their representatives, who were responsible for collecting food rations in designated Community shops – the so-called cooperatives – and distributing it among tenants. In mid-1940, about 700 committees were active.[215]

In June 1940, the committees initiated the Coffee House Kitchen, where coffee committee members prepared together, saving fuel and offering access to coffee for persons deprived of warm beverages. Gradually, the kitchens began to prepare meals, which were then sold at the price of products. Committee members did not receive any compensation – their work had a social character. This allowed people to save funds that could be used to purchase additional products. On the other hand, a system of a free roster and a lack of

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[211] Ibid., p. 116.
[212] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 47.
[213] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 54.
[214] Cf. Chapter 1.4.
[215] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 313.

personal responsibility led to disruptions in the operation of kitchens and adversely affected the order. The first such facilities opened at 13 Zielna Street and 32 Brzezińska Street.[216]

District and block committees operated until August 20, 1940, when Rumkowski decided to disband them. The decision was published in Announcement No. 108, where the Eldest ordered the members of district and block committees of pass all matters to house committees by August 23, 1940.[217] The decision was explained by the "lubberly" work of block committees, which had too many members and therefore were not functioning as smoothly as smaller units – house committees.[218]

In the same month, the Eldest of the Jews declared the establishment of a number of new kitchens "for all," which were intended to issue 10,000 meals a day. It was not a random moment – at the time, hunger protests broke out in the ghetto against Rumkowski and his politics of food distribution.[219] To calm the angry, starving inhabitants of the ghetto, he also pledged to continue to support kitchens founded by house and block committees. The Announcement No. 107 of August 13, 1940, stated:

> Announcement No. 107
> Subject: House kitchens organized by house committees.
> In connection with Announcement No. 104 I give my messages to the following: I have decided to help house committees om organizing general house kitchens. To this end, I call house committees to submit written applications for authorization to create such a kitchen. These applications should be submitted to the Housing Department at 13 Lutomierska Street. The committees will discuss various issues pertaining to kitchens; in any case it is not permissible to open one without any such prior authorization. Some house committees occupied premises and boilers on their own: all boilers stand at my disposal. I stress that shall undertake severe measures against those house committees that will occupy premises and boilers without my prior permission. Existing house kitchens should also submit a relevant application within three days and obtain approval.[220]

The note is evidence of the policy of the Eldest of the Jews, whose aiming intended to take over the supervision and control over grassroots initiatives undertaken by the ghetto inhabitants.

Applications for legalization directed to the Housing Department were then transferred to the Central Control Office. Its employees, the so-called *lustratorzy* (surveyors) not only conducted thorough inspections of kitchens, but also of house committees themselves, "paying attention in the first place whether they were headed by trustworthy persons."[221]

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[216] Ibid., Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 191.

[217] AYIVO, RG 241/232, Announcement No. 108 dated 20 August 1940, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 313.

[218] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 95.

[219] In August and September 1940, first protests against Rumkowski's policy took place. The leaders were the so-called "strong ones": bakers, butchers, carters and fish mongers. The Order Service, which brutally pacified the demonstrations, was overwhelmed – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 328; Announcement no. 104 dated August 12, 1940 r. [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 135–136.

[220] AYIVO, RG 241/231, Announcement no. 107 dated August 13, 1940, p. 1; *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 136.

[221] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 191.

At the same time, the Housing Department developed an outline of a uniform statute for all committees.[222] Here also presented were the results of the surveys carried out by the Central Control Office – advisers Wolf Ulinower and Ber Częstochowski heard the reports of Józef Flasz and Dawid Rozenberg. On September 4, 1940, Rumkowski approved an allocation of 30T of potatoes to kitchen organized by the committees. They did not make it directly to the public, but rather they were distributed by one of the units of the Central Control Office – Food Division. Kitchens that received the products were required to submit weekly reports to the office and could be visited by "irregular kitchen inspections." In exchange for products and fuel, kitchens were ordered to establish maximum prices on soups sold for 20Pf per portion. The allocated potatoes were equivalent to free meal issued – it was assumed that each 700 meals corresponded to 100kg of potatoes.[223] Kitchens approved by the Housing Department issued about 50,000 soups per day, about 20% of which were free of charge. In addition to running the kitchens, house committees were responsible for the distribution of bread among their members – on November 4,1940, rationing of bread allocations was introduced, up to 30dkg per day.[224]

Abuse was rife among the committees. Izrael Tabaksblat wrote in his report:

> Immediately "activists" appeared, for whom the social boiler is never non-kosher, and so the so-called house kitchens emerged, cooking dinners for residents of the house. It created a wide field for abuse and villainy. Only a small number of kitchens are solid and well maintained, while the overwhelming majority evolved into a source of income for individuals who knew how to take advantage of the economic situation. Those individuals rushed to the house and block committees [...] Those uninvited "social activists" have become a scourge of the ghetto.[225]

As mentioned above, the activities of the committees was gradually reduced due to the their competence being taken over by other institutions of the Eldest of the Jews. The rationale behind this was that the Central Control Office was flooded with complaints about the activities of the committees. On November 6, 1940, committees were given the right to collect fees from residents for household expenses including salaries for caretakers, among others, which Rumkowski announced in Announcement No. 157.[226] On November 1, 1940, the right to collect the rent and the duty to maintain order was transferred to the Financial and Economic Department. All cash collected at the cash desks by the committees and all the documents were to be submitted to administrators.[227] With the introduction of food rationing, which will be discussed later herein, the committees actually lost the purpose and were disbanded in the beginning of January 1941.[228]

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[222] It included the principle that the management of the committee was to consist of at least three members and a recommendation for the general meeting to appoint audit committees – ibid., p. 186, 191.

[223] Ibid., p. 173, 192.

[224] That day, a delivery of about fifty tons of bread baked in the city arrived in the ghetto for the first time since its closure – ibid., Fragment opracowania o działalności piekarń, p. 148.

[225] Cited in I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 201–202.

[226] AYIVO, RG 241/280, Announcement no. 157 dated November 6, 1940, p. 1.

[227] Ibid.; AŻIH, 205/455, Rok za drutem..., p. 19.

[228] This is indicated in the Chronicle in entries dated January 17, 26 and 29, 1941, containing information on the new organization of firewood and food distribution, which was to replace the existing competences of former home and

At the end of 1940, the Central Control Office was dissolved. Limiting the role of house committees, and later their dissolution and acquisition of competence in matters pertaining to kitchen by the Department of Kitchens seriously depleted the responsibilities of the office. Some of the responsibility related to control was taken over by the Benefits Department and the Information Department, and above all, the Supreme Control Chamber (*Najwyższa Izba Kontroli*, NIK) founded in November 1940.[229] The Central Control Office operated later as a unit within the Financial and Economic Department, handling complaints, organizing interviews for various departments and controlling kitchens, but in December 1940 some of the staff from the office were delegated to other cells – 25 people were allocated to work in the Benefits Department, the Supreme Control Chamber and Financial and Economic Department and went to work as commissioners in kitchens. In January 1941, the last month of the Office, 24 complaints were accepted and about 1,500 interviews carried out.[230] The heads, Lewy and Landsberg, were transferred to the disposal of the Personnel Department, while documentation went to the ghetto archive.

The Supreme Control Chamber was established on November 6, 1940. Rumkowski announced it to the ghetto inhabitants in the Announcement No. 158. As stated before, the Chamber was established "in order to exterminate all kinds of offenses and to prevent possible abuses in the future" and gained control rights, not only over all agencies of the Jewish ghetto administration, but also of "all manifestations of collective life of the population of the ghetto."[231] In contrast to the Central Control Office, the NIK was not subject to the Financial and Economic Department, but operated as an independent unit, reporting only to the Eldest of the Jews, and its broad control powers made it an institution superior to the rest of the Departments.

The office of the NIK was initially housed at 4 Kościelny Square, then at 4 Dworska Street, and later at 25 Łagiewnicka Street. The superior body of the Supreme Control Chamber was a Committee composed of nine members, solemnly sworn to the position by the Elder of the Jews in the presence of rabbis.[232] Four members of the committee formed a presidium headed by Nikodem Szpet, with Dawid Fabrykant, Hersz B. Litwin and Bencjon Strykowski. Herman Szyffer was appointed secretary of the presidium. Other members of the committee were Meir Perle, Leon Rozenblat, Leon Szykier and J. Tenenbaum.[233] Such a structure of the leadership of the institution of the Eldest of the Jews had no equivalent in other units. Aside from the committee, the NIK initially employed 13 inspectors.

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block committees – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 17 January 1941, p. 21; ibid., entry dated 26 January 1941, p. 47; ibid., entry dated 29 January 1941, p. 49; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 48.

[229] Ibid., p. 47–48.

[230] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 116.

[231] AYIVO, RG 241/281, Announcement no. 158 dated November 6, 1940, p. 1.

[232] *Notatka o położeniu gospodarczym getta łódzkiego w końcu stycznia 1941 r.* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 160.

[233] APŁ, PSŻ 508, Okólnik Najwyższej Izby Kontroli z 11 XI 1940, p. 4; ibid., PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 96–97; ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Szyffer Hermann, p. 256; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Szyffer Hermann, p. 387; *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 129–130; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 321. In 1940, Pinkus Gerszowski joined the presidium – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 92; ibid., entry: Rozenblatt Leon, p. 216–217; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 141; ibid., entry: Rozenblatt Leon, p. 336–337.

The NIK was divided into four divisions and a secretariat coordinating their work. The Division of Financing the Labor Divisions was tasked with controlling the advisability of expenditure incurred by labor divisions, approving the budget of these institutions and conducting periodic checks. The institution was in charge of those departments for which the Jewish administration allocated money to pay salaries and other expenses related to production and purchase of raw materials. The Complaints Division accepted and handled complaints from ghetto residents concerning many aspects of social and economic life in the closed district. As for matters that fell within the competence of other departments, the Division submitted them to the relevant institutions. The Penal Division was responsible for cooperation with the Office of Investigation of the Order Service in connection with inspections carried out by inspectors of the Central Control Office assigned to the NIK. This division oversaw cases referred to the Court by the NIK concerning detected frauds and irregularities. NIK's main instrument of control was the Bookkeeping Control Division. Auditor-accountants conducted regular, *ad hoc* (e.g., based on an of the management order or decision of the chairman of the Main Committee) checks in all labor divisions and departments of the Jewish administration. The division had extensive records containing information about provisioning. The staff conducted spot inspections of goods and administrative departments on the basis of submitted reports. Materials developed in this division provided the basis for regular weekly reports submitted to the Eldest of the Jews.[234]

It is evident, therefore, based on the scope of competences of its individual units, that the Supreme Control Chamber had very broad powers. The cited announcement indicated that in case of irregularities management of the NIK could immediately remove any officials "regardless of their function." The NIK auditors carried special identity cards and had the right of entering into any office or a private home in order to conduct searches; they also carried out personal searches and temporarily detained "at my [i.e., Rumkowski's – AS] discretion or the Court."[235] By the end of 1940, the unit was organized and developed its activities in the following year.

Social Welfare

The closing of the ghetto intensified the process of impoverishment of its inhabitants, which in turn resulted in an increased burden that social welfare had to bear. The rapid proliferation of tasks forced the expansion of the Social Welfare Department and its subordinate institutions. Beginning March 1940, the Department headquarters was located at 32 Młynarska Street, but the office was cramped and made it difficult to deal with petitioners; so, in the spring of 1940, it was moved to 3 Krawiecka Street.[236]

After the borders of the ghetto were closed, the main task of the Social Welfare Department led by Mosze Zażujer was the allocation of relief grants and distribution of food products. On one hand, the beneficiaries were the poor inhabitants of the ghetto, while on

[234] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 96–97. There are incomplete data on the number of officials employed in particular divisions: Secretariat – 2 people, Complaints – 1 person, Division of Control – 17 people – ibid., p. 97.

[235] AYIVO, RG 241/281, Announcement no. 158 dated November 6, 1940, p. 1; *Notatka o położeniu...*, p. 160; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 321.

[236] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 363; D. Dąbrowska, *Administracja...*, p. 129.

the other hand, Welfare provided services to its own subordinate institutions: the orphanage, the home for the infirm, and other homeless shelters.[237]

An important branch of Welfare was the maintenance of Community kitchens (also people's kitchens) which operated independently from the previously described kitchens organized by house committees. The first public kitchen was launched at the end of April 1940 at 26 Zgierska Street.[238] In addition, in mid-1940 there were other such facilities in the closed district, at 32 Młynarska and 10 Ceglana Street (i.e. the kitchen for intelligentsia), as well as kitchen operating at tailoring divisions at 49 Łagiewnicka and Jakuba 10 Streets. The kitchens, reporting to the Division of Kitchens, initially issued about 45,000 meals per day and by the end of 1940, the number increased to 130,000. The most popular kitchen was located at 26 Zgierska Street, because it was there that all people who did not have any means to buy a meal were sent. "Thousands of consumers flocked to that facility every day, lines formed from early morning until late afternoon," the staff of the Archive Department reported in a study. The same text also notes the ill-functioning system of distributing meal cards, which generated injustice: "There was no efficient system, some people go the whole lunch of meal cards, while others applied for a single one in vain."[239]

The Community kitchen at 32 Młynarska Street operated from November 3, 1940, and was the largest of its kind in the ghetto. The opening ceremony was attended by Rumkowski. It issued 13,000 meals per day.[240] The kitchen at 10 Ceglana Street operated from August 24, 1940, and was intended for representatives of the impoverished intelligentsia, hence its unofficial name. The organizing committee responsible for the establishment of this institution consisted of Pinkus Gerszowski, Benjamin Perlsztajn and Ruwen Kenigsberg. The patroness of the kitchen at Ceglana Street was Helena Rumkowska, sister of the Eldest of the Jews. She monitored very carefully every aspect of the facility's operation, from buying table linen to the selection of the personnel. Compared with others, the kitchen was well-stocked with food, so many people tried to get the opportunity to dine at that establishment.[241] In addition, it had the opinion of very clean and well managed. "As a result, the consumer ate on a clean white tablecloth, from ascetic tableware, surrounded by people of more or less matching standards."[242] In addition to these institutions the Department of Kitchens also administered the social kitchens located at 16 Berka Joselewicza Street and 2 Lutomierska Street, issuing about 10,000 meals per day, and private kitchens, which issued approximately 25,000 soups per day.[243]

Despite the rapid development of the network of kitchens, their numbers were still insufficient and those in need in many cases could not even gain access to them. Therefore, in the fall of 1940, it was decided to create a new administrative body which would focus all such institutions operating in the ghetto. As a result, on November 1,

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[237] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Opieka, p. 280–284.
[238] Cf. Chapter 1.4.
[239] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 173–174, 192.
[240] Ibid., p. 192.
[241] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Intelligenzküche, p. 186; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 4 March 1941, p. 117–119.
[242] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Rumkowska Helena, p. 226–228; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Intelligenzküche, p. 186; ibid., entry: Rumkowska Helena, p. 346–348.
[243] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 192.

1940, the Department of Kitchens was established, in charge of all community kitchens as well as house kitchens that had been taken over by the administration.[244] Aiming to centralize the system of food service, Rumkowski decided that the best solution from the point of view of the management of products and fuel would be to make as many kitchen as possible subordinate to one central institution. On December 10, 1940, Announcement No. 177 appeared on the walls of the ghetto, in which the inhabitants of the ghetto were informed of his decision. The Eldest of the Jews said in the announcement that house kitchens did not fulfill their tasks and, given the fact that winter was coming, it was necessary to save coal and provide "uniform and good nutrition to the population of the ghetto." In the 28 kitchens that were taken over by the administration (the list was included in the same notice),[245] Rumkowski announced the introduction of a single menu and identical prices – by 0.15mk for 0.7L of soup. The eldest of the Jews also communicated his plan to establish kitchens in every district of the ghetto and to appoint a committee with the office at 6 Dworska Street in the premises of the Provisioning Department, which was tasked with monitoring the proper execution of orders in that respect.[246]

The committee listed in the decree reported to the Kitchens Department. The staff immediately started work, checking the condition of house kitchens and selecting those that were deemed suitable for the community system. From that moment, the number of house kitchens started to grow rapidly because people realized that it was a good way to obtain a full-time job at the community with a salary: "The objective was not so much the needs of the population, as a potential employment." On December 26, 1940, the Department of Kitchens took charge of further 23 facilities. In the end of 1940, community kitchens issued about 150,000 meals per day.[247] In the early 1941, a system of meal distribution was organized, introducing food cards with vouchers for meals − this system will be discussed later in this volume.

As ghetto journalist Józef Zelkowicz put it, the activity of the Social Welfare Department was very popular in the ghetto, albeit not always evoking positive associations. "The management did not stand up to the challenge," he wrote critically. "It lacked fundamental organization, discipline and commitment. The Welfare is like a ship without a rudder. Its officials were handling cases at their sole discretion and whim. Such state of affairs had to lead to corruption and develop a system of favoritism on a large scale."[248] As a result, Rumkowski decided that the Social Welfare Department was an inefficient institution and as such had to be transformed into in the Benefits Department at the end of September 1940.[249] Rumkowski announced his plans for the reconstruc-

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[244] *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 206.

[245] These were the kitchens located at 30 Nowomiejska Street, 8 Żytnia Street, 8, 24, 26 and 35 Limanowskiego Street, 16 Drukarska Street, 9 Ciesielska Street, 2 and 11/13 Mickiewicza Street, 3/5 Wawelska Street, 14 Chłodna Street, 1/3 Zielna Street, 33, 56 and 82 Brzezinska Street, 3, 7 and 8 Młynarska Street, 12 Smugowa Street, 15 Franciszkańska Street, 6 and 13 Jakuba Street, 16 and 24 Żydowska Street, 13 and 18 Zgierska Street, 15 Berka Joselewicza Street and 1/5 Bałucki Marketsquare.

[246] AYIVO, RG-241/299, Announcement no. 177 dated December 10, 1940, p. 1.

[247] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 194.

[248] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Opieka, p. 280–284.

[249] *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 198. In his report on the Department of Social Welfare Józef Zelkowicz states that the Department of Welfare was liquidated on September 27, 1940. – I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 89.

tion of the social welfare system in Announcement No. 123 of September 20, 1940.[250] Using the slogans "Bread for the hungry! Work for the workers! Care for the sick! Care for children! Peace in the ghetto!" the Eldest presented his plan to create a system of relief grants.[251]

With the establishment of the Benefits Department, Rumkowski responded to the protests of summer 1940. This way, he tried to alleviate the mood of the impoverished and starving people of the ghetto. In the aforementioned announcement of September 20th, Rumkowski stated that given the fact that about 100,000 people without any means of subsistence were living in the closed district, a system of relief grants would be established with the total sum of nearly one million marks per month. Rumkowski also announced a reorganization of the system of community kitchens as well as those ran by house committees.[252] The Benefits Department was officially established on September 24, 1940.[253] The office was located at 20 Pomorska Street and later at 11 Lutomierska Street.[254] Mosze Zażujer, former head of the Social Welfare Department, remained at the helm of the institution with the second director, A. Kapłan, serving alongside him. Henryk Neftalin played a major role in the organization of this institution. The Department employed 72 people.[255] Its main task was to provide residents of the ghetto with relief grants based on the decision of Rumkowski. The basis for the payment were statements made by those applying for a relief grant.

To meet the challenges it was facing, the Department was divided into seven divisions (sections): Relief Grants Committee, Cashier and Bookkeeping, Control Division, Records Division, "L" Division, Court and Penal Division, and Complaints Division. The Relief Grants Committee, chaired by Zażujer, decided whether to approve their relief grant on the basis of the submitted declaration, previously examined by the Control Division. Cashier and Bookkeeping handled cash settlements with the Central Office and collected returned relief grants. It was also responsible for paying employees and suppliers. The division kept financial records of payments and relief grants. The records included all those who received relief grants – about 125,000 people (39,000 families) and was divided into 27 areas, corresponding to the medical areas of the ghetto. In order to improve its operation, the records were divided into five districts of five to six areas each (about 7,500−8,400 people).

The Control Division was one of the most important units within the Benefits Department. Its employees were asked to verify the submitted declarations and issue opinions about the legitimacy of relief grant. For this purpose, they examined the material, family and personal status of the petitioners, as well as their sources of earnings and income level. The "L" Division – list of payments – kept a detailed record of earnings of petitioners on

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[250] AYIVO, RG-241/247, Announcement no. 123 dated September 20, 1940, p. 1–2; Announcement no. 123 [in:] *Archiwum Ringelluma...*, p. 137.

[251] AŻIH, 205/455, Rok za drutem..., p. 15.

[252] AYIVO, RG-241/247, Announcement no. 123 dated September 20, 1940, p. 1.

[253] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 194; *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 198. *Kalendarz* cites the date 20 September 1940.

[254] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 194; *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 132; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 210.

[255] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 196; ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 179–181; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 272–274.

the basis of materials provided by the labor divisions and payroll copies. The Court and Penal Division was tasked with summoning all petitioners who claimed the relief grant illegally or on the basis of false declaration, ordering them to return the money. If they refused, the case was directed to the Court of the Eldest of the Jews. The Complaints Division was where petitioners could appeal if they were refused the relief grant or granted a lower amount than expected. Complaints were examined and then sent for reconsideration in the Control Division.[256]

Relief grants were varied according to age. The first grant covered the period from September 20th to October 20th, 1940, and was established for three age groups: under 14 (7Mk), from 15 to 60 (9Mk) and over 60 (10Mk). In exceptional cases, Rumkowski established extra 10Mk for people over 70 years old. The total sum of the relief grants paid was 1,027,742.50Mk. From October 20, 1940, the amount paid as relief grants increased and also changed the principles of their allocation. Five age groups were introduced: up to 14 years (9.5Mk), up to 60 years (12Mk), up to 70 years (14Mk), up to 79 years (16Mk) and over 80 years of age (20Mk). The amount actually paid was lower, because rent was deducted from relief grant and transferred directly to the Financial and Economic Department.[257]

The first declarations were submitted as early as September 21, 1940 − they were handed to the Financial and Economic Department, where during the day the staff of the Central Control Office conducted interviews with petitioners applying for a grant, which were later organized at night according to areas, entered into the registry and verified whether the declaration had not been submitted twice. After the Central Control Office re-examined the documents, they were handed over to the Benefits Department. Thanks to the extraordinary pace of work, within three days the Benefits Department received 544 declarations, and two weeks later − 7,918.[258]

Declarations sent to the department were sorted according to the opinion of five categories: "P" (certain) – both opinions positive, "O" (rejected) – both opinions negative, "S" (case) – the case insufficiently explained, "R" (various) – divergent opinions, "L" (*Lohnlisten*)[259] – the income of one of the members of the family was not sufficient. All categorized cases were handed over to the Benefits Committee, which had the sole right to decide whether to grant the benefit. Some cases designated with "S" and "R" were integrally examined for the third time by trusted controllers. Statements accepted by the Benefits Committee were entered into the register where a detailed registration card was prepared along with the calculated amount of the relief grant. Then, the postal order was placed, so that the relief grant could be paid the following day.[260]

Paying the money to the beneficiaries – dubbed *zasiłkowcy* – was carried out by the Postal Department, which appointed a special Division for Benefits Payments headed by Mojżesz Gumner.[261] Based on the reports sent by the Benefits Department, the Post Office paid specific amounts from the account of the Relief Grants Department at the

[256] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 194.
[257] Ibid., p. 195.
[258] I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 91–92.
[259] *Lohnlisten* (German) – payroll.
[260] I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 92–93.
[261] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 303.

Central Cashier. Money not paid for various reasons (for example, collected relief grants, death of the relief recipient) was returned by the Post Office to the account of the Benefits Department.[262]

Post Office

Remittances for the relief recipients were one of the aspects of the activity of the reorganized Post Office. After the ghetto was closed, this department was assigned rooms in the barracks at Bałucki Marketsquare, where employees collected incoming correspondence, parcels and money orders from representatives of the city Post Office. The main office was still at 4/6 Kościelny Square, where the parcel branch was located – the warehouse and dispatch for parcels sent to the ghetto. On April 1, 1940, Herbert Grawe was appointed head of the Department.[263] As previously mentioned, on April 4, 1940, the 2nd Branch of the Post Office headed by Abram Jakub Dawidowicz opened at 1 Rybna Street, which also housed the Philatelic Department.[264] At the command of German authorities, the Censors' Office was established on July 12, 1940, whose staff was in charge of monitoring the correspondence sent from the ghetto. At the end of 1940, the Department had 139 employees, including 50 postmen who wore a special uniform: a dark jacket and a hat with a green rim – and were issued a bag for carrying mail.[265]

The Post Office had its own seal which was made shortly after the closing of the borders of the ghetto. It was used solely for internal mail in the closed district and could not be used on postage stamps. According to the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto*, "The Gestapo soon found, however, a letter which left the ghetto with a stamp and seal of the ghetto Post Office. After a short investigation, during which the guilty were not found, the Gestapo ordered the destruction of the seal."[266]

The occupation authorities often announced a break in mail delivery and dispatch (i.e., *Postsperre*). One of these breaks occurred from July to September 1940 as a result a dysentery epidemic in the ghetto or in connection with the intention to introduce censorship of correspondence. At that time, the Post Office handled only internal mail delivery.[267]

Provisioning

After closing the borders of the ghetto, the Provisioning Department grew significantly and the cell became the only mediator in the distribution of food received from the German authorities. This extremely important institution was directed as of January 30, 1940, by Maks Szczęśliwy, a close associate of Rumkowski, called a "friend of the Chairman."

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[262] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 196.

[263] Ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Grawe Herbert, p. 101; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Grawe Herbert, p. 160; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 54–55.

[264] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Dawidowicz Abram Jakub, p. 52; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Dawidowicz Abram Jakub, p. 91; ibid., entry: Paczkarnia, p. 288.

[265] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 364; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 55.

[266] Archiwum Ghetto Fighters' House (henceforth: GFH), 4323, entry: Poststempel, p. 46. *The Encyclopedia* goes on to say that on Rumkowski's birthday on March 17, 1944, a second stamp was made, only used one day on thank-you notes for birthday wishes.

[267] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 55.

Post Office in the ghetto
(State Archive in Łódź)

The Department offices were located at 6 Dworska Street.[268] Because of the extensive structure, Provisioning was one of the larger Departments of Jewish administration – in June 1940 it employed 657 people, and in December 1940,– 993 people.[269]

Following the sealing of ghetto, the Department organized the distribution of all products delivered to the closed district. The office on Dworska Street kept the records and organized distribution of products among institutions and inhabitants of the ghetto. Goods were under its control from the moment of arrival until delivery at Bałucki Marketsquare, where the staff of the Central Office write down the type of products and submitted their reports to the Provisioning Department and the warehouse employee informed the Department that the goods were received by the warehouse or sent further.[270]

The structure of the Provisioning Department was complex. It consisted of two divisions: Block Bookkeeping (i.e., allocations) and Central Bookkeeping. The first section was further divided into the Payments Cashier, headed by Hugo Librach, and the Accounting

[268] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Szczęśliwy M., p. 244, 245; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Szczęśliwy M., p. 374, 375; *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 133.

[269] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 4; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 358.

[270] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 1. Goods from Bałucki Marketsquare were brought to: bread division warehouse at 25 Łagiewnicka Street, central warehouses at 6 Dworska Street, vegetable store at 1/3 Łagiewnicka Street, eighteen potato plots, hay and straw store at 100 Marysińska Street, cold storage of meat division at 40 Brzezińska Street, dairy products division at 1 Źródłowa Street, coal yard at 29/31 Łagiewnicka Street, tobacco division at 24 Brzezinska Street and reserve stores at 6 Ceglana, 12 Niecała, 49 Łagiewnicka, 63 Marysińska, 30 and 32 Młynarska and 96 Zgierska streets.

of Distribution Points and Dairy Shops. The cashiers, divided into three districts according to the division of the ghetto,[271] were opened after the announcement of a new ration. They accepted payments from house committees, which were transferred that same day to the main Casher of the Department. Accounting of Distribution Points and Dairy Shops was divided into the following subsections: the Personnel Division, which kept records of all employees of the Block Bookkeeping and issued instructions for individual officials; The Civil Registry Department, which kept records of the ghetto inhabitants, recording any changes based on the information obtained from the Census Department; The Civil Registry Department kept a record of house committees, which reflected records in the books of account and goods records for individual distribution points and dairy stores; the Dairy Cards Division, which handled dairy and butter cards issued for children under three years of age and bread cards issued based on medical vouchers; the Distribution Points Division monitored the activities of distribution points, including the sale of potatoes and purchases for vouchers issued by the Department of Health as well as cash payments; the Dairy Stores Division, which monitored the cash flow and sale based on children's cards and sickness cards. The second division within the Provisioning Department was Central Bookkeeping. This unit was divided into smaller subsections, according to the competences: Personnel Division, Cashier Division, Control Division of Meat Department, Division of Feed for Horses, Statistical Division and Archive Division.[272] Both divisions of Provisioning were gradually expanded, thus increasing the number of officials employed there. In July 1940, Block Bookkeeping employed 41 people, and in December of that year − 68 people. In the same period, the number of employees in the Central Bookkeeping increased from 27 to 46 people.[273]

The Provisioning Department presided over number of other agencies involved in the distribution of food or raw materials. Some of them reported to Provisioning, others only shared Accounting with the Department while operating as independent entities. Closely related to Provisioning was the Meat Department (Division), Milk Products Department, Coal Department and Tobacco Department.

The Meat Department (also called the Central Meat Office), located at 40 Brzezińska Street, supplied the ghetto with meat, mainly horsemeat – for example, pieces of meat provided by the city were used to make sausage. The manager was Rozenson.[274] The Milk Products Department (the so-called Central Dairy Office) was established in mid-June 1940 at 1 Żródłowa Street, with Pinkus Ajzner as the head. The Dairy Central Office handled dairy production and distribution of dairy products, especially cottage cheese and vegetable salad.[275]

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[271] Aside from the areas of the Order Service and doctors' areas, the ghetto was divided into three main sections A, B and C. Part A, called Ghetto A was west of Zgierska Street and south of Limanowskiego Street, part B – east of Zgierska Street, part C – west of Zgierska Street and north of Limanowskiego Street. The parts could be accessed via wooden footbridges over Zgierska and Limanowskiego streets, which were excluded from the gehtto. This division was often referred to in administrative documents – AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Getto A, B, C, p. 143.

[272] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 1–2.

[273] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 98; ibid., Leksykon, p. 317.

[274] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 26; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 358.

[275] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated 1 March 1941, p. 109; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 358. The production process of "salads à la ghetto" and curd was described by Oskar Singer in an essay devoted to the activity of the Dairy Products Department

Coal yard in the ghetto
(State Archive in Łódź)

On May 8, 1940, the Coal Department was established, headed by Luzer Najman,[276] whose deputy was Izrael Zylbersztrom. At the time of its creation, the Department hired 10 people. The Coal Department was responsible for the unloading, storage and distribution of this extremely valuable raw material in the ghetto, as well as for the acquisition and storage of firewood. It was divided into the following cells: the unloading crew (also called shovel handlers − *szuflarze*), yard workers transporting the unloaded goods to the coal yards, demolition crew for wooden buildings and installations in the ghetto (demolitionists − *rozbiórkarze*), a crew in charge of bringing wood from demolition sites to the yards (cart drivers – *wózkarze*), scales service, mechanical saws maintenance, wood sorting crew, a group of craftsmen in charge of equipment maintenance, as well as a cleanup crew responsible for keeping order in the yards. The Department had two yards where raw materials were stored, located at 29 and 47 Łagiewnicka Street; the former was later replaced by the yard at 10 Mickiewicza Street.[277]

The Tobacco Department was established on June 10, 1940, with its office in the former pharmacy building at 24 Brzezińska Street. The institution, headed by Zdzisław Lubin, was responsible for the production and distribution of cigarettes and tobacco brought to the ghetto.[278] In the first period, the amount of cigarettes coming into the ghetto was limited, and only a select few had access to them.[279]

– O. Singer, *„Przemierzając szybkim krokiem getto...". Reportaże i eseje z getta łódzkiego*, transl. K. Radziszewska, Łódź 2002, p. 53–58.

[276] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Najman Luzer, p. 173, AŻIH 205/349, entry: Najman Luzer, p. 270.

[277] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Zylbersztrom Izrael, p. 295; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Wydział Węglowy, p. 446–447; ibid., entry: Zylbersztrom Izrael, p. 467.

[278] O. Singer, *Przemierzając...*, p. 80–84; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 28 January 1941, p. 54; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 367.

[279] O. Singer, *Przemierzając...*, p. 81.

The Provisioning Department also had a network of warehouses, including potato yards[280] and distribution points where allocations were collected.[281] Another body also associated with Provisioning and sharing bookkeeping was the Bread Division, which was in charge of the only Community bakery and the Bread Desk (*referat*). It was created in May 1940 as a supervisory body tasked with monitoring the operation of private bakeries. Before it was established, bakeries in the ghetto were in fact economically independent. However, after the closed district was sealed, they were cut off from flour supply. Some bakers had some flour in stock or knew how to obtain the product illegally, but these resources depleted very quickly. Moreover, soon after the ghetto was closed, Rumkowski demanded that all bakers contribute a lump-sum for the purchase of flour. During this operation, representatives of all bakeries were selected, namely Mordechai Lajzerowicz and Rozbieliński. On May 14, 1940, both men were appointed bakery inspectors. They were tasked with supervising the process of bread baking, controlling the weight of the loafs and the quality of products and ensuring that the ordinances of the Eldest of the Jews were observed, as well as act in mediation for disputes between bakery owners and their staff to "regulate the whole matter of bread baking."[282]

On August 5, 1940, the general assembly of bakers decided on the type of bread that was to be baked in the ghetto. Due to the necessity to save flour, it was decided that round loafs would be baked, banning all kinds of gingerbread's, rye cakes and luxury bakes. In order to make sure that the regulations were observed, the Penal Desk was established at the Bakeries Desk, tasked with punishing all violations.[283] Another section that shared financial matters with Provisioning was the Meat Office, handling meat sale in community stores.[284]

To prevent profiteering on the sale of products, a system of food allocation was introduced, which Rumkowski announced each time in the relevant decree. Aside from a detailed list of products and their quantity, the decrees listed the price for which the allocation could be purchased in one of the points – warehouses or Community stores – as well as the timeframe for which it was in force, usually for one week. Allocations were collected by housing or block committees (discussed above), which collected money from residents and paid the Provisioning Department in advance.[285] The first allocation (food ration) was announced on June 2, 1940, in Announcement No. 52. According to the decree, each individual was entitled for the week to: 250g of sugar, 250g of rye flour, 500g of groats, 100g of salt, 30g of sodium carbonate (baking soda), 50g of coffee mix,

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[280] At the end of 1940 the warehouses were located at 6 Dworska Street (wholesale store I and II and retail store), 1/3 Łagiewnicka Street (vegetables) and 100 Marysinska Street (hay and straw). Potato yards were located at 15 and 17 Ceglana Street, 36 and 55 Brzezińska Street, 15 Drewnowska Street, 8 Dworska Street, 10, 14 and 16 Jakuba Street, 23 Lutomierska Street, 10 Łagiewnicka Street, 25 Młynarska Street, 17 and 44 Wolborska Street, 1/3 Wschodnia Street, 4 Stary Rynek, and 38 and 40 Zgierska Street. Apart from that, the Provisioning Department was in charge of the so-called reserve stores at 6 Ceglana Street, 12 Niecała Street, 49 Łagiewnicka Street, 63 Marysińska Street, 30 and 32 Młynarska Street and 96 Zgierska Street – APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 2–3.

[281] Some of the goods were received directly in warehouses or at yards. In total, in December 1940, there were 96 distribution points, including 34 general food stores, 17 dairy stores, 15 meat stores, 8 cold meat stores, a coal storage, a vegetable store, 18 potato yards, a hay and straw store and a tobacco shop – ibid., p. 3.

[282] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o działalności piekarń, p. 146–147.

[283] Ibid., p. 147.

[284] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 2; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 56.

[285] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 1, p. 55–56.

30g of chicory, 100g of artificial honey, 50g of *zacierki* (a type of pasta), 20g of oil, 50g of canned onion, and 5kg of coal. Children up to 3 years of age were entitled to an additional 250ml of milk per day, butter, 2 eggs, 250g of semolina, and 1 piece of soap. Additionally, house committees received (for distribution among tenants at their discretion): cucumber, lemon, vinegar and wood alcohol. The allocation could be collected only through committees.[286] Information about the subsequent allocation first appeared in Announcement No. 57 of June 7, 1940. From that moment on, subsequent allocations were announced at relatively even intervals in Announcement No. 66, 72, 80, 84, 87, 91, 98, 101, 109, 116, 119, 128, 139, 144, 151, 167, 173 and lastly, Announcement No. 176 of December 6, 1940.[287]

In January 1941, Provisioning became gradually decentralized, as the Department was facing increasingly harsh criticism and its operation was dubbed an "economy of thieves." The institution was restructured and renamed as the Groceries and Bread Department. This process will be described later in this volume.

Health Service

After the sealing of the ghetto, the organizers of health service faced an extremely difficult task. Even before the district had been isolated, the Jewish administration took charge of three hospitals: at 12 Wesoła Street, 75 Drewnowska Street and 34/36 Łagiewnicka Street. Additional care was provided by three outpatient clinics and an ambulance service.[288] The already enormous problems associated with organizing medical assistance deteriorated further after May 1, 1940. There were not enough trained medical professionals nor appropriate equipment. In spite of this, the Health Department underwent a gradual expansion along with the growing health needs of the population imprisoned in the ghetto. The main task of the department was "handling the maintenance of the health status of the population of the ghetto by organizing treatment and medical care."[289] For this purpose, a complex structure was established.

From the beginning of 1940, the head of the Health Department was an internist, Dr. Leon Szykier, with Jozef Rumkowski, brother of the Eldest of the Jews, as the administrative director.[290] The head had two deputies, the Department Council and the Disciplinary Court, to settle internal conflicts. Along with the expansion of its structure, the Department was divided into a number of Divisions: the Hospital Treatment Division, Post-Hospital Treatment Division, School Hygiene Division, Sanitary Division, Dental Care Division, Pharmacy Division and the Veterinary Division.[291] The office of the department management was the building of Hospital No. 1 at 34/36 Łagiewnicka Street (extension 6).[292]

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[286] AYIVO, RG-241/187, Announcement No. 52 dated 2 June 1940, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 94–95.

[287] Announcements are in the AYIVO collection, records group RG-241; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 95.

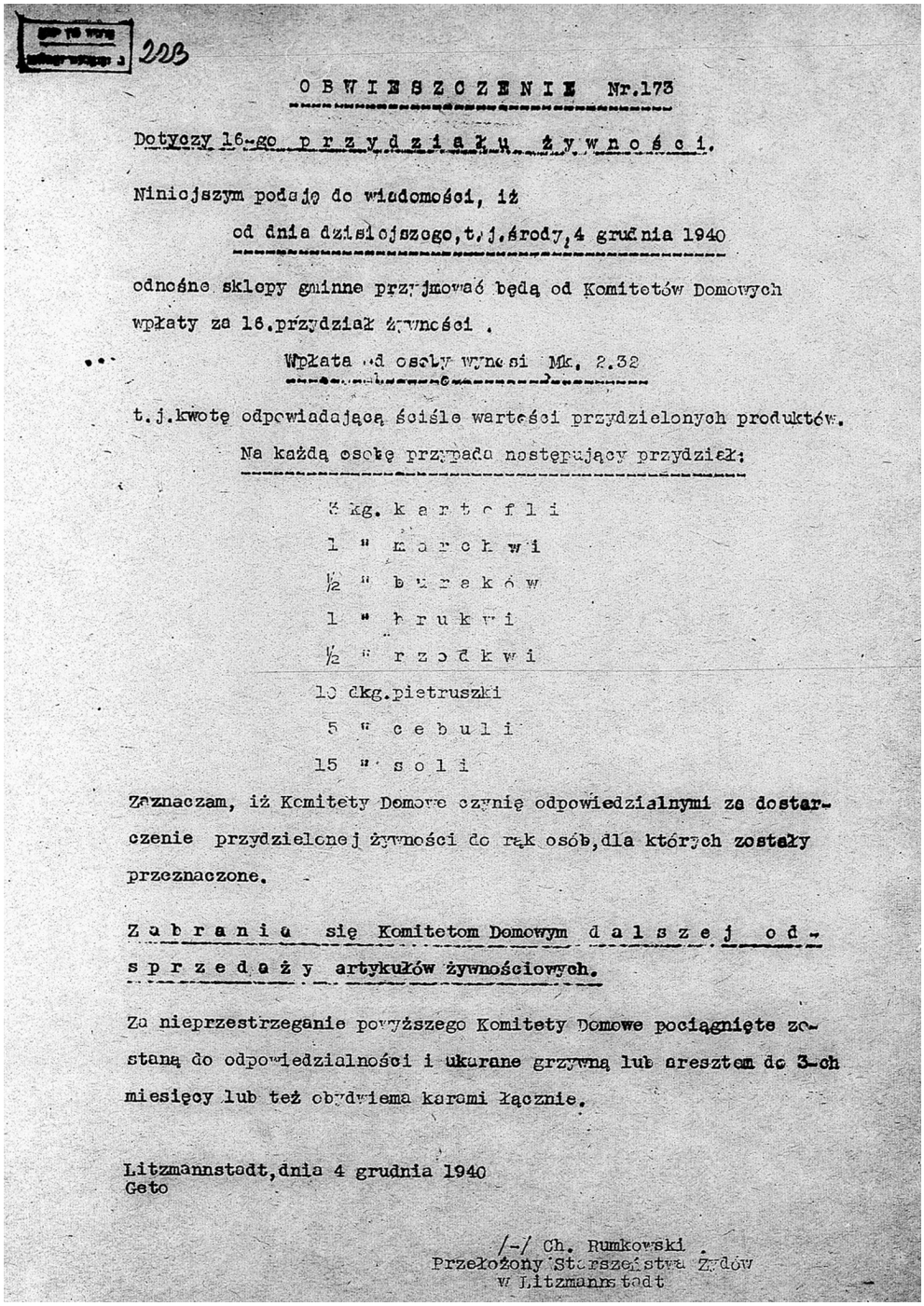
[288] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 45.

[289] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 198.

[290] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Dyrektor, p. 98.

[291] J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka zdrowotna w Łodzi do roku 1945. Studium organizacyjno-historyczne*, Łódź 1990, p. 484.

[292] *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 216.



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OBWIESZCZENIE Nr.173

Dotyczy 16-go przydziału żywności.

Niniejszym podaję do wiadomości, iż

od dnia dzisiejszego, t.j. środy, 4 grudnia 1940

odnośne sklepy gminne przyjmować będą od Komitetów Domowych wpłaty za 16.przydział żywności.

Wpłata od osoby wynosi Mk. 2.32

t.j.kwotę odpowiadającą ściśle wartości przydzielonych produktów.

Na każdą osobę przypada następujący przydział:

4 kg. kartofli
1 " marchwi
½ " buraków
1 " brukwi
½ " rzodkwi
10 dkg.pietruszki
5 " cebuli
15 " soli

Zaznaczam, iż Komitety Domowe czynię odpowiedzialnymi za dostarczenie przydzielonej żywności do rąk osób, dla których zostały przeznaczone.

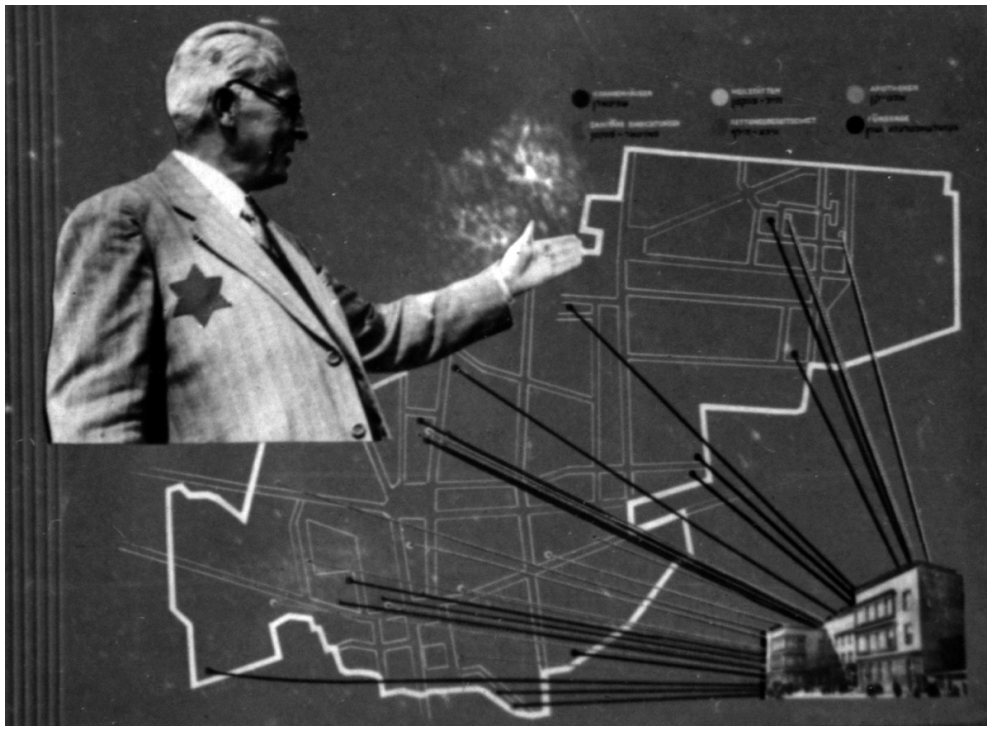
Zabrania się Komitetom Domowym dalszej odsprzedaży artykułów żywnościowych.

Za nieprzestrzeganie powyższego Komitety Domowe pociągnięte zostaną do odpowiedzialności i ukarane grzywną lub aresztem do 3-ch miesięcy lub też obydwiema karami łącznie.

Litzmannstadt, dnia 4 grudnia 1940
Geto

/-/ Ch. Rumkowski
Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów
w Litzmannstadt

Announcement no. 173 dated December 4, 1940
(State Archive in Łódź)



Graphic illustration of hospital network in the ghetto
(State Archive in Łódź)

Hospitals reported to the Hospital Treatment Division. The aforementioned Hospital No. 1 was the largest of its kind in the closed district and its director was Dr. Fabian Klozenberg. The hospital building was taken over by the Jewish administration of the ghetto just before the borders were closed on April 27, 1940. Transferred there were the staff and part of the equipment from the Poznańskis Hospital on Sterlinga Street. The facility had 300 beds in several wards: gynecology, obstetrics, internal and surgery. The conditions in the hospital were relatively good (for ghetto standards) because the building was connected to the city sewerage system, water supply, gas pipeline and had central heating. Along with part of the equipment, the extensive medical library from Poznański's Hospital was also transferred. Hospital No. 2 at 75 Drewnowska Street was also taken over by the Jewish administration in the final days just before the district was isolated from the city. The head of Hospital No. 2 was Dr. Henryk Epsztajn. The facility was expanded and had about 400–450 beds after the ghetto was closed, including the infectious ward. There was also a dissecting room in the hospital. The building, like the facility Łagiewnicka Street, was connected to the municipal infrastructure. Hospital No. 3 was located in three adjacent buildings − the infectious hospital operated at 12 Wesoła Street beginning in January 1940, then from July 1940, the premises were often disinfected and an internal hospital and a ward for tuberculosis patients was opened. Chief physician there was Dr. Samuel Szapiro. The section managed by Dr. Michał Urbach located at 17 Wesoła Street in the

building at the old Jewish cemetery had both an infectious and a psychiatric ward. In 1940, the branch at 5 Bazarna Street which treated dysentery patients was annexed to that hospital. It had a disinfecting stove where the belongings of patients suffering from infectious diseases were placed, as well as a mandatory bath for patients. The buildings on Wesoła nad Bazarna were only partially connected to the water and sewage network, which is why conditions there were difficult compared with Hospitals No. 1 and 2. In total, Hospital No. 3 had about 500 beds, including 50 wards for the mentally ill.[293] By the end of 1940, the three aforementioned facilities were joined by three more, opening at the turn of 1940 and 1941. In Hospital No. 4, located at 37 Łagiewnicka Street, a pediatric branch was organized with about 300 beds. The head of this institution was Dr. Salomea Mandelsowa, also responsible for the Department for the Care of Mother and Child. The institution organized assistance for pregnant women and infants. It also issued hospital referrals for women who could not carry the pregnancy to term and wanted to get a free abortion. Hospital No. 5 was established in a former school building at 7 Mickiewicza with Dr. Wiktor Miller as the chief physician.[294]

An important element of the ghetto health care system were outpatient clinics (ambulatories), subject to the Post-Hospital Treatment Division. Three such facilities were established – at 56 Zgierska Street (Ambulatory No. 1), 17 Zgierska Street (No. 2) and 34/36 Łagiewnicka Street (No. 3). By the end of 1940, another facility of such kind was lounged in Marysin (No. 4).[295] They provided basic health care to the residents of the closed district. In the period from May 1, 1940, to May 1, 1941, ambulatory doctors saw about 2,000 patients on site and visited about 500 patients at home. There were entitled to issue vouchers for extra food rations for the sick, including for bread, dairy products, eggs, lemons or onions.[296]

Complementing the health care system was the ambulance service. There were two ambulance stations in the closed district – at 13 Lutomierska Street and at Hospital No. 1. The head of the emergency service was Dr. Michał Weiss. The purpose of the institution was to provide emergency care and transport to patients. For this purpose, two horse ambulances were dispatched along with several teams of paramedics on foot. By the end of 1940, 11 doctors and 15 ambulance paramedics carried out a total of over 10,500 interventions; in the following year, this number doubled.[297]

The Division of School Hygiene was responsible for maintaining medical points operating in the schools in the ghetto, which monitored the hygiene of their students. The head of the Division was Dr. Sara Holenderska. In the 1939/1940 school year, the hygienists inspected 17,208 students, and doctors − 7,562. The Division was most likely also in charge of medical care of summer camps for children and youth in Marysin.[298]

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[293] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 198–199; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 33–34; ibid., Leksykon, p. 278, 350; J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 489–490.

[294] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 200; J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 488.

[295] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 199–200; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 45.

[296] J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 487.

[297] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 199; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 327, A. Mostowicz, *Żółta gwiazda i czerwony*, Warszawa 1988, *passim*; J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 489, tab. 118.

[298] APŁ, PSŻ 798, Szkolnictwo w getcie w roku szkolnym 1939/1940, p. 1–6.

The main task of the Sanitary Division, located at 13 Lutomierska Street, was the fight against infectious diseases, which, considering the enormous density and appalling sanitary conditions in the ghetto, were a growing threat to its inhabitants. The head of this institution was Dawid Kamelhar, before the war director of Kasa Chorych in the city of Łódź, and at the same time doctor in the Ambulatory No. 1; he was later replaced by Dr. Herman Weiss.[299] The Division employed doctors and sanitary inspectors tasked with locating the source of diseases and carrying out disinfection and disinfestations (in the case of typhus) of the affected house. To facilitate the operation, the ghetto was divided into six areas of sanitary inspection. In each of them, a special group was stationed with an epidemiologist at the helm. There were also three reserve groups, dispatched to the inflammatory sites if necessary. Another task of the Sanitary Division was carrying out preventive vaccinations. The unit also ran a public bath at 23 Lutomierska Street, where residents of buildings threatened by the epidemic were sometimes directed by force. The Sanitary Division, in cooperation with the Sanitary Control Unit of Order Service, was responsible for sanitary supervision of the ghetto; for example, carrying out deracination. Doctors employed in the Division had the right to issue official certificates, including death certificates.[300]

On February 1, 1940, the Dental Care Division was opened, and Joel Taflowicz[301] was appointed the head on March 1st of that year. The division ran a medical-dental clinic 23 Brzezińska Street, which provided care for school children, and a dental-technical laboratory.[302] It is possible that in 1940 there was also a private dental clinic in the ghetto, because such institution is listed alongside other private entities in the registry of the Economic and Financial Department as a payer of tax for the period from May to December 1940.[303]

The Pharmacy Division was responsible for pharmacies in the ghetto. By the end of 1940, there were five pharmacies (Pharmacy No.1 at 9 Old Market, No. 2 at 37 Limanowskiego Street, No. 3 at 56 Brzezińska Street, No. 4 at 36 Łagiewnicka, and No. 5 in Marysin), as well as one repository pharmacy located in the building of Hospital No. 1 at 34/36 Łagiewnicka Street.[304] In addition to the Community institutions at 8 Kościelny Square, there was the only private pharmacy of S. Kon and A. Fajneman, which had to provide about 350 free medicines a day as a "tax" as well as pay the industrial tax to the Economic and Financial Department.[305]

The Veterinarian Division (Veterinary Section) was launched as part of the Health Department. Its director was Dr. Józef Leider, sent to the Łódź ghetto from Kraków by the Gestapo on December 7, 1940. The Division was responsible for the care of animals

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[299] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 308.

[300] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 198–199; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Trzy lata Służby Porządkowej, p. 136; J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 485–486.

[301] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Taflowicz Joel, p. 258; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Taflowicz Joel, p. 390.

[302] J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 484; *Referat przewodniczącego Rady Starszych miasta Łodzi wygłoszony w dniu 15 V 1941 r.* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 263.

[303] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania o Wydziale Finansowo-Gospodarczym, p. 111.

[304] APŁ, PSŻ 510, Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 199–200; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 44–45. Prior to closing the ghetto, Rumkowski also took over Kasperkiewicz's former pharmacy at 56 Zgierska Street, but it does not appear on the list of those facilities from 1940.

[305] The facility operated until the autumn of 1941 – Ibid., Kwestionariusz Najwyższej Izby Kontroli, p. 45, 111.

used in various Departments of the Jewish administration, including towing horses, cows, poultry and rabbits.[306] Initially, doctors from the Divisions took care of the household animals. Veterinarians were also responsible for the sanitary inspection of meat arriving in the ghetto, thus taking over part of the competences of the Institute of Food Research, headed by Eng. Laskowski, liquidated at the end of 1940.[307]

Education and Culture

After the ghetto was sealed, the School Department continued its operation. On May 1, 1940, Samuel Lew was appointed head with the office located at 27 Franciszkańska Street. The institution was in charge of 37 educational establishments.[308] During the 1939/1940 school year, which lasted until September 16, 1940, that number changed.[309] The duration of classes was adapted according to the availability of appropriate premises and weather conditions. Lessons were held in two shifts, morning and afternoon, lasting 35 minutes with 5 minute recesses and two 10 minute intervals. Each day, there were five lessons in the morning shift the same in the afternoon.[310] Classes were based on prewar core curriculum, albeit with some modifications, such as the inclusion of Yiddish and German language, and from May 1, 1940, also Hebrew and Jewish studies.[311] The latter subjects posed a number of difficulties. There were not enough qualified teachers who knew the writing and grammar of the Yiddish language.[312] The situation was similar with Hebrew. This problem was solved by employing graduates of Hebrew secondary schools. Another problem was the lack of uniform manuals for all types of schools. Therefore, classes were taught based on available publications, and often students exchanged their books with another group after classes. Religious education was based on the Pentateuch and on prayer books. Another obstacle was the lack of manuals for Yiddish. In order to solve this issue, the School Department printed Yiddish texts on loose pages for beginners and advanced learners. As it turned out, this only improved the situation slightly, as the amount of available resources was very limited, so only one four-page long copy was produced.[313] On the initiative of Eliasz Tabaksblat, a short glossary of geometry and arithmetic terms in Yiddish was published. The School Department appointed a committee in order to develop a Yiddish reader for three learner groups according to their level. The cost of printing 1,000 copies was estimated at 2,665Mk.[314] However, the project was ultimately never executed, mainly due to technical problems.

Children were directed to their schools by the School Department primarily according to their place of residence and distance from the school. The Department had the

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306 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 27 March 1941, p. 143; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 317.
307 J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka...*, p. 486.
308 Cf. table 3 in Chapter 1.4.
309 Data from May 1940 – I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 54.
310 H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo żydowskie w Łodzi w czasie okupacji niemieckiej w latach 1939–1945* (manuscript in the collection of the Jewish Research Center of the University of Łódź), p. 4.
311 Ibid., p. 7.
312 Therefore, in the following school year (1940/1941), teacher training courses were organized. Classes were taught in four groups, from 15 May to 21 September 1941 – I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 55.
313 H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 6.
314 Ibid., p. 14.

same function as the prewar Department of Compulsory Education. Elementary schools consisted of six grades, which was a new solution compared to the prewar seven-grade system. An important advantage of the new change was the fact that, as a result of freeing up the staff and premises, more classes could be held. Schools could therefore take a greater number of students. On the other hand, the situation led to the extension of the period of inactivity of young people leaving school. Students graduating from sixth grade was forced to wait two years until they could start work, as the minimum age of employment was 15. According to estimates by Helena Smoleńska, the problem affected about 1,000 children in the ghetto.[315]

The curriculum consisted of 13 subjects. These were Yiddish, Hebrew, Polish, German, arithmetic, drawing, physical education, needlework, singing, nature and religion. Also included in the curriculum were history and geography. After the visit of the German authorities, the teaching of the latter two subjects was officially abolished; however, they were continued, although in a much limited form. In religious schools, the number of religion classes was higher.

In the 1939/1940 school year, 10,906 students enrolled in primary schools.[316] This does not mean that the same number of students actually attended classes, because due to the difficult conditions, children and young people usually only came to school at lunchtime. In the winter of 1939/1940, few students attended classes, particularly in schools without heating. The main reasons for the significant absences of students included illness, bad weather, unheated classrooms, the need to stay at home to help the family, as well as the lack of clothing.

The authorities of the Department tried to address the problem of low attendance; for example, by organizing a collection of clothing preceded by drawing up a detailed list of required garments. However, in spite of their efforts, students did not receive the things that they needed most, namely footwear and undergarments. Also organized was a broad scale operation of providing food for children in schools. Launching kitchens in all educational facilities was one of Rumkowski's fundamental bywords.[317] The school year ended with an assembly followed by a dinner. Certificates were issued only for children graduating schools, thus entitling them to entrance into a secondary school, provided they passed the entrance exam. At the end of school year, head teachers submitted a list of students qualified for the entrance exam to secondary school along with an evaluation of abilities of each candidate to the School Department.

Aside from primary schools, there were other types of educational facilities in the ghetto. The largest of these was secondary education. In the 1939/1940 school year, there was the secondary school (*gimnazjum*) for boys located at 27 Franciszkańska Street, a secondary school for girls, also called high school (*liceum*), located in the prewar primary school for mentally handicapped children at 53 Łagiewnicka Street, and the vocational secondary school, occupying the former building of the primary school at 76 Franciszkańska Street. In total, 689 students were enrolled in these facilities[318]. The

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[315] Ibid., p. 11.

[316] APŁ, PSŻ 867, Szkolnictwo – statystyka, p. 19. Trunk cites thenumber 10,462 – cf. I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 54.

[317] APŁ, PSŻ 1627, Pismo Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów do kierowników szkół powszechnych z 1 XI 1939, p. 2.

[318] Ibid., H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 22; APŁ, PSŻ 867, Szkolnictwo – statystyka, p. 19; I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 54.

Management board of the School Department – Mojżesz Karo (left),
Samuel Lew (center), Eliasz Tabaksblat (right) (Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

actual attendance of students was, as in the case of primary schools, lower as available sources lack accurate data on that subject.

Education in secondary schools was held on the basis of prewar secondary school curriculum, albeit with some modifications forced by the German authorities. They concerned, as in the case of elementary schools, geography and Polish history. Classes were divided into two language groups, teaching German on two levels. Classes preparing for the graduation exam (*matura*) covered general and Judaic subjects. Sometimes, due to the lack of qualified teachers, only exams in arithmetic were held. Despite this, the matriculation certificate included all grades.[319] The document was issued in three languages – German, Polish and Hebrew – and without a seal, as the School Department did not have one.

In the ghetto, there were also smaller institutions: two special schools and a school operating in the prison. Plans to open a music school were still in place.[320] There were also facilities for deaf and mentally handicapped children operating in the 1939/1940 school year and listed together in the records for that year. The 63 students enrolled there were divided into two groups taught by two teachers. At the school for the deaf, three groups were formed for fifteen students. Classes were taught by one teacher. At prison,

[319] H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 34; APŁ, PSŻ 1079, Pogłoski z 23 VII 1941, p. 118.

[320] The school was located at 27 Franciszkańska Street, the principal was Prof. Teodor Ryder. The entire teaching staff, including the head teacher, was eight people. There were four courses: piano, violin, singing and cantors, but most likely no classes were ever taught, or if they were, they stopped very quickly. It is possible that the names of the teachers were on record only to justify paying their wages – APŁ, PSŻ 1627, Pismo Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów do kierowników szkół powszechnych z 1 XI 1939, p. 1.

a school for juvenile offenders operated. Classes lasting four hours a day were taught for young people under the age of 20 in a room specially dedicated for that purpose. The curriculum included subjects such as mathematics, religion, Jewish language and morality lessons.[321] However, no precise statistics on the number of students and teachers employed is available.

In August 1940, the School Department organized camps for children and youth in the district of Marysin. Within these, there were three primary schools, including one religious which provided lessons for children and young people. The curriculum was heavily limited, however, and only one hour per day was dedicated to learning. Day camp for children and teenagers organized from July 1940 partly served as an educational facility, but its primary purpose was to organize leisure activities and provide the health of attendees. In total, over 10,000 children and adolescents participated in camps organized by the School Department.[322]

Within the ghetto, there was a group of former activists of various sports organizations.[323] They came up with the idea to establish a facility that would promote physical culture. In late September 1940, the Community Officials Sports Club was formed, although it was a grassroots initiative of the staff. Members of the Board of the Club included, for example, Moszek Narwa and H. Goldblumówna. Club members approached Naum Samelson, chief of the Tax and Rent Department, asking him to become a patron of the initiative.[324] In October 1940, Rumkowski, "appreciating in full the importance and educational function of sports," announced to the residents of the ghetto that he would appoint the Sports Committee.[325] The Committee was not subordinated to any of the departments of the Jewish administration.

Closing the borders of the ghetto did not stop the development of initiatives aimed at promoting cultural activity; on the contrary, the apparent lack of autonomy and permanent supervision of the German authorities contributed to the intensification of various forms of cultural life. Already in mid-1940, Mosze Puławer, the former director of the Ararat Theater, founded the theater group Studio Awangarda. Professional actors and amateurs performed on makeshift stages, including kitchens or school buildings. The premiere of one of these performances, titled *Yidn Shmidn,* was held in the school building at 76 Franciszkańska Street. It was so well-received that the group went on to perform on stage at the House of Culture 3 Krawiecka Street during artistic ceremony on October 27, 1940, attended by Rumkowski and his closest associates, including Dr. Leon Szykier. However, the Chairman did not like one of the scenes in the show. Mosze Puławer wrote:

> The performance is *Pacifists* by Mosze Nadir. The text speaks of my Emperor and your Emperor [Francis Joseph – AS] That he did not like, because in the ghetto the Chairman was called "the Emperor." The final part of the program is *Yidn Shmidn* by Mosze Broderson. "The Emperor" [i.e., Rumkowski – AS] saw the red

[321] H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 19–20, 36.
[322] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 37; H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo...*, p. 30; J. Baranowski, *The Łódź Ghetto 1940–1944 / Łódzkie getto 1940–1944. Vademecum*, Łódź 2006, p. 51.
[323] A. Bogusz, "Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w łódzkim getcie" [in:] *Fenomen getta...*, p. 293–295.
[324] APŁ, PSŻ 2341, Pismo Zarządu Klubu Sportowego Urzędników z 25 IX 1940, p. 1.
[325] AYIVO, RG-241/269, Announcement no. 146 dated October 22, 1940, p. 3.

light and young people with hammers in their hands. He seemed a little scared... He shouted to his deputy Dr. Szykier, "Where have you brought me? To revolutionaries?" Dr. Szykier replied calmly, "If they are revolutionaries, I am the greatest of them..." The old Chairman shouted, "Close it right now!" And the theater was closed.[326]

Performances on the stage of the Culture House were resumed in the following year. Aside from the stage productions by the Awangarda group, there were also musical performances. The first concerts soon took place in the summer of 1940 – on July 13th, the orchestra of the agricultural club *Słońce* (sun) gave its second performance, conducted by R. Piaskowski, and Teodor Ryder, conductor of the pre-war Łódź Philharmonic Orchestra, playing the piano. The orchestra repeated the performance on September 23rd. Soon after, the orchestra of the music society Hazomir was reactivated, beginning performances on October 30th in the Culture House − the repertoire included works by Weber, Mozart, Haydn and Grieg. These concerts were very popular, and were therefore repeated on several occasions in December 1940.[327] Performances continued the following year and the repertoire grew more diverse. A factor that contributed to the development of cultural life was the establishment of an institutional base which took place the following year, along with the aforementioned Culture House being incorporated into the structure of the Jewish administration.[328]

Power Plant and Gasworks

At the end of April 1940 just before the closure of the borders of the ghetto, Rumkowski took over the management of municipal property. The Jewish ghetto administration also replaced the municipal institutions in the field of management of services such as garbage disposal and fire protection. However, there were still areas in which the administration of the Eldest of the Jews continued to be a part of the apparatus of municipal services, operating as its subsidiary in the closed district. This situation concerned the Electrical Department and the Gas Department of the ghetto administration.

Acting on the basis of Rumkowski's agreement with representatives of the municipal power plant of February 28, 1940, after the sealing of the ghetto, the Electrical Department continued to be responsible for supervising the power grid and its maintenance. The director of the Department was Eng. Julian Weinberg and its office was located at 40 Limanowskiego Street (extension 40).[329] The staff of the Electrical Department were paid by municipal power plant, and not from the budget of the Eldest of the Jews.[330] At

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[326] Cited in A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, "Życie kulturalne w getcie łódzkim. Muzyka i teatr" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego. 1940–1944*, eds. P. Samuś, W. Puś, Łódź 2006, p. 257. Pinkus Szwarc, author of stage design for the ghetto theater, remembers this episode differently, "When [Rumkowski] heard the words: 'Host gevolt macht, bist shoyn bamacht,' which translates as 'You wanted power, you have power,' but literally means 'You got full pants,' he got up angry and exclaimed 'Close it!' – ibid.; A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, *"Ratowało mnie malarstwo". Rozmowa z Pinkusem Szwarcem*, *Teatr*, 1996, no. 3, p. 141.

[327] A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, "Życie kulturalne...", p. 248.

[328] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Kulturhaus, p. 138; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Kulturhaus, p. 223.

[329] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Weinberg Julian, p. 436; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 215.

[330] Such a situation took place at least at the end of 1940. According to Trunk, the staff of the Department were treated as city officials and therefore were not deported in 1942. – D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 46–47; I. Trunk, *Łódź Ghetto...*, p. 55.

the same address (extension 54), the Gas Department was established on September 20, 1940,[331] in charge of the supervision and maintenance of gas pipelines in the ghetto − all changes and modifications to the gas installations required the consent of the Department. The gas plant was divided into the Inspectorate and *Inkaso* (Cashier), subject to municipal gas works, as well as units that were subject to the Jewish administration: the Installation Division, which handled the installation of gas meters and removing unused devices; the Bookkeeping and Cashier Division; the Secretariat; and the Warehouse, where gas meters and installation materials were stored.[332]

By the end of 1940, the main structures of the Jewish administration of the ghetto of Łódź were formed. They were based in part on the operating structures before the district was sealed, but several new units were also created, tailored to the specific conditions. In the period of forming the administrative apparatus tendencies to centralization were noticeable, as evidenced by the example of house committees and Hachshara, whose independence was a very quickly restricted by Rumkowski.

3. "Work, peace, order" – the Organization of Labor in the "Closed District"

The closing of the ghetto meant the rapid deterioration of the situation of its residents. Food supplies from outside were largely limited. In addition to small quantities of products smuggled into the ghetto or stocks illegally stored in the close district – whose prices soared – ghetto prisoners had to rely on deliveries organized by the German authorities. For a time, Community-owned shops continue to operate, although their stock sold out very quickly. Another problem was the lack of funds for the purchase of products. From the very beginning of the ghetto, there was not enough cash, as most of it was confiscated from the Jews of Łódź under the orders of the occupation authorities, even before the ghetto was sealed.

Plans for Employment in the Ghetto

As mentioned above, in a letter to the mayor of Łódź dated April 5, 1940, Rumkowski described his initiative to employ about 8–10,000 professionals from various industries in the ghetto and to establish labor facilities where products would be manufactured at the request of German companies. The Eldest of the Jews suggested establishing a "Labor Department," which would assign tasks to individual professionals and collect finished products from them. For their work, the authorities would pay in cash of food, which Rumkowski would then distribute among the people. He also noted that there were junk dealers in the ghetto, whom the German authorities needed. In the end, Rumkowski asked the authorities to release him from the obligation to provide workers used for various types of work in the ghetto and discontinue rounding them up in the streets. He argued

[331] *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 199.
[332] AYIVO, RG-241/264, Announcement no. 141 dated October 15, 1940, p. 1; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 46–47.

that it would be an "extraordinary obstacle" preventing the suggested project from being implemented.[333]

Similar ideas to use the Jewish labor force in the ghetto had been circulating among the interested German entrepreneurs. Günther Schwarz from Berlin, who came to Łódź towards the spring of 1940, in March and April of that year sent two memoranda addressed to the mayor in which he described his own proposal of exploiting the Jewish labor force of the Łódź ghetto. He suggested using Jewish professionals to train German workers brought to the Warthegau, who would reconstruct the textile industry in accordance with the principles of National Socialism. He predicted that in the future, it would be possible to employ professionals from other industries, such as carpenters, metalworkers, mechanics, as well as other craftsmen. He believed that it would be possible to employ all able-bodied Jews, that is about 100,000 people in Łódź alone. He also proposed to resume the trade with the Soviet Union because the Jews of Łódź "had practice developed over decades, which the factories of the Old Reich, overloaded and troubled by workforce shortages, would not be able to gain easily." Finished garments as well as wool and wool rags would be exchanged for fabrics that could be used to make uniforms for the Wehrmacht. According to Schwarz, the organization of production would not require any special administrative apparatus, only a control unit operating under the supervision of the city authorities, which would act as an intermediary between the companies and the Jewish administration. Such an institution would determine the wages and pay them to the city treasury, which, after taxes, would be used to cover the costs of food for the closed district. In another variation, Schwartz suggested establishing several labor camps for the Jews located in the catered factory buildings where their professional skills could be used. In the event of evacuation, as the future of the closed district in Łódź was not certain at that point, he suggested to evacuate workers in the end or leave them on site, where they could continue to work for the German war economy.[334]

The city authorities examined such proposals with great interest. In the end of April 1940, a special representative was even appointed, Alfred Hall. His assessment of April 20th was principally in line with Schwarzer's proposals. He believed that the inflow of orders for the clothing industry would be certain, while in other areas he predicted that efforts would have to be made to attract potential clients. According to Holes estimates, the employment of 50,000 Jewish workers would generate income of 250,000RM per day, and the profit after the deduction of ghetto maintenance costs would be about 50−75,000RM. Hall made his acceptance of the position of representative contingent on one thing –the city would have to defend him against the accusations of favoring the Jews (*Judenfreundlichkeit*). Ultimately, however, he did not accept the position and recommended H. A. Bartram in his place.

Proposals from both the German entrepreneurs and Rumkowski were discussed by the occupation authorities. One these debates took place on April 27, 1940. The meeting of municipal authorities with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and the

[333] AYIVO, RG-241/44, Letter of the Eldest of the Jews to the Mayor of Litzmannstadt dated 5 April 1940, p. 1–2; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 51–52; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 213; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 96.

[334] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 213–214.

Police Presidium resulted in the conclusion that it would be impossible to employ all Jewish professionals residing in the closed district. A group of them – tailors, underwear makers, carpenters and unskilled workers – might, however, be hired in cooperation with Rumkowski. However, this was dependent on whether the Central Trustee Office agree to transfer production facilities and factories located in the emerging ghetto under the management of the Eldest of the Jews. It was estimated that the employment of these groups would cover approximately 15% of the cost of food for the ghetto, so it was equally important to find employment opportunities for Jewish workers outside the ghetto. The city authorities did not want, however, to organize a network of factories employing Jewish workers, because at that point it was still believed that the Jews would soon be evacuated from Łódź. Despite this, Rumkowski was allowed to proceed with the registration of professionals – first tailors and underwear makers,[335] and on April 30, 1940, the Mayor ordered the Eldest of the Jews to "guarantee the order of the economic life, food, work and health care."[336] At the same time, the authorities began to organize a unit in the City Council responsible for providing food and settling financial matters with the ghetto.[337]

On April 30, 1940, during the aforementioned meeting with his closest associates, Rumkowski recounted his correspondence with the authorities regarding the employment of Jewish workers, "When officials asked me how I imagine ensuring the existence of so many thousands of ghetto inhabitants, I replied: our currency is work [...] We should do everything in our power to bring as many Jews as possible into the labor process."[338] Immediately, the registration of professionals was ordered, carried out by a committee headed by Uszer Białodworski and Wolf Zbar.[339] In his Announcement No. 29 of May 2, 1940, Rumkowski called all tailors and underwear makers for registration at the Community office at 32-A Łagiewnicka Street. The operation would last from May 5th until the 10th.[340] Less than a week later, Announcement No. 34 summoned another group of professionals, including shoemakers, boot makers, cap makers, carpenters and locksmiths.[341] Registration was also carried out at the Head Office of Crafts at 45 Łagiewnicka Street.[342] The Eldest of the Jews formed a group of associates – called the First Committee[343] – who were tasked with organizing work and production in the ghetto. Its members included, among others, Chaim Pruszycki as an expert in the production of shoes.

At the next meeting of the members of the Council of Elders and the closest associates of the Eldest of the Jews held on May 6, 1940, Rumkowski confirmed his policy of making the labor of Jewish workers an instrument to maintain the ghetto. Reporting his conversations with the authorities on the internal currency in the closed district[344] and asked about the cover of the new money, Rumkowski replied, "My currency and jewels,

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335 Ibid., p. 216.
336 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 53.
337 Cf. Chapter 2.1.
338 GFH, 267, Minutes April 30, 1940, p. 2–3.
339 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Białodworski Uszer, p. 36; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Białodworski Uszer, p. 55.
340 AYIVO, RG-241/175, Announcement no. 29 dated May 2, 1940, p. 1.
341 Ibid., RG-241/178, Announcement no. 34 dated May 7, 1940, p. 1.
342 D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 39.
343 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Pruszycki Chaim, p. 193; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Pruszycki Chaim, p. 105.
344 Cf. Chapter 2.2.

my golden standard is the work of the hands of the Jewish worker."[345] Next, the Eldest of the Jews said that after the registration of professional labor divisions would be open, first of all tailoring divisions, because the authorities "promised that [the ghetto] will get a lot of orders, and [Rumkowski] hopes that he will be able to repay for the supplies with work."[346]

After less than two weeks, 14,850 professionals were registered, which Rumkowski reported to the mayor on May 13, 1940, reiterating his offer to make use of their labor. Enclosed in the letter by way of incentive was a detailed list of dozens of items that the tailors and seamstresses employed in the ghetto could make.[347] The evidence of Rumkowski's intensive efforts to employ the prisoners of the closed district is found in the report submitted to the German authorities on June 12, 1940, six weeks after the closure of the ghetto. Rumkowski wrote:

> I have first-class craftsmen in the ghetto. If the authorities gave me the opportunity to employ workers on a larger scale and make use of the workforce to a large extent, which could also bring appropriate profits to the authorities, my financial situation would be better. Thus, I would be able to purchase food products in sufficient quantity to satisfy the needs of the population. The result would be calm and trust of the Jewish population.[348]

Is not certain how efficient these arguments proved in persuading the authorities, but in fact, Hans Biebow, head of the *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto*, organized meeting on May 27, 1940, in the offices at Bałucki Market. It was attended by representatives of German entrepreneurs, Rumkowski, as well as representatives of professional tailors from the ghetto. Issues discussed during the meeting included organizational and technical details of the production in labor divisions launched in the ghetto. The Eldest of the Jews guaranteed that all holders would be executed in a timely manner and ensured the highest standards, which convinced the customers. The following day, Biebow, in the presence of Mayor Marder, Moldenhauer (head of the unit of the City Board) and Martin (representative of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry) met with Neurode, representing Łódź textile companies. The meeting was not attended by anyone from the Jewish administration of the ghetto. During the meeting, the contract was signed for civilian clothing and designs of denim uniforms for the main stewardship office of the Luftwaffe. Neurode also assured them that after the designs were approved, he would obtain an order for 30,000 such uniforms. According to the contract, funds from the sale of manufactured goods would be divided as follows: 10% for Neurode, 20% for the city collected by Biebow's office, and 70% for the purchase of food for ghetto residents.[349]

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[345] The *History of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto* described this situation, "At the request of authorities how [Rumkowski – AS] imagined the maintenance of the ghetto and for what funds he intends to purchase food for the Jewish population, he replied that he had the best gold currency in the ghetto which he was certain to exchange for food. Seeing the surprised looks of the authorities he said that this currency was the work of Jewish hands" – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 51.

[346] GFH, 267, Minutes of meeting of 30 April 1940, p. 1.

[347] AYIVO, RG-241/51, Letter of the Eldes of the Jews to the Mayor dated 13 May 1940, p. 1–3.

[348] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 55.

[349] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 239.

On June 6th and other contract was signed. Biebow reach an agreement with the representative of *Litzmannstadter Warenhandelsgesellschaft* on the processing of the tailored clothing confiscated from the Jews of Łódź. After processing, bales of fabric would be delivered to the ghetto, were the tailoring divisions would handle the cutting. At the time, Biebow contacted a company from Essen concerning the production of workwear.[350] Gradually, the head of *Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto* secured new orders, which Rumkowski assigned to individual facilities established in the closed district.

Central Bureau of Labor Divisions and Production Facilities

The first facility, called the division (*resort*),[351] established on May 1, 1940, was the tailoring workshop at 45 Łagiewnicka Street. In the summer of 1940, subsequent facilities were launched: a shoemaking division (July 10th), quilts division (July 12th), carpentry division (July 14th), shoemaking division at 16 Jakuba Street and carpentry division at 3 Urzędnicza Street (July 28th), upholstery division (August 4th), tannery (August 10th), textile factory and dye works (August 15th), slippers division (August 18th), tailoring division at 53 Łagiewnicka Street (August 20th), metalworks division (August 23rd), tailoring division at 2 Młynarska Street (September 17th), tailoring division at 13 Żabia Street (September 18th), felt slippers division (September 26th), and a tailoring division at 10 Dworska Street (September 28th).[352] By the end of September, several new facilities were established. They faced a number of problems: mainly, the shortage of tools and machines, most of which were confiscated or damaged. Therefore, Rumkowski called upon the workers to use their own tools, including sewing machines.[353] Another problem was the relatively small quantity of orders coming to the ghetto, as divisions only worked for a handful of private companies and the internal use of the closed district.[354] Despite this, the Eldest of the Jews continued his appeals to professionals from various industries to register.[355]

Along with the increase of orders from outside the ghetto, the structure of the divisions was reorganized, and beginning August 15th each division had separate management, and on October 1, 1940,[356] a supervising body was established for all production plants, known as the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions. The head of this body was Aron Jakubowicz, close associate of Rumkowski. The office of the bureau was located at Bałucki Market

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[350] Ibid.

[351] As stated in *The Encyclopedia of the Ghetto*: "Over time, the term *ressort* started to be applied to any workshop or factory. No one ever spoke of tailoring or metal factories, as everyone used the word *ressort* exclusively. However, officially it referred only to the Central Office of the Labor Departments. In public announcements or in contact between the German and the Jewish administrations concerning such establishments, only the words "workshops" and "factories" appeared. The ghetto, however, refused to acknowledge this." − AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Resort, p. 323–324.

[352] *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 180–199.

[353] AYIVO, RG 241/271, Announcement No. 148 dated October 26th 1940, p. 1. Rumkowski also called private persons who were not workers to rent their sewing machines. Cf. also B. Hershkovitch, *The Ghetto in Litzmannstadt (Lodz)*, *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 1950, vol. 5, p. 111.

[354] D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura i funkcje...*, part 2, p. 39.

[355] AYIVO, RG-241/245, Summons of the Organization Committee, p. 1.

[356] *The Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* stated that Aron Jakubowicz was appointed head of the Central Office of Labor Divisions on 1 May 1940. – AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Jakubowicz Aron, p. 192.

square, and the main secretary (the "soul" of the institution) was Marta Walfisz. As a body all labor divisions, the Bureau acted as an intermediary between the German authorities from the Board of the Ghetto, who placed the orders, and the contractors in the ghetto. The order, along with raw materials, additional resources, and sometimes tools required for the production were provided by the liaison office at the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions. The liaison office was divided into three sections according to the industry. The order was transferred along with guidelines that the specific division or the division headquarters, and the Central Bureau monitored the deadline and quality of production and handled all correspondence with the Board of the Ghetto concerning the order. Finished products were sent to Bałucki market and were then sent to the customer after disinfection. The Central Bureau also was in charge of production for the internal needs of the ghetto, matters related to payments and extra food rations for workers, as well as the inspection of work conditions.[357] By the end of 1940, 33 labor divisions were established, where 5,709 people were employed. Tailoring facilities developed at the quickest pace, which is why a supervising body was established to monitor the work, called the Tailoring Headquarters, located at 45 Łagiewnicka Street. The head of that institution was a trusted associate of Rumkowski and member of the Council of Elders, Dawid Warszawski. The style of work was described in the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* as follows: "Warszawski is a type of entrepreneur who runs his plants with an iron hand. While his efforts for the ghetto should be assessed highly, one cannot fail to mention that he was disliked by the workers as a hardened, ruthless boss. He was downright hated."[358]

Along with new orders coming to the ghetto, successive divisions were launched. Their number rose from 33 in December 1940 to 55 in the same month the following year. At the end of 1941, the divisions employed 20,789 people.[359] The development of workplaces did not proceed as an even pace. In March 1941, due to a lack of orders, the number of work days was reduced to two or three per week and some workers were transferred to other institutions.[360] Nevertheless, reports of production in divisions from that period are impressive:

> Based on data from the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions, in the month of February, the production was as follows: tailoring factories produced more than 38,000 items. The tailoring division employed in the reporting period 6,050 people. Working in the tailoring division was held in 11 sections,[361] whose headquarters is located at 45 Łagiewnicka Street. These division produced the greatest number of work clothes (about 2,000 items), followed by men's trousers (about 1,300 items), women's coats (957 items), work trousers (871 items), work jackets (about 1,000 items) and men's clothes (over 800 items). Besides civilian clothing, the division made coats for boys,

[357] Ibid.; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Historia getta Litzmannstadt, p. 77; ibid., Leksykon, p. 285; D. Dąbrowska, *Struktura...*, part 2, p. 40.
[358] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Warszawski Dawid, p. 427.
[359] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 309, table 8.
[360] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 25 March 1941, p. 141.
[361] At that time, twelve tailoring divisions were operating under the control of the Tailoring Headquarters. The facilities were located at 40 Łagiewnicka, 63 Łagiewnicka, 32a Łagiewnicka, 13 Żabia, 12 Niecała, 2 Młynarska, 8 Jakuba, 16 Jakuba, 10 Dworska, 28 Nowomiejska, 15 Drewnowska and 10 Podrzeczna.

men's coats, trousers for boys, children's clothes, ski jackets, sportswear, turtlenecks. As for military clothing, the majority of production consisted of cloth coats (8,100), denim trousers (7,150), denim uniforms (7,030), denim blouses (3,000), as well as socks and uniforms for practice, for the army, air force and navy. Tailoring divisions have more than 2,000 sewing machines at their disposal.

The factory of gloves and stockings[362] employed 125 people in February; the machine production in the facility amounted to 304 dozen socks, 684 dozen gloves and 57 pairs of leather gloves. Hand production consisted of 183 sweaters, 35 pairs of gloves, five scarves, five caps and 3 napkins.

The carpentry factory[363] employed 667 workers and made all sorts of furniture in February, first and foremost 121 chairs, 103 stands for files, 38 office tables, 34 typewriter tables, 26 sleeping room sets, and so on. Carpentry is working for the purposes of the Ghettoverwaltung, renovating old furniture, and provide service for individual departments of the Community. Carpentry workshops are fitted with latest mechanical equipment.

The hat-making workshop[364] employed 122 people. It produced 1,240 woolen hats, over 900 straw hats, 489 converted student caps, 314 scarves, 42 velvet hats. The hat-making factory has a hydraulic press made in the ghetto, and a number of first-class machines.

The furrier workshop[365] employed 92 furriers and made mostly fur gloves (341 pairs), 184 women's coats, 80 men's coats and a whole range of fur products for orders outside of the ghetto.

The factory of rubber coats,[366] which employs 280 people, produced in the month of February more than 4,500 civilian coats and more than 1,658 military

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362 The division, established in September 1940, was located at Kościelny Square, and later moved to 32 Łagiewnicka Street. Its head was Dorian Radziejewski, known in the ghetto for his extravagance – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Moszkowicz Josef, p. 170; ibid., entry: Radziejewski Dorian, p. 194; AŻIH 205/349, entry: Moszkowicz Josef; ibid., p. 263, entry: Radziejewski Dorian, p. 311.

363 The division was located at 3 Urzędnicza (Carpentry Division I) and 12/14 Drukarska (Carpentry Division II). Commissioner of the Ordering Service assigned to the carpentry workshop on April 1st 1941 was Szkol Terkeltaub, and Szolem Szwarcowski was made master carpenter on October 13th 1940 was. According to the rumors circulating in the ghetto, it was in the Carpentry Division II that the term "Chane," meaning stealing wood, was coined. *The Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* describes the alleged story: „Working there was a master craftsman who specifically cut out wood, packed it and handed it to his wife as she brought him lunch. One day she was caught and he screamed, "Chane, what have they done with you?"–and so "Chane" came to mean "*gebiegeltes*" ("purloined") wood. According to another version, in the porter's box of Carpentry Workshop II worked a man called Leitner, a half-Jewish auditor who was brought to the ghetto and neither spoke nor understood Yiddish. He heard other workers talking about the *"biegeln"* of wood and taking *"Chale,"* but could not understand. Only when he heard one saying to another, *"sayner chale fartsukht,"* did he finally get it. However, he mispronounced *"chale"* as "chane." Since then, it has been used for "stealing wood." – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Szwarcowski Szolem, p. 255; ibid., entry: Terkeltaub Szoel, p. 262; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Chane, p. 78–79; ibid., entry: Szwarcowski Szolem, p. 386; ibid., entry: Terkeltaub Szoel, p. 395.

364 The division was located at 9 Zgierska Street. The head of the later Hats Department was Abram Chamanski, the technical manager of the division był Dawid Nachstern – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Czamański Abram, p. 31; ibid., entry: Nachsztern Dawid, p. 174; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Czamański Abram, p. 88; ibid., entry: Nachsztern Dawid, p. 266; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated May 20th 1942, p. 218–219.

365 The plant was located at 9 Ceglana Street, on May 16 1941 Perec Blaugrund, nicknamed "Petronius" and "Bris clerk," was made its head – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Blaugrund Perec, p. 18; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Blaugrund Perec, p. 58, 61.

366 The office of the division was located at 5 Bałucki Marketsquare and then at Miodowa 4. The head of the department was Mordechaj Ajnwojner, administrative director Jakub Płockier – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Ajnwojner Mordechaj,

coats (for the army, airmen and police). The division has to cope with a serious obstacle, namely the lack of rubber.

Shoemaking workshops[367] employed 183 shoemakers. In February, the shoemaking division repaired about 1,800 items of military footwear and produced 553 pairs footwear uppers and 80 pairs of shoes.

The underwear factory[368] employs 415 people, who produced 7,218 shirts, aprons over 4,000, nearly 2,000 children's pajamas, 494 dresses and a whole range of other undergarments in smaller quantities. The production of the division is carried out on the orders from the outside.

The quilts workshop[369] employs 12 people and produced 272 quilts.

The felt slippers workshop[370] employs 54 people and produced about 5,000 pairs of shoes.

The upholstery workshop[371] employs 74 workers. It produced more than 1,000 mattresses, 50 daybeds, 33 couches, 73 sets of chairs, etc.

The textile factory[372] employs 60 people. It produced 885kg of yarn, processed more than 2,000 [kg?] rags and sorted about 5,000 [kg?] rags; the mill produced approximately 3,000 meters of the goods from its own yarn and 4,300 from the clients' yarn. Goods are intended for civil and military clothing. The weaving workshop has 14 wool looms, 2 English looms, 300 ply spinners, 1 *wilk* (lit. wolf).

The knitwear division[373] employs 188 people; it produced more than 9,000 items of clothing and more than 1,000 items of knitted underwear. The production includes work clothing, women's silk blouses, aprons and underwear.

The tannery[374] employs 12 people and processed several hundred different types of leather.

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p. 2; ibid., entry: Płockier Jakub, p. 189; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Ajnwojner Mordechaj, p. 6; ibid., entry: Płockier Jakub, p. 298.

[367] The division was housed in the former orphanage at 100 Marysinska Street. It was managed by the Jesuit priest Lew Berenstein, from April 1st 1942. From April 2nd, 1942, Beno Lewenberg and Jakob Rubinstein were appointed deputy heads – APŁ, PSZ 1103, entry: Berenstein Lew, p. 42; ibid., entry: Lewenberg Beno, p. 154; ibid., entry: Rubinstein Jakob, p. 222; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Berenstein Lew, p. 46; ibid., entry: Lewenberg Beno, p. 232; ibid., entry: Rubinstein Jakob, p. 343.

[368] The offices of the division were located at 14 Dworska Street and 85 Franciszkańska Street. From July 1st, 1940 it was headed by Lajb Glazer, and for this reason it was called "Glazer's undergarment-making division" – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Glazer Lajb, p. 94; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Glazer Lajb, p. 152.

[369] The division was located at 11 Zgierska Street, its manager was Majer Farber, then Jakob Brisk – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Brisk Jakob, p. 22; ibid., entry: Farber Majer, p. 73; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Brisk Jakob, p. 67; ibid., entry: Farber Majer, p. 121.

[370] The division, directed by Izaak Sonabend from August 20th, 1940, was located at 11 Zgierska Street – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Sonabend Izaak, p. 238; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Sonabend Izaak, p. 362.

[371] Resort znajdował się przy Urzędniczej 9, jego kierownikiem był Majer Farber – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Farber Majer, p. 73; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Farber Majer, p. 121.

[372] It consisted of divisions at 77 Drewnowska Street and 7 Zgierska Street.

[373] The division was located at 77 Drewnowska Street.

[374] It was originally housed at 5/7 Urzędnicza Street, then at 12/14 Drukarska Street, its heads were at different times: Samuel Topilski, Molzesio and Meier Karmioł – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Karmioł Meier, p. 122–123; ibid., entry: Topilski Samuel, p. 264; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Karmioł Meier, p. 201; ibid., entry: Topilski Samuel, p. 397.

Table no. 4
List of labor divisions (c. 1941) with addresses

Tailoring division	45 Łagiewnicka St.
Tailoring division	49 Łagiewnicka St.
Tailoring division	53 Łagiewnicka St.
Tailoring division	13 Żabia St.
Tailoring division	12 Niecała St.
Tailoring division	2 Młynarska St.
Tailoring division	8 Jakuba St.
Tailoring division	16 Jakuba St.
Tailoring division	10 Dworska St.
Tailoring division	28 Nowomiejska St.
Tailoring division	10 Podrzeczna St.
Shoemaking division	79 Zgierska St.
Shoemaking division II	11 Źródłowa St.
Rubber coats factory	5 Bałucki Marketsquare St.
Quilts division	11 Zgierska St.
Felt footwear division	11 Zgierska St.
Hat factory	9 Zgierska St.
Embroidery division	77 Drewnowska St.
Carpentry division	12/14 Drukarska St.
Carpentry division	3 Urzędnicza St.
Carpentry division	9 Pucka St.
Metalworks division	56 Zgierska St.
Undergarments department	14 Dworska St.
Undergarments department	85 Franciszkańska St.
Hosiery factory	50 Zgierska St.
Furrier division	9 Ceglana St.
Upholstery division	9 Urzędnicza St.
Gloves and stockings department	7 Kościelny Sq.
Tannery division	12/14 Drukarska St.
Saddlery division	5 Młynarska St.
Artistic embroidery division	30 Limanowskiego St.
Paper division	Żydowska St.
Cap-making workshop	47 Zgierska St.

Source: AŻIH, Ring I/331, pp. 1–2.

Cap-Making Workshop sign
(State Archive in Łódź)

The rag footwear[375] workshop has 144 workers who produced 6,746 pairs of shoes.

The tricot factory[376] employs 50 workers. They produced about 2,500 men's pullovers (vigogne wool), 700 of half-woolen yarn, 700 turtlenecks, 118 women's pullovers, 144 women's vests and 42 pairs of earmuffs.[377]

At the same time, to attract new clients, in the first half of 1941, the head of the Board of the Ghetto sought orders from private companies, sending offers to entrepreneurs from all over the Reich. In the offer, he wrote that in his company, Gettoverwaltung Litzmanndstadt, he had many facilities that were working for the German army, but their production capacity was not fully utilized. Therefore, he could take any number of orders with a guarantee of quick and high-quality workmanship.[378] These actions yielded some results, because new divisions were opened gradually.[379] A succession of German committees also came

[375] The division, founded on December 1st, 1940, was originally located at 127 Okopowa Street and then at 75 Brzezińska Street. It was headed by Abram Gutrajman and Berek Izbicki – APŁ, PSŻ 1094, Z wędrówek po placówkach pracy, p. 233–236; ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Izbicki Berek, p. 118; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Izbicki Berek, p. 189.

[376] The division was located at 50 Brzezińska Street, on October 16th, 1940 Izrael Lubliński was appointed its head. Large quantities of earmuffs produced for the Wehrmacht earned Lubinski the nickname "the first millionaire ghetto" – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Lubliński Izrael, p. 144; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Lubliński Izrael, p. 242.

[377] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 10–24 1941, p. 133–135.

[378] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 311.

[379] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated May 6th 1941, p. 192.

to the ghetto to look at the production process and verify whether Biebow could deliver on his promises. On June 5th, Reichsfuhrer SS Heinrich Himmler came to the ghetto and met with the Eldest of the Jews at Bałucki Market. Later, Himmler visited the largest tailoring division at 16 Jakuba Street. There was a short exchange between Himmler and Rumkowski, recorded by Rumkowski's secretary, Szmul Rozensztajn:

> "How are you faring?" asks Himmler. "We are working and building a city of labor," Rumkowski responded. "And how is that work going?" Himmler asks. "Not bad, I think. I am hoping it is going to be even better. I am doing everything to improve and intensify the work. My motto is: work, peace and order." "Try working for the good of your brethren in the ghetto, and then all will be well with you," Mr. Himmler ended the conversation.[380]

Soon after, Dawid Sierakowiak wrote in his diary: "The ghetto is developing more and more gloriously. A large number of new workshops and factories are being established. Together with those already existing, they form what's called in jest the 'Jewish Industrial District.'"[381]

By late 1941, 55 divisions handled incoming orders, including tailoring, shoemaking, straw shoes, furniture, upholstery and rubber coats divisions.[382] According to the reports of Rumkowski's administration, the divisions employed 20,789 people.[383]

The new labor facilities required a number of other units of the Jewish administration aside from the Jewish Central Bureau of Labor Divisions. Premises prepared for labor facilities were found by the Housing Department and later submitted to Rumkowski for his decision. He ordered the Construction Department to adapt the building according to the requirements of the future division.[384]

With the rapid development of production plants, the divisions started competing for the priority to purchase materials for the manufacture of ordered goods or needed machines and tools. Facilities competing for contracts caused one another problems.[385] To curb the conflicts, which were reflected in the production capacity of the ghetto, and to develop a plan to increase the performance of divisions, a meeting convened in February 1941 under the aegis of the Supreme Control Chamber, attended by about 80 of the most important figures of the ghetto and heads of divisions. During the meeting, the obligatory distribution of all raw materials was established, which would be coordinated by a unit appointed for that purpose – the Central Purchasing Office – headed by Dawid

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[380] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik*, transl. and ed. M. Polit, Warszawa 2008, p. 80. A short note about Himmler's stay, mistakenly dated July 7, 1941, was also included in the Chronicle – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated June 7–9th, 1941, p. 213.

[381] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...,* p. 121; *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, ed. L. Dobroszycki, Warszawa 1960, p. 71–72.

[382] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 337–338; ibid., entry dated December 14th, 1941, p. 378; ibid., entry dated December 16th, 1941, p. 382–383; ibid., entry dated December 29–31st, 1941, p. 409–410.

[383] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 309, table 8.

[384] Cf. m.in. *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 29th, 1941, p. 147; ibid., entry dated May 27th–31st, 1941, p. 205; ibid., entry dated December 5–12th,1941, p. 232; ibid., entry dated September 1941, p. 286–287.

[385] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated 3 January 1942, p. 12.

Warszawski.[386] The institution, located at 4 Kościelny Square, handled the purchases for the purposes of labor divisions and are the Department of the ghetto administration. It expedited the organization of subsequent production facilities, although there were also voices of criticism. The establishment of that unit is evidence of the tendency to centralize the structures of the Jewish ghetto administration. The *Chronicle of the Ghetto* describes an incident during the purchase of typewriters, which were bought at the price of 125Mk and then sold to another unit of the ghetto administration for twice as much. "Paper is patient and it can take many a feat, but since when is taking things from one pocket and placing them in another called making profit?" the chronicler asked.[387] In September 1941, Warszawski was replaced by Gustaw Gerson and Chaim Lajb Lipnowski as heads of the Central Purchasing Office.[388]

The Labor Conscription Bureau

Parallel to the expansion of production facilities, institutions responsible for sending laborers outside the ghetto continued their operation after its closure. The Labor Conscription Bureau, located at 10 Podrzeczna Street and still operating in April 1940, was closed at the end of June 1940, and the head, Zygmunt Rajngold, was transferred to the Order Service.[389] In December 1940, a new institution was established, albeit with the same name (Labor Conscription Bureau II[390]), which was tasked with providing laborers to work on the construction of the Posen – Frankfurt an der Oder motorway. The head of the institution was Bernard Fuchs, brother of Dora Fuchs, head of the Central Secretariat. Later, following the fusion with the Division of Public Works in April 1942, the institution was jointly managed by three executives: Bernard Fuchs; Azriel Uryson, former head of the Division of Public Works; and Franz Robert Anders.[391] The office was initially located at 11 Lutomierska Street (extension 35) and later moved to a neighboring house at 13 Lutomierska Street, which housed the Public Works Department.[392]

As mentioned above, the primary objective of the Bureau was to direct people to work on the construction of the Posen – Frankfurt[393] motorway. The institution carried out the registration of volunteers, compiled and organized transports, and handled financial mat-

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386 S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 33–42; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated September 1941, p. 298.

387 Ibid., entry dated 25 July 1941, p. 255–256.

388 Ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 284–285.

389 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Eisatz I, p. 3–4; AŻIH, 205/349, Arbeits-Eisatz I, p. 9–10. *The Encyclopedia of the Ghetto*, calls this unit the Bureau of Conscriptions I because it omits the institution of the same name, established on October 7th, 1939 and headed by Michał Radzyner.

390 Sources also use the name Labor Office, the Labor Bureau or Labor Department, however, this unit did not become part of the ghetto Labor Office in March 1943 on the instructions of the Ghetto Board. Cf. A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 101.

391 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Eisatz II, p. 5–6; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Arbeits-Eisatz II, p. 11–12.

392 *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 210.

393 The whole undertaking was headed on behalf of the German authorities by Ernst Kendz – head of the Office of the Reich Trustee for Labor in the Warta Land. More about forced labor camps for Jews in Greater Poland, including camps for people working on the construction of the motorway, cf. A. Ziółkowska, *Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w Wielkopolsce w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej (1941–1943)*, Poznań 2005, p. 70–84. Cf. also D. Dąbrowska, *Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w „Kraju Warty" w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1955, no. 13–14, p. 145–148.

ters with families of laborers in the ghetto. In November, Rumkowski appealed to ghetto residents to volunteer for work. Announcement No. 166 of November 19, 1940 stated that the registration carried out in the hospital building at 36 Łagiewnicka Street was open to "healthy, strong men aged 18 to 40." The decree also announced that after a medical examination conducted by a German commission, 600 people would be sent to work.[394] The appeal was repeated a little over a week later in Announcement No. 169, wherein the Eldest of the Jews announced that beginning November 29th, applications would be accepted from another 3,000 people[395] and, beginning December 4th, from subsequent volunteers.[396] When the number of applications for voluntary work outside the ghetto proved insufficient, Rumkowski decided to designate certain groups himself and assign them to forced labor. In a speech on February 1, 1941, the Eldest of the Jews announced that he would send to work in the Reich "those who obstructed his work, in particular the criminal element." He followed through on his warning when, shortly after the speech, the Special Unit of the Order Service led by Zygmunt Hercberg made mass arrests of about 50 people who were sent to work outside the ghetto together with inmates at Central Prison[397]. Regardless of this, Rumkowski continued to publish appeals to registration for work in the form of announcements; for example, by addressing women in March 1941.[398] By the end of 1940, 1,263 people were sent from the Łódź ghetto to build the highway, while a year later the figure had already risen to 4,830, to reach over 6,000 workers by August 1942. In total, from December 1940 until the end of June 1942, went about 7,200 people were sent to the Reichsautobahncamps.[399] Persons employed outside the ghetto for some time were entitled to receive parcels from their families in the ghetto; they could also provide the addresses of their relatives in the ghetto to whom Rumkowski paid part of their earnings.[400]

Furthermore, the Bureau was in charge of assigning people to physical labor in divisions, including all workers and non-permanent employees of other departments of the Jewish administration of the ghetto. The so-called delegations of workers, whose powers are not entirely clear, also had some say in choosing who to send for work. The assignment must have been not without some problems, since in Rumkowski's Announcement No. 145 of October 20, 1940, the Eldest of the Jews stated that "under to the current system whereby laborers are assigned by delegations of workers, some of the selected persons proven wrong for the job, lacking the required professional qualifications, who have been the main cause of the recent difficulties and complaints. For this reason, delegations of workers are dissolved."[401]

The hiring system changed completely – henceforth the right to accept or to dismiss a candidate was reserved for the head of the appropriate division, to be approved by

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394 AYIVO, RG-241/289, Announcement No. 166 dated November 19th, 1940, p. 1.

395 Ibid., RG-241/292, Announcement No. 169 dated November 28th, 1940, p. 1. The following day Announcement No. 170 was issued with nearly the same content, but it did not specify the number of people who would be registered – ibid., RG-241/293, Announcement No. 170 dated November 29th, 1940, p. 1.

396 Ibid., p. 3.

397 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 8th, 1941, p. 125.

398 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated March 10–24th, 1941, p. 132; ibid., entry dated March 27th, 1941, p. 143–144.

399 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 309, table 8; A. Ziółkowska, *Obozy...*, p. 76.

400 AYIVO, RG-241/303, p. 3; *Zarządzenie nr 182* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 145–146; D. Dąbrowska, *Zagłada...*, p. 146.

401 AYIVO, RG-241/268, Announcement no. 145 dated October 20, 1941, p. 1.

Rumkowski's expert committees. Groups of unskilled workers were assigned supervisors who were professionals in their respective fields. During this time, the emerging labor institutions were visited by German commissions which observed the work and organization of departments. Therefore, Rumkowski issued another announcement, in which he reminded ghetto inhabitants that they were not allowed to interrupt work and address the Germans "visiting the workshop."[402]

In July 1941, a unit had already been established within the Bureau, responsible for the registration of unemployed relief takers who were then assigned to compulsory, unpaid public works.[403] Workers were assigned to various departments in the ghetto by a unit directed as of 1942 by Kiwa Siennicki and his deputy M. Grosfeld, while the allocation of office workers was the responsibility of Frank Wolf's unit.[404] At the command of the Board of the Ghetto dated April 8, 1942, the Bureau implemented a system of control over the work of each employee in the ghetto, with the exception of permanent employees of other departments who reported to the Personnel Department. On several occasions in the same year, the Bureau transferred larger groups of persons released from their previous positions in divisions, such as institutions subject to the Provisioning Department. In 1942, along with the rapid increase in employment and almost complete elimination of unemployment,[405] the Bureau became particularly important.[406]

Development of Production

From the beginning of 1942, the number of divisions and their employees grew steadily. Rumkowski continued to seek more orders, certain more than ever that his policy was right. During a speech delivered on January 3rd at the Culture House at 3 Krawiecka Street, the Eldest was satisfied with the achievements in that field. "Looking back, I am especially proud of the unprecedented expansion of the ghetto into a center of labor," Rumkowski said. "After all, we have built enormous labor facilities from nothing, we have launched various enterprises and factories. Today, we employ nearly 50,000 people. Such a number of employees must be reckoned with."[407] Employment in divisions indeed increased − in January 1942, out of Rumkowski's 50,000 employed, more than 19,431 people were working in 59 divisions. By August of that year, there were already 91 divisions employing 58,580 people.[408]

The increase in the number of divisions and the orders for the German economy that they handled prompted Hans Biebow to apply to have the Board of the Ghetto recognized as a special production plant working for the Wehrmacht. This was meant to be a measure to protect officials from being drafted into the army. At the same time, Biebow applied to be awarded the position of director of an armament plant and to be paid all overdue salary

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402 Ibid.

403 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 5–12, 1941, p. 231.

404 A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 101.

405 This was associated with deportations carried out from the beginning of 1942, during which a group of the so-called "relief-takers" or persons considered "unproductive" were taken to the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner.

406 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Arbeits-Eisatz II, p. 5–6; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Arbeits-Einsatz II, p. 11–12.

407 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 3, 1942, p. 10.

408 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 309, table 8.

for the period from May 1, 1940. Both cases dragged on for months. In April 1942, Biebow received outstanding wages and the ghetto was recognized as a war industry company, going under the supervision of the Ministry of Armaments of the Reich. In June of that year, Minister Albert Speer assigned the ghetto a special number, which did not, however, exempt employees of the Board of the Ghetto from conscription.[409]

The development of a network of production plants producing growing quantities of goods affected the financial situation within the closed area. Gradually, despite the additional burden of taxes, the negative balance was reduced. While in February 1941 Biebow applied to the President of Regierungsbezirk for further loans for the purchase of food, from April of that year the monthly balance was favorable.[410] Thus, the ghetto began to pay for itself. Growing profits encouraged Biebow to develop the existing network of production plants in the ghetto. The company "Łódź Ghetto" worked more and more efficiently, the only problem from the point of view of the German authorities were the still high costs of maintenance of the unemployed and, above all, of those considered "unfit" for work.

4. Administrative Structures of the "Closed District" and their Operation in 1941

By the end of 1940, the framework of the administrative structure of the Jewish ghetto of Łódź were formed. In the following year, despite the development of institutions associated with production described in the previous section, other departments led by Rumkowski's administration also underwent transformation. These changes did not, however, have such a dynamic character as in the previous period. At the same time, the overall employment in the structures of the ghetto administration was gradually increasing. This was a deliberate move on Rumkowski's part, relating to his policy of employing the largest number of people possible to provide them with some basic means of existence. In his speech of February 1, 1941, subtitled with the motto "Work and peace," he offered the following summary of his policy of expanding the bureaucratic apparatus: "I am very much aware that this apparatus is perhaps too large, but a more important issue is at stake here, namely to achieve a greater effect by employing as many workers as possible, giving them livelihoods and offering them a chance to earn their livelihoods and saving them from relying on relief grants. Work has a positive effect on their wellbeing; they feel needed, while on the other hand it is the perfect solution to this problem from the social point of view."[411]

Centralization of Power

After the first few months of the closed district, certain tendencies emerged that came to characterize the "leadership style" of the Eldest of the Jews. One of these was the diminishing of any real influence Rumkowski's advisory bodies had on his authority.

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[409] A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 449–450; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 311.

[410] Detailed financial statement for the period from November 1940 until August 1942, cf. I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 314, table 10.

[411] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, Exposé Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów z 1 II 1941, p. 90; *"Słuchają słów Prezesa...". Księga przemówień Chaima Mordechaja Rumkowskiego*, eds. A. Sitarek, M. Trębacz, Łódź 2011, p. 16.

At the turn of 1940 and 1941, the role of the Council of Elders was gradually reduced, although the German authorities had intended it as an advisory body for Rumkowski. In the organization chart of the ghetto administration dated February 15, 1941, there were two institutions directly under the Eldest of the Jews: the Council of Elders, and the Supreme Control Chamber.[412] As mentioned above, compared to the first months of the ghetto, the Council of Elders actually ceased to play a significant role, although some of its members still held important positions in the hierarchy of ghetto officials. This, however, was a result of the degree of Rumkowski's confidence in that person, and not his attachment to the structures imposed by the German authorities at the beginning of the war. An example of this process was the fate of Leon Szykier, member of the second Council of Elders and head of the Health Department, who on January 17, 1941, was officially appointed the Chairman's deputy.[413] As Rumkowski's close associate, Szykier chaired committee meetings aimed at delimitation of powers of the Supreme Control Chamber, the Bureau of Investigation and Order Service.[414] He was involved in forming a new institution called the Advisory Committee in February 1941 – which will be discussed below – and opened Rumkowski's speeches addressed to heads of departments and Community officials. The Eldest of the Jews also demonstrated his trust in Szykier by honoring him with a diploma.[415] Szykier also went to Warsaw on behalf of Rumkowski in order to bring doctors to the Łodź ghetto.[416] However, in April 1941, a conflict broke out between Szykier and Rumkowski, and as a result, the latter suspended Szykier's official functions.[417] According to Rozensztajn, the dispute was provoked by Szykier's dictatorial inclinations in the Health Department, which translated into conflicts with Józef Rumkowski, administrative director of that department and brother of the Eldest of the Jews.[418] Ultimately, the Chairman removed Szykier from the office, leaving him the position of one of the chiefs of the Hospital No. 1 on Łagiewnicka Street. He was replaced in the Health Department by Dr. Wiktor Miller, while Leon Rozenblat and Aron Jakubowicz were appointed the new deputies of the Chairman in September 1941.[419]

Other members of the Council of Elders who were in the circle of Rumkowski's closest associates included Pinkus Gerszowski and Dawid Warszawski, but both, unlike Szykier, managed to avoid conflicts with the Eldest of the Jews and held high positions until the end of the ghetto. Gerszowski, a prewar friend and collaborator from Rumkowski's time in Helenowek,[420] was a member of the first Council of Elders and became a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Control Chamber after the establishment of the ghetto, and

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412 APŁ, PSŻ 729, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.

413 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated January 17th, 1941, p. 21; ibid., vol. 1, entry dated 1941, p. 85.

414 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated January 23rd, 1941, p. 38.

415 Ibid., vol. 1, Exposé Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów, p. 89, 93; *Słuchają...*, p. 20–21. Józef Rumkowski, Salomea Mandels, Dawid Warszawski, Aron Jakubowicz, Henry Neftalin, Herbert Grawe, Solomon Ser, Dora Fuchs and Estera Daum were also decorated. – ibid., p. 93–94.

416 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated March 9th 1941, p. 127.

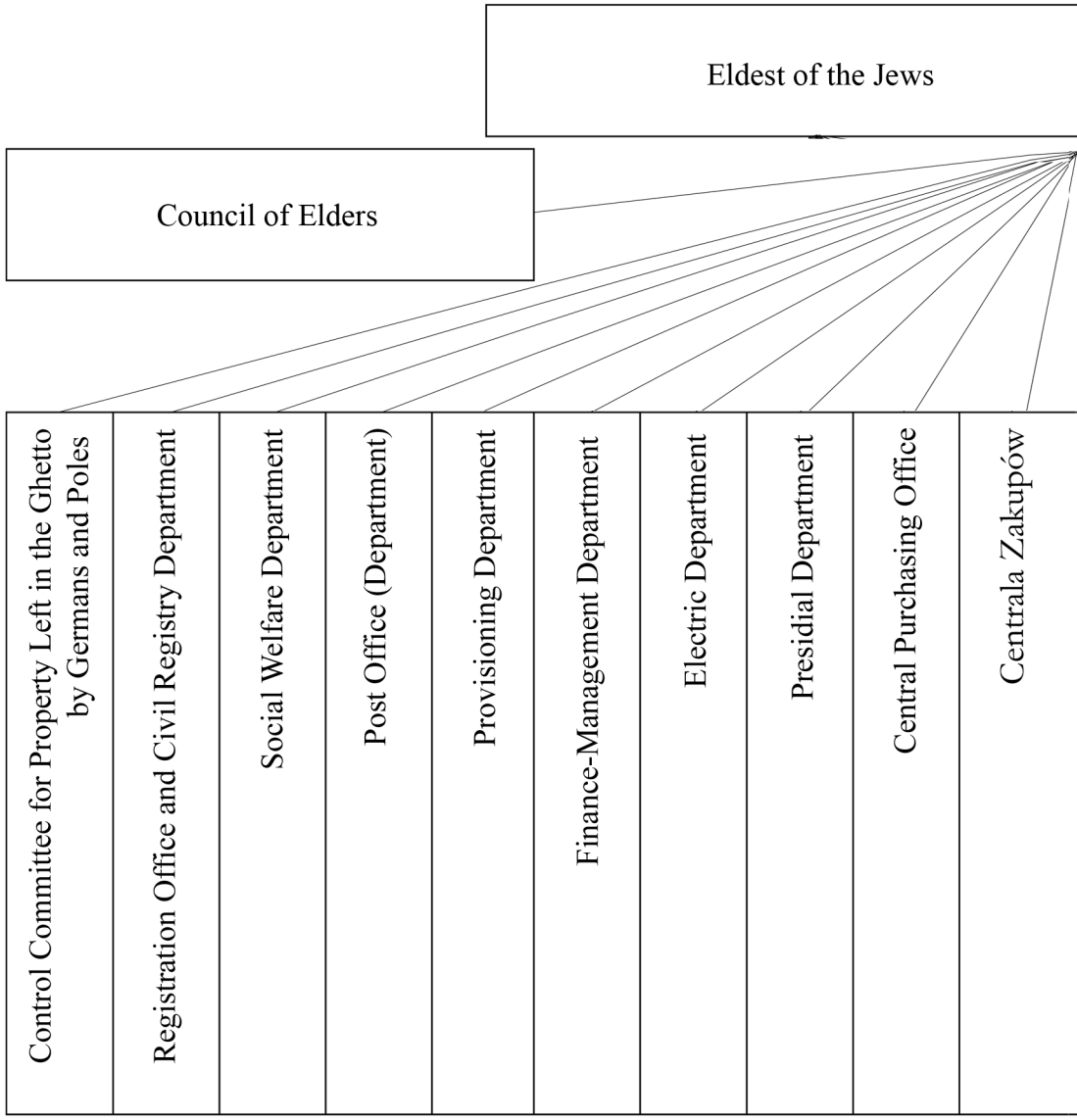
417 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated April 25th 1941, p. 182.

418 S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, April 4th, 1941, p. 78–79.

419 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated May 7th, 1941, p. 192; ibid., vol. 1, entry dated September 1941, p. 299.

420 Pinkus Gerszowski was the curator and then the deputy chairman of the board of the Jewish Children's Boarding House and Farm in Helenówek, and his wife was also on the board. In addition, he was a member of the "Dom Sierot" Orphan Care Association and Montefiore Bnei-Brith Humanitarian Association – APŁ, Urząd Wojewódzki Łódzki (henceforth: UWŁ), 1449, Akta Towarzystwa Internat dla Dzieci w Helenówku; ibid., UWŁ 1471, Akta stowarzyszenia

Table no. 5
Chart of the organization of the Jewish Administration dated February 15, 1941



Source: APŁ, PSŻ 729, p. 1.

Supreme Control Chamber
Bank
Coupons Department
Kitchen Department
Central Office of Labor Divisions
Labor Conscription Bureau
Construction Department
School Department
Health Department
Court
Order Service

later became the manager of the Bank of the Eldest of the Jews.[421] Dawid Warszawski, also a member of the first Council of Elders, was head of the Tailoring Headquarters – the institution in charge of the most important production section in the closed district.[422]

The diminishing role of the Council of Elders was also mentioned by Rumkowski himself. During the organizational meeting of the new advisory institution held on February 23rd, 1941, at 4 Kościelny Square, the Eldest confirmed that the incumbent Auxiliary Council (also known as the Beirat) "exists only on paper" and he recalled "with regret the former Auxiliary Council [i.e. the first Council of Elders – AS], which consisted in its entirety of people with a social approach." Rumkowski therefore decided to appoint a new body, the Advisory Committee (*Beratungsstelle*). He emphasized that it would not undermine the authority of the Eldest of the Jews in any way and was only meant to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas. He mentioned attempts to work with various other committees which had always ended in failure because "these people demanded [...] to keep the deciding vote for themselves," which he could not accept.[423]

Aside from Rumkowskia, the confidential meeting was attended by Hersz Litwin, Szmul Dawid Łaski, Herman Szyfer, Henryk Neftalin, Leon Szykier, Pinkus Gerszowski, Mosze Zażujer, Dawid Warszawski and Józef Klementynowski who took minutes of the meeting. This was not the final composition; in subsequent protocols of the meetings, the names of Leon Rozenblat, David Helman, Seweryn Klozenberg, Mendel Krasucki and Henryk Fajn appeared.[424]

At the first meeting of the Advisory Committee, the Eldest of the Jews presented major problems that he had faced at the turn of 1940 and 1941 – negotiations with the German authorities on the financing of the ghetto, the hunger protests and negotiations with delegates of workers on increasing food rations, and hiring people who received relief grants for unpaid intervention works. He also mentioned the talks with the German authorities on remuneration for demolition work on the border between the ghetto and the city, as well as the creation of the "fire lane"[425] and a project to resettle Jews from surrounding towns. Rumkowski devoted much attention to creating new workplaces and increasing the quantity and quality of production. He explained the decision to close most of the plants in mid-January 1941 with the necessity for a reorganization, in which he acted "ahead of the authorities, who intended to bring about "order" in workshops." The meeting concluded with a discussion on the issue of acquisitioning German marks from ghetto inhabitants necessary for the purchase of certain goods (such as tobacco). The initial purchase operation was quickly halted, and the German authorities proposed an ordinance that would make the exchange of German marks for ghetto receipts obligatory.[426]

Łódzkie Towarzystwo Opieki nad Sierotami Dom Sierot; ibid., UWŁ 1211, Akta Stowarzyszenia Humanitarnego Montefiore Bnej-Brith.

[421] Ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 92; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 141.

[422] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Warszawski Dawid, p. 427.

[423] APŁ, PSŻ 1102, Sprawozdanie z posiedzenia Komisji Doradczej 23 II 1941, p. 108.

[424] Ibid., PSŻ 1102, Sprawozdanie z posiedzenia Komisji Doradczej 7 V 1941, p. 114; ibid., PSŻ 1102, Członkowie Komisji Doradczej, p. 107.

[425] It was an area between the streets Północna, Podrzeczna and Wolborska, where on the orders of the German authorities the dense buildings were demolished to create a space separating the ghetto from the city. After World War II, the Old City Park was established here.

[426] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated October 1–31, 1941, p. 315.

Meetings of the Advisory Committee were *ad-hoc*, irregular, and associated with the necessity to discuss emerging issues. On May 7th, 1941, Rumkowski met with the Committee to discuss the temporary detention of approximately 400 people in the ghetto who were meant to be sent outside for labor.[427]Subsequent meetings concerned issues such as the reduction of the area of the ghetto, provisioning, a further increase in production and the restructuring of the youth. The Committee operated most likely until the deportations of 1942, as it no longer appeared on the organizational chart in August 1943.[428]

In addition to the advisory bodies, another institution that had a primary role in the administrative apparatus of the ghetto was the Supreme Control Chamber (NIK), operating from November 1940. At the beginning of 1941, the Chamber, which had extensive powers, was one of the factors − next to the Court and the Order Service – of a conflict of jurisdiction between the institutions in charge of the control and prosecution of abuse. In order to delimit the responsibilities and capabilities of these institutions, a series of meetings of the so-called Competence Committee were convened from January to March 1941. Based on the minutes of these meetings, it is evident that there was a dispute between the Court and the Order Service, during which the Supreme Control Chamber remained on the sidelines. After a series of meetings, a delineation of powers between control and investigation institutions was achieved. The Supreme Control Chamber was responsible for the prosecution of all violations of discipline committed by administrative staff. In the event a common crime was detected, the Chamber had to refer the matter to the Court. The inverse of this principle was applied to the Courts. At the same time, an obligation was introduced to exchange information concerning pending cases. At larger administration departments, disciplinary courts were appointed which handled cases of employees' offenses in the first instance. The institution of appeal against their decision was the Supreme Control Chamber. Also, the powers of the Chamber itself were clarified, recognizing that the "the NIK has special tasks in the ghetto," which were described as follows:

> prosecution of all offenses, control of all manifestations of collective life, control of all the ghetto authorities, control of the operation of individual units if their activity has an impact on the life of the community [...]. Examination of purpose and viability of individual institutions, examination of the rationalization of work, examination of rationalization work individual officials, assessment and under-appreciation of the work of others.

The Chamber was also to have an effect on the structure and functioning of individual units of the ghetto administration, "the introduction of new institutions, mergers of existing institutions, defense of members of the population from officials' abuse, bureaucracy and slowness [...] reporting problems and wishes of the ghetto population

[427] APŁ, PSŻ 1102, Sprawozdanie z posiedzenia Komisji Doradczej 7 V 1941, p. 114. It was a group of several hundred men from Pabianice and Ozorków, who came to the ghetto on May 9th, and after medical examination were sent to work in Germany – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated May 9th, 1941, p. 194.
[428] APŁ, PSŻ 733, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.

to the authorities, establishing communication with members of the population and gaining their trust."[429]

After the arrangements made in spring concerning the competence of the NIK, the institution functioned without major changes for only a few months until July 1941. Before this, Rumkowski managed to boast about the activities of this institution during his visit to the Warsaw ghetto in May 1941: "I have appointed the Supreme Chamber of Control, which controls the overall activities of all institutions of the Community, carries out searches in all factories, and immediately suspends employees in the event abuse is discovered."[430]

The Chamber's very broad powers were also associated with high expectations. As stated in the *Chronicle*, "So far, the Supreme Control Chamber has failed to rise to the occasion or work in accordance with the intentions of the Eldest of the Jews, who, by giving this institution the highest competence, believed that careful supreme control of the Community's economy would greatly help to rationalize work in the ghetto for the good of the population."[431] The new composition of the Chamber was constituted on July 5th, 1941 − Rumkowski as the chairman; Pinkus Gerszowski, trusted associate of the Eldest of the Jews, as deputy chairman; Samuel Berkowicz from Area I of the Order Service; and Jakub Szkulnik, formerly head of the Bank of the Eldest of the Jews.[432] The Supreme Control Chamber was located 1 Dworska Street. In this form, the institution operated for another year in accordance with the competencies outlined above.

Further changes were announced as early as August 1942. The *Chronicle* recorded rumors circulating in the ghetto about the planned appointment of a "supreme council to control the entire economy of the ghetto." The Supreme Control Chamber was to be disbanded and a new institution would take over its powers. The Chairman of the new Council was to be Józef Rumkowski with Gerszowski allegedly also on the presidium.[433] Just a few days later, specific information concerning the new institutions was cited. The Presidential Council, with Józef Rumkowski appointed chairman and Luzer Najman, Bernard Kopel, Mieczysław Rosenblat and Izrael Tabaksblat as members. The source noted that the institution "is to cover the whole work of the ghetto, except for those matters that require contact with the authorities. However, in the internal affairs the scope of its competence is to be complete." By then, the new body was already divided into four sections: Public Works, headed by Perl; Labor Divisions with Josek Fajersztajn at the helm; provisioning, led by Izrael Tabaksblat; and Labor Inspection headed by Kiwa Siennicki. The premises at 25 Łagiewnicka Street were prepared for the new body, where the Main Cashier and the Personnel Department were also to have office.[434]

Contrary to these assurances, the Supreme Control Chamber was not liquidated at once, but another reorganization of its management was carried out, still in the same month. All

[429] APŁ, PSŻ 1102, Protokół posiedzenia Komisji Kompetencyjnej, p. 25–32 A report from Rumkowski's meeting with the staff of the Supreme Chamber of Control was also included in the second issue of *Geto-Tsaytung* – ibid., PSŻ 1075, *Geto-Tsaytung*, no. 2, p. 6.

[430] *Referat przewodniczącego Rady Starszych m. Łodzi* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 264. On how Rumkowski was received by Adam Czerniaków and other Warsaw Jews, cf. Chapter 4.1.

[431] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 1, entry dated July 5, 1941, p. 225.

[432] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated July 12, 1941, p. 230.

[433] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated August 7, 1942, p. 437.

[434] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated August 11, 1942, p. 443.

former members were dismissed, replaced by Bernard Kopel, Luzer Najman, Mieczysław Rosenblat, Józef Rumkowski as chairman, and as Pachter as secretary. Rumkowski's circular stressed that the Chamber was tasked with monitoring the proper execution of orders and that in the event of the detection of "abuse," it had the authority of undertaking certain measures − dismissals and arrests.[435] The subsequent step in the reorganization of the Chamber was the establishment of the Complaints Division and a number of complaints offices at for each department and division. According to the adopted procedure, the heads of departments and divisions were to accept complaints and respond to them within four days. In the case of rejection, the applicant had the right to appeal to the Complaints Department at the Supreme Control Chamber. Any head who failed to keep the deadline faced a disciplinary procedure.[436] Subsequent measures taken by the Chamber regulated issues such as wages during employees' illness[437] or the issuance of meals.[438]

Gradually, after the 1942 deportations, the NIK lost significance, as the majority of the supervisory cases were taken over by the Special Branch of the Order Service, favored by the German Board of the Ghetto,[439] which was growing in strength and becoming an increasingly important force in the hierarchy of power within the ghetto.[440] On November 1st, Rumkowski announced in a circular addressed to all departments and labor divisions in the ghetto that the Supreme Chamber of Control was to be combined with the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions. The composition of the newly formed Trades and Control Office (FUKR) included earlier members of the Chamber: Józef Rumkowski, Bernard Kopel, LuzerNajman and Mieczysław Rosenblat.[441] The appointment of the division entailed the liquidation of the Main Trade Committee led by Hersz Litewski, with offices at 4 Kościelny Square.[442] Beginning in 1943, FUKR and the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions became superior institutions in charge of factories operating in the ghetto in the altered structure of the ghetto administration, where production plants played the main role; this will be discussed later in this work.[443]

Reorganization of the Provisioning System

The process of reorganization concerned not only advisory bodies, but also the different Departments of the administration. At the beginning of 1941, a thorough reorganization of the Provisioning Department was carried out. As mentioned above, at the end of 1940, the operation of this Department provoked growing criticism. Members of the staff were accused of fraudulent behavior when issuing rations and of wasting the limited supplies

[435] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated August 16, 1942, pp. 449–450.
[436] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated August 23, 1942, pp. 460–461.
[437] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated August 29, 1942, pp. 472.
[438] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated September 28, 1942, pp. 509; ibid., vol. 2, entry dated October 5, 1942, p. 523.
[439] Cf. Section 4.2.
[440] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated 11 October 1942, p. 534; ibid., vol. 2, entry dated October 19, 1942, p. 545.
[441] APŁ, PSŻ 1069, Okólnik do wszystkich wydziałów, warsztatów i fabryk, p. 89; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated November 1, 1942, p. 573; ibid., entry dated November 2, 1942, p. 575; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 382–383.
[442] The Chief Technical Commission supervised Recycled Resources Department – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated 3 November 1942, p. 578–579.
[443] APŁ, PSŻ 733, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.

by inappropriate storage. At the beginning of 1941, dissatisfaction with the system of food distribution led to an outbreak of a series of street demonstrations – hunger protests. Demonstrations on Łagiewnicka Street (in front of the apartment Eldest of the Jews) and on Brzezińska Street took a dramatic turn – on several occasions the protestors tried to raid food carts. Ultimately, the demonstrations were suppressed at Rumkowski's command by officers of the Order Service.[444] In January 1941, in response to dissatisfaction, the Department was reorganized, as noted in the *Chronicle* on January 12th:

> The Provisioning Department is being reorganized, which involves decentralization of individual divisions, such as the sales of colonial products, bread, fuel, vegetables, dairy products, etc. The reorganization, commenced on the first day of this month, will be completed by the end of the month. It will undoubtedly improve the operation of the food distribution system.[445]

The main goal of the reorganization was to decentralize distribution points and divide them according to the type of products issued. The aim was for rations to be issued all at once. The distribution system was divided into four sections: colonial articles, vegetables, bread and dairy products. Provisioning continued to be supervised by Maks Szczęśliwy and Zygmunt Reingold.[446]

One of the effects of the reorganization was the resumption of the network of Community bakeries, which had been inactive since November 6, 1940.[447] An increased supply of flour made it possible to cover the demand with bread baked in the ghetto in place of bread brought in from the city. Before the resumption of baking in the ghetto, Rumkowski held a meeting with his closest associates from the Provisioning Department, namely Szczęśliwy, the manager; commander Reingold; Luzer Najman, head of the Coal Yard; and Mordechaj Lajzerowicz, bakeries inspector. In total, 35 facilities opened, and the first five started work on the night of January 20th. After a few weeks, 10 bakeries were closed, leaving 25 facilities in the ghetto, which as the *Chronicle* notes, "covered the demand for bread according to the new, rationalized consumption standards."[448]

Bakeries were supervised by the Bakeries Division, reporting to the Head Office of Bread and Milk, headed by Lajzerowicz, with its office at 6 Dworska Street. A professional committee was formed as part of this division, tasked with monitoring the bakeries. Its members included Sz. Keller, M. Kuperminc, M. Goldberg and K. Cwillich. In time, the community was disbanded and its competences taken over by a unit headed by Keller[449] which by the end of 1941 transformed into the Department of Bread, reporting directly to the management of Provisioning.[450]

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444 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated January 12, 1941, p. 3.
445 Ibid., entry dated January 12, 1941, p. 2.
446 Ibid., entry dated January 20, 1941, p. 29–30.
447 Ibid., vol. 5, Fragment opracowania Wydziału Archiwum o działalności piekarń, p. 148; N.N, *Notatka o położeniu gospodarczym getta łódzkiego w końcu stycznia 1941 r.* [in:] *Archiwum Ringelbluma...*, p. 161.
448 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated January 19, 1941, p. 27; ibid., vol. 5, Fragment opracowania Wydziału Archiwum o działalności piekarń, p. 149.
449 Ibid., vol. 5, Fragment opracowania Wydziału Archiwum o działalności piekarń, p. 150.
450 APŁ, PSŻ 730, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.

Flour porters, so-called white guard
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

Beginning in mid-January 1941, the daily ration of bread was 40dkg per person. In special occasions such as holidays, this increased slightly. It was collected in designated points one or several days in advance. At the end of April 1941, the system of bread rations distribution was changed – from that moment, whole 2kg loaves of bread were distributed five days in advance. Before, bread crumbled so much that there were significant losses when daily portions were sliced. Another reorganization took place on May 15, 1941, when bread distribution points were liquidated. The task was taken over by Community shops, also called colonial-bread shops, which reported to the Groceries Department. On September 18, 1941, the daily ration of bread was reduced to 33dkg per person – one loaf was distributed for six days. On November 3rd, the ration was further reduced, with one loaf was allocated once a week.[451] At the same time, the system of extra rations was introduced, to which privileged groups were entitled, such as heads of departments or divisions, intellectuals, rabbis and Talmud scholars, doctors or political party leaders. These groups were divided into three categories: "B" − the so-called Beirat (*bajracki*) for heads of departments and divisions and later for employees of major administration agencies, "L" – medical (*lekarski*) for physicians and health care workers, and "T" – for other privileged groups. Later, in 1942, "B" vouchers were subdivided into several categories: "B" – for heads; "BI" - for foremen; "B II" – instructors, brigade heads and officers of

[451] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania Wydziału Archiwum o działalności piekarń, p. 151.

the Order Service; "B III" – variable for employees. Also created were separate categories "Ph" for pharmacists and "CP" for the hard-working (*ciężko pracujący*).[452]

With the increasing number of privileged persons entitled to extra vouchers, Rumkowski lost control over their distribution, as such competences were taken over by heads of individual units, thus opening opportunity for numerous abuses.[453] In spite of this, the "Chairman" retained a certain group of products that he could assign as he saw fit. Their recipients included the sick, young mothers, small children, as well as young couples. The sick could buy extra products based on doctor's prescriptions in special shops. Facilities R I and R II (also called *Diätladen* I and II) were opened in January and April 1941. Their manager was secretary Estera Ejbuszyc, head of the Secretariat of Requests and Complaints. Organizationally, these points reported to the Department of Colonial Goods. The first facility opened at 18 Łagiewnicka Street on January 30th, the second at 17 Lutomierska Street on April 6th.[454] During the opening ceremony of R II, Rumkowski and Leon Szykier gave speeches. The *Chronicle* printed a report of the event along with a description of the point, "The facility has been arranged quite comfortably, for ghetto conditions. It consists of three rooms fitted with first-class shop equipment. The rational layout of all food products in terms of cleanliness and hygiene requirements makes the shop reminiscent of a pharmacy."[455] Goods that could be collected in the these shops came, for example, from parcels sent to the ghetto from abroad, from purchase carried out by Rumkowski or from confiscated goods by the Order Service during the operation against "profiteers"[456] or illegal producers of food.[457] The R I point at Łagiewnicka Street operated until April 18, 1941, and the decision to close it was explained by the fact that there was another point which, serving about 250 customers a day, covered the entire demand of the sick using the vouchers.[458] The number of customers grew steadily and in July 1941, amounted to about 360 persons a day.[459]

In mid-December 1940, the ration card system was introduced in the ghetto. It was actually implemented in early January 1941. The ration consisted of two parts, issued for different coupons of the food cards. One section could be exchanged for a meal at the Community kitchen – in such case, coupons were cut from the food card and exchanged for appropriate meal vouchers.[460] Along with the introduction of the system of food rationing, it became necessary to establish a unit that would coordinate issuing rations. At the end of 1940, the Ration Cards Department was founded for this purpose, headed initially by Henryk Neftalin, and later by Schwarz. The office was located at 71 Marynarska Street,

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[452] APŁ, PSŻ 839, Album poświęcony sprawom specjalnych przydziałów żywnościowych, p. 1–29; *Kronika getta...*, vol. 3, entry dated June 16, 1943, p. 283.
[453] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 292.
[454] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated January 30, 1941, p. 62; ibid., entry dated April 6, 1941, p. 156–157.
[455] Ibid., entry dated April 6, 1941, p. 156–157.
[456] One such action was carried out on April 5, 1941, at Pilcera Square. It was attended by officers of the Order Service and the Office of Price Control – ibid., entry dated April 5, 1941, p. 156.
[457] At the end of April candy produced in 43 illegally operating factorieswas also confiscated – ibid., entry dated April 24, 1941, p. 181.
[458] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated April 18, 1941, p. 175. Originally, it was planned to open three such points – ibid., entry dated January 30, 1941, p. 62.
[459] Ibid., entry dated July 12, 1941, p. 230.
[460] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 291.

where 25 officials worked. Its main task was to introduce card-based food allocation, on the basis of the cards and vouchers, which was announced by the Eldest of the Jews in his Announcement of December 12, 1940. According to the announcement, bread and food cards would be distributed among all residents of the ghetto on December 15th.[461] They were delivered by special inspectors, who checked the number of residents on that occasion, which is why people were banned from leaving their place of residence on that day.[462] The department was in charge of the Division of Bread and Food Cards, the Milk Division, and the Doctors' Cards Division (also called the Office of Vouchers for the Sick),[463] beginning operations on January 29, 1941, and from June 1941 located at 23 Łagiewnicka Street. It was tasked with sending milk and R II cards to the sick. In June 1941, a total of 2,300 cards were distributed.[464]

Storage and distribution of dairy products was handled by the Milk Central Office (also called the Dairy Division), independent from 1941, located at 25 Łagiewnicka Street and initially headed by Pinkus Ajzner, and later by Izrael Gurin beginning February 24, 1941.[465] It stored dairy products (including milk, eggs, butter, margarine, cottage cheese, whey). Dairy products, supplied to the ghetto at irregular intervals, were delivered first to the institutions of the Social Welfare Department and Health Department, as well as R I and R II shops. The remaining products were sold in small quantities and distribution points. In April 1941, dairy products were distributed in 17 special shops and 40 mixed bread and dairy shops.[466] As part of the reorganization of the food sale system carried out in May 1941, 45 provisioning areas were introduced, thus disbanding the mixed bread and dairy points, and dairy products were sold exclusively in 15 special shops.[467]

Meat products were distributed by the Head Office of Meat and Sausages, located at 40 Brzezińska Street.[468] The head of the unit was Rozenson. The ghetto was supplied predominantly with horsemeat and (in smaller quantities) pork and beef. In July 1941, about 20–25T of meat arrived in the ghetto weekly, which did not cover the demand. In September of that year, the quantity dropped to about 8T per week.[469] Meat coming into the ghetto was used partially to make soups and sausage in a meat processing facility operating in the building of the Head Office of Meat beginning August 1940.[470] The distribution was carried out through distribution points.

As a result of the Provisioning Department reorganization, also changed was the system of vegetable distribution. The Vegetable Department was located at 25 Łagiewnicka Street

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461 AYIVO, RG-241/300, Announcement no. 178, p. 2.

462 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Fragment opracowania Wydziału Archiwum o działalności piekarń, p. 149.

463 *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 169.

464 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 30 June 1941, p. 222.

465 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated 1 March 1941, p. 109; ibid., entry dated 30 April 1941, p. 186.

466 Ibid., entry dated 30 April 1941, p. 186.

467 Ibid., entry dated 2 May 1941, p. 188; ibid., entry dated 19 April 1941, p. 175.

468 Ibid., vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 99.

469 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated 26 July 1941, p. 240; ibid., entry dated 30 September 1941, p. 288.

470 *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...,* p. 194; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów*..., p. 214; The meat brought to the ghetto was often poor quality or rotten, causing food poisoning among ghetto residents. As reported by the Chronicle in August 1941, "Last week a wagon of meat came to the ghetto that had been on the road for three days. The meat was swarming with worms. Many workers, after consuming sausage they were allocated at their divisions, were sick with stomach poisoning with high fever (39 degrees and up)." – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 11 August 1941, p. 275.

(extension number 59). In the end of 1941, it was in charge of 14 warehouses, including the central repository at the former Jojne Pilcer Square and 45 distribution points.[471] The head was Najman, then after he resigned, Maks Garfinkel from the Order Service[472] was appointed on April 16, 1941. Vegetables were issued at distribution point based on the so-called vegetable booklets, shared by whole families from August 1, 1941.[473] The system was continued throughout the subsequent years of the closed district.

Another section within the reorganized Provisioning Department was the Coal Department, headed by Luzer Najman, and after he was transferred to the Supreme Control Chamber in August 1942 by Izrael Zylbersztrom, formerly Najman's deputy. The structure did not change from the moment it was formed in May 1940. In early 1941, the department was in charge of one coal yard at 29/31 Łagiewnicka Street in the vicinity of Bałucki Market. Later, subsequent yards were established at 47 Łagiewnicka Street and 10 Mickiewicza Street. The Department initially employed 10 people, and one year later, 520. In the subsequent years, the number of employees continued to grow: 570 in May 1942 and 702 in May 1943. In May 1944, the last year of the ghetto, it dropped to 423 employees.[474]

The Tobacco Department, located at 24 Brzezińska Street, did not undergo any significant changes. From January 1941, it was headed by Zdzisław Lubiński, owner of two tobacco companies before the war, later in September 1942, replaced by Aleksander Nower from the Management Department.[475]

In the early 1941, after a long break, the ghetto started receiving supplies of tobacco[476] again, gradually sent to the distribution point located at the office of the Department. Based on a prewar model, the tobacco was sold at wholesale prices to about 120 war invalids,[477] who had the right to resell it. The invalids ran kiosks (two in each) with tobacco products.[478] Tobacco was also sold to the concessionaries, who sold it further to individual Divisions and Departments of the administration to be distributed among their employees. It was estimated that tobacco supplies coming to the ghetto covered only one third of the actual demand, while the remaining two thirds were covered by the flourishing smuggling. After taking over as the head, Lubiński announced that he would reorganize the distribution system. First, kiosks ran by the invalids would be spaced out "rationally," "taking into

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[471] *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 214, 216; APŁ, PSŻ 730, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.

[472] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated April 17, 1941, p. 173; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 298.

[473] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated July 25, 1941, p. 256.

[474] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Wydział Węglowy, p. 446–447; ibid., 205/349, entry: Zylbersztrom Izrael, p. 467; ibid., 205/349, entry: Najman Luzer, p. 269; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Zylbersztrom Izrael, p. 295; ibid., PSŻ 1103, entry: Najman Luzer, p. 173.

[475] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1, 1942, p. 477.

[476] The ghetto received German tobacco Ballerina and Yugoslavian tobacco Savski Duvan, as well as middle and lower quality Belgian (Sobor), Yugoslavian (Bregava, Drava, Rama) and French (Gauloise) cigarettes. Cigarettes were also made at the Tobacco Department − the so-called Gemachte, from a blend of Belgian and Yugoslavian tobacco, and Gute Gemachte, from Yugoslavian tobacco wrapped in Solala paper. Belgian cigarettes Sobor were given to privileged persons or newlyweds on the wedding day as a gift from Rumkowski – AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Ballerina, p. 27; ibid., 205/349, entry: Belgische (Zigaretten), p. 42; ibid., 205/349, entry: Bregava, p. 66; ibid., 205/349, entry: Drava, p. 96; ibid., 205/349, Gauloise, p. 138; ibid., 205/349, entry: Gute Gemachte, p. 166; ibid., 205/349, entry: Rama, p. 314; ibid., 205/349, entry: Savski Duvan, p. 357; ibid., 205/349, entry: Sobor, p. 361.

[477] One of them was Zygmunt Gryszpan, who wrote about his work in his account – AŻIH, 301/3075, Relacja Zygmunta Gryszpana.

[478] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated January 27, 1941, p. 51.

account particularly busy places in the vicinity of particularly often frequented institutions." He also announced that he would combat smuggling and the illegal cigarette trade.[479] Beginning mid-1941, the amount of tobacco allocated to invalids was gradually reduced in an attempt to ultimately close down all their kiosks, while the Order Service carried out an operation against illegal street vendors selling tobacco products, which ended with a success in the end of June 1941.[480] The irregular supplies of tobacco products to the ghetto resulted in significant fluctuations of prices on the market and contributed to the development of smuggling from the city, which, however, gradually disappeared almost completely, when cigarettes were subject to rationing in Litzmannstadt. During the longer breaks in supplies, other cigarettes appeared in the market, "prepared" from various unspecified materials, which was considered a health hazard. In one of his reports from the ghetto, Oskar Singer called such cigarettes "earthworms."[481]

Smokers faced a particularly difficult situation in early 1942, when tobacco almost disappeared from the market. In January 1942, there was a riot in front of the Tobacco Department, which ended with an intervention of the Order Service.[482] Periods of breaks in supplies also meant that concessionaires did not have any income. People from the group who had families to support received little help from the Eldest of the Jews.[483] The lack of tobacco provoked numerous frauds, such as falsifying the lists of smokers employed in divisions in order to obtain a larger amount of the product. When one such affair was discovered, special cards were introduced for smokers,[484] which facilitated its distribution and control.[485] Along with the increased supply of tobacco, the sale was carried out in 17 dairy shops.

Products and raw materials provided by the authorities for the Provisioning Department were delivered to two Goods Admission Points (*Waren-Annahmestellen*) located at Bałucki Marketsquare and the Radegast railway station. From there, products were sent to an extensive network of warehouses of the Provisioning Department throughout the ghetto. The three largest repositories of food products were at 22 Zawiszy Street, 17 Wolborska Street and 6 Dworska Street[486] – they primarily stored flour. Regardless of the food warehouses, individual units of the Provisioning Department had their own depots – vegetable yards, coal yards, etc.

The activity of the Provisioning Department was associated with the Kitchen Department, operating from the end of 1940. The main task of the Department, located at 1 Dworska Street, was the organization of a network of public kitchens, preceded by a registration of consumers. The Department was managed by a three-person presidium consisting of Boruch Praszkier, Gerson Kaufman and Feder. The Department was in charge of all community kitchens, the number of which was 73 in February 1941. On

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[479] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated January 28, 1941, p. 54; ibid., entry dated January 31, 1941, p. 73.
[480] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated June 15, 1941, p. 215; ibid., entry dated June 30, 1941, p. 220.
[481] O. Singer, *„Przemierzając szybkim krokiem getto...". Reportaże i eseje z getta łódzkiego*, transl. K. Radziszewska, Łódź 2002, p. 80.
[482] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 10–13, 1942, p. 23.
[483] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 341.
[484] Only men could buy tobacco products, women were not entitled to rations, so they were forced to buy cigarettes on the black market.
[485] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated March 1942, p. 63–64.
[486] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 30, 1941, p. 149.

March 15, 1941, the Department took over the kitchens operating in divisions, and at the turn of June and July that year, all social kitchens were subordinated to the administration, provoking protests from the organizations that ran those facilities. Therefore, the institution took complete control over the system of distribution of warm meals in the ghetto. In the end of 1941, the department employed 680 officials and its 1,680 day workers.[487]

The Kitchen Department was also responsible for organizing food distribution in schools. The head of the operation aimed at establishing such facilities was Fajga Cytrynówna. The first school kitchens opened in April-May 1941, and gradually grew to about 100. Under Rumkowski's Announcement of July 1st of that year, mandatory meals for children were introduced in schools. About 10−12,000 children and youth ate meals issued in schools. Aside from school kitchens, special kitchens for children were launched at 7 Widok, 4l Brzezińska, 27 Franciszkańska, 10 Jakuba, 26 Goplańskia, 22 Zawiszy, 11 Urzędnicza, 25 Limanowskiego, 15 Rybna and 15 Wrześnieńska Streets, as well as kitchens at the summer camp in Marysin. School kitchens operated until the fall of 1941 when, due to the resettlement of Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate, all school facilities were closed. By the end of October 1941, there was one last such facility serving meals for children, located at 13/32 Młynarska Street. In 1941, in addition ritual kitchens were organized, where meals were prepared under the supervision of the committee from the Rabbinical College.[488] They served, for example, ritual tsholnt. The three largest kitchens of this kind were located at 26 Zgierska Street, 32 Młynarska Street and 74 Brzezińska Street.[489] Overall, until the beginning of 1942, the department was in charge of 137 kitchens and about 50 coffee points, serving hot coffee twice a day.[490]

After the autumn operation of resettlement into the ghetto, the Kitchen Department provided food to the so-called "Gypsy camp."[491] Between November 6–13,1941, that is until kitchens were organized in the camp, the department delivered 4,500 portions of soup and 1,200L of coffee per day. After the arrival of transports of Jews from the Third Reich and the Protectorate, the department was in charge of serving meals for the newcomers in the amount of about 23,000 portions of soup per day. In the end of October, four kitchens were organized in the collectives in collaboration with the Department, which the latter supplied with food and helped manage.[492]

From the turn of May and June 1941, the Technical and Commercial Division operated within the Department, whose task was to maintain kitchen appliances and carry out repairs in the kitchens. Items and equipment needed in the kitchen were repaired, modified and stored in the Division. The Division employed a staff of nine people, including the stove fitters and plumbers, and used the help of employees of the Electrical or Gas Department

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[487] Ibid., vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 177–178, 185.

[488] Rumkowski accused the Rabbinate representatives of being too strict about observing kosher rules, which he felt was unacceptable in the ghetto. According to Rumkowski, difficulties in provisioning should result in a relaxation of the provisions in this regard. In July 1941, he managed to persuade the Rabbinate to deem horse meat kosher, as it was the basis of meat dishes and soups – ibid., vol. 1, Aneks, April 6, 1941, p. 159.

[489] Ibid., vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 183, 196–197.

[490] APŁ, PSŻ 730, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1; AYIVO, RG-241/440, Announcement no. 337 dated November 24, 1941, p. 2.

[491] More on the Gypsy camp cf. Chapter 3.1.

[492] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Wydziale Kuchen, p. 197.

whenever necessary. The head of the Division was M. Zajbert, his deputy's name was Wiener. The division kept the inventory books of all kitchens.[493] The Kitchen Department, although initially reported directly to Rumkowski, was transferred under the administration of the Provisioning Department at the end of 1941 or the beginning of 1942.[494]

Changes in Social Welfare

The first months after the closure of the ghetto were marked by the rapid process of impoverishment of its inhabitants. This posed a number of challenges for the system of social welfare in the ghetto. The Social Welfare Department reorganized in the second half of 1940, was headed by Mosze Zażujer from July 1, 1941, later succeeded by Henryk Fajn from the Bank of the Eldest of the Jews.[495] The office was at 20 Dworska Street.[496]

The number of people using the assistance of the Benefits Department was growing very quickly. In January 1941, in response to numerous protests of ghetto inhabitants who demanded larger food rations and fuel allocation, Rumkowski decided to introduce a raise of relief grants, which he announced on January 17, 1941, in a special announcement.[497] The raise was indeed significant[498] and welcomed by the inhabitants of the ghetto, and contributed to calming the mood in the closed district. At the same time, however, the requirements one had to fulfill in order to obtain the relief were tightened. If even one person in the family was employed, then such family lost the right to a relief grant, regardless of their income. Wages lower than relief grants were supplemented from the budget of the Benefits Department. After the raises, the system of grant relief covered about 70% of ghetto inhabitants (45% received full relief, while 25% partial). However, even the raised relief grants was not sufficient to purchase the whole allocated food ration.[499]

Despite the raises, discontent was still rife among the population and in early March 1941, new protests broke out, demanding, among other things, a further raise of relief grants. Approximately 700 people were demonstrating outside the seat of the Benefits Department on Młynarska Street, however, they were chased away by officers of the Order Service.[500]

In mid-1941, a registration campaign was conducted of relief takers able to work and an obligation introduced for them to work 14 days each month doing public works.[501] In the first weeks of the Labor Office, established in July of the same year as part of the

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493 Ibid., p. 184.
494 APŁ, PSŻ 730, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.
495 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 30 June, 1941, p. 220.
496 *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 132.
497 APŁ, PSŻ 1067, Announcement no. 197 dated January 17, 1941, p. 15; AYIVO, RG-241/318, Announcement no. 197 dated January 17, 1941, p. 1.
498 Children under the age of 14 received 7Mk, people aged 15−60 years – 10Mk, people aged 61−70 – 12Mk, people aged 71−80 − 14Mk, old people over 80 years − 16Mk – ibid.
499 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated January 1941, p. 79; ibid., Exposé Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów, February 1, 1941, p. 93; ibid., entry dated March 28, 1941, p. 145.
500 The Chronicle reported that people demanded increased food rations, lowering product prices, dissolution of the B co-operative (for members of the Council of Elders), permission to receive parcels from outside the ghetto, increasing relief grants, launching free laundries, as well as bathing and disinfection facilities. At that time, a number of statements were placed on the walls, criticizing the ghetto administration – ibid., entry dated 6 March 1941, p. 121.
501 Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated July 5, 1941, p. 223–224.

Orphanage at 100 Marysińska St.
(State Archive in Łódź)

Public Works Department, about 3,000 people were sent to work on plantations or to dig firepools.[502]

However, not all those who received relief grants reported for work. Those who did not commit themselves to work or performed their tasks without due care quickly became the target of attacks by Rumkowski, who threatened them with taking away their relief and severe punishment.[503] In August 1941, he gave a public speech announcing that although one third of the monthly budget goes to the social welfare and the relief should be treated as a "minimum guarantee of poorer life," many of those who received such support did not fulfill their obligation to work 14 days each month:

> In many cases, relief takers parade through the streets with their hands in their pockets, making a public show of their laziness and consider themselves victims when they are forced to work for fourteen days. They apparently forget it is the work of others that provide their monthly relief grants and their degenerate mentality makes them think that work is exploitation of an inferior species in exchange for a bowl of soup...

Rumkowski attacked.[504] Relief takers remained Rumkowski's enemies until the deportations is, which is why they were among the first groups to be deported in 1942, along

[502] Ibid., entry dated July 12, 1941, p. 231.
[503] Ibid., entry dated July 26, 1941, p. 256–257; ibid., entry dated July 31, 1941, p. 266.
[504] Ibid., entry dated August 30, 1941, p. 278.

with criminals, and the records kept by the Benefits Department was extensively used when drawing up deportations lists.[505]

Aside from relief grants – that is, the basis of the operation of the social welfare in the ghetto – the Department was in charge of other welfare institutions, specifically the House of the Elderly, orphanages and the homeless shelter. The first nursing home for the elderly was opened in April 1940 at 26 Gnieźnieńska Street. After the resettlement of the Western European Jews in the autumn of 1941, when a significant number of elderly people arrived, the facility was expanded. Several new buildings were assigned for the purpose of care of the elderly, including the one on Wrześnieńska and Gnieźnieńska Streetsformerly occupied by the Construction Department. Until the deportations operation, about 1,200 people resided there. Smaller facilities of this type also operated in other sections of the ghetto at 21 Mickiewicza Street and 74 Dworska Street.[506]

Even before the ghetto was sealed, Community orphanages, providing care for a significant number of children, had been transferred to the area of the future closed district. In March 1940, three such facilities were launched, at 10 Dworska Street, 21 Rybna Street and 85 Franciszkańska Street. Due to growing needs, the orphanage was transferred to a modern building at 100 Marysińska Street which, however, had to be vacated in early 1941, because the German authorities decided that section of Marysin would be separated from the ghetto.[507] The facility, housing 540 wards, was transferred to the building of the former secondary school at 76/78 Franciszkańska Street.[508] In the following year, along with the expansion of labor divisions in the ghetto, the building of the orphanage was assigned to one of the divisions, and children were moved to the building at 16 Dworska Street.[509]

The home (shelter) for the homeless operated from June 27, 1940, in the building at 4 Żurawia Street near the border of the ghetto. It predominantly housed people who did not have any family, as well as those returning from forced labor. In the end of 1941, another homeless shelter was opened at 77 Dworska Street in makeshift shacks, where, for example, people brought from Ozorków were placed.[510]

Security Services and Judiciary

After a period of formation in 1940, the institutions of the ghetto judiciary as well as the Order Service expanded in the following years. On March 1, 1941, the first anniversary of the Order Service was celebrated. The event, held at the headquarters of the

[505] Ibid., entry dated December 20, 1941, p. 391.

[506] Ibid., entry dated November 1941, p. 342; ibid., entry dated December 1, 1941, p. 349–350; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 292.

[507] As a result of the decision of the authorities, a fragment outlined by the streets Franciszkańska, Oblęgorska and Brzezinska, where about 7,000 people resided, was also excluded. The loss was particularly acute, as there were fields and vegetable gardens there, organized on the grounds of the former landfill.

[508] *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 174; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated January 22, 1941, p. 35; ibid., Exposé Przełożonego Starszeństwa Żydów, p. 93. The orphanage building was included to the ghetto along with the surrounding area on September 9, 1941, however,a boot-making division was established there – ibid., vol. 1, entry dated September 1941, p. 290.

[509] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated 24–25 May 1942, p. 233. More on the orphanage in the ghetto cf. Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku (henceforth: APMM), Łucja Gold Testimony.

[510] APŁ, PSŻ 1075, *Geto-Tsaytung*, no. 2, p. 8; ibid., PSŻ 730, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1; *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 187; *Wykaz adresów i telefonów...*, p. 214.

District I at 27 Franciszkańska Street, was attended by Commander Leon Rozenblat, who gave a speech and "Daily Order No. 35"[511] on that occasion. Also organized was a parade of Order Service officers, and Rumkowski received a commemorative photo album documenting the work of the formation. The structure of the Order Service did not undergo any significant changes in the subsequent years. Due to the personnel changes in another branch of the German protection police, in April 1941 a detailed report was compiled at the request of the German authorities, documenting the competences and manpower of the Order Service. According to the statement, the District I (27 Franciszkańska Street) employed 117 officers; the District II (56 Limanowskiego Street) – 131; District III (61 Łagiewnicka Street) – 87; District IV (69 Marysińska Street) – 53; District V (22 Zagajnikowa Street) – 60. The headquarters at 1 Lutomierska Street, along with the Price Control Division and the Sanitary Division, employed 36 officers, the Office of Investigation (22 Gnieźnieńska Street) – 38, while 97 people worked at the station at Bałucki Marketsquare at 27 Łagiewnicka Street. A unit composed of seven officers worked at the station of the German criminal police on Kościelna Street.[512]

In subsequent years, the order service was given a new task. Aside from its previous responsibilities – such as combating smuggling, escorting carts with food products and fuel, maintaining order in the kitchens, cooperatives and distribution points, as well as dispersing demonstrations – in the autumn of 1941, the order service was tasked with supervising the operation of resettlement of Jews from the Third Reich and the Protectorate; for example, assisting them at the Radegast station and escorting to collection points, dubbed the Collectives.[513]

In response to the growing threat of epidemic, the Isolation Service was appointed within the Order Service, which collaborated with the Sanitary Division of the Health Department during operations that required control over areas or buildings under quarantine as part of fight against the threat of epidemic. At Rumkowski's request, beginning April 1941, the Order Service was also responsible for controlling whether the anti-aircraft defense regulations were observed, such as the obligation to cover windows. If a violation was discovered by the Order Service, the officers were authorized to give a fine or even send the offending party to prison for 24 or 48 hours. More serious cases were sent to the Court, which could rule a sentence of up to 30 days in detention, to be exchanged for a fine of 25Mk.[514] Based on the regulation of the police president, an anti-aircraft emergency was announced in the ghetto on May 21st.[515] The Anti-Aircraft Defense Service was to be organized under the supervision of Leon Rozenblat, the officers of which were equipped with yellow armbands with the inscription "*L. S. Wart*."[516] The commander of the Fire Brigade, Henryk Kaufmann, was responsible for training members of this formation. Aside from Rozenblat and Kaufmann, other members of the staff and the command of the service included Eng. Julian Wajnberg, head of the

[511] Order no. 35 was included in: *Kronika getta łódzkiego* from March 1, 1941 r. – ibid., vol. 1, Annexes, p. 109–112.
[512] Ibid., entry dated April 7, 1941, p. 161–162.
[513] Cf. Chapter 3.1.
[514] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, t. 1, entry dated April 22, 1941, p. 179; ibid., entry dated May 15, 1941, p. 199.
[515] AYIVO, RG-241/385, Antiaircraft Defense Announcement no. 1, p. 1.
[516] *Luftschutz-Warte* (Ger.) – Anti-aircraft protection service.

Management Department, and Aaron Jakubowicz,[517] head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions. A particular challenge for the entire formation where the deportations organized in the ghetto beginning January 1942. In an order issued by the commander of the Order Service on the third anniversary of the formation, Rozenblat defined expulsions as "the touchstone of our conscientiousness."[518]

Gradually, the Special Unit (*Sonderabteilung*) established in July 1940 grew in strength. After Salomon Hercberg was arrested on August 7, 1940,[519] Zygmunt Reingold was appointed head of the branch. During his term, the unit carried out numerous requisitions of jewelry, furs and other items subject to mandatory sale, such as sewing machines, as well as hidden goods and currency. Reingold retained this position until the end of 1940 when he was transferred to the Economic Order Service and, along with Maks Szczęśliwy, appointed as one of the heads of the reorganized Provisioning Department.[520] His original post was taken over by Bronisław Dancygier, a Gestapo agent and Biebow's trusted informant. Less than six months after he took over, Dancygier was suspended by Rumkowski, although he continued to be employed holding the rank of commissioner.[521] The subsequent removal from the position of the head of the Special Department was associated with abuse. This time, on June 7th, Rumkowski caught Dancygier and his deputy, Marek Kligier, playing cards in the popular ghetto restaurant "Adria"[522] at 27 Łagiewnicka Street, opposite Bałucki Market. Along with the Eldest of the Jews, both Aron Jakubowicz and Berek Ajzman, Rumkowski's personal bodyguard, suddenly ran into the restaurant. That day, an unconditional curfew was announced in the ghetto for all residents due to the shots that had been fired from the ghetto in the direction of the German sentry box.[523] Aside from Dancygier and Kligier, also Hugo Libracк, head of the Bread Division, as well as Klajnsztajn and Grzebień, restaurant owners, were caught playing cards. On the table, as well as on the detained, large amounts of money were found, including German marks. At the request of the Chairman, Dancygier and Libracк were suspended, while Klajnsztajn and Grzebień were sent to the Central Prison. Only Marek Kligier managed to avoid arrest, as he proved that he was there by accident.[524]

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[517] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 318.

[518] Ibid., vol. 5, Trzy lata Służby Porządkowej, p. 135. More about the involvement of the Order Service in deportations, cf. Chapter 3.2.

[519] Cf. Chapter 2.2.

[520] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Reingold Z., p. 199–201; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Reingold Z., p. 319–321.

[521] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 290.

[522] This restaurant, described by Rozensztajn as "second class restaurant and tea room," was a popular meeting place for officials employed in the ghetto administration. In May 1941, the owners received a small room upstairs from the head of the Housing Department, Baruch Praszkier, which became a meeting place for "big shot" card players. – S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, June 8, 1941, p. 81.

[523] Home arrest was announced by Rumkowski on May 5, 1941. The reason was a gunshot fired from the ghetto (corner of the streets Piwna and Lutomierska) in the direction of the German watchtower. The bullet did not hurt anyone but the authorities initially demanded that 25 people be shot, then changing the punishment to flogging. Eventually, according to Rozensztajn's notes, the Eldest of the Jews managed to persuade the authorities to change the punishment to a one-day ban on leaving homes – he argued that since the shot was fired from the ghetto the whole ghetto-should be punished – S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 75–78; D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 98; *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, ed. L. Dobroszycki, Warszawa 1960, p. 53; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated June 9, 1941, p. 213–214.

[524] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 81–84; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated June 9, 1941, p. 214.

In Dancygier, Rumkowski appointed Eng. Julian Grossbart as the head of the Special Department, beginning February 1940, deputy commander of the Order Service, and then in April 1940, the Commander of the District II. He retained that position until September 1942.[525]

Information about the existence and activities of the *Sonderabteilung* reached outside of the ghetto. During one of Rumkowski's visits to the Warsaw ghetto, where he went in order to bring doctors various specialties to the Łódź ghetto, the head of the Warsaw Judenrat noted in his diary after the meeting of the Eldest of the Jews from Łódź, "At the Community, Rumkowski spoke about his activity in Łódź. For him, there is no such thing as an individual. He has his Sonderkommando for requisitions. He takes diamonds and furs [...] He urged to reconcile with Gancwajch."[526]

Along with the changes in the leadership of the Special Unit, a similar reorganization was carried out in the Order Service. On May 15, 1941, Maksymilian Zeligman, head of the District V (Marysin), and Eng. Harry Olszer, administrative head of Marysin, were dismissed. Both these functions were taken over by Salomon Hercberg, released from the prison in Radogoszcz, who at the same time was appointed head of the Central Prison.[527] The reason for these changes was the reorganization of administrative supervision over the north-eastern section of the ghetto. On June 15, 1941, the Board of Marysin was appointed, called Marysin Vorstand or Marysin Vorstand II. From that day, all businesses, plantations, kitchens for workers and youth, holiday houses (*heimes*), distribution point number 46 (Laden 46), the Sweets Factory, as well as administration of the cemetery were subject to the Board of Marysin. The head of the Board was Salomon Hercberg. After he was deported in March 1942, the management was taken over by the Board, composed of Zelig Szurek, Eliasz Tabaksblat, Lewi Grynberg, Lipmanówna and commissioner Judko. Separating the administrative Board of Marysin from the rest of the ghetto was a result of the specific character of that region – tasks facing the administration of the area, largely agricultural with only small buildings, were vastly different from those in the central part of the ghetto. The institution was divided into several sections: Central Bureau (5 Próżna Street), Construction and Renovation Bureau (43 Niemojewskiego Street), Distribution Bureau (23 Zagajnikowa Streeet), Public Works (Roberta Street), Plantations (5 Próżna Street), and the Kitchens Department (23 Zagajnikowa Streeet).[528] Also subject to the Marysin Board was the District V of the Order Service (24 Zagajnikowa Streeet). The Marysin Board was disbanded in October 1942, and individual institutions were subordinated to the relevant departments of the ghetto administration. The main liquidator was the head of the Financial and Economic Department, and later one of the heads of Central Bookkeeping, Naum Samelson.[529]

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[525] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 83; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 9 June 1941, p. 214; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 320.

[526] *Adama Czerniakowa dziennik getta warszawskiego. 6 IX 1939–23 VII 1942*, ed. M. Fuks, Warszawa 1983, p. 181–183.

[527] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 15 June 1941, p. 215; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 92. *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 22 April 1941, p. 179; ibid., entry dated May 15, 1941, p. 199.

[528] APŁ, PSŻ 732, Schemat graficzny administracji getta, p. 1.

[529] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Vorstand Marysin, p. 418; ibid., 205/349, entry: Samelson Naum, p. 355; APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Samelson Naum, p. 235.

In July 1941, the leadership of the District I also changed. After Samuel Berkowicz was appointed member of the Supreme Control Chamber on July 5, 1941, his original position was taken over by commissioner Abraham Feldhendler.[530] Berkowicz returned to his previous position on April 10, 1942, and in April the following year he was appointed by Leon Rozenblat as his deputy.[531] After his return, Feldhendler returned to his previous position at the District III of the Order Service.[532]

Beginning October 1941, the Order Service was in charge of the Fire Brigade and Chimney Sweeps Department, based on the German model, whereas before it had reported to the Financial and Economic Department. Firefighters and chimney sweeps retained some autonomy, however, and their competences did not change from 1940. In mid-1941, the formation consisted of 100 firefighters and 50 chimney sweeps, as well as 10 employees at the headquarters. The head of the formation was, as before, Henryk Kaufmann.[533]

In addition to regular duties – that is, fighting the frequent fires, sweeping chimneys, securing the sides of construction accidents,[534] and so on – officers of the Fire Brigade and Chimney Sweeps Department carried out works on the orders of German authorities or resulting from current needs. In June 1941, as part of the reorganization of the relief grant operation,[535] the commander of the Order Service and commander of the Fire Brigade selected 250 healthy men with completed military service from the group of relief takers assigned to work.[536] After a medical examination, they were sent to serve in the Fire Brigade. They were hired for various public works as well as to prepare firefighting pools. Under the regulation of the Anti-Aircraft Defense Service, 18 pools were to be created within the ghetto, of capacity between 1,000 up to 2,000m³ and from 2–3m deep.[537] As part of the Anti-Aircraft Defence Service, the leadership of the Fire Brigade organized lectures for that formation – for example, from July 1941, about 4,050 members were tested on methods of extinguishing regular fires and those resulting from bombing. At the same time, due to the announced fire emergency, additional officers were assigned to fire stations, a new motorcycle was purchased, as well as a pump mounted on the second fire truck, and all institutions reporting to the Eldest of the Jews – divisions, departments, schools, etc. – were equipped with fire extinguishing equipment (buckets, barrels, fire extinguishing pumps).[538]

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[530] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 12, 1941, p. 231.

[531] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Berkowicz Samuel, p. 40; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Berkowicz Samuel, p. 48.

[532] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Feldhendler Abraham, p. 75; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Feldhendler Abraham, p. 124.

[533] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 13, 1941, p. 232; ibid., vol. 5, Straż i kominiarze przy Lutomierskiej 13, p. 81; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 344, 347.

[534] The most serious disaster occurred in the night of November 2, 1941 in a building on 5 Kościelny Square, where the gable wall collapsed. Ten people died, and about a dozen were injured. The Chronicle wrote that the accident "was of the sort unknown to the chronicles of pre-war Łódź" – ibid., vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 333–334.

[535] The reorganization was announced in the announcement dated June 27, 1941– APŁ, PSŻ 1067, Obwieszczenie nr 285 z 27 VI 1941, p. 72.

[536] According to the *Chronicle* entry dated July 12, 1941, 225 men were hired – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 12, 1941, p. 232. 50 of them were deported from the ghetto in October 1941 for forced labor in sugar factories – ibid., vol. 1, entry dated October 31, 1941, p. 313.

[537] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated June 30, 1941, p. 222; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 318.

[538] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated July 12, 1941, p. 232; ibid., entry dated September 30, 1941, p. 291.

Given the fact that the so-called fire fighters square at 11/13 Lutomierska Street was a place where the Eldest of the Jews gave his public speeches, the Fire Brigade, along with the Order Service, were together responsible for securing order during Rumkowski's appearances. During his speech on August 30, 1941, concerning the change of the relief grants system, the platform on which the Eldest of the Jews was standing was decorated with firefighters' and chimney sweeps' emblems.[539]

The firefighters were also employed in September 1941, during the removal of signs with prewar street names, due to the introduction of the compulsory German names.[540] When the information about the expected resettlement of Jews from the Third Reich and the Protectorate to the ghetto reached the closed district, the Fire Brigade and chimney sweeps, along with workers from the Construction Department, renovated the roofs and chimneys in buildings assigned for the resettled.[541] In December 1941, it was announced that a new, 70-man branch of the Fire Brigade would be established which would be stationed in Marysin. Its officers would be selected from among the resettled, especially those from Prague.[542]

During the first few months of operation of those units responsible for investigating and prosecuting fraud, an attempt was made to clearly delineate their competences. On January 23, 1941, the above-mentioned meeting was convened of the members of the Supreme Control Chamber, the Court and the leadership of the Order Service. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Leon Szykier, officially Rumkowski's deputy beginning January 17, 1941.[543] The Eldest of the Jews was also in attendance. After the seven-hour meeting, it was decided to establish a special committee that would be tasked with solving this problem. Its members were Henryk Neftalin; Albert Merlender; representatives (one each) of the Supreme Chamber of Control, the Court, and the Order Service; and two observers of the Eldest of the Jews.[544] The committee convened at several occasions, settling the matter of delineation of competences between individual units in charge of persecuting crimes and punishing their perpetrators. Particularly severe conflict emerged between the Bureau of Investigation, operating at the Order Service, and the Prosecutor's Office of the Court. As a result, it was decided that the mutual relation between the Order Service and the Court would be defined in detail in the instructions for the Order Service and the Office of Investigation.[545]

In addition to the previously examined cases (mainly thefts and frauds), the Court, operating from September 1940 and headed by Stanisław Jakobson, was faced with a number of new cases. From January 1941, all smuggling cases were subject to the jurisdiction of the Court.[546] In August 1941, a meeting was organized in the office of the Eldest of the Jews at Bałucki Marketsquare with the leadership of the Court and representatives of the

[539] This was documented in the photos that were preserved in the PSŻ record group – APŁ, PSŻ 1109. Cf. also *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated August 30, 1941, p. 276–282; *Słuchają...*, p. 25–30.
[540] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated September 30, 1941, p. 290.
[541] Ibid., entry dated October 31, 1941, p. 311. On the resettlement and role of the Jewish administration of the ghetto cf. Chapter 3.1.
[542] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated December 17, 1941, p. 384.
[543] Ibid., entry dated January 17, 1941, p. 21.
[544] Ibid., entry dated January 23, 1941, p. 38.
[545] APŁ, PSZ 1102, Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Kompetencyjnej, p. 32–35.
[546] Ibid.

Ghetto Court sign
(State Archive in Łódź)

German authorities, during which it was discussed whether new cases should be included in the competences of the ghetto Court, such as currency-related crimes, spreading news harmful to the Third Reich and murders. The Court would be authorized to issue all types of punishment, including the death sentence. The German authorities suggested that the death penalty for crimes related to murder and spreading news harmful to the Third Reich would be binding for the ghetto Court.[547] The further fate of the project of the German authorities is unknown. The Court in the ghetto did not pass a single death sentence until the end of its operation. This could be a result of the objection voiced by a group of judges and lawyers from the ghetto, who informed Rumkowski about their position, even though the head of the court, Stanisław Jakobson, apparently had agreed to the changes. The protesters included Aleksander Binsztok, Naum Byteński, Roma Byteńska, Józef Ejdlie, Albert Merlander, Wilhelm Mrówka, Jakub Najman, Jakub Ratner, Bencjon Wajskopf and Aleksander Wołk. Mrówka, Najman, Wajskopf and Wołk were dismissed and were given the *wilczy bilet* (lit. wolf's ticket, a kind of black ball), while the Byteńskis, Binsztok and Merlander were eventually reinstated.[548]

On March 8, 1941, the Summary Court was established, tasked with combating crimes among the employees of the administration, thus taking over some of the competences of the Supreme Chamber of Control. As its name suggests (*shnelgerikht*, lit. "swift court"), the tuition proceeded on an expedited basis. Cases were heard by one judge and two associates without the prosecutor and jury, and the defendant was brought directly to the case.[549] Officially, the establishment of the new institution was announced in March 15th.

[547] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated August 4, 1941, p. 270–271.
[548] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 320–321; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 63. Jankiel Nirenberg wrote about the conflict, mentioning that the Bund Committee supported the dismissed judges and their families with food supplies – Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs...*, p. 20.
[549] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 9, 1941, p. 127–128; *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 174.

It stated that the task of the Summary Court was to "prosecute crimes directed against the vital interests of the general populace." It was also emphasized that the new institution, located at 27 Franciszkańska Street, is entirely independent from the existing Court, here named the "Common Court," located at 20 Gnieźnieńska Street.[550] Also appointed were two boards for minor offences, composed of a judge and two associates, appointed by Rumkowski from among the ghetto residents. Initially, there was no right of appeal from sentences passed by the Summary Court – such an opportunity was not introduced until late April 1941 at the request of the Presidium of the Summary Court, headed by Samuel Bronowski.[551]

Cases heard by the latter institution usually concerned bribery among community officials, or the theft of materials from workplaces or building materials from fences and houses. Judgments ranged from four weeks up to six months in prison.[552] One of the most widely commented processes was the trial of Izrael Lewitin, head of the office of the Health Department and Kloc, the secretary of the office Lewitin was acquitted of the charge of accepting a bribe.[553] The Summary Court also heard the case of Lajzer Dabrowski, head of the Department of Feces and Waste Disposal at the Financial and Economic Department, who was also accused of taking bribes. He allegedly took fees from entrepreneurs in exchange for assigning them shorter routes, such that their earnings – calculated based on the barrel, not the route traveled – increased significantly. Dąbrowski was sentenced to five months of prison, for half of which he was to work with the disposal of feces.[554] On the night of May 12, 1941, the head of the Summary Court, Samuel Bronowski, was arrested. As the *Chronicle* reported, during a search in Bronowski's home, 1,000Mk was found. He was arrested on charges of taking bribes from the accused.[555]

The arrest of the head of the Court meant that the Summary Court was disbanded. The competences to pass judgments in cases of fraud, theft and abuse, to the detriment of the Eldest of the Jews and the community, were taken over by Rumkowski himself. His Announcement No. 275 of May 30th informed the community that the decisive factor when passing judgments would be reports compiled by Henryk Neftalin, who would examine all reports on the above matters.[556] The Summary Court was officially liquidated on July 1, 1941. The decision was justified with the increasing number of cases. The remaining cases where passed over to the Court of the Eldest of the Jews and in special cases, they were assessed by Neftalin and sent to Rumkowski for approval.[557]

The activity of the Summary Court was assessed positively, first of all for the expediency and the severity of judgments. This contributed to the reduction of criminal activity among the employees of departments and labor divisions. Gradually, however, the problem returned, which Rumkowski mentioned in his public speech on August 30, 1941. On

[550] AYIVO, RG-241/353, Announcement no. 233 dated March 15, 1941, p. 1.
[551] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated April 29, 1941, p. 185.
[552] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated April 12, 1941; ibid., entry dated July 5, 1941, p. 226.
[553] Ibid., entry dated April 6, 1941, p. 157.
[554] Ibid., entry dated April 28, 1941, p. 184–185.
[555] APŁ, PSŻ 1076, *Geto-Tsaytung*, no. 11/12, p. 156; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated May 31, 1941, p. 205.
[556] AYIVO, RG-241/390, Announcement no. 275 dated May 20, 1941, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated May 31, 1941, p. 205–206.
[557] Ibid., entry dated July 5, 1941, p. 224.

that occasion he announced that he would combat all crimes of that type using the "most severe repressions," including floggings.[558] The activity of the Summary Court also had another dimension – after it was established, the consumption of alcohol in the ghetto dropped by about 80−90%.[559] The reason for this was the significant restriction of access to additional, illegal income: "Workers say that they do not have any money for vodka because the wages are not enough and there is no way to get some more on the site. Three months in prison for 1kg of timber or several meters of thread is enough for everyone to think twice before making such a mistake."[560] At the same time, when the Summary Court was disbanded, the aforementioned reorganization of the Supreme Control Chamber was carried out on Rumkowski's initiative.

Aside from the crime among the adult residents of the ghetto, there was another growing scourge of juvenile delinquency. The captured criminals were sent to the Court of the Eldest of the Jews and then to the Central Prison, however, in late July 1941, a special unit was established on the initiative of Henryk Neftalin, handling court hearings of juvenile criminals – the Juvenile Court.[561] The facility, beginning operations on July 22, 1941, in the office at 13 Lutomierska Street, was composed of judges and 16 members of the board. Based on judgments passed by the court, juvenile delinquents were sent to a special ward for juveniles in the Central Prison.[562]

4 Kościelny Square

In 1941, the expansion covered the structure of the Census Departments headed by Henryk Neftalin and located in the offices at 4 Kościelny Square. The increasing number of responsibilities facing the Statistical Department forced its reorganization at the beginning of this year. The department was divided into a number of desks, responsible for the preparation of statistical summaries on demography, employment and production output of individual divisions, health services, education and restructuring, social care, provisioning, as well as security and justice in the ghetto. In addition, incoming data control desks were established as well as a desk in charge of control and tabular development of the material. Considered as particularly important was the desk of employment and

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[558] Ibid., entry dated August 30, 1941, p. 280; *Słuchają...*, p. 25–30; S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 108–110. Rozensztajn noted that Rumkowski said during his second speech that day, "Knowing that I have no other choice, and that my judgments cannot prevent the plague of theft, I decided to introduce a punishment much more severe than prison. [...] I am going to bring back the old Jewish punishment − flogging. Instead of punishing a thief with a long and heavy prison sentence and even heavy labor, I will now sentence him to no more than six weeks but with the addition of flogging. Every day or three times a week the thief will receive twenty lashes. He will be flogged by a *goy* ("These hands are the hands of Esau"), and without mercy. If the thief faints, cold water will be poured over him and the flogging will be continued. The goy will be flogging according to the principles of the flogging code ... Because such thieves cannot be treated in any other way" – ibid., p. 110. The *Chronicle* reported the enforcement of the sentence of flogging on a coal thief in November 1941– *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 341.

[559] In mid-1941, about 20 liters of vodka were sold in the Provisioning Department.

[560] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 26, 1941, p. 258. The decrease in alcohol consumption was also affected by the transfer of the food and fuel depot owned by the Department of Provisioning to the closed area at Radegast station, which cut off employees from suppliers.

[561] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 179–181; AŻIH, 205/348, entry: Neftalin Henryk, p. 272–274.

[562] APŁ, PSŻ 1075, *Geto-Tsaytung*, no. 15, p. 51–51; ibid., *Geto-Tsaytung*, no. 16, p. 55–56; *Kalendarz z getta łódzkiego...*, p. 190; *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 341; I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 44.

labor divisions production, headed by Fiszel Ratner. The heads of the desks were Dawid Czudnowski, Mordka Chojnowski, Helena Wajntraub Salomon Frenkel, Ch. Eksztajn, Grossfeld, Reach, Szach, Mandels and Jerachmil Bryman.[563] In 1942, they were joined by Wilhelm Caspari, a prominent physician deported from Frankfurt, who was responsible for compiling statistics on health. The Statistical Department collected daily reports on births, deaths and population status and passed them to the Board of the Ghetto and the Kripo. For the German authorities, the compiled materials were especially important when negotiating procurement and during talks with superior authorities, "Often thanks to the data collected, authoritative factors managed to effectively intervene in Berlin, Posen or on site and prevent the impending misfortune."[564] On the order of the Eldest of the Jews, studies were prepared on the state of employment and production in divisions. On the order of various departments statements were prepared; for example, on the health of the ghetto population, the population density, the number of apartments available in the ghetto, etc.[565] The Graphic Office prepared a summary of statistical data, using for this purpose, among others, photographs taken by the Photographic Office (sometimes referred to as the Photographic Department).[566] Graphical data, developed in the form of tables, charts, graphs and collages, were presented on boards and in albums of high artistic value. Such statements served the purposes of "propaganda and training."[567]

Aside from photograph albums and statistical tables,[568] the Graphic Office prepared an illustrated Yearbook consisting of two volumes which was given to Rumkowski at a ceremony to mark the first anniversary of the Census Departments.

> A telling outcome of the Department's achievements is the illustrated statistical yearbook, which contains tables, diagrams and photographs. The yearbook consists of two impressive volumes, made in the form of an album of nearly a thousand large-format pages. This monumental work of the Statistical Department vividly and clearly shows everything that happened last year in the ghetto, and reproduces the enormous apparatus of the Eldest of the Jews.[569]

Established in July 1940, the Civil Registry Department (Office) in 1941 expanded the scope of its competences. In addition to the existing tasks such as keeping the register of births, deaths and marriages, the Divorce College operated under the Department from February 1941, consisting of two rabbis and one official. The college nullified marriages which could not be reconciled with the arbitration of the rabbinical court (*Din Toyre*).[570]

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563 AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Statistische Abteilung, p. 366–368.
564 APŁ, PSŻ 1096, Wydział Statystyczny, p. 149.
565 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated April 7, 1941, p. 161–162.
566 More about the work of photographers employed by the Jewish administration cf. Z. Hylla, *Fotografowie getta łódzkiego i ich dzieło* (MA thesis in the collection of the Center for Jewish Research of the University of Łódź).
567 AŻIH, 205/348, entry: Statistische Abteilung, p. 368.
568 Many of them are in the collection of the State Archive in Łódź and the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem.
569 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 5–12, 1941, p. 229. They are located in the archives of the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem. Photographs of pages of the yearly taken during the war are also in the State Archives in Łódź – APŁ, PSŻ 1122.
570 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 1, 1941, p. 105; ibid., entry dated July 5–12, 1941, p. 229; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 311.

Henryk Neftalin – head of the Census Department
(State Archive in Łódź)

The Department was controlled by the German authorities, and the records were kept in accordance with recommendations of city officials. In September 1941, the head of the Litzmannstadt Civil Registry Office along with a delegation of German officials came to the Civil Registry Office at 4 Miodowa Street. During the visit, the records of deaths and births kept in the ghetto were examined. *The Chronicle* reported that the purpose of the visit was to coordinate the procedures of keeping records in the ghetto and in the city.[571]

After the deportations of 1942, when the Rabbinical College was liquidated after all rabbis were deported to Chełmno on the Ner, the competences of that institution were included in the responsibilities of the Statistical Department. Officiating marriages was taken over by the Eldest of the Jews himself, who maintaining all the required religious procedures and performed the role of a rabbi.[572]

Another section within the Census Department was the Archive Department. The Archive, operating from November 1940 at 4 Miodowa Street, moved along with the majority of units of the Departments of Records to the building at 4 Kościelny Square in the summer of 1941. The head of the Archive was Dr. Józef Klementynowski. The Department employed Józef Zelkowicz, a famous Łódź writer, who took the position of archivist, Bernard Ostrowski, Stanisław Julian Cukier-Cerski and Szmul Rozensztajn. The autumn of 1941, following the resettlement of Jews from the Third Reich and the

[571] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated September 30, 1941, p. 286.
[572] Cf. numerous photographs in APŁ, PSŻ 1108.

Protectorate, Oskar Singer, Oskar Rosenfeld, Bernard Heilig joined the team.[573] The purpose of the Archive was to collect all documents concerning the ghetto "for the future research on the Jewish social life in one of the most difficult periods," and the staff were tasked with compiling monographs and reportages on departments and workplaces, as well as the functioning of the ghetto. The German authorities were aware of the facility; therefore, the employees tried to do their work in such a way as to avoid notice.[574] The staff of the Archive received a special letter from Rumkowski which obliged all heads and other officials to provide information on issues of interest to the archivists. However, they still faced problems. Singer complained that he could not learn much from the Eldest of the Jews and his secretary, Dora Fuchs. The office at the Central Secretariat at Bałucki Marketsquare was also inaccessible to the archivists.[575]

One of the tasks of the Archive was compiling the *Daily Chronicle Bulletin* – also called *Chronicle of the Łódź ghetto*. From January 12, 1941, until July 30, 1944, almost day after day, they described the most important events in the ghetto. Before the texts were included in the *Chronicle*, they had to be examined by the Censorship Committee, composed of Neftalin, Kamieniecki and Mojżesz Karo, one of the heads of the School Department. Rumkowski also read the texts, which is why they could not be explicitly critical of the activity of the Eldest of the Jews and the German authorities.[576] In 1944, the staff started working on the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto*. The work proceeded very slowly, and until the liquidation of the ghetto about 400 entries were developed, concerning the most important people and phenomena in the ghetto.[577]

The Archive became an unofficial "information point" of the ghetto. Heads of various facilities or persons holding various posts came to the office in order to share information they had heard on illegally owned radio or to learn something new. Writers came as well to talk about literature.[578]

The conditions in the office on Kościelny Square were not good. In subsequent years, Cukier-Cerski, Kamieniecki and Heilig died of tuberculosis. As the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* noted, "The name Archive does not mean at silent studio of the scholar, were collected documents are meticulously analysed. The aforementioned deaths of the archivists, including the death of the official [Szmul] Hecht, indicates the harsh conditions of work. Hunger and cold made a relatively regular and creative work almost completely impossible."[579]

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[573] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Archiv, p. 13–16. More on the staff of the Archive Department cf. K. Radziszewska, "Centrum dokumentacyjne getta. Autorzy Kroniki i ich tekst" [in:] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 234–242; eadem, "Bernard Heilig – kronikarz łódzkiego getta i jego tekst" [in:] *Studia i szkice dedykowane Julianowi Baranowskiemu*, eds. E. Wiatr, P. Zawilski, Łódź 2010, p. 200–214; S. Feuchert, *Oskar Rosenfeld und Oskar Singer – zwei Autoren des Lodzer Gettos. Studien zur Holocaustliteratur*, Frankfurt 2004; idem, "Oskar Rosenfeld und Oskar Singer – zwei Autoren im Archiv des Judenältesten von Lodz" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego...*, p. 327–333.

[574] Ibid., 301/2841, Bernard Ostrowski Testimony, unpaginated.

[575] Ibid., 205/349, entry: Archiv, p. 13–16.

[576] K. Radziszewska, "Centrum...", p. 233–234.

[577] *Encyklopedia getta. Niedokończony projekt archiwistów z getta łódzkiego*, ed. K. Radziszewska, E. Wiatr, A. Sitarek, J. Walicki, Łódź 2014.

[578] Józef Zelkowicz was visited by Symcha Szajewicz and Woliński, among others – K. Radziszewska, "Centrum...", p. 233–234.

[579] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Archiv, p. 13–16.

Post Office

The Post Office Department, established in March 1940, did not undergo any transformations in the following year – its main task remained delivering parcels and remittances from outside the ghetto and sending letters and postcards outside. Equally important was the delivery of relief grants to people using social welfare.

On March 16, 1941, on the first anniversary of its operation, the Post Office Department was moved to a new, spacious premises located at the same address – 4 Kościelny Square. In the new office, visitors were admitted from 8.30am to 6.30pm, and remittances and parcels were handled until 3pm.[580] The anniversary was also an opportunity to recapitulate the operation of the Department – in previous year Post Office headed by Herbert Grawe had handled 64,049 money transfers amounting to nearly 7 million Mk, delivered 135,062 packages shipped from the Reich and 14,229 from abroad,[581] handled 10,238 telegraphic dispatches, and sent and received a total of 1,074,351 letters and postcards.[582] Since mid-1941, postmen wore caps modeled on those worn by the Order Service officers, but with a green rim. Many of them used the Department's bicycles when making deliveries.[583]

As a result of the political situation, postal communication with individual states was often interrupted. After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, it was no longer possible to send correspondence to the Soviet Union, and the number of incoming parcels and remittances from there dropped radically. In July 1941, communication with the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland and France stopped.[584] In the same month, postal communications with America were also blocked.[585] In the autumn of 1941, with the restoration of postal communication with France, Belgium and the Netherlands, the telegram service to the General Government was suspended and messages could only be sent to the Reich.[586]

Despite the substantial reduction in postal communication with foreign countries, it was possible to correspond with states that were at war with the Reich through the Red Cross forms. Sometimes letters sent directly from the enemy countries reached the ghetto. In August 1941, the *Chronicle* reported:

> One postcard written in Yiddish and sent from Kinerat (Palestine) in February 1941 came to the ghetto in May, stamped with the seal of the English censor and "Briefstempel der Oberkommando der Wehrmacht"[587] with a sticker on the side with the text bearing the following inscription, "Postsendungen in Jiddischer in Sprache

[580] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated March 28, 1941, p. 145.
[581] Until the outbreak of the German-Soviet war in June 1941, parcels from the Soviet Union accounted for half of the total traffic, reaching about 4,500 parcels per month. After June 1941 most of the parcels came from Portugal – ibid., entry dated July 5–12, 1941, p. 232–233.
[582] Ibid., entry dated March 1941, p. 130.
[583] Ibid., entry dated July 13–15, 1941, p. 236.
[584] Ibid., entry dated July 16–21, 1941, p. 238; ibid., entry dated July 22, 1941, p. 248.
[585] Ibid., entry dated July 20, 1941, p. 242.
[586] Ibid., entry dated September 15, 1941, p. 287.
[587] *Briefstempel der Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* (German) – Postmark of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

und Hebräischen Schriftzeichen werden nicht befördert. Auslandsbriefstelle."[588] Nevertheless, it reached the destination.[589]

The subsequent suspension of postal communication occurred in early 1942. The only allowed incoming messages were postcards with short, printed text, which served misinformation about the fate of people sent to death. This ban continued until the spring of 1944, when exchange of parcels with friends and relatives was allowed, mainly Aryans from the Reich and the Protectorate. The authorities allowed food parcels to be sent, mainly to the people resettled from the West. These packages passed through the Special Branch, which confiscated part of the contents.[590]

Health Service

In the second year of the ghetto, the health service operating in the closed district faced an increasing number of responsibilities. However, the network of facilities under the Health Department[591] founded in 1940 was not significantly expanded in the following years. In addition to the network of five hospitals and four outpatient clinics, six pharmacies and three ambulance stations, the Bacteriological Laboratory was established (with offices at 3 Zgierska Street and 36 Łagiewnicka Street), which was tasked with seeking solutions to facilitate the fight against the ever-growing epidemiological threat, supporting the Sanitary Section operating within the Department.[592]

The constant and enormous problem was the lack of a sufficient number of medical practitioners. At the beginning of 1941, Rumkowski, with then head of the Health Department Leon Szykier, attempted to bring doctors (who had fled Łódź in 1939 and went to the capital) back to the ghetto. In February 1941, Szykier went to the Warsaw ghetto to arranged this. His mission proved successful − in early March, five doctors were brought to the Łódź ghetto.[593] This number, however, was still insufficient,[594] so on May 13–20th, the Eldest of the Jews himself went to the Warsaw ghetto in order to arranged for more physicians to come to the Łódź ghetto. This time, he managed to convince 13 specialists, which *Chronicle* deemed "an event of great importance" from the point of view of public health. The following doctors came to the ghetto: surgeons Michał Eliasberg and Arno Kleszczelski, laryngologist Abram Mazur, radiologist Salomon Rubinstein, pediatricians Janina Hartglas and Benedykta Moszkowicz, as well as internal medicine specialists Józef Goldwasser, Alfred Lewi, Izaak Ser Nekrycz, Alicja Czarnożyła and Izrael Geist.[595] On June 17th, once again Rumkowski went to the Warsaw ghetto – this time he convinced 11

[588] *Postsendungen in Jiddischer Sprache und in Hebräischen Schriftzeichen werden nicht befördert. Auslandsbriefstelle* (Ger.) – Postal mail in Yiddish and spelled with Hebrew alphabet will not be sent. Foreign Post Office.
[589] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated August August 1, 1942, p. 269–270.
[590] Ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 364.
[591] Cf. Chapter 2.2.
[592] APŁ, PSŻ 729, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1; *Spis wydziałów i placówek...*, p. 131–132.
[593] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 9, 1941, p. 127.
[594] In April 1941, 93 physicians practiced in the ghetto and 15 medical students were employed as medical assistants – ibid., entry dated April 9, 1941, p. 163–164.
[595] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated May 31, 1941, p. 205. Doctors brought from Warsaw were assigned the newly renovated building at 19 Drewnowska Street – ibid., entry dated April 6, 1941, p. 211.

physicians and their families to come to Łódź.[596] Bringing groups of medical practitioners only partially solved one of the problems of the ghetto health service. Even with sufficient staff still there was still not enough medicines and medical equipment.[597]

Aside from the healthcare facilities described above, the Health Department was in charge of baths and rest houses. These bathing facilities, which played a very important role in combating the threat of epidemic in the ghetto, were opened by the Construction Department in the first half of 1941, whereas before, only one such facility owned by the Community had operated, located at 39 Wolborska Street. New baths and disinfection points were launched at 23 Wolborska Street, 23 Lutomierska Street and in Marysin.[598] The first Rest House (also called *Heim*) was launched in July 1941 at 121 Okopowa in Marysin. There, officials, and later also workers employed at labor divisions, could stay for several days and rest, with better board than what they usually received. As stated in the study carried out by the Archive Department:

> At a time when the population of the ghetto was plagued by hunger, people in Marysin did not want for anything, there were no limits on food consumption at heims, life was carefree and consequently people were gaining weight over the course of one week, even up to 5 or 6kg, as demonstrated by the heim memorial book. This is a record even for normal times, such as their spas in Śródborów or Otwock."[599]

Obtaining the right to stay in one of the rest houses in Marysin was very difficult. The referral required are personal invitation from Rumkowski, and the prerequisite was at least one year of employment in the administration, or a special contribution to the ghetto and the Jewish population. Often, people tried to use connections among the administration officials. The *Chronicle* reported these efforts, "The elites of the ghetto spend the weekends in Marysin, so whoever has two good hands and feet, and especially back [Pol. *plecy*, a play on words similar to "someone has your back" in English], tries to get there on a Saturday, because otherwise he could, God forbid, be considered by others as non-elite."[600]

After the resettlement of the Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate in the autumn of 1941, rest houses were partly used for accommodation for the displaced; for example, "the oldest and most socially distinguished" Viennese.[601] Despite this, by the end of 1941, 183 people stayed for nine terms.[602] The following year, with the start of deportations, referrals to the rest houses were discontinued. The first 1942 term did not start until July.[603]

Organized health care in the forms known from the beginning of the ghetto ended with the deportations of September 1942. After the closure of hospitals and deportation

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596 Ibid., entry dated April 30, 1941, p. 220.

597 The drop in the sea of need was the X-ray machine installed in the Hospital No. 1 in early March 1941 thanks to the work of engineers Dawidowicz and Wertheheim – ibid., entry dated March 9, 1941, p. 126.

598 APŁ, PSŻ 733, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated June 6th, 1941, p. 210–211.

599 Ibid., vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Domach Wypoczynkowych, p. 121.

600 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated July 25, 1941, p. 255.

601 Ibid., entry dated July 26, 1941, p. 241; ibid., entry dated November 1941, p. 324.

602 Ibid., p. 121–122.

603 Ibid., p. 122; ibid., vol. 2, entry dated July 5, 1942, p. 362.

of patients to the extermination camp in Chełmno on the Ner, the Health Department remained part of the structure of the administration, but to a very limited extent. Wiktor Miller was still the head, but Józef Rumkowski, among others, resigned from involvement in managerial capacity.[604] All hospitals, clinics and ambulatories were closed, leaving only the sanitary service units of labor divisions.[605]

Culture in the Ghetto

In 1941, the developing cultural life was given an institutional form when the Culture House was established, which from March 1, 1941, constituted an independent Department of the Jewish ghetto administration. The head of this institution was Kiwa Siennicki, although Teodor Ryder also played a significant part in organizing cultural life.

Artists employed at the Culture House had similar contracts to labor division workers, the only difference being that they worked in the Culture House, and not in any division. Making them subordinate to the Eldest of the Jews affected the repertoire. The performances could not feature any criticism of the German authorities or Rumkowski. As a researcher who studied this phenomenon stated, it was "a peculiar variety of courtly art."[606] Even Mosze Puławer, one of the creators of the cultural life of the ghetto, made no secret of this: "I made sure that the program was innocent, I would never allow any skit or song that could offend the Chairman. I had to fight heavy battles with Siennicki, head of the Culture House."[607]

The Culture House regularly organized concerts, many of which were reported by the *Chronicle*.[608] The stage at 3 Krawiecka Street also held theatrical performances, in the style of revue shows. The first revue premiered on May 31st. Performances were not titled, but numbered, due to the self-imposed censorship of the author. "Programs that I performed in the ghetto [...] were innocent, that is they contained no political satire or criticism of local 'big fish,'" said Puławer after the war.[609] Texts for the revue performances were written by Szymon Janowski and Abraham Jachimowicz, the aforementioned Mosze Puławer directed them, Pinkus Szwarc was responsible for stage design, and music was composed by Dawid Bajgelman. Three revue shows were completed, quickly becoming a hit with the audience − the first was performed 40 times, and the second, 45 times.[610]

The activity of the Culture House was interrupted by the deportations in September 1942; however, the cultural life was gradually reborn, although no longer in the institu-

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[604] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Rumkowski Josef, p. 349.
[605] APŁ, PSŻ 733, Schemat organizacyjny, p. 1.
[606] A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, *Życie...*, p. 246–247.
[607] Cited in ibid., p. 247.
[608] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated March 1, 1941, p. 106, 108–109; ibid., entry dated March 5, 1941, p. 120; ibid., entry dated March 8th, 1941, p. 126; ibid., entry dated March 11, 1941, p. 133; ibid., entry dated March 25, 1941, p. 141; ibid., entry dated March 26, 1941, p. 142; ibid., entry dated March 29th, 1941, p. 147; ibid., entry dated April 1, 1941, p. 169; ibid., entry dated November 1941, p. 340; ibid., entry dated Decemeber 6, 1941, p. 362; ibid., entry dated Decemeber 13, 1941, p. 376; ibid., entry dated Decemeber 20, 1941, p. 389. Detailed repertoire of concerts, cf. A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, *Życie...*, p. 248–256.
[609] Cited in A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, *Życie...*, p. 258.
[610] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 336. More on the performances cf. J. Frenkiel, "Teatr i inna działalność w getcie łódzkim w latach 1940–1944" [in:] *Łódzkie sceny żydowskie*, ed. M. Leyko, Łódź 2000, p. 91–121; A. Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, *Życie...*, p. 256–268.

דער עלטסטער פון די יידן אין ליצמאנשטאט

№ 1.

געטא=צייטונג

פאר אינפארמאציע,
פאראדענונגען און באקאנטמאכונגען.

פרייז 10 פענ'ג.

אדרעס פון רעדאקציע:
זיקאָרסקא 1.

אינטערעסענטן ווערן אָנגענומען
יעדן דינסטאָג פון 5 ביז 7 אוונט.

Litzmannstadt-Getto, den 7. März 1941.

ליצמאנשטאט-געטא, פרייטאג דעם 7-טן מערץ 1941

פראָגראַם פון דער געטאָ = צייטונג

פון היינט אן הייבט אן אין געטא צו דערשיינען א צייטונג אין דער יידישער שפראך א. נ. „געטא=צייטונג".

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט זיך באמיען אלזייטיק צו אינפארמירן די איינוויינער פונעם געטא וועגן אלץ וואס קומט אין געטא פאר; אויפצוקלערן נעגיי, וואס עס איז יא דערלויבט און וואס עס איז נישט דערלויבט צו טון אין געטא.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט באלייכטן אלע פראגן, וואס זיינען נוגע די דערנערונג, ארבעט א. א.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט דער באפעלקערונג גיבן די מעגלעכקייט זיך צו באקענען מיט מיין ארבעט אויף אלע געביטן פונעם געטא=לעבן.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט נישט דערלאזן, אז די פארשיידענע בייוויליקע העצער און רכילות=טרייבער זאלן קענען פארשפרייטן אומפאראנטוואָרטלעכע ידיעות, וואס זענען נאר עכט אריינצובערענגען א כאאס אין אומרו צווישן דער באפעלקערונג.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט ברענגען נאר די ידיעות, וואס אנטשפרעכן דעם ריינעם אמת.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט אפנעבן א גרעסערן פלאץ פאר די וויכטיקסטע נעשעענישן, וואס וועלן פארקומען אין געטא.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט שטעלן צום שאנד=סלופ די ננבים אין די אלע, וואס מיסברויכן מיט זייערע אמטן צום שאדן פון דער געטא=באפעלקערונג.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט רעגלער אינפארמירן וועגן דער טעטיקייט פון אלע מיינע פארשיידענע אפטיילן, אמטן און בעסם=רעסארטן, און וועגן מיינע פלענער פאר דער נאענטסטער צוקונפט.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט פארעפנטלעכן אלע מיינע פארארדענונגען און באקאנטמאכונגען.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט פארפנטלעכן די נעמען פון די פארזיכטיקע דורך מיין נעריכט און פון די, וואס ווערן דורך מיר נופא אדמיניסטראטיוו באשטראפט.

די „געטא=צייטונג" וועט אן שום רחמנות באקעמפן די כארופציע און פראטעקציע=סיסטעמען אין אלע מיינע אמטן.

ביי דער דאזיקער נעלעגענהייט דערמאָן איך אין די דורך מיר נעוואָרפענע 5 לאָזונגען בעת אונדזער אריינקום אין געטאָ, דהיינו:

1) ארבעט,
2) ברויט,
3) זארג פאר קראנקע
4) השגחה איבערן קינד אין
5) רו אין געטא.

אויף אט א די דאזיקע לאָזונגען. האב איך באזירט מיין ביז איצטיקע טעטיקייט און וועל זי וויטער אינעם זעלביקן זינען פירן, נישט קוקנדיק אויף די בייזוויליקע שטערער פון העצער פון פארשיידענע זיימן.

פון מיין אויבנאנגעצייכנטן פראגראם, וועל איך אויך קיין האר נישט אפטרעטן.

Geto-Tsaytung, no. 1
(State Archive in Łódź)

tionalized form from the previous period. Ultimately, the Culture House was liquidated in August 1943, and the building at 3 Krawiecka Street housed the offices of the Quilted Duvet Division.[611]

Geto-Tsaytung

Another semblance of normality in the ghetto was the Yiddish-language weekly *Geto-Tsaytung*. From March 7th to September 21, 1941, 18 issues were published. The editorial office was located at 1 Dworska Street, and Szmuel Rozensztajn – personal secretary to Rumkowski[612] – served as editor-in-chief and at the same time head of the Press Division of the Eldest of the Jews. The newspaper was printed at 10 Brzezińska Street.[613]*Geto-Tsaytung* appeared officially with the consent of the German authorities. The first three issues were published without prior censorship, but beginning March 22, 1941, all articles were translated into German and sent to the Ghetto Board and the Gestapo.[614] The main content of the weekly consisted of information on the composition and dates of food rations, accounts and reports from the work of various departments and labor divisions. The paper also published announcements of the Eldest of the Jews and eulogies in his honor. They were penned by L. Berman (Graf Kali). No established journalist collaborated with the newspaper, although Rozensztajn tried to hire them.[615]*Geto-Tsaytung* was discontinued due to a lack of paper, as reported in the *Chronicle*.[616] Commenting on the closing of the weekly, the entry stated: "This is a serious loss for the population devoid of any current reading material, especially since the newspaper offered information on local affairs, while providing an authoritative exponent of the views and intentions of the Eldest of the Jews."[617]

Other Initiatives

The *Chronicle* also reported ideas for the establishment of new units of the administration that were never executed. One of them was the Department of Ideas proposed by Henryk Wosek, a well-known inventor and holder of many patents. This unit was to be modeled on the former Patent Office. The author of proposals assumed that the numerous departments of the administration were facing a number of problems which could be solved by inventive ghetto inhabitants. In response to the demand, people would propose different solutions in exchange for reimbursement of costs, and the department would

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611 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Kulturhaus, p. 138; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Kulturhaus, p. 223.

612 APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Rozensztajn Szmul, p. 212; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Rozensztajn Szmul, p. 340; M. Polit, "Autor i jego tekst" [in:] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik*, ed. and transl. M. Polit, Warszawa 2008, p. 9–16.

613 All prints, forms and announcements of the Eldest of the Jews were printed in this printing house. On August 1st,1943, Szmul Rozensztajn was appointed its head. The facility was then called the Printing House and Sign Producing Factory.

614 German translations of materials for individual issues of "Geto-Tsaytung" are in APŁ, PSŻ 1076–1078.

615 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 300–301; ibid., vol. 1, entry dated September 1941, p. 297–299; M. Polit, *„Getto-Cajtung" – gazeta Mordechaja Chaima Rumkowskiego*, *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, 2006, no. 2, p. 392–403.

616 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated October 15–31, 1941, p. 314.

617 Ibid., entry dated Decemeber 16, 1941, p. 383.

awards prizes for the authors of the best ideas. The project listed a number of advantages of the potential department, including that "inventors will have the opportunity to get a job using their ideas. This could bring a number of benefits, such as work for the unemployed and productive individuals, which would be an incentive for ideas whose implementation will ultimately contribute to improving the living conditions." The author of the project of the Department of Ideas presented several interesting solutions, including utilization of frozen and rotten potatoes, the use for fine coal dust, production of artificial ice, or replacing glass – which was a scarce commodity in the ghetto – with other materials.[618] Many different ideas were brought to the Secretariat of Requests and Complaints – including new labor divisions, rationalizing work in shops or provisioning (frugality when peeling potatoes, equitable system for soup distribution, etc.). Some of them were implemented, but it is impossible to determine whether they were, in fact, an implementation of the suggested idea.[619]

[618] Ibid., entry dated January 12,1941, p. 6.

[619] Cf. D. Dąbrowska, *O projektach poprawy sytuacji ludności w getcie łódzkim (Wnioski mieszkańców getta z lat 1940–1942)*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1961, no. 38, p. 118–127.

3

JEWISH ADMINISTRATION OF THE ŁÓDŹ GHETTO IN THE PERIOD OF THE "FINAL SOLUTION OF THE JEWISH QUESTION"

1. Jewish Administration of the Łódź Ghetto and the Deportations of Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate[1]

From the *Chronicle* of the ghetto:

> In October 1941, the most important event in the ghetto in Litzmannstadtwas the arrival of 23,000 foreign Jews. Until that moment, they had been relatively free, residing in their own area – in their homeland, to which they were very attached and where they had their roots, often for generations, for centuries. From that environment, where they had been residing for a long time, not knowing any other, which had been the only one for them and the one they found obvious, thousands of Jews were suddenly expelled and deported. They arrived without any preparation in an area and into an environment that was vastly different from the one in which they had been living thus far. They arrived in the ghetto in Litzmannstadt, a creation that, it must be admitted, was truly one of its kind.[2]

In mid-September 1941, the occupation authorities of Łódź were informed that about 20,000 Jews from Western Europe and 5,000 Roma from the Hungarian-Austrian borderland would be deported to the local ghetto. The head of the German board of the ghetto, Hans Biebow, was concerned upon receiving this information. He believed that the arrival of 25,000 people would hinder the production output of ghetto workshops, which generated enormous profits for him. Biebow wrote a memorandum, and on September 24th, Mayor Verner Ventzky submitted it to the president of the Łódź *Regierungsbezirk*, Friedrich Übelhör. The document presented detailed statistical data on the number of people and the density of the population in the ghetto and predicted the consequences of bringing such a large group of people: specifically, the deterioration of living conditions and food supply. He cautioned that the operation might provoke protests from the

[1] The following subsection is a supplemented version of the previously published text: *W obliczu trudnej konieczności. Administracja żydowska getta łódzkiego wobec wsiedleń Żydów z Rzeszy i Protektoratu (październik – listopad 1941 r.)*, *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały*, 2012, no. 8.

[2] *Kronika getta łódzkiego / Litzmannstadt Getto 1941–1944*, ed. J. Baranowski et al., vol. 1: *1941*, entry dated October 1941, p. 316.

principal contractor, namely the High Command of the German army, as it would hamper the production in divisions and "German companies are not capable of manufacturing what was being made in the ghetto."[3]

The document was sent to Heinrich Himmler, who submitted it further to Adolf Eichmann, who was in charge of the operation. In September, Eichmann came to Łódź and met Hans Biebow in order to persuade him to accept the deportation project and to check on site whether the ghetto could accommodate 20,000 Jews. He postulated to reorganize the ghetto by dividing it into two parts – eastern, which would serve as a labor camp where 40,000 workers would produce goods for the purposes of German economy, and western, which would be for the rest of the population not employed in factories. The plan was approved by the Łódź Gestapo, specifically by the head of the IV B4 Division, Gunther Fuchs.

However, Biebow did not change his mind and still argued that it was impossible to accommodate such a large number of deportees. He had the support of the authorities of the Łódź *Regierungsbezirk* and together with president Übelhör he tried to prevent the deportations. Biebow approached general Georg Thomas, chief of the Office of War Economy and Armaments at the High Command of the Wehrmacht (*Wehrwirtschafts–und RüstungsamtimOberkommando der Wehrmacht*), asking him to mediate with Himmler on his behalf. On October 7th, the *Regierungsbezirkpräsident* intervened directly at the Division of Internal Affairs of the Third Reich. There, he learned that Eichmann and Fuchs spread false information that the idea of reorganizing the ghetto and bringing in Jews from the West had been fully approved by their Łódź authorities. Moreover, they provided false data as to the number of people in the ghetto, reducing it to 25,000. In a letter sent to Himmler, he corrected this information and described the actions of the two officials as "manners adopted from Gypsy horse traders." At the same time, he suggested resettling 20,000 Western Jews and 5000 Roma to the Warsaw ghetto, arguing that it would have no adverse effect on German economy if such a solution was to be adopted.[4]

In response, Himmler persuaded general Thomas that the operation would not have any effect on the execution of German army orders. Übelhör was sharply reprimanded by head of the Main Security Office of the Third Reich Reinhard Heydrich for obstructing the resettlement of Western European Jews.[5] Therefore, the decision was already made and no intervention could change it. German authorities in Łódź began preparations for the operation of receiving the displaced from the West.

"Difficult experiences are ahead ..."

Rumkowski was informed about the planned resettlement on September 23rd, the second day of Rosh Hashanah 5702,the circumstances under which the information about the resettlement was communicated were recorded in the *Chronicle*:

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[3] *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. 3: *Getto łódzkie*, part 1, ed. A. Eisenbach, Warszawa–Łódź–Kraków 1946, p. 197–200; I.(H.) Rubin*, Żydzi w Łodzi pod niemiecką okupacją 1939–1945*, London 1988, p. 339.

[4] Ibid., p. 339–341.

[5] Heydrich allegedly said that Übelhör's conduct showed his "lack of sense of belonging to the SS." Ibid., p. 341.

> At 4 o'clock the chairman received a delegation of officials who had come to offer him the greetings for the New Year, in his apartment at Łagiewnicka Street hospital. [...] The exchange of New Year's greetings was interrupted shortly after the ceremony began by the summoning of the Chairman to Bałucki Marketsquare by the German authorities. This happened because, at the same time, final deliberations were underway in connection with the resettling of groups of many thousands of Jews from various locales in the West – some close to the ghetto, orders farther away – into the ghetto.[6]

The described events were witnessed by Szmul Rozensztajn, Rumkowski's personal secretary. He kept a diary in the ghetto in which he recorded the Chairman's reaction to the decision communicated to him by the German authorities. According to him, Rumkowski said "difficult experiences are ahead of the Jews. [...] Very difficult, also for our Jews from the ghetto in Litzmannstadt."[7] On the same day, after a morning meeting with German officials, Rumkowski went to the synagogue since it was a holiday. There, according to Rozensztajn's account, he gave a short speech in which he announced a "difficult trial" for the ghetto. A brief announcement communicated by the Eldest of the Jews spread throughout the ghetto immediately, becoming a pretext for a number of hypotheses and conjectures. Some of them were recorded by Rozensztajn in his *Notebook*. Rumors spoke of the planned resettlement of 75,000 people from nearby towns, creating a camp for 1,000 Gypsies in the ghetto, reducing the 33dkg bread ration by half in connection with the planned operation, deporting all those who collect benefits from the ghetto, vacating houses at Zgierska Street, a ban on crossing Zgierska Street, or arrival of transports from Breslau. Also, Sierakowiak wrote about the calamities – *gzeyres*– that awaited the ghetto.[8] Rumors circulating around the ghetto were also recorded in the *Chronicle*.[9] As it later turned out, some of these"rumors" were confirmed because Roma were indeed resettled into the ghetto and a special, isolated so-called "Gypsy camp" was established[10]. Between September, 26–29th, 3,082 people arrived from Włocławek and the neighboring towns.[11] The German name of Włocławek was Leslau, which is most likely why it was confused with Breslau.

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6 *Kronika getta łódzkiego..., vol.* 1, entry dated September 1941*,* p. 292–293.

7 S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik*, transl. and ed. M. Polit, Warszawa 2008, p. 123.

8 *Gezeyra* (Yiddish) – calamity, persecution. Dawid Sierakowiak noted in his Diary on September 23th 1941, "New stories are reported. Rumkowski said at the prayer [...] that new *gezeyres* await us. What is it about? No one knows yet. Brr, something will begin again." D. Sierakowiak, *The Diary of Dawid Sierakowiak*, ed. A. Adelson, transl. K. Turowski, New York − Oxford 1996, p. 131; *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka,* ed. L. Dobroszycki, Warszawa 1960, p. 81.

9 S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 125–126; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated September 1941, p. 293–294. Gossip was repeatedly the target of Rumkowski's attacks as a source of unnecessary anxiety and disorganization of the ghetto. In the quoted fragment of the Chronicle, the authors also drew attention to the negative effects of this phenomenon, "[...] Never before in the history of the ghetto has gossip been so rife, without any repentance and with no inhibitions. This despicable social symptom is especially deserving of condemnation when it occurs in serious moments when balance and calm are required."

10 Cf. J. Baranowski, *Obóz cygański w Łodzi 1941–1942*, Łódź 2003.

11 Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (henceforth APŁ), Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów (henceforth PSŻ), 863, Statystyka ludności, unpaginated.; cf. A. Baranowska, *Żydzi włocławscy i ich zagłada 1939–1945*, Toruń 2005; D. Dąbrowska, *Zagłada skupisk żydowskich w Kraju Warty w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1955, no. 13/14, p. 122–184.

Almost immediately after being told about the planned arrival of the groups of Jews, Rumkowski mobilized the administration apparatus, ordering to prepare the ghetto for the arrival of transports, as the groups of the displaced were called. First of all, the officials from the Housing Department were tasked with compiling a report on the state of population density in the ghetto. The residents were carefully counted, as were all residential rooms and buildings, including the material from which they were built. Also involved in compiling data were officials from the Civil Registry Office and the Finance and Economy Department. Henryk Neftalin was put in charge of the operation.[12]

In September, Rumkowski organized a meeting for teachers, during which he informed them about the planned deportations and the idea to adapt school buildings as temporary housing for the newly arrived from the West:

> Soon, the ghetto will expand with 23,000 Jews, including the 3,000 Jews from small towns in former Poland that have already arrived. The rest, 20,000 Jews, will arrive from the old Reich [...]. They all will need a roof over their heads. [...] About 1,000 will be arriving each day. This requires many collection points, from which they will be later taken to their place of residence. The only large premises (except for divisions and factories, which, of course, we have to exclude, as their operation cannot be stopped even for a minute) are the school buildings. This is why school holidays must begin tomorrow. How long they will last, I cannot predict today, perhaps four or six weeks – until the end of the resettlement.
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> [...] Each resident of the ghetto will have to take in at least one newly arrived person. We will have to cramp even more, and then, I want to believe, we will be able to keep the schools, if not all of them, then at least some small part [...].[13]

Although Rumkowski planned for the holidays to last only several weeks, that moment marked the end of organized education in the ghetto, as it was never relaunched again.[14] The head of the School Department, Eliasz Tabaksblat, confirmed that teachers were ready to join the aid operation and help the deportees; Rumkowski made them guardians, whose task it was to "relieve the fate of the newly arrived Jews."[15] When the first groups of the deportees arrived at Radegast Station, teachers helped to direct them to their new accommodation.[16]

The decision to turn school buildings into a temporary residence for the arrivals from the West – collectives, as they were called – had two reasons. The particularly difficult housing situation in the ghetto forced Rumkowski to seek new space, thus far unused

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[12] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated September 1941, p. 294.

[13] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 129–130. Dawid Sierakowiak mentions the meeting in his *Diary*, commenting on the decision to suspend school classes, "It seems to be the end of education in the ghetto. I will not be a *lyceum* student, at least not in the ghetto, if I'm a student ever again (I've been lucky enough to snatch *the gymnasium* graduation).". D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 85.

[14] The liquidated schools were replaced to some degree by further training Yad Vashem Archive in Jerusalem (henceforth AYV), O.3 / 1315, E. Tabaksblat, Dzieje szkolnictwa żydowskiego pod okupacją niemiecką, p. 9; H. Smoleńska, *Szkolnictwo żydowskie w Łodzi w czasie okupacji niemieckiej w latach 1939–1945* (Manuscript in the collection of the Center for Jewish Research of the University of Łódź), p. 41.

[15] Ibid., p. 131.

[16] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 321.

for residential purposes. Given how important it was for the ghetto administration and its superiors from the German board of the ghetto to carry out the production in labor divisions, vacating factory buildings was out of the question. Only school buildings had a relatively large available space. Also not without significance were the economic factors, as Rumkowski assumed that the costs of maintaining the collectives would be lower and running the household easier.[17]

The newly acquired premises had to be adapted for the purposes of housing. According to instructions of the Eldest of the Jews, the task was given to the Construction Department. At an "American pace," residential premises and houses in Marysin were renovated and the staff adapted school classrooms for the purposes of the collective housing. In collaboration with the fire department, roofs and flues were repaired. Carpentry workshops, where bunk beds and other necessary furnishings were made, worked practically non-stop. Other workshops made mattresses and pallets. At the order of the Kitchen Department, boilers and other appliances for preparing meals were installed. Rooms were numbered, and in each collective area for first aid station, infirmary, and manager's office were assigned. Due to the preparations, distribution of meals for the youth, earlier carried out in school buildings, was moved to pray houses and to the large auditorium of the former "Bajka" theatre on Franciszkańska Street.[18]

One of Rumkowski's basic methods of communication with the community of the "closed district" were his public speeches.[19] Since the resettlement of Western European Jews was an event of great significance, Rumkowski decided to make a public appearance in order to inform the wide masses of ghetto residents about the actions he undertook. The rally took place on October 7, 1941, at the firemen's square at 13 Lutomierska Street. Posters announcing the planned speech were placed on the walls of the ghetto several hours before it began, attracting considerable interest of the people, who had been living for a week on rumors on the planned resettlement. About 10,000 people came to the square. A special grandstand was constructed for Rumkowski, bearing emblems of the Fire Brigade, and an electric sound system was installed:

> I have been given an order by the authorities. I want you all, gathered here, to know that: I have to and should receive, here, into the ghetto, 23,000[20] Jews. I repeat: 23,000 Jews must be received into the ghetto. Each order, no matter how difficult, can be carried out with the help of the whole society. Taking in 23,000 Jews is not easy, but an order is an order and it must be obeyed at all costs. I have already ordered my Housing Department to start working on it. I am ready to carry out that order one hundert percent. The Jews sent to us must be given a roof over their heads. My instruction will have to be carried out. In each room, if possible, more people will be placed. However, I would not want to impose lodgers

[17] J. Baranowski, *Żydzi...*, p. 17; A. Sitarek, "Transporty Żydów z Berlina do getta łódzkiego (1941–1942)" [in:] *Studia i szkice dedykowane Julianowi Baranowskiemu*, ed. E. Wiatr, P. Zawilski, Łódź 2010, p. 233.

[18] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated October 15, 1941, p. 310–311; ibid., entry dated November 1941, p. 321.

[19] Cf. "Wstęp" [in :] *Słuchają...*, p. 6–11.

[20] As in the speech to the teachers, Rumkowski included in this number 3,000 people deported to the ghetto from Włocławek and neighboring towns.

> on anyone. So I am explaining now that each small family living in a larger room should choose in advance one or more desirable roommates – for example family members, relatives or friends – and my department will always take that into account [...]. We have provide our sisters and brothers with a roof over their heads, and later food and drink. [...] I decided to close all [private] shops. Shops that are necessary for the trade in the ghetto will remain. All sealed establishments will be turned into housing.[21]

These words were received with concern. The prospect of even more cramped living conditions provoked discontent. Residents of the ghetto were awaiting further developments with anxiety, additionally exacerbated by news from the front about the beginning of the German offensive against Moscow. Various rumors were circulating in the ghetto about the newcomers: "The first transfer of deportees from Vienna will arrive tomorrow. They are said to be all Christians and Nazis who is grandmothers were proved to be Jewish. They may yet set up and anti-Semitic association in the ghetto!" Sierakowiak wrote ironically.[22]

Several days after the speech at the firemen's square, Rumkowski convened a conference at the Health Department in the hospital at 34/36 Łagiewnicka Street, inviting the heads of the most important bodies of the Jewish administration of the ghetto. It was a "briefing" before the deportations, as it was held on the October 15th; that is, one day before the arrival of the first transport from the West at Radegast Station. One of the participants of the conference, Szmul Rozensztajn,[23] recorded an extensive account in his *Notebook*. Thirty high-ranking officials took part in the meeting, including: head of the Health Department Dr.Wiktor Miller; administrative director of that department and member of the Presidium of the Supreme Control Chamber Józef Rumkowski; Head of the Census Department (in charge of the resettlement operation) Henryk Neftalin; Head of the Construction Department Izaak Gutman; Commander of the Order Service Leon Rozenblat; Commissioner of the Special Unit of the Order Service Marek Kligier; Head of the Court of the Eldest of the Jews Stanislaw Jakobson; Head of the Archive Jozef Klementynowski; Head of the Bank and member of the Presidium of the Supreme Control Chamber Pinkus Gierszowski; Head of the Provisioning Department Maks Awigdor Szczęśliwy; member of the Council of Elders and Provisioning Council Mendel Krasucki; employees of the Benefits Department Mosze Fajn and Izrael Tabaksblat; Head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions Aron Jakubowicz; physicians Dr. Fabian Klozenberg, Dr. Wajnberg and Dr.Wolfson; rabbis Eliasz Józef Fajner and Szmul Dawid Łaski from the Rabbinical College; Head of the School Department Eliasz Tabaksblat and his employees Szmul Bunin, Samuel Lew and Mojżesz Karo; member of the Council of Elders and Head of the Central Tailoring Office Dawid Warszawski; member of the Presidium of the Kitchens Department Boruch Praszkier; as well as heads of divisions and factories Abraham Bande, Perec Blaugrund, Jakub Szyper, Natan Szwarc and Samuel Jakub Topilski.

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[21] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 134–137. The speech, in a slightly modified form, was included in the memorial book of Rumkowski's speeches – cf. *Słuchają...*, p. 33–36. Sierakowiak mentions it, too – D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 138.

[22] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 139.

[23] S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 139–146.

Rumkowski making public speech, October 7, 1941
(State Archive in Łódź)

According to Rumkowski, the purpose of this meeting was to "provide a report on the situation of the ghetto." He summarized the results of his "negotiations" with German authorities concerning their resettlement of Jews from provincial ghettos in Warthegau and the circumstances of the arrival of transports from Włocławek and the neighboring towns in September 1941. Once again, he stated that he was expecting the arrival of 20,000 Jews from the Reich and 5,000 Gypsies.[24] He received the ultimate confirmation of the operation that day, October 15th. Aware of the difficulties that finding accommodation for them would involve, he recommended: "We will have to get even more cramped, confined, in order to make room for the 23,000 Jews they are sending."Rozensztajn noted that Rumkowski considered out loud several options that would free some space in the ghetto, "I could unburden myself [i.e., deport from the ghetto to labor camps – A.S.] several thousand people from the demi-world." Once again, he announced that schools would be closed and turned into temporary housing for the deportees from Germany. He also repeated the appeal he had made during his public speech of October 7th to take friends in order to increase the available living space in the ghetto and confirmed his intention to close privately owned shops "whose entire merchandise can fit in the shop window" and adapt them for residential purposes. Unfortunately, Rozensztajn's notes from the meeting do not provide information whether there was any discussion on the ideas presented by the Eldest of the Jews.

"The Ghetto Passed the Exam"

On the morning of October 17th, news spread throughout the ghetto that in the afternoon, the first transport carrying deportees from the West would arrive at Radegast Station. From the early hours, the station was being readied to receive the resettled; horse wagons were brought nearby and a group of workers who would be in charge of carrying luggage were stationed in the cinema building. Officers of the Order Service were on standby, and many of them were ordered to report to the station. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, cars started arriving with German officials. The first train was awaited by representatives of the German authorities from the board of the ghetto with its head, Hans Biebow, at the helm, as well as officers of the Kripo and members of the Jewish administration of the ghetto, including Rumkowski. The area of the station was secured by officers of the German protection police and the Jewish Order Service.[25]

About a 4:15pm, the first transport arrived at the station, carrying 1,000 Viennese Jews. Thus started the resettlement that would last until November 4, 1941, during which, in 20 transports, nearly 20,000 people from Vienna, Prague, Luxemborg, Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne, Emden, Hamburg and Düsseldorf[26] were deported into the ghetto. For the Western newcomers, the first moments in the ghetto where a shock, many of them had not known

[24] There is an interesting passus in Rumkowski's speech devoted to the Roma. According to Rozensztajn's notes, Rumkowski allegedlt said, "[...] we cannot live with the Gypsies. Gypsies are people ready for anything. They first rob and then set fire, and then everything will burn down, even your factories and goods" – S. Rozensztajn, *Notatnik...*, p. 142.

[25] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 320–323.

[26] The exact list of transports, including the number of people and their location, cf. Załącznik do sprawozdania o przyjeździe do getta nowej ludności – ibid., p. 331–332.

Table no. 6
Number of people from Western Europe deported to the ghetto

Transport	No.	Arrival date	Number of people under transport
Vienna I	1	October 17, 1941	1,000
Prague I	2	October 18, 1941	1,000
Luxemborg	3	October 18, 1941	512
Berlin I	4	October 19, 1941	1,082
Vienna II	5	October 20, 1941	1,000
Frankfurt / M.	6	October 21, 1941	1,186
Prague II	7	October 22, 1941	1,000
Cologne I	8	October 23, 1941	1,006
Vienna III	9	October 24, 1941	1 000
Emden	10a	October 25, 1941	122
Berlin II	10b	October 25, 1941	912
Hamburg	11	October 26, 1941	1,063
Prague III	12	October 27, 1941	1,000
Dusseldorf	13	October 28, 1941	1,004
Vienna IV	14	October 29, 1941	1,000
Berlin III	15	October 30, 1941	1,030
Cologne II	16	October 31, 1941	1,006
Prague IV	17	November 1, 1941	1,000
Berlin IV	18	November 2, 1941	1,000
Vienna V	19	November 3, 1941.	1,000
Prague V	20	November 4, 1941.	1,000
In total:			19,923*

Source: *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, p. 331.

*According to author's findings, the number of deportees to the ghetto was 19,954 − A. Sitarek, *Transporty...*, p. 227. The PSŻ records cite the number of 19,945 people, I. (H.) Rubin quotes the number of 19,953 people, D. Dąbrowska points to a slight divergence in figures found in different sources, therefore I assume that the number was 20,000 − cf. APŁ, PSŻ 19, Zestawienie nowo wsiedlonych, p. 196; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, s. 346; D. Dąbrowska, *Wsiedleni Żydzi zachodnioeuropejscy w getcie łódzkim*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1968, no. 65–66, p. 106–109.

where they would be taken.[27] Also the residents of the ghetto were moved, as the arrival of transports from the West was a significant event for them.[28]

The gradually incoming deportees were received at Radegast Station by organized groups of police officers and workers, who were in charge of carrying luggage. "They have piled up the bundles, suitcases and chests of the newcomers like camels, considering it their ambition to assist each of the newcomers at least in caring their belongings," the *Chronicle* wrote.[29] Later, it noted that the characteristic uniform of Order Service officers became a source of confusion, as some of the deportees mistook them for hotel porters. The elderly or the infirm were offered transport and care by paramedics supervised by the management of the Health Department – Dr. Wiktor Miller and Józef Rumkowski. Assisted by German police officers, the deportees were taken to the ghetto. There, according to an earlier plan, subsequent transports were placed in the collectives or private accommodation.

Initially, the new arrivals were quite hopeful about their collective housing. It was much easier for them to bear the difficult conditions when they were among people from their own country. They were ensured that they would be provided with medical care – in each collective, there was a doctor and three nurses paid by the Eldest of the Jews. Each of the collectives had a manager, also paid by the community, and block leaders, appointed on Rumkowski's command, who were in charge keeping the premises clean and orderly.[30]

In spite of extensive works, the premises where the new arrivals were placed were not sufficiently prepared for objective reasons. Residents of the collectives did not have access to many basic facilities such as heating or sanitation. Only one of the 10 collectives had access to running water and toilets, while the other nine had to make do with latrines in the yard. Those who were unable to leave the building were forced to use buckets placed in the corridors. These were insufficient, so soon not only the bucket itself was dirty but so was the surrounding area. The new arrivals spent the first nights sleeping on mattresses or on the floor in their clothes, cramped one beside one another: "Tightly pressed bodies and feet of the neighbors made it all feel as if we were lying in a mass grave [...]. Going out at night, caused by watery food, was a circus trick of balance for the one who was trying to leave, and torture for everyone lying on the floor."[31] All this was a complete shock for the newly arrived.

For the first several weeks, residents of the collectives were eating the supplies they had brought. Gradually, however, they had to get used to the ghetto food, which made many of them suffer from an upset stomach. Kitchens operating at the collectives could not provide enough food for people whose bodies were unused to such extreme conditions.[32]

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[27] One of the most characteristic examples is the conviction among the members of one of the transports that they reached the English Channel, where they would be exchanged for German prisoners of war – B. Abraham, *And the World Remained Silent,* New York 1996, p. 27.

[28] Relations between the newcomers are very accurately depicted in the essays *Zum Problem Ost und West* by the journalist Oskar Singer, published in Prague – O. Singer, „*Przemierzając szybkim krokiem getto...*". *Reportaże i eseje* z getta łódzkiego, transl. K. Radziszewska, Łódź 2002, p. 97–109. Cf. also D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 88–91.

[29] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 322.

[30] D. Dąbrowska, *Wsiedleni...*, p. 115–119.

[31] B. Heilig, "Die ersten sieben Monaten in Litzmannstadt Getto" [in:] *Unser einziger Weg ist Arbeit. Das Getto in Lodz 1940–1944,* ed. H. Loewy, G. Schönberger, Wien 1990, p. 178. Also Rozensztajn wrote about the impressions of Rumkowski's visit to the collectives. Particularly difficult conditions were found in the building where the resettled from Luxembourg were living – S. Rozensztajn*, Notatnik...*, p. 152–153.

[32] A. Sitarek, *Transporty...*, p. 235.

Table no. 7
Addresses of the Collectives and the Transported Placed in Them

Transport	Number of Transport	Address
Vienna I	1	Marysin, Przemysłowa
Vienna II	5	10 Jakuba St.
Vienna III	9	Private apartments
Vienna IV	14	25 and 45 Limanowskiego St.
Vienna V	19	41 Brzezińska St. and „Bajka" theatre
Berlin I	4	Private apartments
Berlin II, Emden	10a, 10b	Marysin, Staszica St.
Berlin III	15	11 Urzędnicza St. and 70 Zgierska St.
Berlin IV	18	7 Widok St. and 27 Franciszkańska St.
Prague I	2	21 Franciszkańska St.
Prague II	7	37 Łagiewnicka St.
Prague III	12	21 Franiszkańska St., 37 Łagiewnicka St., 37 Franciszkańska St. and 38 Marysińska St.
Prague IV	17	29 Franciszkańska St.
Prague V	20	10 Jakuba St.
Dusseldorf	13	25 Rybna St.
Cologne I	8	Private apartments
Cologne II	16	Marysin, Otylii St.
Frankfurt	6	13 Franciszkańska St. and 10 Jakuba St.
Hamburg	11	25 Młynarska St.
Luksemburg	3	29 Franciszkańska St.
Włocławek	-	Marysin, private apartments

Soon after the deportees arrived, officials of the ghetto administration started registering people who decided to take up work. The Health Department managed to carry out this operation particularly efficiently and as a result, not even two weeks after the transport arrived nearly all doctors, dentists, paramedics, nurses and medical students were employed. In November, newly arrived lawyers found employment. The ghetto Court appointed

six judges and prosecutors as well as one clerk.[33] The Archive Department employed journalists and writers,[34] while some qualified craftsmen quickly found work in relevant divisions. At Rumkowski's orders, a "permanent employment emergency service" was organized – 600 men were selected from among the new arrivals and engaged for works such as unloading or transport of goods arriving in the ghetto.[35]

People from the Third Reich and the Bohemia and Moravia Protectorate were unfamiliar with the rules in the ghetto. They learned about them directly from their new neighbors as well as from official speeches or announcements of the Eldest of the Jews. Rumkowski presented his program to the forced newcomers at a meeting organized on November 1st in the Culture House. The speech of the Eldest of the Jews was composed of two parts. In the first, he briefly outlined the history of the ghetto and characterized the most important offices of the administration along with their competences. In the other, he explained his program for the newly arrived – the principal motto was "The same for us as for you." He also referred to a number of problems resulting from the new situation, not leaving any illusions for the newly arrived:

> My fundamental attitude toward you can be summarized in the motto, "the same for us as for you." I would be the worst of the worst if I had a different approach. I am deeply convinced that local Jews agree with me fully in that regard. [...] I am sorry when I hear that many of you behave in a completely unacceptable manner.[...] I have personally heard sayings such as, "I am not a Jew and I have nothing in common with any of you."[...] I have to emphasize that you will have to adapt to our ways, not the other way round. I have also observed some comforting symptoms, in particular as regards the behavior of the Prague people. The exiles from Prague have been noted to compete for hard physical labor, labor that needs to be than irregularly, at night.
>
> [...] Please note that writing any kind of requests and complaints to the authorities is pointless. It is a waste of paper because such petitions ultimately end up in my wastebasket. Any disobedience or disorderliness will be eradicated. Now, as regards housing. I have entrusted this most important division to my friend and comrade, Neftalin. This is a guarantee that you will all be provided with accommodation [...].
>
> I caution you against a reckless waste of money, as money is very hard to come by here. [...] No one should move into any apartment on the own, without the approval from the Housing Department. I have introduced the system to protect you from potential exploitation by the local population. At the same time, I caution you against selling your belongings to peddlers and shady intermediaries. Only my Bank can guarantee you a reliable purchase. Please remember, in the ghetto German marks are a foreign currency. They need to be exchanged at the Central

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[33] APŁ, PSŻ 1096, Sprawy sądownictwa, unpaginated.; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 341.

[34] K. Radziszewska, "Centrum dokumentacyjne getta. Autorzy „Kroniki" i ich tekst" [in:] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, p. 231–246.

[35] In November 1941, due to the coming winter, more food and fuel was delivered to the ghetto – ibid., vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 326.

Cash Desk for the local currency. I could not stress enough the necessity to follow all regulations that are in force in the ghetto to the letter, even though they are often severe in terms of their form and content.[36]

Rumkowski communicated various orders also through official announcements placed on the walls of the ghetto. The first notice addressed to the newcomers was announced on October 17th; this concerned German marks being banned from circulation in the ghetto. The newcomers were obliged to exchange them by October 26th at the Central Treasury at 4 Kościelny Square. Since transports from the Third Reich and the Protectorate continued to come until the first days of November, Rumkowski reissued the notice on October 27th. Another notice was announced on October 31st – this concerned housing allocation, carried out by the Eldest of the Jews. Rumkowski cautioned against "exploitation by individuals taking advantage of [newcomers'] unfamiliarity with local housing and provisioning relations." He also banned renting accommodation on one's own. The only body authorized to allocate quarters was the Housing Department. In another announcement, dated November 2nd, Rumkowski reminded newcomers that wearing fur was not allowed in the ghetto and that all fur coats, collars and stoles had to be sold and the Bank of Purchase at 7 Ciesielska Street. The order was repeated on November 27th. It took a while for the new arrivals to adapt to the rules in the ghetto. In an announcement of November 7th, Rumkowski informed that "In all departments, representatives of the new population must wait in line just as other customers;[...] Those who fail to observe the regulations of the Eldest of the Jews will be held accountable."[37] The announcement also regulated issuing luggage of the resettled, assigning better accommodation in the first place to the elderly and mothers with children and maintaining hygiene in places of residence. Rumkowski also announced that inspections would be carried out in the premises where the newcomers were staying. On that same day, an announcement was placed on the walls, concerning the obligation to sell of cameras to the Bank of the Eldest of the Jews, as there was ban on taking photos in the ghetto.[38] On November 29th, the Eldest of the Jews ordered that all work books of the resettled had to be returned to the Labor Office. A particularly important announcement was issued on December 3rd. Rumkowski appointed the Department for the Resettled, a new body of the ghetto administration, which from that moment handled all issues related to the deportees.[39]

Department for the Resettled

The Department for the resettled coordinated all issues related to the individuals deported to the Łódź ghetto from the Third Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as provincial ghettos in the Warthegau. Its office was located at 8 Rybna Street. The head of the Department was Henryk Neftalin from its founding until December 1942, when he was replaced by Mojżesz Minc.

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[36] *Słuchają...*, p. 39–49.
[37] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 329.
[38] *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto 1940–1944*, ed. J. Baranowski, S.M. Nowinowski, Łódź 2009, p. 287.
[39] AYV, 06/213, AfE [Abteilung für Eingesiedelte] 3.12.41 – 3.12.42, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 330.

The main office of the Department was the Secretariat, where the resettled came with their problems. Such cases were either handled on site or submitted to the relevant division. One of the first such divisions to be appointed was the Division for Registration, where the newcomers were registered according to the number of fear transports and collectives. The Housing Division was a link between the applicants and the office in charge of allocating housing. The Economics Division provided collectives with necessary materials and goods. For that reason, a separate warehouse was created. The Welfare Division allocated financial or material relief, mainly to the unemployed or sick. The Labor Recruitment Division acted as an intermediary between people looking for work and employers. For this purpose, the division kept records of all individuals capable of work, with their professional skills. Pensions were handled by the Division for Pensions and Disability Benefit, which exchanged correspondence with relevant offices and authorities in order to secure benefits for those entitled to them. The Sanitary-Technical Division was in charge of issues relating to sanitation in the collectives, prevention of epidemic, as well as care of individuals in quarantine. The division was also in charge of first aid stations in the collectives and allocating food vouchers for the sick. There was also the Division of Statistics, which from March until December 1942, provided more than 300 tables to the Department of Statistics, as well as to the Archive, where the documents of the resettled were collected. An important task of the Department was the care of the elderly, who were often very lonely. At 26 GnieźnieńskaStreet, the homefor the elderly was opened, and two other houses at 2-A Krzyżowa Street and in Marysin were renovated. The Department was liquidated at the beginning of January 1943.[40]

The ghetto administration under Rumkowski's leadership undertook extensive operation aiming at preparing the resettlement of Jews from Western Europe. Significant efforts and materials from several departments were engaged in preparing housing. Given the insufficient accommodation, Rumkowski was forced to close down schools. The arrival of subsequent transports entailed substantial organizational effort. The main body of the administration in charge of all issues related to the newly resettled populace was the specially established Department for the Resettled.

2. Administration Apparatus during the Deportations

In mid-1941, the supreme authorities of Warthegau came up with an idea to concentrate all Jews in the entire province in a district ghetto – *Gaugetto* ghetto in Litzmannstadt. They decided the operation could succeed on one condition, however: the removal of "unproductive" Jews. The solution to the question of the "evacuation" of this group was suggested during one of the meetings at the office of *Reichsstatthalter* Arthur Greiser, as evidenced by the famous memorandum sent to Adolf Eichmann by Hoppner from the Resettlement Headquarters in Posen. It contains a reference to the

[40] AYV, 06/213, AfE [Abteilung für Eingesiedelte] 3.12.41–3.12.42, p. 1–22; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated November 1941, p. 342; ibid., entry dated December 3, 1941, p. 357; ibid., vol. 2: 1942, entry dated December 6, 1942, p. 647.

idea of murdering Jews who are unable to work.[41] The concept was accepted by Greiser, who appealed to Heinrich Himmler asking him for "special treatment" of about 100,000 Jews from provinces. Having obtained the approval, works on the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner began, where a special unit was brought, commanded by Herbert Lange. By early December 1941, the center in that small village was completed, which later became the central place of the implementation of "the final solution of the Jewish question" in Warthegau. From 8 December, the extermination of subsequent groups of people started in Chełmno, initially Jews from the neighboring counties, and later from the Łódź ghetto.[42]

The First Wave of Deportations

On December 16, 1941, the German authorities informed Rumkowski about the decision regarding the resettlement of 20,000 people from the ghetto. According to their reassurances, those people were to be deported in early 1942 to nearby towns, where it would be easier to provide room and board for them. In their place, the ghetto would receive professionals and laborers from other cities. The Jewish administration of the ghetto was tasked with designating people for deportations as well as carrying out the entire operation, and if the order was not executed, the authorities would takeover without Rumkowski's help. According to the Eldest of the Jews, through "imploring and pleading," he managed to persuade the German authorities to reduce the requested number by half – to 10,000 people.[43]

Having received information about the planned deportations, Rumkowski convened a meeting with his closest associates, during which a number of decisions were made about the operation. Present at the meeting were, aside from Rumkowski: Head of the Census Department and the Department for the Resettled Henryk Neftalin; Commander of the Order Service Leon Rozenblat; Head of the Court Stanisław Jakobson; Commander of the Central Prison and the Board of Marysin Salomon Herzberg; Head of the Investigation Bureau Zygmunt Blemer; and head of the criminal and administrative division of the Court Chaim Lajb Grynberg. During the meeting, it was decided to establish and the Resettlement Committee, dubbed "the committee of five,"[44] the office of which was located at the station of the District I of the Order Service on Franciszkańska Street. The committee was in charge of supervising the whole process of compiling and approving deportations lists, and all decisions had to be taken collectively, in order to prevent "subjective attitude

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41 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 335–336.

42 Ł. Pawlicka-Nowak, *Świadectwa Zagłady. Obóz w Chełmnie nad Nerem, getto wiejskie Czachulec*, Gdańsk 2014, p. 29–45; P. Montague, *Chełmno. Pierwszy nazistowski obóz zagłady*, Wołowiec 2014, p. 105; A. Löw, *Getto łódzkie / Litzmannstadt Getto. Warunki życia i sposoby przetrwania*, Łódź 2012, p. 210–211.

43 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated 20 Dec 1941, p. 388–389. Andrea Löw and Henryk Rubin believe that reducing the number of people destined for the deportation was the success of Rumkowski, who convinced the Germans to initially reduce the contingent, as they were anxious to carry out the action effectively and initially lull Rumkowski to complacency. It is more likely, however, taking into account the subsequent deportations and Rumkowski's speeches during which he tried to justify them, it seems that Rumkowski himself had originally offered twice as many people to show the ghetto inhabitants his alleged ability to influence the decisions of the German authorities and thus have his power confirmed in the eyes of the ghetto inhabitants – A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 211; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 349–350.

44 The Commission consisted of six people.

Deportees on their way to the Radegast Train Station.
In the background Central Prison buildings
(State Archive in Łódź)

to the candidates." The deportation lists were to be compiled based on information from the Court, the Investigation Bureau and the Central Prison, concerning the "undesirable element"; that is, criminals along with their families. It was that group which, by Rumkowski's decision, was chosen for deportations in the first place. The Eldest of the Jews decided that criminals were the greatest obstacle to the ideal system based on the motto "Work, peace, order" which he wanted to introduce in the ghetto.

"I have chosen that section for deportations," Rumkowski later said, "that has been a festering boil for the ghetto. Thus, on the lists of the exiles, there were representatives of the underworld, scum and all individuals harmful for the ghetto. [...] When today I am sending away crooks and swindlers of all kinds from the ghetto, I am doing so convinced that those people are fully deserving of that fate."[45]

Moreover, it was established that within the group sent for deportation, there would be also about 2,000 people resettled from Włocławek and the neighboring towns, as well as families of people sent for labor to Germany. It was decided that when compiling the lists, German Jews – resettled from the Third Reich and the Protectorate – would not be taken into account, which later provoked significant displeasure among the population of the ghetto who blamed the newcomers from the West for the deportations. During the operation, the committee closely collaborated with the Registration Office, which was

[45] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 17, 1942, p. 35–36.

in charge of establishing the address of persons designated for deportations as well as their families.[46]

The following day, in the Culture House at Krawiecka Street where a concert for officials and ghetto administration was held, Rumkowski gave a speech in which he shared the information about the planned deportations. In his speech, he emphasized that the "undesirable element" would be sent away from the ghetto, namely criminals and those entitled to benefits who had not been contributing work in exchange for the support they received. Another group of the deported were to be salesman profiteering from purchasing property from the newly resettled, as well as children illegally peddling goods in the streets, along with their parents. Rumkowski presented the planned operation is an exchange of "social pests" for a group of experts and laborers, 10,000 of whom were supposed to arrive in the ghetto. He emphasized his "success" in persuading the German authorities to reduce the quota from 20,000 to 10,000 people. In the end, he cautioned against making any attempts to influence the decision of the deportations committee, threatening with arrest and ultimately deportation for the person providing the recommendation, the recommended individual, and the member of the committee who intervened on their behalf.[47]

The announcement of deportations provoked understandable anxiety in the ghetto. Rumors started circulating about the liquidation of the whole ghetto and resettling the population, like in winter 1940, when Jews had been resettled to the newly established ghetto.[48] There was also other upsetting news circulating about the fate of the resettled, further intensified by deportees arriving from other towns who spoke about the events they had witnessed. Rumkowski wanted to keep order in the ghetto, so he tried to refute such rumors. During his public appearances, he argued that "the fate of the exiles is not going to be as tragic as it was predicted in the ghetto. They will not be placed behind the wire, and they will be given work in agriculture." He immediately added that, "along with the deportations, the gossip hydra has multiplied. I have to condemn disturbing the public peace. I have repeatedly declared that you can build your peace only by work, and succumbing to gossip could only undermine the iron foundation that work provides."[49]

The deportation committee started operating on January 5, 1942, and from that moment, each day's list was compiled at the building located at 27 Franciszkańska Street, which then served as the basis for summons for deportations, delivered by mail carriers from the Post Office. At meetings, it was debated who should be chosen for deportations – members of the committee did not know the destination of transports, which is why they debated whether it would be better to choose young and strong individuals who could withstand the difficulties of travel, or perhaps the elderly and children, which would mean that people in productive age would stay in the ghetto. One of the compromises was the decision not to separate families. When compiling the list, however, no one argued with

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[46] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated December 20, 1941, p. 388–389.

[47] Ibid., p. 391–392. Henryk Rubin quotes Eliasz Tabaksblat who said that Rumkowski called Boruch Praszkier, Izrael Tabaksblat and other social activists and ordered them to draft a list of people to be protected against deportations – social, religious and political activists. – I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 350–351.

[48] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 1–5, 1942, p. 2.

[49] Ibid., entry dated January 17, 1942, p. 36; *Słuchają...*, p. 67–70.

Rumkowski's idea of deporting criminals from the ghetto; that is, people who prevented the Eldest of the Jews from implementing his plans.[50]

At the same time, Rumkowski never stopped appealing to the German authorities to change their decision about the deportations. What worked to his advantage was the horrific situation in the so-called Gypsy camp, which was to be liquidated as a result of the typhoid epidemic. This forced the authorities to postpone the date of deportations of ghetto residents.[51] On January 6th, the Eldest of the Jews asked to Biebow for an intervention about the decision of the deportations. In a letter addressed to the head of the board of the ghetto, Rumkowski described the enormous production opportunities as well as the value of goods manufactured in labor divisions and outlined his plans for future production.[52] Nevertheless, such appeals were in vain as the decision had been made by the supreme authorities of Warthegau.

The first summons to report to the collection points were sent out on January 9th. Each addressee was informed in German and Yiddish that he was to report to the collection point at 7 Szklana Street near the Central Prison, with luggage up to 12.5kg. Those amongst the summoned who failed to report to the points voluntarily would lose the right to take luggage. On the same day, Rumkowski's notice was announced, informing the deportees that they were allowed to sell belongings such as furniture to the carpentry workshops, based on their professional evaluation.[53] In connection with the deportations, the Rabbinic College was authorized to grant divorces according to a simplified procedure, without the involvement of the Divorce College. The purpose was to make it possible for spouses in separation to avoid deportations if one of them received summons.[54]

On January 13th, the first day after the collection points opened, only half of the summoned reported. Therefore, others were forcibly brought to the points according to the lists.[55] Those who arrived to the registration point had to give away their bread and food cards and were later directed to one of the three collection points, organized at 25 Młynarska Street in the former school building, the building at Czarnieckiego Street adjacent to the Central Prison, and in Marysin. During the two or three days of waiting at the collection points, people stationed there were provided with food in the form of soup with meat, a ration of bread and coffee, as well as necessary clothes – warm undergarments, earmuffs, wooden clogs and socks. In the Central Prison, mark vouchers were exchanged for German marks. Meanwhile, information was collected from those who reported to the point in regard the sick who stayed at home. The Health Department appointed a group of doctors and paramedics who visited homes and found people left there, sending them to hospitals. According to the schedule, each morning, a group of deportees was directed

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[50] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 212.

[51] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 1–5, 1942, p. 3. The liquidation of the Gypsy camp was completed on January 12th, 1942 – J. Baranowski, *Zigeunerlager in Litzmannstadt – The Gypsy Camp in Łódź / Obóz cygański w Łodzi 1941–1942*, Łódź 2003, p. 41.

[52] I.(H.) Rubin*, Żydzi...*, p. 351.

[53] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 10–13, 1942, p. 24; AYIVO, RG-241/457, Obwieszczenie nr 353 z 9 Jan 1942, p. 1.

[54] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 10–13, 1942, p. 24.

[55] Some people were hiding from being deported, staying with friends or in other places. Rumkowski issued a notice on January 14 cautioning against sheltering unregistered visitors, threatening to expel all household members if such incident was discovered. – AYIVO, RG-241/460, Announcement no. 355 dated January 14, 1942, p. 1.

to Radegast Station from collection points. Before departure, each of them received half a loaf of bread and a piece of sausage and was directed to board the train. Each train consist of about 20 wagons with 55 people in each.[56] Between January 16–29th, 14 trains transported 10,003 people to the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner, including 4,853 men and 5,750 women.[57] They were all murdered.

The Second Wave of Deportations

When on January 29th the train with the last group of deportees left, it was expected that the demands of the authorities had been fulfilled. Representatives of the Gestapo ordered the ghetto residents to get back to work, threatening with severe punishment in case they failed to carry out the command.[58] However, the respite did not last long, as only several weeks after the deportations had been withheld, the Germans ordered subsequent thousands of people to be deported from the ghetto. On February 12th, the Outsettlement Committee resumed its operation, and 10 days later another train carried deportees from the Radegast station to Chełmno on the Ner. Over the subsequent days in severe cold, the remaining criminals were brought to the collection points, along with the so-called benefit-takers and members of the work reserves.[59] This time, they no longer had the right to take the 10Mk with them, and could instead leave the money in a deposit or give to a designated person at special points in Marysin operating at collection points. People selected for deportation could still sell their property – purchase points were opened at the carpentry workshop at 35 Franciszkańska Street and at the Purchase Headquarters at 4 Kościelny Square. Aside from this, lively trade was carried out in the yards and doorways – people sold all house equipment for next to nothing in order to buy food for the road. Also, this time not everyone reported to the summons; therefore, the Order Service was employed once again, organizing roundups and bringing people who tried to avoid deportations to the collection points. In order to discourage them from resisting, Rumkowski published an announcement in which he threatened that all of those who would not report punctually at the collection points would be stripped of their right to take luggage.[60]

The resumed deportations once again provoked enormous anxiety among the ghetto residents. The increased frequency of roundups caused hatred towards the officers of the Order Service. People were also afraid of house searches carried out by the Special Unit – discovery of any valuables, stolen food or materials from divisions resulted in detention at the Central Prison, which meant automatically that the individual was included in the deportation list. The staff of the Central Prison, headed by the infamous Solomon Herzberg, also carried out roundups. As a member of the Deportations Committee, Herzberg was particularly eager during the deportations, convinced that he would win approval from the German authorities. On March 14th, he would learn exactly how much he was mistaken. On that day, Herzberg was arrested and a search carried out in his house revealed his

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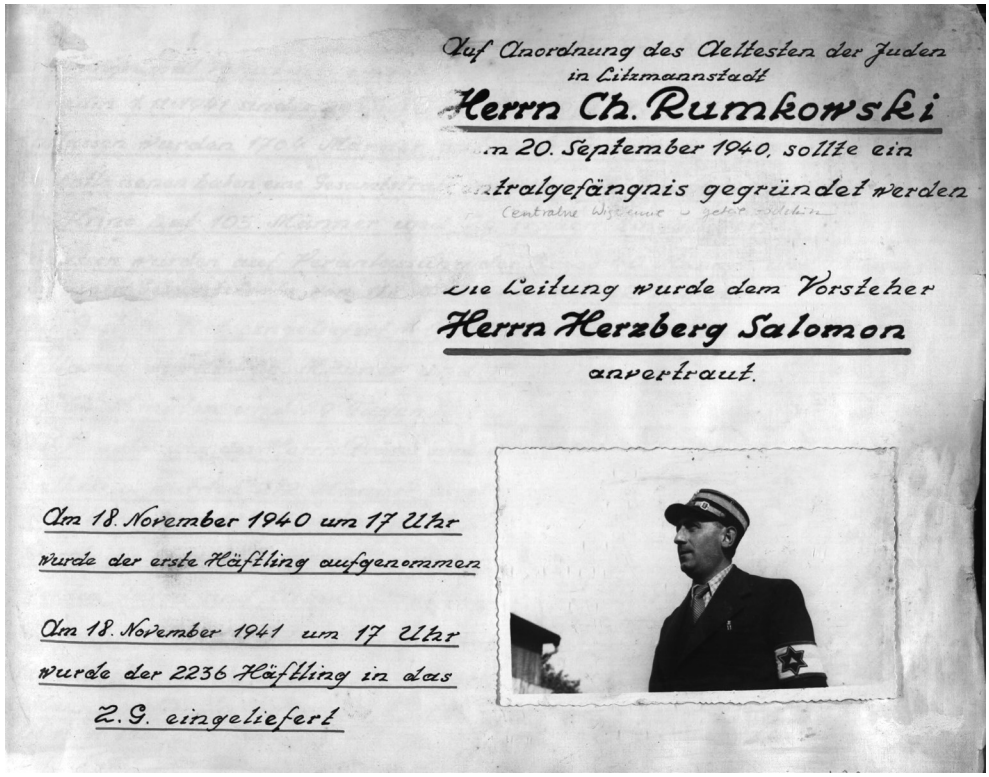
[56] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 14–31, 1942, p. 29–30.
[57] Ibid., p. 33; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 213.
[58] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 352.
[59] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated February 1942, p. 39, 44.
[60] Ibid., entry dated March 1942, p. 69; AYIVO, RG-241/480, Announcement no. 371 dated March 22, 1942, p. 1.



Salomon Herzberg – head of the Central Prison
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

hidden property and a significant supply of food. Three days after the arrest, Herzberg, along with his wife and three sons, was brought to Radegast Station and deported along with one of the transport.[61]

The deportation of the head of the Central Prison only intensified rumors as to the purpose of the deportations. Nobody knew about the fate of those who were sent, as no information ever reached the ghetto. It was speculated that the transports were directed to the General Government or to Warsaw, which was said to be the reason why the deportees were no longer allowed to take German marks with them, as they were no longer valid currency in the GG. There was also information that the deportees the Koło county or the camp near Brześć Kujawski. "Secrets keep all of the ghetto awake at night," the *Chronicle* recorded in February 1942.[62] It was not until mid-April that the Gestapo informed that the deportees had been placed in labor camp near Koło, which, as it was noticed, corresponded with the most popular rumor in the ghetto. As the *Chronicle* noted, there were allegedly 100,000 Jews in the camp, including 44,000 deported from the Łódź

[61] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated March 17, 1942, p. 75–76; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 216–217.
[62] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated February 1942, p. 39.

ghetto earlier. Those who were capable of work were apparently repairing roads and doing agriculture work with "model provisioning," and in the future workshops would be organized for them.[63] Information as to the real nature of the camp "in the vicinity of Koło" first reached Warsaw. It was brought to the underground Warsaw ghetto archive (called Emmanuel Ringelblum's Archive) by Szlomo Feiner from Izbica Kujawska – an escapee from Chełmno on the Ner who had worked in the camp burying the bodies of the murdered.[64] When in late May 1942 the first transports with belongings of the deported reached the Łódź ghetto, people started asking questions about their fate. The anxiety was identified by reports from people resettled into the ghetto after the liquidation of provincial centers, who spoke of their experiences. Information about mass murders in Chełmno on the Ner was also brought to the ghetto in the end of May 1942, most likely by one of the resettled from Brzeziny. The letter of the Rabbi of Grabów, dated January 19, 1942, was based on Fajner's testimony and contains information about the mass murders in "hell" – as the author of the letter called the camp.[65] Gradually, knowledge as to the purpose of the deportations became increasingly widespread as evidenced by journals, which contain direct references to "gassing" or "exterminating" people deported from the ghetto.[66]

Before the ghetto residents could learn the tragic truth, the information about the purpose of the deportations reached the Eldest of the Jews. It is uncertain when exactly Rumkowski learned about the nature of the center in Chełmno on the Ner, however, there is no reason to believe that residents would know more than he did. As Andrea Löw points out, the tone of Rumkowski's speeches changed at the turn of February and March 1942 – he started emphasizing the need to extend the obligation to work to larger groups of people and at the same time promised that he would intervene on every person's behalf. Most likely, he already had adopted the tactics of sacrificing some to save the others. Undoubtedly, in mid-May 1942, Rumkowski must have known that the transports from the ghetto were not sent to work. After the deportations were resumed in September 1942 and after the brutal roundup of the infirm, children and the elderly, no one could have any doubts that the people deported from the ghetto were sent to their death.[67]

The second wave of deportations lasted without intermission throughout the whole of March until the early April. "March will be remembered in the ghetto annals as the month of deportations. From early morning, without any break, processions of deportees headed to Marysin," the *Chronicle* noted.[68] By April 2nd, 40 trains carried 34,073 people away from the ghetto.

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[63] Ibid., entry dated April 10–14, 1942, p. 95.

[64] Cf. R. Sakowska, *Ludzie z dzielnicy zamkniętej. Z dziejów Żydów w Warszawie w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej, październik 1939 – marzec 1943*, Warszawa 1993, p. 179–180; eadem, *„Szlamek" – uciekinier z ośrodka zagłady w Chełmnie nad Nerem*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1984, no. 131/132, p. 131–152; *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawskiego*, vol. 1: *Listy o Zagładzie*, ed. eadem, Warszawa 1997, p. 3–11, 19, 35–46. Cf. B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *Getto Warszawskie. Przewodnik po nieistniejącym mieście*, Warszawa 2001, p. 627–638.

[65] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 226–227.

[66] I. Hauser, *Cud, że ręka jeszcze pisze...*, ed. J.W. Solecki, Warszawa 1993, p. 30; AYV, O.33/1569, Dziennik Heńka Fogla, p. 147–148; *Dziennik...*, p. 134–135.

[67] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 229–231.

[68] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated March 1942, p. 66–67.

When the deportations were halted on April 2nd, the first reaction was disbelief – people were afraid to be prematurely happy, as they had been during the previous operation. They did not start rejoicing until, on Rumkowski's orders, police officers started informing them that the deportations were halted. The Outsettlement Committee was disbanded and the officials employed there transferred back to their original departments. Only a small group of officials stayed in the offices on Franciszkańska Street, in charge of supervising the conclusion of works.[69]

After the operation was halted, people who avoided deportations started to gradually come out of hiding. Rumkowski ordered that no repressions were used against them, quite the contrary, they received their food rations they were due, as a result coming into possession of relatively large supplies for the ghetto conditions. In addition, the Bank of Purchase was ordered to return their belongings to them, even if they did not have sufficient funds to buy them out.[70]

Gradually, the mood in the ghetto was appeased, and people focused on returning their regular activities, which was to be facilitated by initiatives undertaken by the ghetto administration. On April 3rd, Rumkowski's notice was issued, announcing a spring cleanup of streets and yards. All residents of the ghetto aged 15 to 50 were to be involved. On April 6th, nearly all departments and divisions were closed and people started cleanup works.[71] As the *Chronicle* noted, thanks to this operation, "a significant amount of winter dirt was cleaned."[72]

The German authorities, however, did not abandon their plan to eliminate "unproductive" individuals. At their orders, on April 19th, Rumkowski announced the medical examination of all unemployed residents above 10 years of age. "A new thunder from the sky!" Sierakowiak recorded in his diary.[73] Other residents of the ghetto reacted in a similar manner, as the *Chronicle* noted, "the announcement has had a staggeringly depressing effect on the population of the ghetto which is already steeled by two years of experience and is accustomed to blows of all sorts."[74] In the announcement, the procedure and schedule of the examination was described in detail. All residents above 10 years of age had to report to the medical point organized in the kitchen at 32 Marynarska Street with their identification or their bread card, with the exception of employed people, people who had a certificate of a job assignment from the Personnel Department or the Labor Office, and those resettled from the Third Reich and the Protectorate. Almost immediately, crowds of applicants headed to 11 Lutomierska Street, to the offices of the Labor Office and the Benefits Department, in order to obtain a labor passport. In the long lines that formed in front of the office, horrific incidents occurred. In the first days, the summons for the medical examination were sent to people living in the eastern part of the ghetto, which is why those who lived on the other side applied for cleanup work at the Public

[69] The liquidation committee was responsible for the rumors of a resumption of deportation, which, however, were soon denied – ibid., entry dated April 1–10, 1942, p. 83–84.

[70] Ibid., p. 84.

[71] According to the Chronicle, only the Order Service, the Fire Brigade, the Health Department, the Management Department, the Transport Department, the Funeral Department and Feces Disposal Department were operating that day, and from 3pm – the kitchens – ibid., entry dated April, 1–10 1942, p. 86.

[72] Ibid.

[73] *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, *Fołks Sztyme*, February 19, 1972, no. 7 (4043), p. 12.

[74] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated April 18–20, 1942, p. 106.

Works Department, hoping that it would guarantee them security. The announcement was repeated on four more occasions: on the 21st, 23rd, 27th and 28th of April.[75]

The examination was carried out by a board of German doctors and Gestapo officials. By May 1st, about 11,000 people were examined and marked with a special stamp on their chest.[76] In spite of the numerous appeals announced by Rumkowski, not everyone reported to the medical examination. Therefore, from April 22nd, the Order Service was tasked with carrying out the operation, once again successfully. Roundups carried out at night proved to be an efficient method to bring all those who tried to avoid the examination.[77]

Alongside the medical examination, Rumkowski ordered a review of those employed. Information about the inspection was sent to all departments on April 25th. According to the circular, all those employed were obliged to report to their place of work with their certificates and bread cards, and all units of the community were to prepare employee records and lists of wages as well as documents justifying the employment of specific individuals. Failing to report for inspection was punished with dismissal. Very quickly, Rumkowski's order was interpreted as an attempt to verify people who should report to the medical committee. Rumkowski himself, during a meeting in Kitchen No. 2 at 41 Zgierska Street, explained the reason for the inspection. As it had been suspected, the main motivation was an attempt to establish the specific number of people who should report to the medical board. In addition, the inspection was meant to verify the number of the employed, as many people had various certificates and documents issued in various periods. Rumkowski wanted to legalize all those who indeed worked in the ghetto and established whether the employed were capable of performing the tasks they had been given.[78]

In order to carry out the operation, the Main Committee was appointed, whose office was located in the Personnel Department at 4 Kościelny Square. It was composed of 32 inspection committees, with two officials in each who, equipped with seals and forms, visited labor departments and divisions. The management of each inspected post had to assign several employees to help the committee with the personal records. Officers of the Order Service were also assigned in order to ensure that the inspection was efficient. The majority of work were carried out on April 26th, and gradually subsequent employee records were verified, which alleviated the mood. "Receiving the coveted stamp was a balm for the heated nerves" the *Chronicle* noted that day.[79]

Deportations of Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate

Before the medical board finished the work, news came to the ghetto about the deportations of subsequent groups of the population. This time, it was the unemployed Western European Jews that were selected to leave the close district. The residents were informed about this on April 29th – Announcement No. 380 was put on the ghetto walls, informing residents that beginning May 4th, deportation would start of the Jews from the Reich and

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[75] Ibid., p. 107; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 354–355; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 217.

[76] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated April 21–24, 1942, p. 109, 112; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 355. According to the Chronicle, there were sixteen letters – eight for men and another eight for women.

[77] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated April 21–24, 1942, p. 111–113.

[78] Ibid., entry dated April 25–26, 1942, p. 115–116.

[79] Ibid., p. 117.

the Protectorate.[80] Until then, the group had been relatively safe, as Rumkowski did not include them in the deportations at the beginning of the year. Most likely he could not decide about their fate on his own, and the German authorities did not give him a clear signal as to the fate of the deportees. The situation changed on April 17th after Heinrich Himmler and Wilhelm Koppe visited the eastern territory of the Warthegau, including the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner. It was on that day at the latest that Himmler ordered the extermination of Western European Jews unable to work.[81]

According to the aforementioned announcement, the only persons exempt from the deportations were the employed, Knights of the Iron Cross of the first and second class, and veterans of the First World War decorated for wounds.[82] Just like during the previous deportations, the resettled were allowed to take 12.5 kg of luggage and to sell their belongings to the Purchase Headquarters. All applications and complaints, including certificates confirming the aforementioned medals, were to be submitted to the office of the Department for the Resettled at 8 Rybna Street.[83] The following day, another announcement was issued bearing the same number, however, without the category of persons exempt from deportations.[84]

The announcement of the deportations of Western European Jews provoked an outbreak of panic among that group of the ghetto residents. Many of them could not believe that, after a period of peace and some sort of "untouchability," it was their turn to leave. As the *Chronicle* reported, "the dominating concept was that in order to save the locals from deportations they were hidden in divisions and offices, leaving their Western Jews exposed."[85]

Almost immediately after Announcement No. 380 was issued, long lines formed in front of the office on Rybna Street with residents seeking a chance to be exempt from the deportations. The Department in fact took on the role of the Outsettlement Committee – it was in charge of sending the summons, blocking food vouchers of people who failed to report, and accepting complaints and appeals. However, the committee remained an appeals instance, retaining the right to grant exemption from deportation. In May, the Department for the Resettled sent about 15,000 summons, called "wedding cards" in the ghetto. About 4.5 thousand appeals were accepted.[86]

According to the schedule, the first transport was to leave the ghetto on May 4th according to the order in which they arrived. Just like during the previous operations, deportees had to report to the Central Prison, from where they were later sent to the collection points. After one or two days of waiting, they were taken to Radegast Station,

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[80] AYIVO, RG-241/491, Announcement no. 380 dated April 29, 1942, p. 1.

[81] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 218. Trunk hypothesized that Rumkowski persuaded the German authorities to consent to the extermination of Western European Jews, who, like criminals and money-earners earlier, were considered intruders. Rubin disagrees with this assertion – I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 356–358.

[82] More about this group: E. Wiatr, *Kawalerowie Krzyża Żelaznego w getcie łódzkim*, *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały*, 2012, no. 8, p. 348–361.

[83] AYIVO, RG-241/491, Announcement no. 380 dated April 29, 1942, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated April 29– 30, 1942, p. 121–122.

[84] Ibid., p. 125.

[85] Ibid., p. 125–126.

[86] Ibid., entry dated May 1–3, 1942, p. 130–131; ibid., entry dated May 6, 1942, p. 139–140; ibid., entry dated May 17, 1942, p. 196–197.

from where each morning trains left in the direction of Chełmno on the Ner. Initially, all the luggage was taken away from them and then brought to the office of the Department for the Resettled, which, however, provoked anxiety among the resettled. This is why on May 9th the confiscation of personal belongings was discontinued. The first days of deportation were calm, and those who were summoned did not resist and reported to the collection points. Over the subsequent days, their anxiety was grew so much that more and more people decided to hide. Once again, the Order Service was employed, dragging people out of their beds during night raids and sending them directly to the collection points.[87] On May 15th, the last transport left Radegast Station.[88] During the 11 days of the operation, 10,914 people were sent to the Chełmno on the Ner, including only 416 local Jews.[89] At their own request, on May 9th, a group of about 260 Christians left in a separate transport.[90] In total, during the five months of the deportations, nearly 55,000 people were sent from the ghetto and murdered in Chełmno on the Ner.

Deportations from Neighboring Towns

The ghetto was relieved to learn that the deportations were discontinued. This did not mean, however, that the closed district was peaceful. Only several days after the last train carrying the Western European Jews left from Radegast Station, Jews deported from Pabianice arrived in the ghetto. The information about the planned resettlement appeared on May 11th – tailoring divisions received orders from the Günter Schwartz K.G. company, which had been using Pabianice workshops before.[91] The events of subsequent days confirmed the predictions. On May 17th in the morning, the first trams carrying the resettled from Pabianice arrived at Bałucki Marketsquare. In total, about 2,370 people[92] arrived in about 100 wagons, and on the next day – a further 920 people[93]. The resettled were provided accommodation by the officials of the Housing Department at 15 Rybna Street, 7 Widok Street, 22 Masarska Street and 25 Limanowskiego Street – in the former collectives vacated during the recent deportations operation as well as in private housing left by the German Jews. At the same time Jews resettled from Brzeziny arrived in the ghetto – on May 19th, the first trains carrying the residents of Brzeziny and Stryków arrived at Radegast Station, and in the subsequent days also from Ozorków. In total 8,179 people from Pabianice, Brzeziny and Ozorków arrived in the ghetto.[94] Along with the liquidation of provincial ghettos, successive groups of deportees arrived in the Łódź ghetto. In July, about 500 Jews from Kalisz and Koźminek came, along with over 100 people from Turek, Dobra and Uniejów,[95] and August saw the arrival of the last transport

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87 O. Singer, *Przemierzając...*, p. 28; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 221–223.
88 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated May 17, 1942, p. 196.
89 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 358, table 13.
90 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated May 9–11, 1942, p. 159.
91 Ibid., entry dated May 11, 1942, p. 161.
92 Ibid., entry dated May 17, 1942, p. 199.
93 Ibid., entry dated May 18, 1942, p. 203.
94 Ibid., entry dated 19 May 1942, p. 212; ibid., entry dated May 20, 1942, p. 216; ibid., entry dated May 24–25, 1942, p. 234–235.
95 Ibid., entry dated July 9, 1942, p. 370–372; ibid., entry dated July 11, 1942, p. 376; ibid., entry dated July 28, 1942, p. 413; ibid., entry dated July 31, 1942, p. 421–422.

of residents of Pabianice, along with a group of Jews from Bełchatów, Ozorków, Zelów, Wieluń, Stryków, Sieradz, Łask and ZduńskaWola.[96]

Resettling new groups of people into the ghetto once again forced the administration to organize a special apparatus and procedures. Based on the experience from the autumn of 1941, an efficient system was launched: as the *Chronicle* recorded in August, "An organization has already been created which is so efficient that the newcomers are being absorbed without problems, even imperceptibly, being provided with the most essential items – apartments, furniture, bedding, et cetera et cetera. After a few days, they become regular ghetto residents."[97]

Upon their arrival in the ghetto, the Order Service took over the care of the resettled, taking them to the collection points at the Central Prison. There, they were all sent to the bathhouse. Then, the Department for the Resettled took over, and, in collaboration with the Housing Department, assigned them accommodation. At the same time, the Department for the Resettled carried out an exchange of temporary certificates for bread and food cards issued by the Labor Office, based on which the resettled were entitled to meals in their designated kitchens at 28 Rybna Street and 22 Masarska Street. Moreover, the Department distributed mattresses and pillows – as it has been mentioned before, the majority of the resettled came to the ghetto without any luggage. At the same time, on Rumkowski's orders, the Clothing Department distributed clothes and underwear among the resettled.[98] At the Department, their personal information was carefully recorded by the staff of the Division of Records, which made it easier to allocate housing for them. Moreover, there was a branch of the Coupons Department on Rybna Street.[99] The Department collaborated with the Pabianice Residents' Committee headed by Goldblum, former Superior Eldest of the Jews from that town, which acted as an advisory body on matters concerning the Jews from Pabianice. Its members were appointed to posts in the ghetto administration.[100] All matters relating to persons displaced to the ghetto from different towns of Wartheland dealt with handled by the Committee for Newly Displaced, operating at the Department for the Resettled. It was composed of: Commander of the Order Service Leon Rozenblat; Head of the Special Affairs Department Boruch Praszkier; Head of the Housing Department Wolfowicz; Head of the Transport Department Marian Kleinman; and ad hoc commissioners of the Order Service.[101]

With the development of subsequent work divisions, subsequent experts among the resettled found employment. The Labor Office conducted a registration campaign which resulted in a referral to work in various divisions for groups of deportees – including tailoring plant, which about employed 250 tailors from Pabianice. Several days after their arrival, about 165 residents of Pabianice were sent to the labor camp in Dąbrówka near

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[96] Ibid., entry dated August 11, 1942, p. 443–444; ibid., entry dated August 12, 1942, p. 446; ibid., entry dated August 27, 1942, p. 466. More on the liquidation of provincial ghettos, cf. D. Dąbrowska, *Zagłada...*, p. 122–184.

[97] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated August 19, 1942, p. 455–456.

[98] Ibid., entry dated May 22, 1942, p. 222–223.

[99] Ibid., entry dated May 27, 1942, p. 244–245; ibid., entry dated May 30–31, 1942, p. 255; ibid., entry dated August 19, 1942, p. 455–456; ibid., entry dated August 28, 1942, p. 467.

[100] Ibid., entry dated May 23, 1942, p. 226.

[101] Ibid., entry dated May 17, 1942, p. 200.

Pabianice,[102] where belongings of the victims murdered in Chełmno were sorted. The Labor Office paid their wages to the families and loved ones who in the Łódź ghetto.[103]

Development of Production during the Deportations

In parallel with deportations, Rumkowski sought to increase production capacity of labor divisions operating in the ghetto. He consistently pursued his policy of employment as many residents as possible, and its essence was best summarized in his New Year speech with the motto, "Work, work and work again," repeated by the Eldest like a mantra.[104] Deportations ordered by the German authorities reaffirmed his conviction that only an increase in employment and making the work of the Jewish laborers indispensable for German occupiers could protect the ghetto residents from deportation into the unknown – "only work can save us from the worst."[105]

Increasing the number of employed workers was not always a response to a greater demand and production. One of the ideas that Rumkowski realized during the deportations was the reorganization of work by shortening the working day and at the same time introducing a three-shift system. At the beginning of March 1942, he established and new unit – the Qualification Committee – in charge of assigning work based on special forms filled in by the unemployed.[106] The Committee operated until the end of May 1942. At the same time, in order to motivate people who were unemployed to report for work, in early May 1942, Rumkowski ordered to withhold their family benefits – relief grants in the amount of 15Mk paid to the unemployed members of the family of the working person. At the same time, special benefits were discontinued, assigned in exceptional situations based on the decision of the Eldest of the Jews.[107]

The situation in the ghetto affected the production capacity. One of the most serious consequences of deportations is was the expulsion of qualified workers, the lack of whom was very keenly felt. In March, after the wave of deportations, the Department of Labor declared that the Saddle-Making Department did not have enough instructors, as they had reported for the deportations voluntarily, not wanting to be separated from their loved ones.[108] On the other hand, constantly reduced food rations affected the capacity of workers employed in divisions. "This lack of powerful work due to the enormous physical exhaustion of people can be felt that every step, in every field. The economy of every household suffers, as does the general economy of the ghetto, the performance suffers from it, the production capacity of divisions, the efficiency of the departments..." the *Chronicle* recorded in May 1942.[109] The same month, an interesting analysis of that phenomenon from the point of view of their work and division had was published:

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[102] Cf. Ibid., entry dated May 22–23, 1942, p. 225.
[103] Ibid., entry dated July 2, 1942, p. 352.
[104] Ibid., entry dated January 3, 1942, p. 14.
[105] Ibid., entry dated January 17, 1942, p. 36.
[106] Ibid., entry dated March 2, 1942, p. 74. The Commission's activities were based to a certain extent (such as concerning surveys) on well-proven models from the Restructuring Commission.
[107] Ibid., entry dated May 4, 1942, p. 136; ibid., entry dated May 9–11, 1942, p. 160.
[108] Ibid., entry dated March 20, 1942, p. 78.
[109] Ibid., entry dated May 11, 1942, p. 169.

The decline in labor productivity is too serious an issue for the security, and even for the existence of the ghetto at all, to simply overlook it. For that reason, it would be interesting to listen to the interested parties. Everyone agrees us to one thing, while each of them provides secondary reasons, very characteristic for the current situation.

Worker: The reason for the decline in production is insufficient food. You cannot require from the worker, who barely, who barely drags his swollen legs, to be as efficient who is as a man healthy, strong and rested. There is no power in the world that could force him to do it, because he knows that excessive effort is deadly in the present circumstances, when there is nothing to replenish the energy spent. Just check the mortality rate among the workers. Accidents are not uncommon, we often learn of a colleague who yesterday was working alongside us, that he is dead today. Perhaps replacing the manual drive with mechanical, initiated in recent days wherever possible, would be a proper solution to this problem by minimizing the effort of the workers. Next, let us not forget about another very crucial factor. The current system of work in many division has been based on group work. Each brigade composed of a number of expert specializing in individual Subsequent stages of production received a section of goods to make, for which they were paid in total, to be shared between individual partners, according to a prearranged system. Recently, many people have been employed who are not so much qualified as recommended. Including one such person in a group was enough to immediately reduce the production capacity to a minimum, not only because that person could not keep up with others, thus becoming a link hampering the work of the entire group, but also because other members adapted for that weaker pace, not wanting to toil for others and in their stead.

Head: it is a fact that that malnutrition affects the production, causing a significant decrease in capacity. In some departments, it reaches up to 25 percent. But on the other hand, that decrease is [affected by] the lack of interest in earnings, because, aside from rations, the money cannot buy virtually anything.[110] Therefore, people work only as much as they need to earn enough to buy their rations for themselves and for their families. Another demoralizing factor is the presence of a large number of newly employed, who had no idea about the craft, for do not make anything and do not earn anything, only going to the factory to collect soup and sausage. It is the latter that would make the best earnings, because yesterday it cost 32 marks. Given such prices, income from work is of secondary importance, as it is enough to sell two portions of sausage to have as much as a qualified craftsman earns for a week of hard work.[111]

[110] At that time prices in the ghetto were exorbitant, bread on the private market cost about 600 marks, margarine – 1000 marks, 5 dg sausages – 29 marks, and soup – 30 marks. Therefore, only such rations were bought whose prices were set by the Community and were kept low – in May the price of a single ration was 4.1 Mk. The price rise was due to the mass sale of belongings of people deported from the ghetto. Those who sold such items received payment in the ghetto marks, which had no value outside the ghetto, so they bought food for them at virtually any price.

[111] Ibid., entry dated May 13–14, 1942, p. 180–181.

The reduction of the production capacity of the ghetto divisions had another, much more serious consequence – specifically, a decrease in the number of orders which, in turn, was a source of great concern for the German Board of the Ghetto.[112]

Gradually, however, new institutions opened and the existing ones were expanded. By April 1942, subsequent divisions were launched:

Straw Shoe (7 Widok Street), Furrier (6 Smugowa Street), Tricotage (41 Brzezińska Street) and Shoemaking (l Bałucki Marketsquare).[113] In May, the Central Laundry was opened (77 Drewnowska Street), which received enormous orders – for example washing about 300 wagons of dirty linens. In the same month, another Straw Shoe Division opened in the area of the former "Gypsy camp"[114] and the hat factory (9/15 Zgierska Street) received large orders, for example the production of powder puffs, brooches made of leather scraps, refractory belts and curtains.[115]

Along with the expansion of the production plants, a special unit was established at the behest of Rumkowski. It had broad competences, such as preparing new branches of production buildings for the expanding labor divisions. On June 1, 1942, the Office for Special Affairs was established and Rumkowski's close associate, Boruch Praszkier, was appointed as its head. The first significant task of the office was to prepare the area of the liquidated "Gypsy camp" on Brzezińska Street for the Straw Shoe Division. Other responsibilities of the bureau included cleaning and sorting clothes from the liquidated provincial ghettos. Over time, the office expanded to significant size, and in July 1942, it had 1,500 employees. It had three depots (8 Żydowska Street, 32 Niska Street, 93 Franciszkańska Street), tailoring workshop (7 Widok Street), where clothes that were partially distributed to the resettled from the towns of the Warthegau were repaired, and the laundry (49 Marysińska Street).[116] The office was also in charge of the Construction Department II, established on July 12th with offices at 18 Łagiewnicka Street. The administrative head of the Department was Praszkier, and the technical head − N. Mąk. The main task of the new unit was performing construction works "for special, sudden purposes." The Department combined renovation companies reporting to the board of Marysin. It also took over renovating works of premises located in the eastern section of the ghetto from the Construction Department.[117] The Construction Department II only operated until mid-August 1942. It was liquidated and its competences were taken over by the construction Department, which also opened its branch in Marysin.[118]

In early June 1942, the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions sent new orders for the Wehrmacht to tailoring divisions, first and foremost for winter wear, and as a result nearly all tailoring divisions switch to production for the German army. The Upholstery Division, which expanded its production, occupied new premises (9 and 11 Urzędnicza Street)as did the Carpentry Division No. 2 (39 and 47 Limanowskiego Street).[119] The Old Materials

[112] Ibid., entry dated May 8, 1942, p. 155.
[113] Ibid., entry dated April 18–20, 1942, p. 105.
[114] Ibid., entry dated May 16, 1942, p. 193; ibid., entry dated May 20, 1942, p. 215–216.
[115] A million puffs and 10,000 brooches made of leather scraps were ordered in the factory – ibid., entry dated May 20, 1942, p. 218–219.
[116] Ibid., entry dated July 3, 1942, p. 357–358; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 360–361; I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 38.
[117] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated July 12, 1942, p. 377; ibid., entry dated July 22, 1942, p. 398.
[118] Ibid., entry dated August 19, 1942, p. 455.
[119] Ibid., entry dated June 1, 1942, p. 261–262; ibid., entry dated June 26, 1942, p. 336.

From left in first row: Mojżesz Karo, Boruch Praszkier
and Mordechaj Chaim Rumkowski
(State Archive in Łódź)

Department was considerably expanded (73 Brzezińska Street), with 12 sorting points throughout the ghetto. Raw materials segregated in the sorting points were later sent to other divisions for further use; for example, the manufacture of rag slippers, the production of which was launched at the Cork Department.[120] The Division of Woodworking received a significant number of orders. As a result, the area of the old Jewish cemetery on Wesoła Street adjacent to the division had to be adapted for warehouses. On the order of the board of the ghetto, by the end of June, the entire area had to be adapted for this new function and gravestones were to be used to pave the walkways. The rabbinate protested, albeit in vain, especially since the needs were so significant that plans were made to use also the nearby buildings of the psychiatric hospital on Wesoła Street along with the adjacent area.[121] Also expanded was one of the largest production plants– the Shoemaking Division, headed by Berek Izbicki and Abram Gutrajman. Aside from the main branch located in Marysin (Mostowskiego Street), in the end of June, two more were established – one

[120] Ibid., entry dated June 1, 1942, p. 262.

[121] Ibid., entry dated June 26, 1942, p. 335. The Chronicle reported that, at the command of the Rabbinate, an elaborate plan of grave placement was commenced, so that in the future it would be possible to reconstruct the location of the graves. The plan has not survived.

manufacturing army footwear (82 Brzezińska Street) and one − rag slippers (13 Otylii Street).[122] In early July, the Department of Weak Current was opened, which produced telephones and exchanges. Also organized was the mica mill. The office of the Department was located at 12 Smugowa Street in the buildings that had housed the Metalworks Division No. 2. The head of the new department was Marian Dawidowicz, former head of the ghetto streetcars.[123]

One of the elements that contributed to increasing the production capacity was the extension of the streetcar transportation operating in the ghetto. In late May 1942, the authorities considered extending the tramline in the direction of Marysin, where a number of production plans operated. Another important issue was a financial aspect, as according to the estimates, passenger traffic could bring about 5,000Mk per day. On May 22nd, the electric trams were combined with the Transport Department with Marian Klajman as the administrative head and Eng. Marian Dawidowicz as the technical head in charge of trams. The Transport Department, which employed about 2,000 people, became henceforth the sole administrator of transportation in the ghetto. According to the developed procedure, all needs for hand, horse or tram transport would be submitted, along with the size of the load, to the Transport Department, which decided which specific means of transport to assign.[124] Beginning June 2nd, the Department was also responsible for passenger transport, as on that day passenger tram communication was launched between Bałucki Marketsquare and Marysin. It was used first and foremost by workers employed at Radegast Station, employees of the timber depots in Marysin, the division of wood wool, the Boot-Making Division at 100 Marysińska Street, and the cemetery service.[125]

According to the command of the German authorities, the vacated collectives were adapted for production purposes. All works were carried out by the Construction Department, which adapted the former building of the Prague collective at 15 Franciszkańska Street for the Underwear Division (the so-called Glazer's division) and the building of the orphanage at 75 Franciszkańska Street for a branch of the Tricotage Division.

According to the statistics of the Jewish administration, in early June 1942, out of 100,000 residents of the ghetto, about 70,000 people were employed in divisions and values offices. "Excluding children and old men, the human material has been completely exhausted," the *Chronicle* noted when commenting on the visit of the *Reichsstatthalter* of Warthegau Arthur Greiser on June 4, 1942.[126] The Chronicler writing that sentence did not expect that the German authorities would soon demand the removal of the groups

[122] Ibid., entry dated June 29, 1942, p. 342.

[123] Ibid., entry dated July 1, 1942, p. 351; ibid., entry dated August 3, 1942, p. 430; ibid., entry dated August 4, 1942, p. 433.

[124] Ibid., entry dated May 24, 1942, p. 231; ibid., entry dated May 24–25, 1942, p. 233.

[125] Ibid., entry dated June 5, 1942, p. 282–283.

[126] Ibid., entry dated June 4, 1942, p. 278–280. The ghetto was then visited by Minister Schwartz and Mayor Verner Ventzki. Accompanied by Rumkowski, Rozenblat and Jakubowicz, the German commission visited the saddle-making division on Łagiewnicka Street, carpentry workshop at 12 Drukarska Street and the tailoring division at 29 Franciszkańska Street. Dawid Sierakowiak also commented on the visit in his diary, "Fortunately the 'Greiser' cloud has passed. Greiser visited the ghetto, toured many workshops, and was reportedly very happy with our *Arbeitsgebiet* [German; work district]. The visit was over by the afternoon, and after it, bread was issued. Rumkowski was running around the ghetto in a very merry mood, and perhaps because of that a new ration was issued in the evening" – D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 181.

he listed from the ghetto as an "unproductive element." The validity of concerns about the fate of the elderly and children, however, is confirmed by the intensification of the operations of the Regrouping Commission at the beginning of June 1942.

Regrouping (*Przewarstwowienie*)

Closing schools related to the resettlement of Jews from the Third Reich and the Protectorate to the ghetto opened a new field of activity for the Occupational Regrouping Commission (*Komisja Przewarstwowień*). The idea to better prepare as large a group of young people as possible for work first appeared in early 1941. In one of the issues of the "Geto-Tzaytung," Rumkowski announced, "I have decided to expand the network of employment on nonprofessionals, first of all for young people who must become productive at any cost."[127] In practice, the idea was to be implemented by the restructuring commission, operating at the School Department beginning March 1, 1941, with its headquarters at 27 Franciszkańska Street. The commission developed special surveys, based on which young people were assigned to relevant work details.[128] The process of engaging the youth in work gradually brought more and better results.[129]

When schools were closed after the resettlement of Jews from the Third Reich and the Protectorate to the ghetto, the commission had to identify the operations and extend the survey to a larger group. At the same time, the commission as well as the school Department started receiving applications requesting changes of current employment. The arguments included bad financial situation, a desire to earn higher wages, or poor health preventing the applicant from doing hard labor.[130] In Rumkowski's speeches, the employment of juveniles, aside from the general development of production, became one of the key principles of his policy.[131]

The process of restructuring gained momentum in 1942. At a meeting with officials and heads of labor divisions, the Eldest of the Jews emphasized that vocational training of the youth was one of the most important elements of increasing the productivity of the ghetto. However, in contrast with Rumkowski's declaration, the number of juvenile employees was not that high – up until that point, only about 3,000 juvenile workers were employed in labor divisions, which accounted for 12% of the overall workforce.[132] Gradually, subsequent divisions employed more young people, who were quickly taught whatever they needed to carry out basic work. Rumkowski also declared that he wanted to reopen the dormitories in Marysin where the youngest could learn how to work in agriculture. It was planned that the operation would cover over 8,000 of the youngest residents of the ghetto and about 200 teachers who would be employed there.[133]

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[127] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 324.
[128] APŁ, PSŻ 1728, Ankieta Komisji Przewarstwowień, p. 127–128.
[129] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated August 30, 1941, p. 279.
[130] APŁ, PSŻ 1727, Podanie do Komisji Przewarstwowień, p. 25; ibid., PSŻ 1728, Podanie do Komisji Przewarstwowień, p. 27, 29, 31, 295, 473.
[131] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 3, 1942, p. 14.
[132] Ibid., entry dated February 1942, p. 45–46.
[133] Ibid., entry dated April 16, 1942, p. 100–101; ibid., entry dated April 17, 1942, p. 103–104.

Illustration with the results of Regrouping action on June 1943
(State Archive in Łódź)

In the face of the deportations from the ghetto, the process of restructuring gained an additional dimension. Rumkowski's slogan that "the worker's ID is a safety passport" applied also to the youngest. In June 1942, the Commission markedly identified its operations.[134] It could be a result of the fact that Rumkowski knew by then that the youngest residents of the ghetto could also be subject to deportations. The first information that subsequent resettlement would target children appeared in late May 1942. It was mentioned by the head of the Special Unit of the Order Service, Dawid Gertler, who was visiting the Warsaw ghetto at the time.[135]

The *Chronicle* also noted such concerns: "In recent days, a lot has been said about the deportations of the elderly, children up to 10 years of age and people stamped by the medical committee," said the entry dated May 22nd.[136]

[134] Ibid., entry dated June 27, 1942, p. 337.
[135] Hersz Wasser, secretary of the underground ghetto archive, wrote in his diary on May 26th that Gertler spoke of the deportation of all children under the age of 10 and of the elderly over 65 years of age. – AŻIH, Ring I/490, Dziennik Hersza Wassera, May 26, 1942, unpaginated.
[136] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated May 22, 1942, p. 222.

The Regrouping Commission was working in full swing – out of more than 11,000 juveniles working in divisions, more than 1,600 were employed in the last two weeks of June. By the end of June, all "stamped" children were also employed – that is, those who had been examined by the medical committee. On that occasion, rumors started circulating in the ghetto that Rumkowski was hiring younger children from the age of eight, but the administration of the ghetto categorically denied such rumors.[137] In the subsequent month, a further 1,800 young people found employment in divisions, which was noted as a record. Thus, by the end of July, the Restructuring Commission hired a total of 12,674 people. Most worked in the Metalworks Department (I and II) – 1,597; Tailoring Department – 1,596; and Leather and Saddle Making Department – 1,407.[138]

Allgemeine Gehsperre (Wielka Szpera)

The period of relative peace lasting a little over three months was suddenly interrupted on September 1, 1942. On that day, all hospitals patients were evacuated. Rumors about the evacuation of hospitals and turning the buildings into labor divisions had first appeared in mid-July 1942.[139] Also, in August, ghetto residents heard that the authorities were planning to liquidate the Health Care Department and open production plants in hospital buildings.[140] However, it was believed that this was only a rumor, one of many circulating in the ghetto. The mobilization of an Order Service unit told to report to Bałucki Marketsquare on September 1st did not raise any concerns either, because police officers had been used for assistance before; for example, during the liquidation of the ghetto in Pabianice.[141]

Under the decision of the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA) at the end of August 1942, all patients in hospitals under 10 and over 65 years of age and others who were unemployed would be deported from the ghetto to the extermination center in Chełmno. Rumkowski was most likely not informed about the planned operation.[142] First, the authorities decided to vacate hospitals in the ghetto. On September 1st at dawn, German troops under the command of Gestapo Commissioner Gunter Fuchs entered the ghetto and headed to the hospitals. The streets surrounding these institutions were guarded by officers of the Order Service and the Special Unit, who were ordered to keep everyone out of the vicinity of the evacuation area. German police dragged the sick out of their beds and rushed them to trucks and wagons, which carried them to Radegast Station. Gradually, subsequent hospitals were emptied, and all those who resisted were killed on site. Only a handful of patients survived. All those in the central prison as well as in the preventorium in Marysin were evacuated as well. Some patients fled the hospitals, and

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[137] Ibid., entry dated June 30, 1942, p. 346; ibid., entry dated July 1, 1942, p. 351. The *Chronicle* also cites the fact that about a hundred of the youngest gave false names when examined by the medical commission. False information was given for fear of deportation – ibid., entry dated July 2, 1942, p. 354.

[138] Ibid., entry dated July 21, 1942, p. 391; I. Trunk, *Łódź...*, p. 171.

[139] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated July 20, 1942, p. 388–389.

[140] Ibid., entry dated August 11, 1942, p. 443–444. In the eyes of some, this rumor was further substantiated by the transfer of Józef Rumkowski, head of administration of the Health Department, to the Presidial Council founded in mid-August a new institution of control replacing the Supreme Control Chamber.

[141] J. Poznański, *Dziennik z łódzkiego getta*, Warszawa 2002, p. 15.

[142] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 231.

Hospital No. 1 at Łagiewnicka St.
(State Archive in Łódź)

therefore, a house search was carried out on the following day, September 2nd.[143] Like in previous deportations, the Order Service was involved in this operation, provoking a wave of criticism. Dawid Sierakowiak noted in his diary, "the Jewish police committed crimes that were probably had no precedent in the ghetto."[144]

The evacuation of patient left a horrific impression. "People are terribly agitated, and macabre mood prevails, and it is still difficult to arrive at any definite sense of the situation. The Jewish authorities were shocked by this new ruling and are completely unable to express any opinion on the subject," the *Chronicle* recorded.[145] However, removing the sick from the hospitals was only a prelude to the events that took place in the following days. On September 3rd in the evening, Rumkowski was summoned by the German authorities (Commissioner Gunter Fuchs and advisor Weygandt) who ordered the deportations of all the unemployed from the ghetto, including children under 10 and the elderly over 65 years of age – a total of 24,000 people.[146] The news of the new deportations immediately spread all over the ghetto. The following day, crowds stormed the Labor Office in order to obtain a certificate of employment. They also rushed to the Registration Office, where

[143] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1, 1942, p. 476–477.
[144] D. Sierakowiak, *Diary...*, p. 142.
[145] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1, 1942, p. 481.
[146] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 368.

all residents applied for new documents that would prove that their children were older and the elderly members of their families younger.[147]

In the afternoon of September 4th, the Eldest of the Jews convened a meeting of all ghetto inhabitants in order to inform them about the decision of the German authorities. At the firemen's square on Lutomierska Street, about 1,500 people gathered, who then listened to Rumkowski's speech. However, before the Eldest of the Jews spoke, Dawid Warszawski, head of the tailoring headquarters, addressed the crowd, conveying the information about the ruling ordering the deportations of 20,000 unemployed from the ghetto – mainly children and the elderly. Warszawski informed those present that after a meeting of the highest-ranking officials of the community, it was decided that the demand would be fulfilled. Justifying the decision, he cited the example of the operation in the Warsaw ghetto, arguing that if it had been carried out by the Community it would not have been so cruel. After Warszawski, the Head of the Court Stanisław Jakobson spoke[148], and then Rumkowski addressed the crowd.

> A grievous blow has struck the ghetto. They are asking us to give up the best we possess − the children and the elderly. I was unworthy of having a child of my own, so I gave the best years of my life to children. I've lived and breathed with children, I never imagined I would be forced to deliver this sacrifice to the altar with my own hands. In my old age, I must stretch out my hands and beg: Brothers and sisters! Hand them over to me! Fathers and mothers: Give me your children!

Later in his speech, Rumkowski justified why the Jewish administration would be responsible for the operation, just like during previous expulsions:

> Yesterday afternoon, they gave me the order to send more than 20,000 Jews out of the ghetto, and if not – "We will do it!" So the question became, "Should we take it upon ourselves, do it ourselves, or leave it to others to do?" Well, we – that is, my closest associates and I – thought first not about "How many will perish?" but "How many is it possible to save?" And we reached the conclusion that, however hard it would be for us, we should take the implementation of this order into our own hands.[149]

The speech had an electrifying effect on the ghetto inhabitants. People in the square started crying and screaming loudly. Any people rushed to their homes where the loved ones were. They did not believe in what they had heard from Rumkowski.[150]

The following day, Announcement No. 391 appeared on the walls of the ghetto, in which Rumkowski informed the Community that on that day beginning at 5pm, all movement in the ghetto was forbidden (*Allgemeine Gehsperre*). Only bearers of special passes

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147 A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 233–234; O. Singer, *Przemierzając...*, p. 73.

148 A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 234.

149 http://www.centrumdialogu.com/litzmannstadt-ghetto/913-przemowienia-chaima-m-rumkowskiego-ogaszajce-wielk-szpere (access on March 3, 2014); the speech is cited in many works on the Łódź ghetto, cf. I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 368–370; J. Zelkowicz, *In Those Terrible Days: Notes from the Lodz Ghetto,* Jerusalem 2003, p. 281–283.

150 O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu...*, p. 148; I. Hauser, *Cud...*, p. 47.

Bekanntmachung Nr. 391.

Betr.:

Allgemeine Gehsperre im Getto.

Ab Sonnabend,

den 5. September 1942 um 17 Uhr,

ist im Getto bis auf Widerruf eine

ALLGEMEINE GEHSPERRE.

Ausgenommen hiervon sind:

Feuerwehrleute, die Transportabteilung, Fäkalien- und Müllarbeiter, Warenannahme am Baluter Ring und Radegast, Aerzte und Apothekerpersonal.

Die Passierscheine müssen beim Ordnungsdienstvorstand, Hamburgerstraße 1, beantragt werden.

Alle Hauswächter sind verpflichtet darauf zu achten

daß keine fremden Personen in die für sie zuständigen Häuser gelangen, sondern sich nur die Einwohner des Hauses dortselbst aufhalten.

Diejenigen, die ohne Passierscheine auf der Straße angetroffen werden, werden evakuiert.

Die Hausverwalter

müssen in ihrem Häuserblock mit den Hausbüchern zur Verfügung stehen.

Jeder Hauseinwohner hat seine Arbeitskarte bei sich zu halten.

CH. RUMKOWSKI

der Aelteste der Juden in Litzmannstadt.

Announcement no. 391 from September 5, 1942
(State Archive in Łódź)

issued by the Order Service, firemen, employees of the Transport Department, fecalists and garbage collectors, employees of warehouses in Bałucki Marketsquare and Radegast Station, doctors and pharmacy staff were exempt from the ban. Those caught in town without a pass would be evacuated from the ghetto.[151]

On September 5th, in the premises of the Trades and Control Office at 4 Kościelny Square, the Resettlement Commission began operations. It was composed of Leon Rozenblat, Stanisław Jakobson, Henryk Neftalin, Zygmunt Blemer from the Investigation Bureau and Lewi Grynberg from the Order Service. In the same building one floor below, in the premises of the Department of Statistics, Henryk Neftalin supervised the preparatory work that involved the viewing of 19 census books, house after house, and compiling lists of families on separate sheets indicating the exact age. Several dozen people were assigned to that task, working in 12-hour, and later 8-hour shifts. In order to prevent the falsification of data, the Investigation Office sealed population records stored at the Registration Office. Extracts from the census books were sent to the second floor at the Resettlement Commission, and from there to the Order Service stations to be carried out in order to bring the persons concerned to assembly points organized in the former hospitals on Drewnowska Street and Łagiewnicka Street, which had beed evacuated several days before.[152]

Almost immediately, the office of the Resettlement Commission was besieged by crowds of applicants who wanted to make adjustments in the population census. These included, among others, parents who until that point had been lowering the age of their children in order to receive an allocation of milk. "What is the right thing today, tomorrow may turn out to be wrong, and what today means salvation, tomorrow is inevitable doom. [...] If yesterday it was important to get milk, today it is life that is at stake," Oskar Singer noted.[153] In the offices of the Register of Deaths, where the applicants were received, Dantean scenes played out. Prosecutor Roma Byteńska, Head of the Register of Deaths Skurecka, and Weiland were in charge of handling the situation.[154]

Police officers from the Order Service and members of the Special Department began to execute their orders, and consulting the lists, they dragged the designated persons from their houses. The officers were accompanied by committees of doctors and nurses, who carried out the selection of the elderly, children and the sick.[155] The actions of the Jewish administration was met with enormous resistance, especially since children of police officers and officials had been separated in a safe place in the hospital building on Łagiewnicka Street, opposite the assembly point, where they could peacefully wait out the entire action.[156] Particular anger was directed toward the policemen. Describing their participation in the action, Józef Zelkowicz said that they decided to "gain experience" starting from the home for the elderly. One of the officers told him that "the table has been

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[151] AYIVO, RG-241/504, Announcement no. 391 dated September 5, 1942, p. 1.

[152] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1942, p. 488; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 236.

[153] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Felieton o wydarzeniach podczas "wielkiej szpery", p. 218.

[154] Ibid., p. 219.

[155] AŻIH, 301/3807, Józef Śmietana Testimony, p. 12; I. Hausner, *Cud...*, p. 47; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 237.

[156] AŻIH, 301/3500, Diana Kopciowska Testimony, p. 2; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1942, p. 489. For the elderly, a special isolation ward was set up Marysin. In total, about 1,500 elderly and sick people were protected from deportation, as well as several hundred children.

laid out. You can take them out one by one. No need to choose."[157] Severe criticism of the Jewish police can also be found in the cited text by the ghetto archivist, Oskar Singer:

> Everyone had a hunch that the Order Service would fail. The author of this word has the worst opinion about the police of the Eldest of the Jews in the ghetto in Litzmannstadt. But he also understands that the Order Service alone would not be able to render such a dastardly service. To take away children from their mothers! Jewish mothers! The Chairman has long been spoiling his people from the Order Service. But to toughen them for the job, he guaranteed them that their own children would be protected. He let them keep their beloved sons and daughters provided that all the others would be torn from the arms of their mothers. Is there a place in the world where something like that has happened before?
>
> Or anywhere else where such morality from hell could sprout?
>
> It is a monstrous product of the spirit of the ghetto. What will the mothers do? – The same thing that every mother would from whom someone wants to take away her child by force. She will stand up to the policeman, attack the robbers with a knife or an axe – or even let herself be beaten to death rather than give up her child. Bethlehem in the Litzmannstadt ghetto![158]

Criticized for taking part in the operation, the policeman, however, tried to explain that they were forced to do so because "if these children won't go, ours will."[159] Singer also noted the tragic position, "It is clear that the Chairman's policemen are not honorable people, but more than one has hidden himself in a corner in the yard and cried. Crying mothers and children, crying torturers! Where to find a poet whose imagination could produce such vision of terrible misfortune!"[160] Aside from policemen, the so-called white guard was mobilized to carry the sick and the elderly – porters from the Provisioning Department with Jankiel Rozenberg at the helm. In exchange for their participation in the operation, their families were also granted an exemption in the form of a security document.[161]

Many people have tried to seek protection to save a loved one destined for deportation. Only a few succeeded. The main route in such cases was to report to Aron Jakubowicz and Dawid Gertler, who could to issue a certificate and obtain the signature of Hans Biebow.[162] Also, the children of heads of major labor divisions were exempt from deportation. A list of about 200 children was compiled, signed by Biebow. However, it did not guarantee full safety – the child from the Tauber family, whose name was on the list, was taken by police officers twice and only after some time was placed in the house for children exempt from deportations.[163]

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[157] J. Zelkowicz, *In those...*, p. 302.
[158] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Felieton o wydarzeniach podczas „wielkiej szpery", p. 218–219.
[159] AŻIH, 301/3181, Jakub Ogólnik Testimony, p. 9.
[160] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Felieton o wydarzeniach podczas „wielkiej szpery", p. 219.
[161] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated September 1942, p. 489.
[162] Ibid., p. 489–490; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 237–238.
[163] AYV, RG-033/1131, Ruth Tauber Testimony, p. 13–16.

The German authorities were not satisfied with the results of the operation carried out exclusively by the Jewish administration. On September 7th, troops of German police and the Gestapo entered the ghetto. As noted in the *Chronicle*, the Germans "were not relying on lists but were guided solely by visual impressions."[164] The German forces and Jewish police took turns surrounding quarter by quarter and entering subsequent houses, and the signal to come down to the yard was a gunshot. All residents of the house where arranged into lines, and the German officer carried out a selection, picking up persons incapable of work, who were immediately directed to tracks or wagons waiting in front of the house. In case of resistance, guns were used. During the selection, groups of Jewish policeman surged apartments looking for the elderly or the sick hiding or staying at home. In smaller houses, the whole operation took only several minutes. Once it was concluded, in the majority of areas the selection was repeated – on smaller streets, all inhabitants were summoned and examined once again. This way, many people who had survived the selection several days before were ultimately deported. Also, those who were captured in the street violating the announced curfew were sent to the assembly points. During the expulsion from homes, no names were recorded, and then at the assembly points large groups stayed only for a very short period of time, which is why the designated officials did not manage to compile lists with the names of those deported.[165]

During the operation, Rumkowski did not go out in the street of the ghetto even once.[166] In contrast, the head of the Special Unit, Dawid Gertler, was quite active, accompanying German officers to the selection and on several occasions convincing them to release certain individuals from being deported. His Special Unit was involved in the operation of searching houses looking for people who were hiding there. After the war, Gertler testified that he had not been involved in the operation and dealt mostly with buying out children.[167] A group of people employed in divisions survived thanks to the intervention of Aron Jakubowicz.[168] Among the German authorities, particularly active was the Gestapo Commissioner, Gunter Fuchs, and a Gestapo officer, Alfred Stromberg, who shot a lot of people. Also active was head of the Board of the Ghetto, Hans Biebow, who personally carried out a selection, for example in the liquidated orphanages.[169]

On September 11th, the operation was unexpectedly interrupted. The following day, two announcements appeared on the walls of the ghetto: one signed by Rumkowski that cancelled the Gehsperre and another, signed by Biebow, announcing that factories would resume work on Monday, September 14th.[170] During the 11 days of operation, 15,681 people were deported from the ghetto to the extermination camp at Chełmno, several hundred people were shot on site for resisting the eviction, and 35 people were hanged for an attempt to escape from the transport or for leaving the workplace.[171] Overall, during

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[164] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1942, p. 488.
[165] Ibid., p. 489–491; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 372–375.
[166] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 374.
[167] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 240.
[168] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 1942, p. 490.
[169] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 239–240.
[170] AYIVO, RG-241/505, Announcement no. 392 dated September 12, 1942, p. 1; O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu...*, p. 154; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 375; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 242.
[171] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 375; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 349–350.

all deportations from the beginning of 1942, 70,671 people were deported from the ghetto to their deaths in Chełmno on the Ner (the table below presents detailed statistical data).

Table no. 8
Number of People Deported from the Łódź Ghetto to the Extermination Center in Chełmno on the Ner in 1942

Date	Number of deported people
January 16–29, 1942	10,003
February 22 –April 2, 1942	34,073
May 4–15, 1942	10,914
September 3–12, 1942	15,681
In total:	70,671

Source: J. Baranowski, *The Łódź Ghetto...*, p. 106.

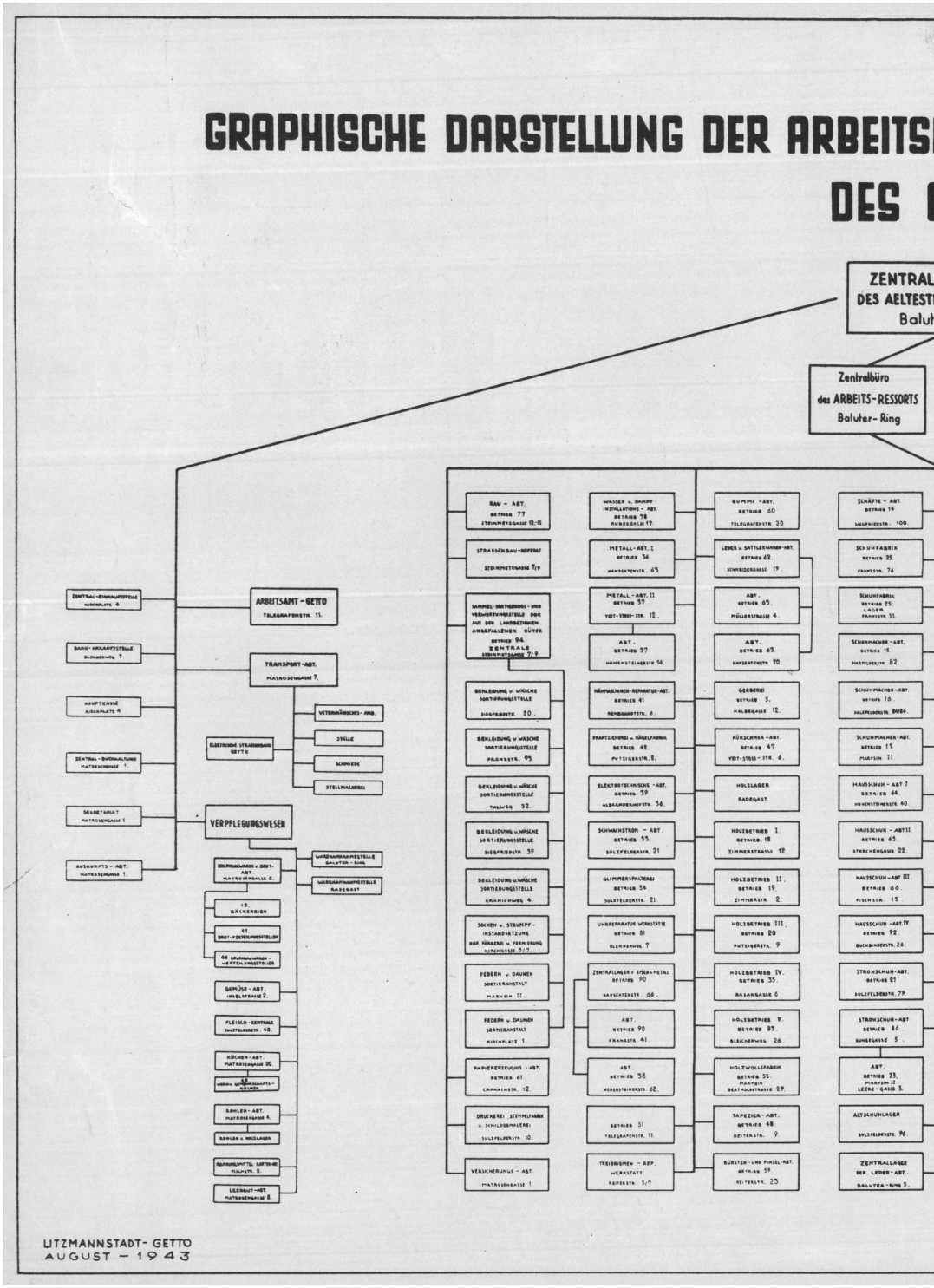
3. The Ghetto as a Labor Camp – the Organization of the "Closed District" After Deportations

The September deportation, called *Algemeine Gehsperre*, was one of the milestones in the history of the Łódź ghetto. After its completion, almost all ghetto inhabitants worked in factories and workshops for the German war economy or were employed in the administrative operations of the closed district. The ghetto virtually became a forced labor camp. The Gestapo report of October 1, 1942, summarized the changes brought by the September action: "As a result of the recent expulsion, the number of Jews in the Litzmannstadt Getto has been reduced to approximately 89,500. These are exclusively Jews that are capable of working, almost entirely involved in the production process."[172] Displacement of people unfit for work confirmed Rumkowski's conviction in the rightness of his policy, which was characterized by the slogan placed on the walls of labor divisions and albums documenting the production: "Our only way is to work."

Expansion of Production

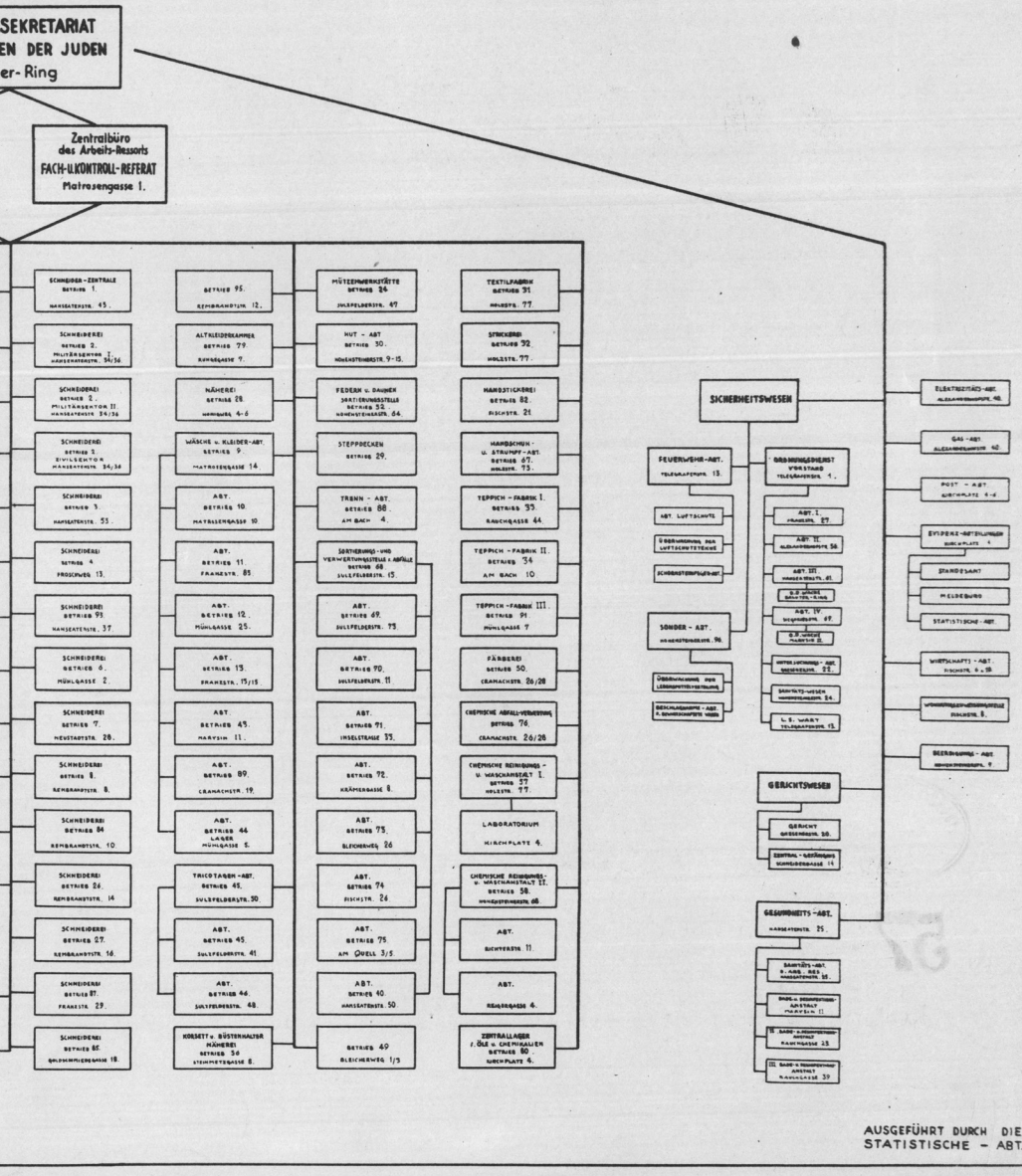
As mentioned above, the head of the Board of the Ghetto, Hans Biebow, called in his notice to resume work in divisions from September 14th. All residents, under the threat of "most severe consequences," were to report punctually at their workplaces in order to clear the backlog caused by a standstill.[173] From then on, the ghetto was expected to concentrate on work. Therefore, Rumkowski continued to expand the production facilities

[172] AŻIH, 205/71, Report dated October 1, 1942, unpaginated.; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 244.
[173] *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 236.



Structure of the Jewish administration of the ghetto, August 1943
(State Archive in Łódź)

BETRIEBE UND DER INNEREN VERWALTUNG
GETTOS



and constantly strove to increase the production capacity. Gradually, more buildings were adapted for new tasks, such as the hospitals emptied in September.[174]

One of the main branches of the "industry" operating in the close district was processing footwear and clothing that belonged to people killed at the center in Chełmno on the Ner, significant quantities of which arrived in the ghetto. For that purpose, a special Department of Clothing was founded, headed by Henryk Fein, located at 70 Zgierska Street. The clothing point operating at 30 Franciszkańska Street, headed by Szmul Bunin, was transformed into a section of footwear.[175] Other industries were also expanded – including carpentry workshops and the division of straw footwear. By the end of 1942, there were 94 labor divisions in the ghetto.

Biebow's aforementioned ruling dated September 12th heralded an increased control in labor divisions. Indeed, after the September deportations, German commissions visited factories more frequently, on many occasions interfering with their structure; for example, by demanding a reduction in employment. In some divisions, a German controller was permanently assigned to monitor the production process. Officials of the Board of the Ghetto, including Hans Biebow himself, were in direct contact with Aron Jakubowicz, head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions, or heads of individual plants, bypassing Rumkowski. A visible sign of the extension of influence of the German administration was the order to change the plaques with the names of departments and divisions, announced in October 1942. According to the new regulation, instead of the phrase "Der Alteste der Juden" (Eldest of the Jews), "Gettoverwaltung" (Board of the Ghetto) was used on plaques placed in individual establishments. Any notice displayed in divisions had to be translated into German, and all decrees and announcements of the ghetto administration had to be edited in German. "The ghetto has been Germanized," Oskar Rosenfeld wrote in his diary.[176]

Meeting with the heads of divisions, Biebow encouraged them to set their own priorities in regards carrying out orders, so that orders placed by the Wehrmacht could be produced first. However, all information regarding the production had to be submitted to the Board of the Ghetto by Rumkowski or Jakubowicz's office.[177] Increasingly more often, the head of the Gettoverwaltung personally visited production plants, checking whether there was order and if his regulations were followed. According to the *Chronicle*, in March 1943 during one of his unannounced visits in a tailoring division on Łagiewnicka Street, Biebow noticed that many workers left five minutes before the end of their shift. Immediately, he summoned plant managers Abram Grossman and Weiss and took them to Central Prison. They were released the following day, most likely thanks to the intervention of Jakubowicz, but from that moment, control was tightened in all divisions. On May 1, 1943, the communist organization operating at the tailoring division at 63 Łagiewnicka Street organized a brief demonstration, during which workers left their machines in order to celebrate Labor Day. When Biebow, along with Erich Czarnullą, made an unexpected appearance in the division, frightened workers returned to work, but the head of the Board

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[174] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 2, entry dated September 21, 1942, p. 494.
[175] Ibid., p. 494.
[176] Ibid., entry dated September 27, 1942, p. 508–509; ibid., entry dated October 10, 1942, p. 533; ibid., entry dated October 17, 1942, p. 541; O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu*..., p. 169; A. Löw, *Getto*..., p. 250.
[177] Ibid., vol. 3: 1943, entry dated June 12, 1943, p. 263; A. Löw, *Getto*..., p. 249.

of the Ghetto angrily grabbed a tool and hit one of the workers, Aaron Weintraub, who died the following day. Two weeks later in a woodworking division, Biebow discovered workers resting. The situation was saved by the statement of the head of the division, Szwarcowski, who said that he had allowed them to take a break. Nevertheless, Biebow ordered them to work 15 minutes longer that day, and soon after organized a meeting for all heads of divisions and Rumkowski, during which he ordered them to observe the working time.[178] Biebow also interfered directly in appointing people to specific positions in the divisions. When in September 1943 it was found that children's beds sent from the ghetto and produced by the woodworking factory were faulty and fell apart in use, the head of the Board of the Ghetto summoned Ludwik Winograd, head of that division. After interrogation, he was detained in Central Prison, where he was supposed to stay for four weeks at Biebow's discretion. However, several days later after Jakubowicz's intervention, Winograd was released.[179]

Divisions were subject not only to the control of the German authorities but also the Jewish administration. In each division there was an officer of the Order Service responsible for supervising workers. The formation was called the Economic Police, and although formally operating within the structures of the Order Service and reporting to commander Leon Rozenblat, it was gradually becoming independent. The head of the formation was Zygmunt Reingold. Its members still wore their caps and armbands of the police, the only difference being that on the rim and the band there was a letter W (*Wirtschaft*).[180] As the *Chronicle* noted, there were frequent conflicts between officers of the two formations, further fueled by the fact that Rumkowski supported Rozenblat while Reingold was backed by Jakubowicz: "On the occasion of the third anniversary of the Order Service, commander Rozenblat was offered to promote that group of officers, which, however, he rejected on the grounds that he might agree to a promotion only for merit which he sees himself. This refusal led to an open split between the two, now independent, groups. On one side stood Rozenblat with his regular Order Service and on the other Reingold, whose aspirations were supported by the head of divisions, Jakubowicz. On the third anniversary of the Order Service, a ceremony was held organized by an independent group of economic police. The invitation was sent to Rozenblat, but it was later rescinded. Since the chairman sided with Rozenblat concerning the promotions, he did not show up at the event. It was the first time that the chairman ostentatiously refused to participate in the celebration of such kind."[181] As the *Chronicle* noted, Rozenblat attempted to alleviate the conflict; however, the head of the Sonderkommando, Dawid Gertler, joined it as well.[182] The dispute became another element of the struggle for influence in the ghetto.[183]

Another body that supervised labor divisions was the Supreme Control Chamber, which on November 1, 1942, transformed into the Trades and Control Office (*Fachund*

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[178] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 20, 1943, p. 115; ibid., entry dated March 23, 1943, p. 118; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 54; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 398.

[179] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated September 30, 1943, p. 502; ibid., entry dated October 4, 1943, p. 509; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 117; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 398.

[180] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 327.

[181] Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated March 16, 1943, p. 108.

[182] Ibid., entry dated March 19, 1943, p. 112.

[183] Cf. Chapter 4.3.

Kontrollreferat – FUKR) with its office at 1 Dworska Street, operating as part of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions[184] as well as a Special Unit of the Order Service, whose officers for example searched workers to check whether they were taking materials and tools from the workplace.[185]

Is evident from the above outline that after September 1942, labor divisions became the main element of the Jewish administration of the ghetto. The purpose of all other entities was to handle all matters related to production plants or workers employed in them. The function was reduced to ensuring "peace and order" in the ghetto, in accordance with Rumkowski's repeated slogan, "work, peace and order."

Regardless of the development of the network of divisions, workers were still sent to work outside of the ghetto. After the provincial ghettos had been liquidated, the Łódź ghetto became a reserve of labor force to be used by the German authorities. Therefore, the authorities of the Warthegau Labor Bureau ordered Biebow to send regular reports concerning employment in the ghetto and the exact size of available labor force. Biebow objected, writing to the head of the Labor Bureau, Ernst Kendzia that he did not have enough workforce to spare to compile such reports; besides, employment in divisions was changeable and it was impossible to provide specific data onto the staff of each establishment. He also wrote that since all workers were employed in divisions that produced goods for the German economy, they should not be used in any other way.[186] Biebow's interventions were unsuccessful, and the deployment of subsequent groups of workers continued.

Just as before, those sent for work were recruited from the detainees of Central Prison on Czarnieckiego Street, workers who had worked outside of the ghetto, people found to have been evading work obligations and people caught doing illegal trade. This time, the sick were also sent to the transports, as the Germans no longer examined people sent outside the ghetto and only the numbers mattered.

The first transport after the September expulsions departed on September 24th, 1942, followed by others on November 1st[187] and 23rd and on January 10 and 15, 1943. In order to collect the required quota of people for the last of the transport listed above, the special department headed by Gertler organized a roundup in the streets of the ghetto on January 9th – those captured were sent to Central Prison, where it was checked whether they had employment and families. Everyone who was found to be single or guilty of something was sent to the transport. That same month – on January 27th – another group left for Kolumna, followed by two more on February 18th and 25th. Often, groups of workers returning from labor camps arrived in the ghetto at the same time – on September 23, 1942, a group of workers arrived from Eberswalde (the majority of them were deported the following day), and on January 22nd, workers from Kolumna return to the ghetto. They only stayed a few days – they left again for Kolumna with the subsequent transport. In February, another group returned from Kreuzsee. On March 11th, the entire division of quilted comforters along with the medical staff, was deported to the labor camp in

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[184] APŁ, PSŻ 1069, Okólnik, November 2, 1942, p. 89; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 321; ibid., vol. 2, entry dated November 1, 1942, p. 573; ibid., entry dated November 2, 1942, p. 575.

[185] Ibid., entry dated October 11, 1942, p. 534; ibid., vol. 3, entry dated January 20, 1943, p. 18–19.

[186] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 399.

[187] In this group, a robber's gang was deported, along with Jankiel Rozenberg – head of the "white guard" from the Department of Provisioning, who was active during the raid.

Dąbrowa near Pabianice. Only five months later, the division was once again moved to the ghetto and located in the building that had previously housed the liquidated House of Culture. Sometimes, deportations to labor seemed completely logical – as the division of comforters was leaving for Dąbrowa, a group of 79 men arrived in the ghetto on that same day from that very camp.[188]

Another group sent to labor outside the ghetto left in an atmosphere reminiscent of the tragic days of the September deportation. When on March 15, 1943, 855 people came to the ghetto from the camp in Poznań,[189] Biebow ordered to employ them at demolition works, and then at repairing roads in the ghetto. On Rumkowski's command, some of them, however, were released because they had families in the ghetto, while others were employed in divisions.[190] The arrival of the group was noted by Dawid Sierakowiak, "Yesterday, 850 workers came from Germany (near Poznań) who are going to be employed at demolition works. However, they are in such a sorry state that they cannot be hired for the time being. They had been in a camp that was literally a place of death, because 80 or 90% of workers employed there have died so far. Among the newcomers, there are only 150 workers from the ghetto, while the rest are Jews collected from various other cities. They have been tortured in many different ways, work has been inhumane, and food worse than here in the worst times."[191]

In the end of March, it was announced that 1,000 would be sent from the ghetto to work. This number included the entire group of people who had arrived over a week earlier from Poznan,[192] and the rest were to be ghetto residents. The announcement caused an atmosphere of anxiety in the ghetto, which was recorded in the *Chronicle*:

> Spirit in the ghetto remains low. In the course of three hard years of ghetto life, people have developed a nose for impending disaster. It is known for a fact that, in addition to the people from Poznan, ghetto dwellers also scheduled for a settlement. Then certainty about their numbers and categories waste like a lead on the souls of the people as they move anxiously about in the streets. The general nervousness mounted in the evening hours, as Ward circulated that the special department had been placed on alert.[...] One concerns that the next 24 hours will tax the nerves of the ghetto.[193]

These predictions were right because starting the following morning, the Sonderkommando officers carried out roundups, capturing everyone in the streets of the ghetto. "It looked as if the horde of dogcatchers was chasing stray dogs." Those who were not able

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[188] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 11, 1943, p. 95; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 399–400.

[189] It is probably a reference to the last prisoners of the Posen camp, which operated from 1941 until the end of March 1943 and was the main camp for the network of smaller sub-camps organized in Greater Poland (Wielkopolska). It reported to the Main Office of Civil Engineering in Posen – A. Ziółkowska, *Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w Wielkopolsce w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej (1941–1943)*, Poznań 2005, p. 451. The list of arrivals has survived – APŁ, PSŻ 995, Lista więźniów, p. 124–138.

[190] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 13, 1943, p. 102; ibid., entry dated March 16, 1943, p. 107; ibid., entry dated March 20, 1943, p. 115.

[191] *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 11 III 1972, no. 11 (4045), p. 12.

[192] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 23, 1943, p. 120.

[193] Ibid., entry dated March 24, 1943, p. 121.

Dawid Gertler – head of the Special Unit (Sonderabteilung)
(Institute of National Remembrance)

to present their work card or other document confirming their employment were escorted to the headquarters of the Order Service or the guardhouse in Bałucki Marketsquare. A field commission was formed to inspect the captured − starting with the station of the District I, they checked the documents of the detainees. The commission was composed of the head of the court, Stanislaw Jakobson, Head of the Investigation Office Zygmunt Blemer and Commander of the Order Service for the District II Józef Kohl. A handful of the detained were released thanks interventions by Dawid Gertler or Marek Kligier. In total, about 120 people were sent to Central Prison after the selection, which accounted for 20% of the detained.[194] The operation continued until the subsequent day.[195] All those selected for the deportations, about 850 people in total, were detained in Central Prison in horrible conditions: "[They] remain under lock and key, victims of cold, dirt and vermin. Because of the shortage of beds, hundreds of men and women are forced to spend the night leaning against doors and walls or in a crouched position."[196] On March 30th,

[194] Ibid., entry dated March 25, 1943, p. 123–124; ibid., entry dated April 2, 1943, p. 138–139; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 54; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 401.
[195] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 26, 1943, p. 125.
[196] Ibid., entry dated March 27, 1943, p. 128.

the group of people held in prison were taken to Radegast Station, adding 90 gravely ill on the way. In total, 945 people left in 20 wagons.[197] They most likely ended up in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, indicated by the information that on April 8, 1943, a group of 107 people from Litzmannstadt were admitted to the camp, while others were murdered upon arrival at the camp.[198]

Reorganization of the Administrative Apparatus of the Ghetto

After the expulsions of September 1942, Hans Biebow took over the management of the most important issues of the ghetto. Rumkowski's position weakened, as he admitted himself in his speech on September 19th at the Culture House, mentioning "the loss of former autonomy."[199] The visible evidence that the position of the Gettoverwaltung was stronger was the notice announcing that work was to be resumed having been signed by Biebow and not Rumkowski.[200] The new order introduced after the *Allgemeine Gehsperre* applied to other fields of life. As mentioned above, German commissioners were placed in some divisions who supervised the production process. After a number of rabbis had been deported, the authorities banned prayers during holidays and people were ordered to work on such days as usual. "What is important here is not religious sentiment but the sort of freedom of action allowed by that now lost autonomy," the *Chronicle* commented on the work order.[201] The new, harsher course of the policy of the German authorities was also manifested in the introduction of the 12 hour work day for the departments of the Jewish administration of the ghetto. Starting on September 30th, all agencies of the administration worked from 7:30am until 8pm with a one hour lunch break, and on Saturday between 7:30am and 2pm. The new ruling caused significant complications for the employed officials because it was difficult for them to collect their rations or prepare meals.[202] Commenting on the new work hours, Józef Zelkowicz called the document that introduced them a "Draconian circular." He also wondered how female officials were supposed to find time to take care of their children or prepare meals.[203]

Another example of the new order was the aforementioned ruling dated October 9th in which Biebow ordered to change all plaques and notices in departments and divisions to German-language ones. From then on, the Board of the Ghetto was listed instead of the Eldest of the Jews. In the same ruling, the Head of the Gettoverwaltung also announced that anyone who committed theft in the division or during the transport of goods would be severely punished.[204] Biebow also significantly expanded the competences of the Special Unit, which will be discussed further herein. The head of the Sonderkommando, Dawid

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[197] Ibid., entry dated March 30, 1943, p. 132. The sick were to join the group on the orders of one of the heads of the Health Department, Henryk Czarnobroda, and Bronisław Dancygier of the Sonderkommando – I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 401.

[198] D. Czech, *Kalendarz wydarzeń w KL Auschwitz*, Oświęcim 1992, p. 463; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 401.

[199] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 27, 1942, p. 508–509.

[200] APŁ, PSŻ 1069, Announcement dated September 14, 1942, p. 64.

[201] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated September 27, 1942, p. 508.

[202] Ibid., entry dated September 30, 1942, p. 513.

[203] AŻIH, 302/111, Józef Zelkowicz Diary, p. 33.

[204] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated October 10, 1942, p. 533; ibid., entry dated October 17, 1942, p. 541; O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu...*, November 2, 1942, p. 169; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 250; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 382.

Gertler, gradually reinforced his position, becoming one of the most important players in the internal politics of the ghetto.[205]

Along with the increase of the production capacity of the ghetto, German authorities ordered Rumkowski to change the employment structure of the ghetto and transfer officials to work in divisions. In the autumn of 1942, they dissolved a number of departments and their staff was partially included in the production process. In early November, as already mentioned above, the Supreme Control Chamber was reorganized; on November 3rd, the Main Crafts Commission was disbanded and its responsibilities were taken over by the Trades and Control Office; on November 4th, the Issuing Bank and the Bank of Purchase combined, forming an institution supervised by the leadership of the latter; on November 5th, the Post Office was united with the Philatelic Division[206] housed on 1 Rybna Street – Abraham Dawidowicz was appointed head of the reorganized Post Office; the Holiday Commission was disbanded, leaving only the Secretariat, and Rumkowski kept the right to grant holiday leave.[207]

In February of 1943, the Loan Fund was established, located at 17 Zgierska Street. The manager of the new facility was Józef Klementynowski, former head of the Archive. The supervisory board of the Fund consisted of 40 representatives of various divisions and departments.[208] The announcement of March 6th specified the exact amount of the contribution for the Fund, which was to be deducted from employees' salaries and ordered elimination of individual loan funds operating at different departments.[209] The official launch of the Fund took place on March 15th – that day, application forms for loans were sent to divisions and departments.[210] In its first month of operations, the Fund had a budget of 200,000 marks, out of which 1,200 loans were paid out in the amount of about 60,000 marks.[211] After several months of operations, the Fund started to experience problems. "The haste with which it was formed is now beginning to take its toll. The project has not been thought out carefully enough," the *Chronicle* noted in June 1943. The principal problem was collecting the outstanding contributions from people who changed their place of work.[212] By September that year, however, the difficulties were overcome and the fund no longer withheld taxes from the salary of officials and workers. During that time, over 191,000 marks was paid based on 3,181 applications.[213] In March 1944, it

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[205] Cf. Chapter 4.3.

[206] The Philatelic Department was buying postage stamps. Only from October 1941 until June 1942, 385,394 stamps were purchased, which were grouped into albums – APŁ, PSŻ 907, Zestawienie kupna i sprzedaży Wydziału Filatelistycznego, p. 63.

[207] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated November 2, 1942, p. 575; ibid., entry dated November 3, 1942, p. 578–579; ibid., entry dated November 4, 1942, p. 580; ibid., entry dated November 5, 1942, p. 583; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 277, 290; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 383–384.

[208] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated February 24, 1943, p. 64; ibid., entry dated February 27, 1943, p. 69.

[209] With weekly earnings up to 17.50 mk, 0.5 percent of the salary was deducted; from 17.51 to 35 – 1 percent; from 35.01 to 46.50 – 1.5 percent; from 46.51 to 70 – 2 percent; from 70.01 and up – 3 percent. The following sums were deducted from officials' wages: from salaries of up to 75 mk per month – 0.5 per cent; from 76 to 150 mk – 1 percent; from 151 to 200 mk – 1.5 percent; from 201 to 300 mk – 2 percent; 301 mk and more – 3 percent – ibid., entry dated March 5, 1943, p. 80–81.

[210] Ibid., entry dated March 13, 1943, p. 101.

[211] Ibid., entry dated March 23, 1943, p. 120–121.

[212] Ibid., entry dated June 1, 1943, p. 251.

[213] Ibid., entry dated September 15, 1943, p. 472.

Tailoring Workshop sing on a former Hospital No. 1 building at Łagiewnicka St.
(State Archive in Łódź)

was announced that the fund would be disbanded and the staff stopped accepting loan applications. However, the institution was not ultimately closed, and after a short period of inactivity the Fund renewed operations.[214]

In November, the structure of the medical care was significantly reorganized. After the hospitals were liquidated in September 1942, organized health care ceased to function for a short time. The majority of hospital equipment and medical instruments was requisitioned. During the September operation, waste and garbage disposal stopped for about two weeks which contributed to the deterioration of the sanitary situation of the ghetto. At the end of September, there was an outbreak of an epidemic of typhoid fever. Facing the threat of a reduction of the production capacity of the ghetto, Biebow agreed to open two hospitals. In early October, the authorities opened a healthcare facility with 200 beds on Łagiewnicka Street, and at the end of that month one hospital with 500 beds at 74 Dworska Street. Two emergency stations continued to operate – one at 41 Łagiewnicka Street, where the office of the authorities of the Health Department was located, and another at 13 Lutomierska Street. Two outpatient clinics were also organized, one at 40 Zgierska Street and the second at 40 Lutomierska Street, where the area doctors were on duty during specific hours. In medical areas (each for 2,000 or 2,500 residents), area doctors made house calls. Seriously ill patients were directed to the aforementioned outpatient clinics. There were now 161 doctors in the ghetto, 31 of whom were unemployed in the autumn of 1942, remaining at the disposal of the Personnel Department. Doctors were employed in each division that had over 1,000 employees, where they held office for seven hours per day. However, the gravest problem with providing healthcare was the shortage of medicines and dressing materials.[215] From the end of January 1943, the Special Unit of the Order Service was in charge of distributing medicine, gradually becoming a monopolist in that area.[216] The Special Unit received applicants for prescriptions each morning and based on these certain specific medicines were distributed.[217] In September 1943, after the point ran by the Special Unit was closed, Rumkowski opened a new facility to distribute medication, the Department of Vaccines, which was combined with the Central Warehouse of Medicine located at 1 Pomorska Street. Long lines formed in front of this point; however, given the shortage of medicine, not all applicants were served.[218] As a result of such shortages, the black market flourished and drugs were sold at exorbitant prices.[219]

Despite the reorganization, new units of the Jewish administration were formed. In November 1, 1942, the female units of the Order Service was established (called the Female Order Service – Frauen-Ordnungsdienst). It was not directly associated with the regular troops of the Order Service, although to a certain extent the two formations had similar competences and collaborated on occasion. The main task of the formation was

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[214] Ibid., vol. 4: 1944, entry dated March 18, 1944, p. 204; ibid., entry dated April 4, 1944, p. 228–229.

[215] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated November 5, 1942, p. 583–584; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 367–368; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 379.

[216] In March 1943, when an extremely popular vitamin supplement called Vigantol came to the pharmacies, the Special Branch banned the sale and instructed all supplies to be delivered to the Branch – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 6, 1943, p. 82. On Vigantol cf. AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Vigantol, p. 417.

[217] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Avitaminose, p. 8; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Avitaminose, p. 23–24.

[218] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated September 12, 1943, p. 463; ibid., entry dated September 20, 1943, p. 481.

[219] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 61; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 285.

Stanisław Jakobson – head of the ghetto Court
(State Archive in Łódź)

to take care of children and youth whose parents worked in divisions. Other responsibilities of the Female Order Service included combating illegal street trade by juveniles and supervising passenger tram traffic in the ghetto. The head of the formation was Dr. Karl Bondy, deported from Prague, who was at the same time the representative of all transports deported from the Third Reich and the Protectorate.[220] About 60 girls served in the formation, mostly graduates of the secondary school who passed their graduation exam in the ghetto. However, the unit did not exist long. Although it had successes, such as the complete elimination of juvenile street trade, the Board of the Ghetto disbanded it on March 3, 1943. The reason for this decision is unknown. At the same time, the policewomen lost their right to extra rations but were allowed to keep their coats and boots received as elements of their uniforms.[221] After the formation was disbanded, the problem of juvenile street trade returned immediately: "As soon as the female police was disbanded, juvenile saccharine sellers reappeared at street corners. Three items for one mark!" the *Chronicle* recorded.[222] From that moment, the problem became the sole responsibility of regular troops of the Order Service. In early April 1943, Dr. Bondy was transferred to the District II of the Order Service, which was being reorganized at the time.[223]

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[220] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Karl Bondy, dr., p. 20; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Karl Bondy, dr., p. 64; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated November 17, 1942, p. 607; ibid., entry dated November 24, 1942, p. 624.
[221] Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated March 3, 1943, p. 77–78.
[222] Ibid., entry dated March 25, 1943, p. 124.
[223] Ibid., entry dated April 4, 1943, p. 142.

Hans Biebow (right) and Erich Czarulla (left) from the Board of the Ghetto (*Ghettoverwaltung*)
(Institute of National Remembrance)

After the end of the deportations in March 1943, changes were introduced in the leadership of the Order Service and Central Prison. These were caused by the severe conflict between Rumkowski and the Resettlement Commission because, as it later turned out, many people excused from deportation by the Eldest of the Jews were later included in the lists and sent out of the ghetto. Jozef Kohl was removed from his position as the head of the District II of the Order Service and appointed head of Central Prison. Julian Grossman, former head from Czarnieckiego Street, was transferred to the position of the head of the District IV, replacing Solomon Gartner, who, in turn, was transferred to the District II. Rumkowski also punished the head of the Court – Stanisław Jakobson no longer had any say in administrative matters of the prison. He could only issue orders on matters of prisoners detained by the Court.[224]

March 1943 was one of the most turbulent months after the Allgemeine Gehsperre. Biebow found himself in a difficult position – the growing pressure of the SS to seize the ghetto and move the production coincided with a reduction of the number of incoming contracts. The atmosphere of anxiety spread throughout the ghetto. Maril Porges and Professorska were fired from the Secretariat and transferred to the Old-Materials Department at 10 Jakuba Street. The Division of Holidays with Tatarka and the Provisioning

[224] Ibid., entry dated April 2, 1943, p. 138; ibid., entry dated April 4, 1943, p. 142; ibid., entry dated April 5, 1943, p. 143–144; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 401.

Division with Estera Daum were moved to 1 Dworska Street.[225] These actions provoked a wave of comments in the ghetto, citing different versions of the reason for Biebow's decision to fire the secretaries, such as putting on make-up, gossiping at work, or an affair with a German official. However, the most likely reason was that the head of the Board of the Ghetto wanted even more control over the life of the ghetto in order to undermine the position of Rumkowski. Already on the following day, Biebow ordered a liquidation of the Personnel Department and dismissal of all staff. The powers of that unit were given to the Labor Office headed by Bernard Fuchs. At the Labor Office, former head of the Personnel Department Izrael Frank was responsible for issues pertaining to workforce. Also, the Labor Conscription Bureau was disbanded and its head, Kiwa Siennicki, transferred to work in a division, while two other heads, Azriel Uryson and Franz Andres, were hired by the Labor Office, albeit in low-ranking positions. The Labor Office was also reorganized. Biebow ordered all junior employees to be dismissed and sent to work in factories. The same happened in the Economic Department.[226] Dawid Sierakowiak, employed at the Labor Conscription Bureau, witnessed Biebow's visit and described it in his diary

> There was a surprise waiting for us at the office, which quickly became news in the entire ghetto. Biebow from the Gettoverwaltung visited our department with Fuchs, and they toured the whole office. As a result of the visit (Biebow also inspected the Personnel and Management Departments), all the clerks, men and women less than forty years of age, will be dismissed from the offices and will have to find employment in the workshops or in public works. Old and exhausted workers will be employed in their place. In almost every room, there was an argument because there were way too many young, made-up, and nicely dressed workers there. Biebow also dismissed the three directors in our workshop – Andres, Uryson, and Sienicki – and has given all the managing power to Fuchs. Sienicki, who has Rumkowski's special protection and is fat as a bull as a result, has simply been fired.[227]

Later that same day, on March 9th, Rumkowski met with the head of the Census Department, Henryk Neftalin, and head of the Statistical Department, Sucher Ehrlich. The meeting was devoted to Biebow's next order to send all officials under 40 years of age employed in the ghetto administration to the production work in divisions. Rumkowski was to be in charge of the regrouping operation with the assistance of the Department of Labor. Biebow agreed that the dismissed Siennicki could also be involved.[228] They immediately carried out a review of officials employed in departments. On that occasion,

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[225] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 8, 1943, p. 87. In the following days, the Chronicle reported that Estera Daum returned to the Bałucki Market on the following day, where she helped with the process of restructuring. Mary Schifflinger replaced her in the Provisioning Division – ibid., entry dated March 9, 1943, p. 89; ibid., entry dated March 10, 1943, p. 91.

[226] Ibid., entry dated March 9, 1943, p. 88–89; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 402–403.

[227] *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 4 III 1972, no. 10 (4046), p. 11.

[228] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 11, 1943, p. 95; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 50; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 402–403.

detailed lists of all employees were compiled and their work cards were checked, with information being added pertaining to their prewar profession. Individuals were sent to work in divisions based on the decision of Rumkowski, who often, as Sierakowiak wrote, personally spoke to the officials:

> As a result of various kinds of behind-the-scenes manipulations in the highest circles of the ghetto, the task of purging the young elements from the departments has been handed over to Rumkowski. At half past six, the "Eldest" came to our department with Sienicki in order to classify the employees in person.
>
> [...] As Rumkowski was about to arrive, his portrait was again hung in Fuchs's office, though it had been taken down on Biebow's order! [...]. We entered the office one by one. The "Eldest" asked a few questions and told Siennicki to write down whether a given clerk should stay or be transferred to one of the workshops. Rumkowski had quite a long talk with me (in Yiddish, using the "Lithuanian" dialect). He asked me about my age, former occupation, schooling, and family. (He seemed to know my family name.) When I told him that I had been the best student in school, he said that the Germans wouldn't care about that. Finally, he ordered Sienicki to write down that I should stay in the office.[229]

Several days after their "sweeping" operation started in the agencies of the Jewish administration, the meeting was organized in the Culture House with the heads of all ghetto departments and divisions, during which Rumkowski explained the regrouping operation, citing as reason the mobilization of production force in the entire Third Reich. In his speech, he also returned to the issue of limiting his power in the ghetto. "'At one time,' he said, 'we have had autonomy. But, step-by-step, that autonomy was curtailed, so that today on only a paltry few remnants of it remain."[230]

The review covered about 3,000 people from the overall number of 13,000 full-time officials.[231] By the end of March, 1,328 persons were qualified to work in divisions; 1,715 remained in their positions; 31 were temporarily left at their current position; 86 were not reviewed by the end of the month; and 114 were absent during the review. Also, employees of Community kitchens were reviewed – out of 373 reviewed persons, 109 were sent to work.[232] Young people were sent to work in production, with women being more frequently assigned to tailoring divisions and carpentry workshops. However, not everyone was transferred at once; people were moved gradually as new facilities were opened.[233]

At the same time, a special three-person commission was formed, tasked with examining the elderly employed in divisions who were later transferred to office work – this was a form of compensation for several years of hard physical labor.[234]

It was suspected in the ghetto that the regrouping operation was associated with the visit of the head of the German Labor Front, Robert Ley, who came to the ghetto on March

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[229] *Dziennik Dawida Sierakowiaka*, *Fołks Sztyme*, 4 III 1972, no. 10 (4046), p. 11.
[230] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 13, 1943, p. 100–101.
[231] 5,000 of them were instructors and group and branch heads, in fact, about 8,000 were qualified for the review.
[232] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 30, 1943, p. 133.
[233] Ibid., entry dated March 22, 1943, p. 118; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 403.
[234] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 14, 1943, p. 103.

25th.[235] In mid-1943, new, larger contracts indeed started coming to the ghetto, so the expansion of the staff employed at production proved to be purposeful. To a much lesser extent, operations transferring officials to work at production continued essentially until the liquidation of the ghetto.

Another reorganization of the administrative apparatus was carried out in early 1944. It was associated with changes introduced in the Board of the Ghetto. In February, Mayor and head of the Łódź Gestapo Otto Bradfisch, ordered that the offices of the Gettoverwaltung should be moved to Bałucki Market and vacancies resulting from several officials being conscripted to the Wehrmacht were to be filled with Jewish clerks. Therefore, all Jewish institutions were ordered to vacate the barracks on Bałucki Marketsquare with the sole exception of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions, headed by Jakubowicz, and the Point of Collection of Goods. Institutions of the Jewish administration, thus far located in offices at Bałucki Marketsquare, were transferred to the tenement located opposite, at 23 and 25/27 Łagiewnicka Street. On February 7th, the Central Secretariat moved to a new office, taking rooms after the former Research Department at 25/27 Łagiewnicka Street, even though originally it was going to be moved to the adjacent building, to the offices of the Vegetable Division at the vegetable square at 10 Łagiewnicka Street.[236] Institutions previously located in buildings on Łagiewnicka Street were moved mostly to new addresses: the Central Treasury, the Juvenile Department, the Department for the Resettled, the Injection Distribution Point, the Secretariat for Requests and Complaints, the Information Department were all moved to new premises, and the Health Department was moved to 4 Kościelny Square. Only the Presidential Secretariat and the guardhouse of the special department, operating at Bałucki Marketsquare, remained in place.

Care for Orphans and Social Care

In his speech on September 19th at the Culture House, Rumkowski addressed the issue of care of children orphaned during the last deportations. The Eldest of the Jews proposed to develop a system of care of orphans, the number of whom was estimated at about 1,500. The cost of maintenance of children in foster families would be covered by the Community. Families accepting such a child were only expected to accept the effort of care and upbringing of the orphan. The placement of children in new families was to be handled by a Commission for the Care of Poor and Orphaned Children (also called Commission for the Care of Juveniles), formed for that purpose on September 22, 1942, with offices at 1 Dworska Street. Members of the Commission included Henryk Neftalin, Stanisław Jakobson, Regina Wołk and Eliasz Tabaksblat.[237] The commission was also in charge of providing essentials for the children, such as clothing and footwear.

Rumkowski's idea resonated with the ghetto inhabitants. By the end of October 1942, foster homes were found for 520 children, and the Commission was analyzing a further

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[235] Ibid., entry dated March 12, 1943, p. 99–100; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 54.

[236] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Bałucki Rynek, p. 28–30; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated December 30, 1942, p. 75; ibid., vol. 4, entry dated February 2, 1944, p. 87; ibid., entry dated February 5, 1944, p. 92; ibid., entry dated February 7, 1944, p. 99.

[237] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated September 20, 1942, p. 492; O. Singer, *Przemierzając...*, p. 128; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 375–377.

500 applications.[238] The operation continued without interruption in subsequent months – by the beginning of December 1942, a further 200 children found foster homes. At the end of the year, children staying in five dormitories for juvenile workers were placed with new families. At that time, an attempt was also made to place groups of orphaned youth in independent apartments, several persons in each.[239]

Children were mostly placed with officials. In order to encourage adoption, families organizing a foster home received increased food rations. In the event such a family received their Beirat allocation, orphans were given the same.[240] Adoptions, which Rumkowski promoted, were very popular among the highest-ranking officials of the ghetto. The Eldest of the Jews himself adopted two boys – Stanisław Klein and Max Książek.[241]

Regardless of the help operation for orphaned children, institutions responsible for the care of the youngest continued to operate within the administration of the ghetto. By May 1943, 17 nurseries were founded, providing care for about 4,000 infants. In spite of the closure of schools, vocational courses were gradually launched in divisions as part of the aforementioned regrouping operation. The majority of them resembled schools and their curriculum went beyond professional instruction. In 1943, 18 such facilities provided education for 1,230 students. In April that year, a holiday house for youth was opened in Marysin.[242]

In the wake of September deportations, the Social Welfare Department was closed and its function taken over by the aforementioned Commission for the Juvenile Care and the Secretariat for Requests and Complaints, headed by Regina Wołk.[243] Holiday houses in Marysin continued to operate and workers employed in divisions and officials of the administration could go there to regenerate. In May 1943, there were eight such facilities providing service for about 500 people. In order to be able to stay there, one had to submit an application to the Holiday Commission, then after it was disbanded in November 1942 to the office responsible for handling holiday applications. However, the system of referrals to one of the holiday houses was corrupt, given the limited number of places, which required a special "recommendation," usually from senior officials and their protégés.[244]

In August 1943, the head of the Board of the Ghetto closed down all holiday houses, because he decided that instead of workers they provided service for officials and their protégés. The *Chronicle* recorded that the decision was explained by the shortage of food supplies.[245] Although it was announced that they would resume operation, holiday houses were not reopened until the end of the ghetto's existence.[246]

Certain functions of social welfare were also carried out by committees for the help to the sick, formed at labor divisions. They offered support to workers employed in factories

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[238] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated October 7, 1942, p. 527; ibid., entry dated October 30, 1942, p. 567.
[239] Ibid., entry dated November 15, 1942, p. 602; ibid., entry dated December 7, 1942, p. 648–649.
[240] Ibid., entry dated 23 April 1942, p. 176.
[241] Cf. Chapter 4.1.
[242] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 379.
[243] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated August 20, 1943, p. 414.
[244] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 102. Requests for an assignment to a holiday house were also addressed to the Secretariat of Requests and Complaints – APŁ, PSŻ 158, Podania do Sekretariatu Próśb i Żażaleń.
[245] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated August 15, 1943, p. 401; ibid., entry dated August 21, 1943, p. 417; ibid., entry dated August 25, 1943, p. 425.
[246] Ibid., entry dated August 26, 1943, p. 428; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 293.

based on financial donations and food products they received. The main forms of support included food and vouchers for extra rations, and in some cases also financial means. The committees received irregular assistance from the Eldest of the Jews, Jakubowicz and Kligier. The committees organized lotteries, proceeds from which were spent on their activity. In practice, the help came almost exclusively from contributions of workers, which is why the committees were criticized by some members of the staff who claimed that helping the needy was the responsibility of the leadership.[247] Such initiatives were also found outside of factories – for example, in the Electrotechnical Department[248] and the Kitchen Department.[249]

Another form of support was the operation of rotary employment in Community kitchens, organized by labor divisions. Based on the decision of the heads of the Department, Fuchs and Siennicki, an emaciated person was assigned to work in one of the kitchens for a specific period of time, which offered access to better food.[250] Earlier, before the deportations, a similar operation had been organized in bakeries, which also provided access to more bread and thus an opportunity to eat more. In October 1943, the Supper Department was formed under the social welfare system, headed by Anna Lewkowicz. In the building at 53 Łagiewnicka Street, the Department issued "reinforcing meals" for persons sent there for 14-day turns. That same month, more "supper kitchens" were planned to open on Flisacka and Masarska Streets.[251]

Another significant problem for the ghetto inhabitants was the lack of adequate clothing, especially winter clothes. Distribution of clothes was the task of the Clothing Department, operating at 70 Zgierska Street and headed by Michał Fein and A. D. Najman. It provided clothes, for example, to people sent for labor outside of the ghetto or in wards of orphanages. For the latter, a special Juvenile Clothing Department was established in July 1943, which until October was located at 25 Łagiewnicka Street and was later transferred to 70 Zgierska Street. The head of the Department was Leon Grinfeld. Both these institutions used goods stored at the warehouses of the Department for the Resettled, which was liquidated on July 1, 1943. According to Rumkowski's guidelines, clothing and footwear was first assigned to orphans and juveniles employed in labor divisions, who had to provide certificates of their difficult financial situation. Initially, about 120 sets of clothing were issued daily.[252]

As part of the support for inhabitants of the ghetto without families, Rumkowski suggested forming residential communities. The announcement dated December 22, 1943, signed by the Eldest of the Jews, listed the whole procedure, according to which heads of divisions and departments should report to the Presidential Secretariat on Dworska Street, which therefore became another institution responsible for social welfare. The *Chronicle* commented on the initiative in a very positive way, "One should know how those who are

[247] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Komisje Chorobowe (Komitety Chorobowe), p. 211–212; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated October 1, 1943, p. 505; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 104, 111; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 287–288.
[248] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated February 9, 1944, p. 108.
[249] In the Kitchens Department the help committee was headed by Cytrynówna and Flasz – Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated October 21, 1943, p. 545.
[250] Ibid., entry dated June 26, 1943, p. 302–303.
[251] Ibid., entry dated October 20, 1943, p. 543.
[252] Ibid., entry dated July 7, 1943, p. 324–325; ibid., entry dated October 25, 1943, p. 551.

lonely here, in the ghetto, go through their lives. Ten hours of work deprived of the care of a family. After the War, rushing to get their rations. Struggling with a number of everyday troubles, shopping, repairs, shorter or longer sickness, all that are problems impossible to solve for the lonely."[253] The formation of the first collective household dragged on until the end of the year. Henryk Neftalin was involved, and from mid-November he was in charge of organizing preparation works. He invited the head of the disbanded Holiday Division, Tatarka, to collaboration. The former Holiday House No. 4 at 119 Okopowa Street was designated for that purpose.[254] There were so many applicants willing to live in the collective household that they had to be sent to a medical examination in order to minimize the risk of infectious diseases spreading among the residents of the collective.[255] The first workers were offered accommodation in the house on Okopowa Street in mid-December. Very soon, the entire building was filled, and more such institutions were planned to be open in Marysin and in the former Heim on Gnieźnieńska.[256]

The Growing Importance of the Special Department

As mentioned above, from the autumn of 1942, the significance of the Special Department, headed by Dawid Gertler, was increasing. Based on the ruling of Hans Biebow dated October 9th of that year, Sonderkommando had the exclusive right to combat theft and abuse in divisions as well as in the Provisioning Department. Controllers of the Special Unit gradually took over subsequent divisions, vegetable and coal yards, as well as points of distribution of food and medicine. An officer of the Sonderkommando, Bronisław Dancygier, supervised the work of division doctors, members of the formation escorted wagons with food and guarded potato digging in Marysin.[257] Beginning in March 1943, an officer of the information participated in sessions of the court concerning penal cases brought by the special department. Initially, he took active part in the trial, over time, however, his role was limited to that of an observer.[258] Gradually, more and more disciplines of life and branches of administration that had been previously subject to Rumkowski came under the control of Sonderkommando. The Department took over the competences of the Bank of Purchase – beginning February 1944, all valuables, as well as gold and silver, previously purchased by the Bank at 7 Ciesielska Street, could be sold only at the headquarters of the Department at 96 Zgierska Street.[259]

As a result of the extension of its competences, the recruitment for that formation was carried out, which, on Rumkowski's orders, was handled by the Personnel Department.[260] In 1943, the Department had as many as 800 officers. With the power of Sonderkommando at his disposal, especially since there were many agents of the German Criminal Police,

[253] Ibid., entry dated September 22, 1943, p. 485.
[254] Ibid., entry dated November 17, 1943, p. 600; ibid., entry dated November 21, 1943, p. 606–607; APŁ, PSŻ 869, Korespondencja, p. 313.
[255] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated November 23, 1943, p. 611.
[256] Ibid., entry dated Decemeber 12, 1943, p. 654.
[257] Ibid., entry dated October 17, 1943, p. 534.
[258] Ibid., entry dated March 14, 1943, p. 103–104.
[259] APŁ, PSŻ 1070, Announcement no. 408 dated February 12, 1944, p. 74; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated February 2, 1944, p. 87; ibid., entry dated February 12, 1944, p. 114.
[260] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated October 11, 1942, p. 534.

Gestapo, as well as informers of the Board of the Ghetto among them, Biebow severely limited the power of the Eldest of the Jews.

After the September deportations, more and more food started arriving in the ghetto, which coincided with the distribution system being taken over by the Special Unit. However, from the point of view of the ghetto residents, one resulted from the other.[261] Gertler gradually gained popularity as the counterbalance for Rumkowski. People still noted the unfair system of protection; however, given the increased food rations, it was not as severe. Nevertheless, the head of the department lost the support of the German authorities in July 1943 – he was arrested by the Gestapo and deported from the ghetto. Allegedly, he was arrested personally by the head of the Gestapo, Otto Bradfisch himself.[262] Marek Kligier, who remained in opposition to Rumkowski, took over as the head of the Sonderkommando.

When in the autumn of 1943 a bitter competence dispute out between Rumkowski and the leadership of Sonderkommando[263] provoked by the issue of food distribution, it was the latter that came out victorious, gaining support of the head of the Board of the Ghetto. As a result, on Biebow's orders, the distribution of food in the ghetto was to be handled by a three-person body composed of Marek Kligier, Zygmunt Reingold and Wiktor Miller, which came to be known as the triumvirate. *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* recorded jokes that circulated about the new commission:

> The ghetto humor invented a word made up from the first letters of those names. Firstly, the Hebrew letters M-R-K could be interpreted as "*marak*" (soup), which was to say that "*marak*" would take care of better quality of soup. In Polish, the first letters ordered as R-K-M are an acronym for "*ręczny karabin maszynowy*" ["light machine gun"], which had to mean the "*triumvirate*" would shoot food toward people.[264]

Thus, Rumkowski was removed from that essential area, along with the head of the still operating Provisioning Department, Maks Szczęśliwy.

Hans Biebow clearly defined the responsibilities of the special department in a speech he gave on December 7, 1943 at the hall of the Culture House on Krawiecka Street:

> It is the institution that informs us about everything that is happening in the ghetto.
> Ever since the deportations is, I have entrusted the Special Unit with supervision of bakeries, vegetable market places and meet headquarters. If the Special Unit carries out house searches, it is because it is authorized to do so, as it is in the best interests of the ghetto to give up all hidden goods for the purposes of the production in the ghetto.[265]

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[261] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 264.

[262] Gertler was probably no longer useful for the Germans. The report on his arrest mentioned unspecified "irregularities"– AIPN, Ld 247/8, Akta osobowe Dawid Gertler, unpaginated.; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 268–269.

[263] Cf. Chapter 4.3.

[264] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Triumvirat, p. 267; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Triumvirat, p. 406.

[265] AŻIH, 205/19, Protokół przemówienia Hansa Biebowa, unpaginated.; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated Decemeber 6, 1943, p. 634; ibid., entry dated Decemeber 7, 1943, p. 641–642.

Thus, the head of the Board of the Ghetto confirmed that there were indeed agents of the German authorities in the Sonderkommando, which was intimidating but by no means a surprise for the ghetto inhabitants. He also reminded them that one of the tasks of this formation was carrying out house searches in order to find hidden goods, although such operations were not as intensive compared to the previous period. An extensive network of informants, spies, was used, who managed to amass considerable fortunes for the conditions of the ghetto.[266] At the same time, Biebow emphasized Rumkowski's achievements and defined the powers of the Eldest of the Jews regarding keeping peace and order with the help of the Order Service and the internal management of production plants.

A symbolic act signifying the increased importance of the Special Unit was establishing a new guardhouse at Bałucki Marketsquare in the end of October 1943, in rooms formerly occupied by the Presidential Secretariat, which was transferred to the office of the Secretariat for Requests and Complaints. Officers of the Sonderkommando stationed there guarded the nearby vegetable and coal yards as well as the Groceries Department.[267] At the moment of the liquidation of the ghetto, officers of the Special Unit faced one final important task – once more, they were to take part in a deportation operation, supporting German formations.[268]

4. Administrative Apparatus at the Time of the Liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto

In mid-1943, the SS took interest in the Łódź ghetto, which manifested in Heinrich Himmler's order to transform the closed district into a concentration camp and move all production plants from the ghetto, along with the staff, to camps in the Lublin region. As a result of the political situation, especially the approaching frontline, as well as the transfer of Odilo Globocnik to another position, the idea of moving the production east was abandoned. However, the plan to turn their ghetto into a concentration camp supervised by the SS-Ostindustrie (OSTI) was still considered. In mid-December 1943, a commission sent by the OSTI management came to Łódź and visited the ghetto[269] in the company of Otto Bradfisch and Hans Biebow, who were ordered to present statistical data on the population, provisioning and production in the close district. During the conference, preliminary conditions for OSTI taking over the ghetto were discussed. It was also established that it would be necessary to reduce the ghetto by selecting its residents and deporting those unable to work. The project was quite advanced, as evidenced by the fact that the issues

[266] The work of informants was described in the Chronicle in the column "Małe zwierciadło getta" [Little mirror from the ghetto]: "Special spy. Also the Special Branch has its spies. The proudly call themselves informers. Two of them, Fränkiel and Werdiger, are particularly savvy. They practiced their nasty business so intensely that they managed to amass a small fortune. But spies are not too friendly to one another. Kripo spies reported that Fränkiel and Werdiger had grown to be very wealthy officers of the ghetto underground world. Not only did they receive a real plot for the dignitaries from Gertler and appropriately exploited it, but also obtained a real fortune under false pretenses in the course of their 'official activity.' Kripo took care of these knights so intensely that they are not very mobile at the moment"– ibid., vol. 3, entry dated October 23, 1943, p. 549.

[267] Ibid., entry dated October 28, 1943, p. 556.

[268] Cf. rozdział 3.4.

[269] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated Decemeber 15, 1943, p. 660–661.

discussed during the meeting included personnel matters of the future camp, including the exact number of leaders, *kapos* and so on.[270]

However, Biebow did not support the idea of giving the ghetto to the SS, as he preferred to keep the status quo, that is staying in the group of enterprises reporting to Albert Speer.[271] The Jews imprisoned in the ghetto were aware of the competition at the highest levels of the economic authorities of the Third Reich. A *Chronicle* entry dated February 14, 1944, recorded quite specific information on the subject of the negotiations:

> In managerial and ostensibly well-informed circles, the conversation always turns to the question of an administrative change in the ghetto. For a long time, people have been saying that the ghetto will be removed from the jurisdiction of the mayor and delivered into the hands of the SS. Now a rumor is gaining currency that, since the ghetto falls into the sector of the armaments industry, it will be taken over by the so-called "Ostindustrie-Gesellschaft," a semi-official organization. An SS officer named [Max] Horn is reputed to be its representative.[272]

Eventually, during Himmler's meeting with the governor of Wartheland, Arthur Greiser, held in Poznan on February 12–13, 1944, a compromise was reached regarding the future of the closed district. The ghetto would not be transformed into a concentration camp but would continue to operate as the central ghetto of the province – the *Gau-Getto*. Moreover, it was to be reduced to the minimum, that to the point when all Jews in the close district would work exclusively for the purposes of German economy. Such a reduction would be carried out by a commando headed by Hans Bothmann, who had returned from Croatia and resumed the operation of the extermination center in Chełmno.[273] It was also established that all the movable property after the liquidation of the ghetto would be given to the Main Trustee Office for the East, while the area of the district and all property located there would be taken by the city.[274]

Expulsions in June and July 1944

However, it was several months before the announced liquidation was carried out. The decision was accelerated by the approaching eastern front, and with it the increasingly likely defeat of the Third Reich. Germans were also afraid that the events from the Warsaw ghetto, where Jews took up arms, might be repeated in Łódź. The concern was that the psychological consequences of such resistance could be catastrophic and provoke

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[270] A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów*, Warszawa 1961, p. 559–561.

[271] According to Eisenbach's findings, the head of the Ghetto Board clearly sabotaged the SS activities, not sending the OSTI the required data on the ghetto, which he sent to the Armaments Inspectorate in Posen first, along with information about the ghetto production capacity (5,000 sets of uniforms per day, excluding footwear) – ibid., p. 560–561.

[272] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated February 14, 1944, p. 123.

[273] W. Bednarz, *Obóz straceń w Chełmnie nad Nerem*, Warszawa 1946, p. 29, 36–37; S. Krakowski, "Zarys dziejów obozu w Chełmnie nad Nerem" [in:] *Mówią świadkowie Chełmna*, ed. Ł. Pawlicka-Nowak, Konin–Łódź 2004, p. 14–15; idem, *Chełmno. A Small Village in Europe. The First Nazi Mass Extermination Camp*, Jerusalem 2009, p. 154–157.

[274] A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska...*, p. 567–568.

broad social response. After all, Łódź was within the borders of the Third Reich, where more than 100,000 Germans were living at the time. They were also afraid that the Red Army or Polish underground might liberate the ghetto.[275]

The decision to liquidate the ghetto was most likely made in May or early June 1944.[276] This time, the governor of Wartheland followed the orders of the authorities in Berlin and started preparations to carry out the command. The obstacle proved the uncompromising position of the Armament Inspectorate in Poznan, which tried to postpone the date of the deportations – ghetto divisions were manufacturing goods for an urgent order for the Wehrmacht. Minister Speer also intervened. In his conversation with Himmler, Governor Greiser complained about the efforts of the Armament Inspectorate and Speer to delay liquidation, but on June 10, 1944, the Reichsfuhrer-SS clearly ordered him to continue the liquidation of the ghetto. After allied forces landed in Normandy and the Red Army started their offensive, neither Armament Inspectorate, nor Speer voiced any further objections.[277] Therefore, the Germans began to implement Himmler's orders.

News of the impending liquidation also reached the ghetto. On June 15, 1944, the *Chronicle* noted that a commission came to the ghetto with Otto Bradfisch, the previous Mayor Werner Ventzki, and police president Karl Albert. Members of the commission talked to Rumkowski in Bałucki market and visited the tailoring division at 36 Lagiewnicka Street. At the same time, Gestapo Commissioner Gunther Fuchs and an officer of that formation, Alfred Stromberg, came to the Central Secretariat and spoke to the head of the Order Service, Leon Rozenblat and Rumkowski's secretary, Dora Fuchs. As soon as the two commissions left, rumors started circulating in the ghetto:

> All [rumors – AS] aimed in one direction: expulsion! The ghetto did not know yet what actually happened in the Chairman's office, but everyone suspected significant expulsions. While before noon it was said that 500–600 people would be needed, in the afternoon it was believed that the resettlement would affect several thousand, perhaps even the majority of the population. Some even suspected that the ghetto would be liquidated.[278]

Next, the Chronicler noted that Gestapo officers handed Miss Fuchs and Rozenblat an order in which the authorities demanded that the first 500 people to work outside of the ghetto should be delivered by June 21st, and later 3,000 people every week. Therefore, it was clear for the author of the text why ghetto was talking about the upcoming liquidation. In the end, he added "It should be said that the mood is more apathetic than desperate, apart from individual outbursts of despair. Recent months of starvation tired the population so much that everyone says that things could not possibly be any worse."[279]

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[275] M. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945,* Wiesbaden 2006, p. 491; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi łódzcy po likwidacji getta (wrzesień 1944 – styczeń 1945)" [in:] *Rok 1945 w Łodzi. Studia i szkice*, ed. J. Żelazko, Łódź 2008, p. 32.

[276] A. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska....*, p. 568.

[277] Ibid., p. 569.

[278] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated June 15, 1944, p. 359–360.

[279] Ibid., p. 360.

The following day, Rumkowski issued Announcement No. 416, calling for registration work outside the ghetto. The registration took place at the Labor Office at 13 Lutomierska Street.[280] A comment on the announcement printed in the *Chronicle* on June 16th provided additional information about the operation, the purpose of the expulsion and the expected number of workers to be sent. First, groups would be directed to Munich for cleanup works after the Allied bombing, while the destination of subsequent expulsion was unknown. Each transport would have a designated leader, two doctors, sanitation personnel and Order Service members of which would not recruit from officers of the ghetto Order Service.[281]

In order to facilitate the registration and transport of workers, a resettlement committee was formed like in previous years, which operated in collaboration with the Labor Office. The head of the commission was Stanisław Jakobson, while prosecutor Ignaz Nussbrecher, one of the heads of the Anti-Aircraft Defense Service, was appointed secretary. Other members included Zygmunt Blemer, head of Central Prison Jozef Kohl, commander of the 1st District and deputy chief of the Order Service Samuel Berkowicz, and Hersz Wollman from the Sonderkommando.[282]

That day, an incident occurred, later reported in the *Chronicle*. Rumkowski was brutally beaten by Biebow in the office of the Eldest of the Jews at Bałucki Marketsquare. It was the believed that the reason for the aggressive outburst of the head of the Board of the Ghetto was Rumkowski's agreement to send workers out of the ghetto, as Gestapo officer demanded, which could affect the productivity of the ghetto. However, Biebow was most likely aware that the deportations marked the beginning of the liquidation of the ghetto. It is also possible that it was a revenge for Rumkowski's confirmation that the head of the Board of the Ghetto knew about the difference between the officially declared size of population and the actual number, which had come to light in January 1944.[283] Rumkowski was taken to the hospital at Mickiewicza Street, where he was treated by Dr. Michał Eliasberg.

On June 17th, the resettlement committee held a meeting of Rumkowski's closest associates Leon Rozenblat, Dawid Warszawski, head of the Central Tailoring Office and Kiwa Siennicki. Next, the committee organized a meeting for all heads of divisions and departments, during which it was established that each head would produce lists of persons to be deported. Biebow suggested that the staff of divisions that did not work for the purposes of the German army, that is the divisions of Carpets, House Slippers and Quilted Duvets, should be disbanded and sent for deportation. However, as the *Chronicle* noted, the commission "managed to dissuade him."[284] Managers were allowed freedom to choose the required number of persons from their staff to fulfill the fixed quota. Biebow assigned the committee a budget in the amount of 550,000 German marks, so that every

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[280] AYIVO, RG-241/542, Announcement no. 416 dated June 16, 1944, p. 1.

[281] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, p. 362.

[282] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Berkowicz Samuel, p. 40; ibid., entry: Nussbrecher Ignaz, p. 177; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Berkowicz Samuel, p. 48; ibid., entry: Nussbrecher Ignaz 276; AYV, O-34/637, unpaginated.

[283] Henryk Rubin put forward such theory – cf. I. (H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, pp. 430, 450. Committees visiting ghettos and the operon of the correction of divergences were also described in the *Chronicle – Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated January 11, 1944, p. 27.

[284] Ibid., entry dated June 17, 1944, p. 365. In the same note, the chronicler addresses the fate of the resettled from the west, rightly pointing out that they would be the first to be deported because they were not a member of the *mishpocha* – family and friends of the authorities protected from deportations.

deportee could receive a small amount. Money was also transferred to the Central Purchase Point, which would pay up to 50 marks for objects sold by the resettled.[285] The exchange was to be supervised by Henryk Neftalin.[286] The call to sell movables that belonged to those sent "to work" also appeared in Rumkowski's Announcement No. 417, announced on the following day.[287]

Over the subsequent days, the first people received personal summons for the departure sent via the Post Office. The summons were delivered by mail carriers, now cast in the role of bearers of ill news:

> Now, if you hear a knock on the door, it is known for sure that it is neither the milkman nor the baker – it is the postman, usually such a welcome sight; he scares people with his knocking in the broad daylight as if it was midnight. You barely got the summons and you already decided to resist.[288]

As during the displacement in 1942, the authorities used the method of blocking ration cards of those summoned and their families. Appeals were accepted by the committee operating at Central Prison. Those who did not report to the assembly point were brought the by the Order Service. The largest group were those previously resettled from the Third Reich and the Protectorate, who had the least chances of securing a protection and exemption from deportation.[289] Assembly points were formed at Central prison and in the building of the former Culture House at 3 Krawiecka Street.[290] From there, those designated for deportations were directed to Radegast Station.

The first transport departed on June 23, 1944, at 8 o'clock in the morning, carrying 561 people.[291] That day, a transport of 50 men left from Bałucki Marketsquare, sent to work at the extermination center in Chełmno on the Ner[292], which had just resumed operation. Gradually, in accordance with the guidelines of the German authorities, subsequent quotas were delivered for deportations.

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[285] When buying items at Central Point of Purchase at 4 Kościelny Square checks for German marks were issued, which were only exchanged in the Central Prison. Purchase was also possible in exchange for ghetto marks issued on the basis of a check at the Main Cash Office – ibid., entry dated June 25, 1944, p. 387; ibid., entry dated June 26, 1944, p. 390.

[286] Ibid., entry dated June 20, 1944, p. 373–374; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 450.

[287] AYIVO, RG-241/543, Announcement no. 417 dated June 18, 1944, p. 1.

[288] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated June 20, 1944, p. 374–375.

[289] Ibid., entry dated June 19, 1944, p. 371.

[290] Ibid., entry dated June 21, 1944, p. 377.

[291] Originally 562 people were sent, however one person was redirected to the Central Prison, as reported by the Chronicle, "A man who behaved exceptionally desperately was taken by Commissioner Fuchs back to the Central Prison." On the transport list, the number of people deported that day was corrected to 561 – APŁ, PSŻ 442, Lista transportowa, p. 1–11; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated June 23, 1944, p. 381.

[292] Only 14 people from this group returned to the ghetto. They arrived on July 6, extremely exhausted, and were sent back to the hospital. On the following day twenty more men were sent from the ghetto in their place – ibid., entry dated July 6, 1944, p. 409; ibid., entry dated July 7, 1944, p. 410. Their return was also noted by an anonymous author of a diary, "All signs in the heaven and earth seem to indicate that this devilish play is definitely and definitively coming to an end [...] even if it is a departure for work in the best case. Our lives are in grave danger, as I had the opportunity to see myself yesterday, watching those who came back from "voluntary" labor. They had been taken several weeks ago. They made a terrible impression on me, terribly hurt, swollen and completely exhausted only after a few weeks of work" – *Szukajcie w popiołach. Papiery znalezione w Oświęcimiu*, ed. J. Gumkowski, A. Rutkowski, Łódź 1965, p. 61.

Table no. 9
Deportations in June–July 1944.

Date	Number of deported
June 23rd	561
June 26th	912
June 28th	803
June 30th	700
July 3rd	700
July 5th	700
July 7th	700
July 10th	700
July 12th	700
July 14th	700
Total:	7,196

Source: *Kronika...*, vol. 4, p. 424.

During the deportations, several meetings of the leadership of divisions and departments of ghetto administration were convened. On the day when the first train departed, a meeting was held at the office of Metalwork Division I at 63 Łagiewnicka Street, attended by managers and headed by Aron Jakubowicz, head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions. He tried to convince those present to compile lists of people designated for deportations and supply them to the committee at Central Prison.[293] The operation had not been going as expected, and still more people were needed to meet the required quota set by the German authorities. On the following day, the 24th of June, another meeting was held for about 40 senior officials in the ghetto, the purpose of which was to "develop methods and guidelines for the deportations." It was decided to form an Inter-Divisional Committee. The new body would be tasked with preparing lists in accordance with the agreed quota and handling appeals. The resettlement committee that had been operating at Central Prison would provide care for people sent for deportations staying in assembly points and handled technical aspects of transports. Members of the Inter-divisional Committee were: Head of the Undergarment Division Leon Glazer; Head of the Construction Department Eng. Ignacy Gutman; head of the leather and saddle making divisions Józef Podlaski; Head of the Kitchens Department Boruch Praszkier; Commissioner Reingold of the Order Service; member of Trades and Control Office Presidium Mieczyslaw Rosenblatt; Head of Central Treasury Salomon Ser; former Head of the Labor Office Kiwa Siennicki; Head of the Old-Shoe Warehouse Izaak Sonabend; one the heads of the Metalworks Department I, Eng. Abraham Strykowski; Dawid Warszawski; and Head of

[293] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated June 23, 1944, p. 381.

the Department of Woodwork III Ludwik Winograd. The commission's headquarters was located at 18 Tokarzewskiego Street.[294]

The commission clearly delegated is competences among specially formed sections or sub- commissions. All members of the commission were responsible for supplying the required quota; all claims and appeals were handled by the commission for complaints, formed by Glazer, Podlaski, Praszkier, Ser, Siennicki, Strykowski and Winograd. Reinhold and Praszkier were in charge of care for those designated for deportations waiting in assembly points. The office was divided into four sections – three of them handled issues pertaining to people from Labour divisions, while one – persons from various departments of the ghetto administration. The Secretariat of the Inter-Divisional Committee was managed by clerks from the Trades and Controll Office, Mandelman, Lotenberg, Perl and Feierstein.[295]

The commission immediately developed a procedure for assembling the quota of people for deportations required by the German authorities. It was calculated that in order to satisfy the demands of the authorities, about 20–25% of workers had to be listed. These lists would be compiled by heads of individual units, and should feature persons capable of work aged from 15 to 60, with the provision that the upper age limit could be raised provided that the person in question was strong enough. It was suggested to designate the least needed workers, with the exception of the closest relatives of people necessary for the work in divisions or departments. The lists would be publicly announced so that people could appeal the decision.[296]

The first instance that examined each application was the head of a given unit, and the second– the commission for complaints at the Inter-Divisional Committee. If someone volunteered for deportations, another person could be removed from a compiled list; however, this was only up until the moment it was published. Persons designated for deportations who failed to report to assembly points were threatened with having their ration cards blocked, which was supervised by the Sonderkommando in consultation with the Head of the Ration Cards Department Albert Merenlender and Henryk Neftalin. The Health Department was obliged to provide health care for each transport.[297]

Some institutions were exempt from the obligation of providing lists of people for deportations, as they were involved in the operation or deemed to be imported enough that any interference with their work could affect the operation of the ghetto. Such excep-

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[294] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Podlaski Josef, p. 190; ibid., entry: Rosenblatt Mieczysław, p. 220; ibid., entry: Winograd Ludwig, p. 284; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Podlaski Josef, p. 299; ibid., entry: Rosenblatt Mieczysław, p. 330; ibid., entry: Winograd Ludwig, p. 438.

[295] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated June 24, 1944, p. 384.

[296] Usually two lists were complied, the so called external list, with the names of persons under protection, and internal, for people actually intended to be deported. The purpose of the system was to avoid the pleas of *misera plebs*, which could affect even more the already disturbed production in the divisions – ibid., entry dated June 27, 1944, p. 392.

[297] Dr. Robert Blum from Cologne was designated for the first transport, Dr. Adolf Witten-Berg from Berlin for the second, the third − Dr. Walter Schwerin from Berlin, the fourth − Dr. Elisabeth Singer from Prague, the fifth − Dr. Fritz Heine from Berlin, the sixth − Dr. Herman Weiss from Prague, the seventh − Dr. Hugo Natannsen from Prague, the eighth – Dr. Feliks Proskauer from Berlin; Dr. Grödel from Cologne was designated for the ninth transport, he was, however, released and left in the tenth transport. There was a doctor or nurse in every transport to Chełmno on the Ner. They were not murdered in the gas chambers, but were led to the furnaces in the Rzuchowski Forest and shot there – AYV, O-53/12, Walter Piller Testimony, unpaginated.

Dawid Warszawski – head of the Central Tailoring Office
(State Archive in Łódź)

tions included the Ration Cards Department, central purchase point, the departments of Post Office, Housing, Registration, Statistical, Fire Brigade and the Order Service, and most likely also the Central Secretariat. Also exempt from the obligation to provide lists were the Small Electrical Appliances Division and manual finishing plant.[298] Therefore, employees of these units were relatively safe. Some of them used their status for various reasons and married others, so as to protect them from expulsion. The practice was soon discovered and in early July, marriages with officers of the Order Service and Fire Brigade were banned.[299]

[298] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 4, entry dated June 24, 1944, p. 383–385.
[299] Ibid., entry dated July 4, 1944, p. 405; ibid., entry dated July 6, 1944, p. 408.

Bernard Fuchs – head of the Labor Office
(State Archive in Łódź)

During the deportations on June 27th, Leon Rozenblat acted on behalf of Rumkowski, who was staying in the hospital at the time.[300] Marek Kligier, head of the Sonderkommando, also played an important role − although he was not formally member of the deportation committee, he repeatedly came to the Central Prison,[301] where he intervened in the case of exemptions from deportation lists. Dr. Oskar Singer also met with Kligier regarding protection of the intelligentsia from the resettled group. The head of the Special Unit allegedly passed a list of names to the Central Prison. Later, Rumkowski and Neftalin, head of the Departments of Records that employed many representatives of the local and resettled intelligentsia, also became involved in the case. Aside from Singer, Szmul Rozensztajn, Józef Zelkowicz and Szaja Szpigel also intervened with Neftalin regarding sparing writers and artists from deportation.[302] Zygmunt Reingold, member of the resettlement committee, was involved, too – Neftalin promised to pass him the memorandum concerning that issue compiled by Singer. On July 9th, Singer, as an unofficial representative of Western intelligentsia, also met with the members of the Interdepartmental Commission and Rumkowski himself. The Eldest of the Jews requested a list of people who should be protected.[303]

[300] Ibid., entry dated June 24, 1944, p. 382.
[301] Ibid., p. 383.
[302] APŁ, PSŻ 871, Lista artystów i ludzi pióra w getcie, p. 47–48; I. Trunk, *Łódź*..., p. 256.
[303] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*..., vol. 4, entry dated July 5, 1944, p. 407; ibid., entry dated July 9, 1944, p. 415–416.

Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, Dora Fuchs, Hans Biebow and unknown German officer on Bałucki Marketsquare
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

On June 27th, Dawid Warszawski, head of the Tailoring Headquarters and member of the Interdepartmental Commission, was arrested. This incident caused a big stir in the ghetto. The reasons for the arrest are unknown, the *Chronicle* reported at the time: "Some argue that two gold watches were found on him, others again say that they know that nothing was found, and that it was not the usual arrest, typical in the ghetto, but some circumstance of higher caliber from many years ago and that that the case is being examined in the city."[304]

After returning to work Rumkowski organized a meeting with his closest associates, during which they discussed, among other issues, the blocking of ration cards – despite employing this method, many people did not report to the assembly points. The meeting was attended by Aron Jakubowicz, Marek Kligier, Henryk Neftalin and Tröger from the Special Unit. It was established that starting on June 30th the system would be simplified, especially as regards unblocking the cards of persons exempt from deportation and their family members. Soon to prevent the storage of food and to force those summoned whose cards had been blocked to appear to the Central Prison, Rumkowski decided to shorten the period for which rations were issued, from fourteen to seven days.[305] In early

[304] Ibid., entry dated June 27, 1944, p. 391.
[305] Ibid., entry dated July 1, 1944, p. 398.

July, the Eldest of the Jews also met with the heads of all labor divisions in the building of the Metalwork Division I at 63 Łagiewnicka Street. After this meeting, further list of persons to be transported were prepared. According to reports Rumkowski changed his stance regarding roundups, which he had shunned thus far. At his command the Order Service organized raids, dragging people from their beds at night, but also pulling them from queues in front of shops and capturing on garden allotments, where many went in the hope that they would find vegetables.[306]

Fear of raids was enormous. Jakub Hiller wrote in the journal: "people in the ghetto had their nerves taut like violin strings."[307] The *Chronicle* was very critical of the roundups carried out by the Order Service, "shameful, shocking sights in the streets. Jews hunt for Jews like the wild animals. A real hunt for Jews organized by Jews." In conclusion, the author added, "We have learned something, however, from our guards ... how to hunt people."[308]

As a result of the deportations from the turn of June and July 1944 many labor divisions had insufficient workforce. Acting on the command of Rumkowski, the Labor Office under the leadership of Bernard Fuchs reviewed various departments whose activity had been halted in connection with the deportations. On its basis, the number of employees was reduced. And so on July 11th the Court reduced its workforce to sixteen people, and the employees, including judges, were sent to work in workshops. Reductions also included the Loan Office, Central Bookkeeping, and Office Work Sections, where officials were transferred to work, for example in the Wood Plant I and IV, Metalwork Division I and Demolition Bureau (Abbruchstelle).[309]

In parallel to the liquidation, in mid-June demolition works were carried out, associated with the separating of several quarters on the streets Lutomierska, Podrzeczna, Drewnowska, Stary Rynek and Wolborska. The Jewish administration assigned Wolfowicz from the Housing Department and Eng. Gutman from the Construction Department, head of the demolition, to coordinate the resettlement of people from areas excluded from the ghetto. A further reduction of the ghetto was announced by Mayor Bradfisch, who visited the closed district on July 6th, 1944. This time, he ordered to dismantle buildings from Podrzeczna Street to Drewnowska and Stodolniana Street in order to form a fire lane for the former Poznański factory. The *Chronicle* reported that in addition to the team from Abbruchstelle were also employed several hundred Poles for the demolition.[310] On the instructions of the authorities officers of the Order Service and the ghetto Fire Department were also assigned to demolition works.[311]

On July 15, 1944 Rumkowski announced that deportations were stopped. All cards were unblocked and people could collect their rations. Joy came over the ghetto, described

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[306] Ibid., entry dated July 4, 1944, p. 405; ibid., entry dated July 12, 1944, p. 420; AŻIH, 302/9, NN Testimony, p. 1.

[307] AŻIH, 302/10, Jakub Hiller Diary, p. 43.

[308] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated July 13, 1944, p. 422–423.

[309] Among those directed to the Metalworks Division I were Judge Naum Byteński and Dr. Paweł Feygl – ibid., entry dated July 11, 1944, p. 418–419.

[310] On July 11th, the entire area of the Poznański factory was transferred to the City Board and only Polish workers were employed there – ibid., p. 418.

[311] Ibid., entry dated June 22, 1944, p. 378; ibid., entry dated July 6, 1944, p. 408; ibid., entry dated July 8, 1944, p. 412; ibid., entry dated July 11, 1944, p. 418.

in many accounts.[312] However, the happiness that deportations stopped did not alleviate the anxiety about the fate of the deported. An anonymous author wrote that day:

> This morning a rumor swept through the ghetto like wildfire: no more deportations ... People embraced and kissed one another. I did not believe this information but then it turned out to be true – I was filled with joy, but a few hours later my joy was disturbed again – I learned that someone read a letter found in a wagon which carried the deported – they went to Koło: It a terrible name for us, the name of the town, there was a slaughterhouse for Jews there... But in the end it is better that it ended.

The very next day in the halls of the Metalwork Division I at 63 Łagiewnicka Street Rumkowski organized a meeting of all heads of divisions and departments of the ghetto administration. He informed them of the necessity to resume and increase production and the related reorganization of labor divisions. He announced that from then on he would be in charge of assignments for work, and not the Labor Office. The heads were instructed to reduce administrative apparatus to a minimum, transfer younger, able-bodied people to production and replace them with the elderly. Closest family members of heads were to be employed, including their wives. Divisions that did not produce for the needs of the German army were to be disbanded, that is the divisions of Carpets, Slippers and Hats. The Restructuring Commission would prepare a project of productivization of youth.[313]

Peace brought to the ghetto by the halting of deportations was disrupted on July 17th, when Biebow's visit. He ordered Neftalin to provide statistics of the population still in the ghetto. Allegedly, the Gestapo demanded such information.[314] The following day, the head of the Board of the Ghetto met with the head of the Sonderkommando Kligier, which caused great concern and provoked many rumors, including those concerning the impending liquidation.[315] Tension intensified when information about Biebow's abnormal behavior reached the residents − he was said to have Dora Fuchs driven to the Records Departments in order to obtain current statistical data.[316] The mood was somewhat alleviated when postcards from the deported arrived, which indicated that they were in Leipzig.[317] In fact, however, these cards were an action aimed to calm the inhabitants of the ghetto, and had been written under duress at the death camp in Chełmno, moments before their authors were murdered.[318]

At Biebow's behest, offices of the Jewish administration at Bałucki Marketsquare were also reorganized. In an attempt to minimize contacts between the Jews and the Aryans, head of the Board of the Ghetto banned the heads of labor divisions from the Bałucki Marketsquare. Until that moment, they visited Jakubowicz's Central Office of Labor

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[312] AŻIH, 302/9, NN Testimony, p. 2; ibid., 302/10, Jakub Hiller Diary, p. 61; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 183.
[313] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated 16 July 1944, p. 429–430.
[314] Ibid., entry dated July 17, 1944, p. 431–432.
[315] Ibid., entry dated July 18, 1944, p. 433; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 184.
[316] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated July 19, 1944, p. 436.
[317] Ibid., entry dated July 26, 1944, p. 450–451.
[318] One of the tormentors from Chełmno called this action "a devilish alibi for murderers" – E. Serwański, *Obóz zagłady w Chełmnie nad Nerem*, Poznań 1964, p. 41. Cf. również M. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung...*, p. 489.

Division to attend to various matters. Jakubowicz was ordered to set up offices in a building opposite the Marketsquare and receive visitors there. Aside from that, Biebow ordered all non-essential personnel of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions to be removed from the barracks at Bałucki Marketsquare, including bookkeeping. The new headquarters of the part of the Central Bureau became the building at 25 Łagiewnicka Street.[319]

After the deportations were paused, Rumkowski reviewed a number of production plants. Highest production output was once again found in the tailoring plants and carpentry divisions, which provided goods for the orders of the German army. Despite the initial plan to discontinue hiring homeworkers, announced by Rumkowski, some establishments continued to use this form of employment. At the end of July 1944, more and more customers began to withdraw orders from the ghetto and demand that all unfinished goods be delivered to them. Some divisions were ordered to return equipment they had been using and which was the property of their clients. This way, Undergarment Division and Shoe-Making Division were forced to return their equipment. Gradually, subsequent divisions were closed – in early August the factory producing prefabricated houses for the victims of bombings was closed down.[320]

Liquidation of the Ghetto

The period of relative calm did not last long. Already on August 1st, Rumkowski with Kligier and Jakubowicz were summoned to the headquarters of the Schupo at Bałucki Marketsquare, where they were informed about the planned evacuation of the ghetto. Mayor Bradfisch and Biebow ordered the representatives of the Jewish administration to prepare a plan to export machines and goods from labor divisions to the Reich. Along with this, 5,000 people were to leave for work every day. According to the diary of Jakub Poznański, Rumkowski responded that he was unable to develop such a plan, to which the Germans replied that they would do this themselves. That day, Rumkowski convened a meeting with the heads of divisions, departments and representatives of workforce in order to alleviate the mood in the ghetto, which was buzzing with rumors. The tension was extremely high: "People were fleeing from divisions and running through the streets as madmen," Poznański noted. Rumkowski recounted his previous meeting with the mayor and the head of the Board of the Ghetto, reassuring those present that the announced date was not yet fixed and, as Poznański put it, "Nothing was certain, it could be that Thursday, or not that Thursday, it could start on Friday, on Saturday, or on Sunday." The authorities allegedly said that the front was 120km away from Łódź,[321] which is why Rumkowski suspected that there could be some disturbances with the transports.[322] The meeting had a calming effect on some ghetto residents. "I do not think anything is going to come out of it," Poznański wrote, but added that a lot of people did not come to work in his division, especially the heads. People did not trust the Eldest of the Jews, whose position had long

[319] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated July 20, 1944, p. 438.
[320] Ibid., entry dated July 22, 1944, p. 442; ibid., entry dated July 27, 1944, p. 454; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 187, 189.
[321] The Germans provided fairly precise information to Rumkowski, because the front had stopped at the Vistula River, and the uprising broke out in Warsaw. This may be evidence that government officials no longer cared enough to hide how difficult the situation of the Reich was.
[322] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 190.

been weakened.[323] "I think," Poznański noted, "that they had not told the Chairman what he said they had. I think that he deliberately described it in the blackest possible colors in order to take away peace from people and prevent them from organizing should there be a change of government."[324]

The following day, Biebow convened a meeting with the heads of tailoring and metalworks divisions in his offices on Bałucki Marketsquare. It was also attended by Erich Czarnulla of the Board of the Ghetto, Head of the Łódź Gestapo Stiller, and a delegate of the Armament Inspection from Berlin. It was agreed that the first divisions to leave would be tailoring, followed by metalworks. The authorities also ordered that electric machines be disassembled and prepared for transport – this task was given to the staff of the Sewing Machines Repair Division. Later that same evening, Announcement No. 417 was sent for printing.[325] Signed by Rumkowski, it announced the "transfer" of the ghetto. Beginning August 3rd, 5,000 people per day were to report for transport with 15−20kg of luggage. The notice specified (as agreed) that the first transport to leave would be composed of the staff Central Tailoring Office and Tailoring Division II along with their families, were ordered to report to the assembly point in the barracks at Radegast Station at 7 o'clock in the morning.[326] "The bomb has exploded," Jakub Hiller wrote about the first days of August in his diary.[327]

Only a small portion of those summoned from deportations reported to Radegast Station: "The trains are ready but there are no people," an unknown girl recorded in her diary.[328] In order to avoid repetition of the expulsions from September 1942 and the uncontrolled confusion, the head of the Board of the Ghetto decided to convince ghetto residents to report for deportation, giving a series of speeches. On August 2nd, he spoke addressing people in the hall of Metalworks Division I, asking them to listen to the summons and report for deportation. In addition, the Eldest of the Jews attempted persuasion – the following day, Rumkowski gave a speech at the firemen's square. He explained the decision of the German authorities and persuaded people to report to assembly points. After him, Mayor Bradfisch spoke, "openly begging the Jews to leave."[329]

Speeches by the representatives of the German authorities and Rumkowski did not convince ghetto residents to report to the transports. Each day, only about a dozen people came to Radegast Station. Therefore, the Germans decided to change tactics. The tone of speeches gradually grew more harsh. On August 4th, Announcement No. 418 was announced, this time signed not by Rumkowski but the mayor. In order to force those designated to report in collection points, the tested method of blocking food cards was employed – Bradfisch informed the staff of Tailoring Divisions I and II, designated to be "transferred" first, that from that moment all food products could be collected exclusively at Radegast Station. Moreover, the mayor threatened with death anyone who would hide

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[323] Cf. Chapter 4.3.

[324] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 190–191.

[325] Ibid., p. 191–192.

[326] AYIVO, RG-241/549, Announcement no. 417 dated July 18,1944, p. 1.

[327] AŻIH, 302/10, Jakub Hiller Diary, p. 120; A. Löw, *Getto*..., p. 360.

[328] AŻIH, 302/9, NN Diary, p. 2. Poznański noted in the diary that trains were delayed, but when they finally arrived at the station, there were no people to deport anyway – J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 192.

[329] Ibid., p. 192–193. Rumkowski's speech was announced on the morning of 3 August – AYIVO, RG-241/551, Announcement dated August 3, 1944, p. 1. Cf. also A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 361.

or provide food to people designated for deportation who failed to report at collection points.[330] The summons announced on the following day was just as harsh − Rumkowski urgently called the staff of the aforementioned divisions to report to the collection points, along with their families and luggage.[331] Over the subsequent days, Biebow and Rumkowski visited individual divisions almost daily, trying to convince people to report for the "transfer."[332] On the walls, announcements were placed calling employees of specific divisions. On August 7th, Tailoring Division III was called (53 Łagiewnicka Street) and IV (13 Żabia Street)[333], the following day − the Tailoring Divisions at 28 Nowomiejska Street and 2 Młynarska Street, and on August 10th − three subsequent tailoring divisions from 8, 14 and 16 Jakuba Street.[334] On August 8th, the final warning was announced. Rumkowski addressed employees and heads of tailoring divisions (using his typical phrase "Sisters and brothers!"), explaining to them that reporting to assembly points was in their own best interest as it guaranteed them the opportunity to take luggage and stay with their families.[335] It failed to convince ghetto residents, as evidenced by subsequent summons.[336]

At the same time, Biebow, who visited individual divisions, promised them better work conditions, lying that he was concerned for their good. The concern of the head of the Board of the Ghetto was further emphasized by phrases he used addressing ghetto residents, such as "My Jews." It caused confusion because people remembered Biebow had been actively involved in the deportations in September 1942. Therefore, people did not believe his words and did not report to collection point.[337]

Roundups were carried out in the streets in order to deliver the agreed quota of people. Initially, they were carried out by the Order Service, whose officers searched houses looking for hiding people. Later, Jewish firemen and chimney sweepers joined them. As Poznański noted, the operation started the night of August 7th, affecting not only employees of tailoring divisions but also the staff of other plants.[338] Ghetto streets were noisy, ringing with screams and cries of people dragged from their beds by officers of the Order Service.[339] The activity of the Jewish police was evaluated very negatively. The raids were very brutal and testimonies described looting of houses of the deported people.[340]

The entire Jewish administration, with Rumkowski at the helm, was criticized. Jakub Hiller interpreted the zeal in carrying out the roundups as an attempt of senior officials

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330 AYIVO, RG-241/552, Announcement no. 418 dated August 4, 1944, p. 1; *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 269.

331 AYIVO, RG-241/553, Announcement no. 419 dated August 5, 1944, p. 1.

332 Ibid., RG-241/555, Announcement no. 421 dated August 6, 1944, p. 1; *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 267–268.

333 AYIVO, RG-241/554, Announcement no. 420 dated August 5, 1944, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/557, Announcement no. 422 dated August 7, 1944, p. 1; *Dokumenty i materiały...*, vol. 3, part 1, p. 270.

334 AYIVO, RG-241/558, Announcement no. 423 dated August 7, 1944, p. 1.

335 Ibid., RG-241/559, Final warning, p. 1.

336 Ibid., RG-241/565, Warning concerning coluntary reporting for transports, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/566, Summons, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/567, Summons, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/568, Announcement 426 dated August 15, 1944, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/570, Warning, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/571, Warning, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/572, Warning, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/573, Warning, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/574, Warning, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/576, Admonition, p. 1.

337 A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 362.

338 J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 193.

339 AŻIH, 302/9, NN Diary, p. 2.

340 Ibid., 302/9, NN Diary, p. 3; ibid., 302/80, Markus Margulies Diary, p. 9; ibid., 302/124, Liza Taflowicz Diary, p. 50; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 363.

Group of people on their way to Radegast Station
(State Archive in Łódź)

to protect themselves. He decided that the Germans not only would be more ruthless, but they would not differentiate between the prominent figures of the ghetto and other people, which terrified the "elites" of the ghetto and motivated them to an even greater zeal.[341] Poznański added, describing searches organized by the Jewish police: "It should be noted that the house at 16 Berka Joselewicza Street, where only senior dignitaries resided, was allegedly untouched. It is very possible and characteristic."[342]

On August 8th, German troops arrived in order to make the expulsions more efficient. Again, using the experience from September 1942, subsequent blocks were surrounded and searched in order to capture a specific quota of people for deportations. Biebow often participated in the operation, along with his closest associates from the Board of the Ghetto. Many people hid in labor divisions, which initially proved to be a relatively safe place. Although officially, those who did not work there were not allowed to stay there, some heads of these plans tolerated people who sought shelter.[343] However, over the following days, divisions were also deported. Along with the capture of subsequent groups, the area of the ghetto was reduced at the order of the German authorities. Gradually, subsequent blocks were separated,[344] and people sent to points at Central Prison and at 3 Krawiecka

[341] AŻIH, 302/10, Jakub Hiller Diary, p. 145.
[342] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 194.
[343] Ibid., p. 195–196.
[344] AYIVO, RG-241/564, Announcement no. 425 dated August 13, 1944, p. 1.

Street, or directly to Radegast Station. Announcements published by the Gestapo informed inhabitants of the death penalty for any unauthorized person found in the area separated from the ghetto. The reduction made it much easier to carry out roundups, as the searched territory was smaller.[345]

During the liquidation, the administrative structures of the ghetto gradually fell apart. The first to stop operations were labor divisions whose staff simply stopped coming to work. Food rations were still distributed but most shops, cooperatives and bakeries stopped working, and therefore long lines formed in front of the open ones. Waiting involved significant danger, as people standing in the lines were an easy target for officers of the Order Service carrying out roundups. Chaos deepened with each passing day, and the threat of the deportations caused that not only the staff of labor divisions to stop coming to work but also other departments and administration offices. On August 18th, Poznański noted in his diary:

> Ghetto authorities completely lost their heads over the whole life of the ghetto. Vegetable yards, community shops (the so-called *ladens*), bakeries, pharmacies and any other kind of Community institutions have been completely looted even on Thursday evening [i.e., August 17th – AS]. The police have not been able to keep the crowd storming these institutions at bay. Money issued by Rumkowski completely lost its value and is now worthless. You can't get anything for it. There is no bread. There is no bread in *ladens* because there is no way to bring it.[346]

Until the end of August, there were some distribution points still operating, however, they distributed rations in a chaotic manner, without any registration. The largest allocations went to people from senior management of those who had a special protection. Over time, however, given the growing confusion, the system of protection stopped working in that regard. The control of the distributions of food allocations was taken over by law enforcement departments, which Marek Kligier's Sonderkommando, Leon Rozenblat's Order Service and Henryk Kaufmann's Fire Brigade, distrusting one another, mutually supervised themselves.[347] Until August 20th, rations were given only to people in collection points or stationed in division buildings, waiting for deportations along with the whole staff and families. Others who went to hiding were forced to obtain products illegally.[348]

Rumkowski's announcements in the ghetto served only to keep up the appearances that he had any control over the situation in the ghetto. In fact, the anarchy in the ghetto deepened with each passing day.[349] Individual divisions were grouped in "stationing points," where the staff could feel relatively safe. At 14–18 Żydowska Street, a point for fecalists and garbage collectors was formed and elsewhere, employees of the Transport Department, Order Service, and fire brigades were grouped, as well as porters from the Provisioning Department (the white guard, headed by Łajb Krajn), porters and attend-

[345] AYIVO, RG-241/569, Announcement no. 427 dated August 17, 1944, p. 1; ibid., RG-241/575, Announcement no. 428 dated August 22, 1944, p. 2–3.
[346] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 198.
[347] Ibid., p. 199–200.
[348] Ibid., p. 201–205; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 366–367.
[349] AŻIH, 301/3078, Zofia Kolczycka Testimony, p. 4.

Former ghetto area in spring 1945
(Institute of National Remembrance)

ants from Bałucki Marketsquare − employees of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions (Jakubowicz's guard). There were also collection camps at 36 and 63 Łagiewnicka Street and 16 Jakuba Street, where experts from various industries were grouped, protected from deportations.[350]

On August 27th, a notice was published, signed by the Gestapo, informing inhabitants that all who remained in the ghetto should report to collection point no later than the evening of August 28th, because the following day the last transport was leaving. All those found in the ghetto after that date, except for a designated group stationed in several camps, would be punished with death.[351] Chaos caused by the deportation meant that there were no accurate records, including transport lists of people taken out of the ghetto. It is therefore impossible to determine the exact number of deportees and departure time of individual transports. By August 29, 1944, approximately 67,000 people were deported from the ghetto to Auschwitz-Birkenau.[352]

In the final days of the liquidation, the structure of the Jewish administration effectively ceased to exist. Individual departments were closed and the majority of the staff were

[350] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 204–205; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi łódzcy po likwidacji getta, wrzesień 1944–styczeń 1945" [in:] *Rok 1945 w Łodzi. Studia i szkice*, ed. J. Żelazko, Łódź 2008, p. 34–35.

[351] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 208–209.

[352] The first transport reached the camp on August 15th, 244 people were admitted to the camp as prisoners, while others were sent to the gas chambers – A. Strzelecki, *Deportacja Żydów z getta łódzkiego do KL Auschwitz i ich zagłada*, Oświęcim 2004, p. 41.

deported. In one of the transports, the Eldest of the Jews left. He was killed several days later in one of the gas chambers in Birkenau.[353] His brother Józef and some of his closest associates, including police commander Leon Rozenblat shared his fate.[354]

After the Liquidation of the Ghetto

After the completion of the liquidation, about 1,300–1,400 remained in the ghetto.[355] After a selection,[356] they were all stationed in the aforementioned collection camps. The largest was located at 16 Jakuba Street in the building of the former tailoring and carpentry division. The administrative head of the camp was Mordka Bruder, member of the Sonderkommando, previously Eldest of the Jews in Wieluń. After Rumkowski's deportation, Bruder became the unofficial representative of Jews remaining in the area of the liquidated ghetto, with Lejb Krajn acting as his assistant. Officially, Biebow appointed a new representation, the Council of the Elders, which was composed of Dr. Michał Eliasberg, Dr. Albert Mazur, Eng. Julian Wajberg, Bronisław Dancygier and Leopold Mozelsio. The Eldest of the Jews was Majer Karmioł. Several days after his appointment, Karmioł was replaced Eliasberg.[357] In fact, Eliasberg and Mazur were responsible only for the sanitary condition of the camps.

In the camp at 16 Jakuba Street, there were 700–800 people. They formed the Aufraumungskommando, a camp of workers used for cleanup work in the area of the ghetto. Gradually, more people joined, coming out of hiding voluntarily or captured as a result of the denunciation.[358] According to Kripo reports, between September and the end of December 1944, 115 hiding Jews were found. The conditions in the camp were very difficult – it was dirty, damp post-factory building, where men were put on one floor and women on another, was surrounded by a fence guarded by German policemen. The day was organized just like labor camps. After morning roll call at 7–7:30, prisoners were divided into commands of 50 people, which, supervised by the police, were sent to work. Their responsibilities included, for example, searching empty houses for bedding, clothing, undergarments, furniture and other equipment, as well as sorting them and then taking to Radegast Station and placing them on wagons to be taken to Germany.[359] They

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[353] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 369; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 209–210; H. Langbein, *Ludzie w Auschwitz*, Oświęcim 1994, p. 211.

[354] According to Mosze Chęciński's account, Rozenblat was beaten to death by Mojsze Chusyd from Łódź. – M. Chęciński, "Zegarek mojego ojca" [in:] idem, *Jedenaste przykazanie: Nie zapomnij*, Toruń 2004, p. 145–148. Konstanty Wołkowski allegedly witnessed the incident – AŻIH, 301/2838, Konstanty Wołkowski Testimony, p. 11–13.

[355] M. Alberti, *Die Verfolgung...*, p. 495; A. Strzelecki, *Deportacja...*, p. 37; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 35.

[356] It was carried out personally by Biebow and his associates from the Ghetto Board at Bałucki Market or directly in divisions– R. Bonisławski, "»Obozy« pracy dla Żydów przy ulicach Jakuba 16 i Łagiewnickiej 36" [in:] *Obozy hitlerowskie w Łodzi*, ed. A. Głowacki, S. Abramowicz, Łódź 1998, p. 225–226.

[357] AIPN, SOŁd 4, Announcement dated November 27, 1944, p. 67; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 39. In the ghetto Karmioł was a technical head of the Tannery – APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Karmioł Meier, p. 122; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Karmioł Meier, p. 201.

[358] A recurring theme in many accounts is the tragic story of the discovery of Dr. Daniel Wajskopf's hideout at the beginning of November 1944, during which there was a struggle between the doctor defending his family and Germans with Biebow at the head. Before he was shot, Wajskopf, managed to beat up Heinrich Schwind and do some harm to Biebow – J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 254; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 372–373; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 46.

[359] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 256–257.

worked into the afternoon with the exception of Sundays, which were free. Those who worked slowly and carelessly were punished with flogging, and theft or sabotage was punished by death – executions were carried out in the cemetery. In the autumn of 1944, a group of several dozen people incapable of work were taken in an unknown direction and murdered.[360] Prisoners were also robbed by their German supervisors – they were deprived of their last remaining valuables, such as watches.[361]

Aside from the camp on Jakuba Street, there were other such establishments on Łagiewnicka Street, housing about 600 people. The camp at 36 Łagiewnicka Street was located in the building of the former Hospital No. 1, therefore the conditions there were better than on Jakuba Street. The camp at 63 Łagiewnicka Street was located in a former metalwork's division. In both these camps, there were qualified representatives of various industries as well as prominent members of the Jewish administration of the ghetto – the head of the camp at 36 Łagiewnicka Street was the Aron Jakubowicz, while Solomon Lewin, former head of the Straw Shoe Division, and Dawid Feiner, former head of the Tailoring Division II, were his assistants. Marek Kligier was in charge of provisioning. Just like on Jakuba Street, here women were separated from the men. On the ground floor, there was a pharmacy, an ambulatory, administrative rooms and storage where bedding meant to be cleaned and then taken out of the ghetto was kept. Aside from German policemen, the camp was guarded by members of the cleanup group appointed by the leadership of the camp.[362]

Persons detained in camps at Łagiewnicka were to be transported to work in factories in Dresden, Oranienburg and Königs Wusterhausen, where the authorities planned to move the production substitute houses for victims of the Allied bombing. Workers assigned to work in the plants where Biebow and his colleagues – Erich Czarnulla and Alfred Stromberg – had shares were picked personally by head of the Board of the Ghetto himself.

Before that, an epidemic of scarlet fever broke out among the detained children, as a result of which, on October 21st, 51 people were moved to the camp on Jakuba Street – patients and their families – and five people there were chosen to take their place.[363] That same day, people from the camps on Łagiewnicka Street were directed to Radegast Station and left for Germany with machines and tools necessary to work in Biebow's factories.[364] The Poznański noted, "They say that they left on Saturday [October 21st – AS] at noon, 37 people in each wagon. Biebow bid them farewell, he even kissed Jakubowicz, and he was there to see Jakubowicz board the train."[365]

After the camps on Łagiewnicka Street were liquidated, subsequent blocks of streets were gradually cleaned, changing the purpose – a military hospital was planned in the building of the former hospital at 36 Łagiewnicka Street. Construction works were supervised by Eng. Ignacy Gutman and carried out by Jewish and Polish workers brought in from the city, which facilitated contacts and exchange of information as well as getting food.[366]

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[360] Ibid., p. 252.
[361] R. Bonisławski, "Obozy...", p. 228–230.
[362] D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 36–37.
[363] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 244.
[364] Ibid.; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 37.
[365] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 246.
[366] Ibid.; D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 38, 41–42.

With the approaching front, German authorities decided to murder the remaining people in the former ghetto. On January 10, 1945, a group of workers was ordered to prepare nine ditches by the cemetery wall, which caused alarm among the Jews. On January 17th, it was decided at a meeting at Bałucki Marketsquare that in the face of the expected entry of Red Army troops, people from the camp on Jakuba Street would be shot. Mordka Bruder reported this in his testimony:

> Rudolf Kramp told me to announce a gathering for 7.30am the next day, after a few minutes I went to Kramp to make sure that the service and typists that generally appeal to be excused from roll calls were also expected to attend. When I asked once again about the reason for the roll call, [...] he told me that it was about extra food rations. Gestapo officer Neuman, who was present during this conference, got drunk and blurted out that all Jews were to be murdered the next day.[367]

Expecting the worst, prisoners from Jakuba Street did not come, apart from a small group. Most of them managed to hide in the release of the former ghetto. Because of the lack of time, the Germans only managed to capture several dozen people, who were locked in the Kripo arrest at Kościelny Square and fled the city that day. The following morning, on January 19, 1945, the first Red Army troops entered Łódź, who saved the lives of the remaining Jews. In total, out of about 200,000 people who passed through to the ghetto, not even 900 survived to see it liberated.[368]

[367] Cited in R. Bonisławski, "Obozy...", p. 231–232.
[368] D. Siepracka, "Żydzi...", p. 47–48; R. Bonisławski, "Obozy...", p. 232–233; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 374–375.

4

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS OF THE ŁÓDŹ GHETTO

1. Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski – the Eldest of the Jews

In the context of its administration, the name most often mentioned in studies devoted to the closed district of the occupied Łódź is the head of its Jewish structure, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski. Previous chapters have described the circumstances of Rumkowski's appointment as the Eldest of the Jews and his official activity as the head of the Jewish administration of the ghetto. This chapter will present the private biography of the "King"[1] of the Łódź ghetto. In spite of numerous publications devoted to the Łódź ghetto, Rumkowski's biography is yet to be written.[2]

The following section aims to answer the question that Primo Levi asked years ago in his essay *The Gray Zone*, namely "Who was Rumkowski?" Was the Italian philosopher and Auschwitz survivor correct in saying that the eldest of the Jews "He is neither a monster nor an ordinary man, yet many people around us are similar to him"?[3] Presented below will be two themes associated with Rumkowski. The first is Rumkowski's prewar biography, presenting his family life, economic activity, political involvement in the Łódź Jewish Community as a representative of the Zionist party, and his contribution to the broadly understood social care. The other theme is an attempt to present Rumkowski's wartime biography, his family life and the house where he lived. The latter part will not cover the characteristics of the office of the Eldest of the Jews and Rumkowski's associated official activity and policy tour words, the German plans

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[1] Rumkowski is referred to as such on a number of occasions in writings devoted to him; the phrase is derived from the ghetto parlance. Cf. the illustrated satirical publication on Rumkowski, *Voyl iz dem melech* (It's good to be a king) in the Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (henceforth: AŻIH) as well as the text by Alice de Buton *Drobny przekrój getta* [in:] *Kronika getta łódzkiego / Litzmannstadt getto 1940–1944*, vol. 5: *Suplementy*, ed. J. Baranowski et al., p. 202–203.

[2] This gap is filled to some extent, contrary to its author's intention, Monika Polit's book "*Moja żydowska dusza nie obawia się dnia sądu." Mordechaj Chaim Rumkowski. Prawda i zmyślenie*, Warszawa 2012. This work is the first attempt to present the Chairman's life more broadly, albeit unfortunately limited to biographical aspects, to prewar times. The book provoked an interesting discussion, thus proving that the dispute over the assessment of the Eldest of the Jews, which had begun in his lifetime, is still ongoing − cf. reviews of the book by Paweł Spodenkiewicz and Paul Glasser in: *Dzieje Najnowsze*, 2013, r. 45, z. 1, p. 259–266; Andrea Löw and Agnieszka Żółkiewska in: *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały*, 2014, no. 9, p. 556–568; response to these reviews, ibid., p. 569–578. The same issue also featured an interesting discussion of the book by Michał Głowiński, reviewer of Monika Polit's doctoral dissertation – *Mordechaj Chaim Rumkowski – postać rzeczywista i bohater legend*, ibid., p. 551–555.

[3] P. Levi, *The Complete Works of Primo Levi*, ed. Ann Goldstein, New York 2007.

of exploitation and later extermination of Jews imprisoned in the ghetto, as they have been described in previous sections of the volume.

Prewar Activity

Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski was born on February 27, 1877,[4] in Illino in the Vitebsk province in the Russian Empire. He had three siblings: Roza, Berta and Józef, to whom he was very attached; in an autobiographical essay from 1938, Rumkowski described his family as loving. Other than that, very little is known about Rumkowski's family home. It was most likely a poor one and profoundly religious, as the first and last level of education of young Mordechai was the local *cheder*. Rumkowski's attachment to religion is evidenced by his conduct when he was living in Łódź − he kept kosher and regularly attended the synagogue Ohel Yakov at 18 Gdańska Street where he even paid for his own seat. He lived at 105 Kilinskiego Street in the same building as his brother – another indication of their brotherly affection.[5]

In the early 1890s, by way of Jewish emigration from the Russian Empire, Rumkowski left his hometown and headed for the Kingdom of Poland. He was one of 250,000 Litvaks who decided to leave, fearing further pogroms and persecution. This emigration was particularly intensified following the Tsarist laws of 1882, 1887 and 1891, which reinstated the restrictions of the right of residence for Jews, forcing them to settle in the western part of the Empire and forbidding them from staying in towns with less than a thousand inhabitants. The Jews were also expelled from Moscow, St. Petersburg and other cities in which they had been previously tolerated. The majority of Litvaks chose to emigrate to Central Poland – Warsaw or Łódź – which is exactly what Rumkowski did.[6] There, they quickly organized their daily lives from scratch and their knowledge of the Russian conditions, above all the language, helped them to cope in the new reality. However, their presence provoked mixed feelings among the local Jews, who were rather reluctant towards the newcomers. As Alina Cała writes, Litvaks were considered "rude, arrogant, unpleasant, standoffish and cheap, overly intellectual."[7] To complete their negative image, they were often accused of assimilating the Russian way of life and collaborating with the tsarist regime.

It was in such atmosphere that Rumkowski arrived in Łódź and found work there. Unfortunately, very little is known about that first post. In the aforementioned biography, he only mentions that he was indeed employed at the time.[8] Rumkowski's name does not appear in records until 1898, where he is listed along with Natan Ejman as registrant

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[4] Monika Polit points out the likely date of February 28, which was included in Rumkowski's biography published in *Lodzer Gezelszaftlechkajt Almanach*, vol. 1, ed. M. Frankental, Łódź 1938. Cf. M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 14. The ghetto administration documentation unequivocally cites the date of February 27.

[5] Ibid., p. 19–20; *Księga adresowa miasta Łodzi i województwa łódzkiego z informatorami Warszawy woj. krakowskiego*, kieleckiego, lwowskiego, poznańskiego, pomorskiego z m. Gdynią i śląskiego. Rocznik 1937–1939. Dział II: Wykaz mieszkańców miasta Łodzi, p. 371.

[6] A. Cała, *Asymilacja Żydów w Królestwie Polskim (1864–1897). Postawy, konflikty, stereotypy*, Warszawa 1989, p. 152. Cf. also J. Klier, *Pale of Settlement*, http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/ article.aspx/Pale_of_Settlement (access February 24, 2014).

[7] A. Cała, *Asymilacja...*, p. 151; M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 21–22.

[8] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 22.

Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski in 1941
(State Archive in Łódź)

of a plush weaving mill, in the form of a limited liability company with the capital of 84 rubles. The factory, located at 29 Wólczańska Street, employed 15 laborers and had a 8 hp gas engine.[9] At the age of only 21, having been living in Łódź for several years, Rumkowski decided to seek his own fortune in the "promised land" and started his own company. At that time, his family life also flourished − in 1902 he married Ita Bender, daughter of Icek and Dwojra, who accompanied him until her tragic death in 1937.[10]

Rumkowski was consistent in his search for opportunities, as evidenced by subsequent initiatives he undertook. According to Monika Polit's findings, in 1904, Rumkowski lounched a plush factory with Abe Nejman, located at 116 Piotrkowska Street, hiring 32 Jewish workers. The following year, the address book states that the company opened a new weaving mill at 81 Średnia Street, this time with 20 employees, while the staff

[9] W. Kowalski, *Leksykon łódzkich fabryk*, Łódź 1999, p. 116.

[10] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 24. The photograph of the funeral is in the Archive of the Ghetto Fighters' House (henceforth: GFH) pref. number 28286.

working in the building on Piotrkowska was reduced to 16. In subsequent years, Rumkowski returned to the building at 29 Wólczańska Street, where his business operated as a company until 1911, employing up to 25 people. The following year, Nejman left and two other partners took his place, while in 1913−1914, Rumkowski was the sole owner of the factory.[11] At the same time, until the outbreak of the war, he was involved in the Łódź Society for Mutual Credit.[12]

After the outbreak of the First World War, he left for Moscow. According to his autobiography, in 1915 he initiated an operation to help Polish Jews, which soon evolved into the General Assistance Committee of Polish Jews. In that committee, headed by the Łódź factory owner Ber Wachs, Rumkowski could devote himself to organizational work. He returned to Łódź in 1990. In the same year, he worked as an insurance agent for the company Prudential and the Silesia Society; he was said to be the director of the Society's Łódź branch. He continued working for the insurance industry until 1938.[13]

At the same time, upon returning to the independent Poland, Rumkowski became involved in political activity. In 1919, he joined the ranks of the Zionist Organization, and from 1928 for the subsequent ten years he was a member of the local leadership of the party, namely the Municipal Zionist Committee. He was also involved in political initiatives on the central level. For example, he was a member of the Party Council of the Zionist Organization in Poland and supported Icchak Grunbaum's radical faction Al Hamishmar, rival of the Et Livnot bloc within the Zionist Organization. In late 1928 and early 1929, when the conflict between the two factions reached its peak, mainly regarding the tactics of the Jewish parliamentary representation in the face of the Polish political movement called Sanation (Pol. *Sanacja*) as well as ideological issues, Rumkowski clearly sided with the radical Al Hamishmar party. He participated in two meetings of the faction, taking an active part in them.[14] In 1933, as a representative of the Zionist committee, he greeted the president of the World Zionist Organization, Nachum Sokolow, when he arrived in Łódź. Several years later, he was appointed one of the Łódź delegates to the 12th National Zionist Congress.[15]

Rumkowski's political involvement was reflected in his activity in the local arena in the Łódź Jewish Community. He was a member of the Community Council from its first term in 1925.[16] Almost from the beginning, he was a member of the Committee for Social Help as well as the Committee for Controlling Orphanages Subsidized by the Community, which was directly associated with his interests and social activities, which are going to be discussed later herein. During the Community meetings, Rumkowski

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[11] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 23–24; B. Pełka, "Rumkowski Chaim Mordechaj (Morduch)" [in:] *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, ed. J. Rudowski, J. Rustejko, vol. 33, Wrocław 1991.

[12] Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (henceforth APŁ), Łódzki Spółdzielczy Bank Dyskontowy 3, Lista członków Łódzkiego Towarzystwa Wzajemnego Kredytu, p. 1.

[13] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 25; J. Podolska, "Nie w naszej mocy przebaczać. Chaim Mordechaj Rumkowski. Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów w łódzkim getcie" [in:] *Fenomen getta łódzkiego 1940–1944*, ed. P. Samuś, W. Puś, Łódź 2006, p. 208.

[14] J. Walicki, *Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce w latach 1926–1930*, Łódź 2005, p. 270–275.

[15] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 50. The YIVO Institute in New York has Gustaw Eisner's film documenting Sokolow's visit in Łódź, featuring Rumkowski – http://www.cjh.org/16mmPostcards/Original_Films.php (access February 24, 2014).

[16] In 1914–1925, the Community was administered by a provisionary council. Cf. R.M. Shapiro, *Jewish Self-Government in Poland: Łódź 1914–1939*, Columbia University 1987 (manuscript of a doctoral dissertation in the collection of the University of Łódź Center for Jewish Research).

repeatedly requested subsidies for social institutions. In June 1926, during a meeting of the Community Council when the new budget was debated, he criticized the proposed expenditure, pointing out the lack of resources for the care of orphans, asserting that supporting such institutions should be the Community's responsibility. He made no secret of his dim view of the "clerical" majority of the Council and its attitudes toward the needs of the Jews of Łódź. Although the sum of 70,000 zlotys was indeed allocated for the needs of all charitable institutions, which can be considered Rumkowski's success, no subsidies were paid by February the following year. In 1927, he postulated allocating funds for the Committee for the Adoption of Children and funding a special Commission for the Pesach Action − annual holiday aid for the poor members of the Community. In doing so, he found himself in conflict with the Chairman of the Community Council, Szlomo Budzyner, whom he accused of dishonesty and disregarding the needs of voters. In the winter of 1928, Rumkowski proposed providing heating for social institutions, presenting his own calculations of the amount of coal needed during a meeting.[17]

From 1930, Rumkowski, already as a member of the board of the Community, continued to criticize the policy of the orthodox majority. In March 1930, the press reported that he exposed a bribery network in the cemetery division of the Community. During the same meeting, he postulated allocating 10 million zlotys for aiding the Jews in the Soviet Union, which the majority of the board members accepted. Characteristically, during this and several other debates, Rumkowski apparently enjoyed giving speeches so much that he disregarded the time limit while delivering them. This provoked a number of incidents. Such behavior seems interesting in the context of Rumkowski's public speeches, when, as the Eldest of the Jews in the Łódź ghetto, he considered that form of communication with the populace of the closed district as one of the most important.[18]

After the May elections to the Jewish Community in 1931, Rumkowski was elected to the board, running in the first position on the Zionist list. The new authorities of the Community were dominated by representatives of the Agudat party, since Socialists boycotted the elections. Thus, the orthodox had the absolute majority both in the Council and in the board of the Community. The local press printed a series of articles alleging that the election was rigged, which marked the beginning of a long-term conflict in the Community. It culminated in the autumn of 1937, when the Zionist party, the Folkists, and the media Mizrachi representatives resigned from the leadership of the Community.[19]

Interestingly, Rumkowski refused to resign and he continued to hold his office on the board until the outbreak of the Second World War. As he explained, the vote was carried out when he was absent, even though he served as the leader of the Zionist faction in the Community. Moreover, he justified his participation in the structures of the Jewish representative bodies saying that he had to take care of the poorest. Rumkowski's subordination was not received well by the authorities of the Zionist organization, and he had to face the party court. Researchers disagree as to the ruling. On the one hand, some claim that he was removed from the organization in the spring of 1938 and reinstated in the follow-

[17] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 45–48. All further information on Rumkowski's activity in the Community has been based on M. Polit's work.

[18] The subject is discussed in greater detail further in the chapter . Cf. also "Wstęp" [in:] *"Słuchają słów Prezesa..."*. *Księga przemówień Chaima Mordechaja Rumkowskiego*, ed. A. Sitarek, M. Trębacz, Łódź 2011, p. 6–11.

[19] R.M. Shapiro, *Jewish...*, p. 216–217.

ing year. On the other hand, Monika Polit points out that Rumkowski is mentioned in the oft-cited *Almanac*, published precisely in 1938, as member of the organization. There can be no doubt that in the spring of 1939, Rumkowski was present at the general meeting of the organization, where he reported on his activity in the Community, reiterating his motivation not to resign from his position on the Community board.[20]

Rumkowski's political involvement was only one of his areas of activity. His popularity as a politician never extended beyond the Jewish world, and while he was a well-known figure in the circle of the Jews of Łódź (also, or perhaps above all, because of his social activities described below), in the scale of the city and not to mention the country his role was not as significant as that of the Zionist Mieczyslaw Rozenblat or the Aguda member Jakub Lejb Mincberg (both members of Parliament of the Polish Republic), or the Polish senator Szlomo Budzyner, also associated with Aguda. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons of Rumkowski's limited career opportunities was his very poor command of the Polish language. It seems that Rumkowski's ambitions were restricted to his involvement in the Community and social organizations, and he had significan achievements in the latter area.

The institution inherent to Rumkowski's activity was the orphanage in Helenówek, but he was also actively involved in many other institutions and societies: he was a member of the Herzlyia Association, co-founder of the Jabne (Yavneh) Hebrew school, he supported the Szolem Alejchem preparatory school, and served as a member of the board of the orphanage at 20 Szulca Street together with his wife. He was actively involved in the support of the Łódź Jewish Association for the Help of Mothers and Newborns at the Gynecology and Obstetrics Clinic at 15 Sterlinga Street. For a time, he also served as the head of the Łódź branch of the American Jewish Joint Distibution Committee, was the president of the General Committee of Orphanages and the deputy president of the Łódź branch of the Central Committee for Help for Orphans in Poland. He was a member of the audit committee and the board of the Łódź branch of the Society for Health Protection and co-founded the Association of Convalescent Soldiers. Rumkowski also served as the president of the board of the Boys' Dormitory at 41 Pomorska Street and the "Pomoc" Dormitory at 7 Narutowicza Street (both were associated with the dormitory in Helenówek).[21]

In 1925, Rumkowski served as the president of the board of the Association "Boarding for Jewish Children and Farm in Helenówek." According to Rumkowski himself, the institution, was supposed to be a modern care facilityt (the name "orphanage" was deliberately abandoned), located outside the city so that young charges could stay away from the unfriendly urban environment. The location was also supposed to make it possible to implement the Zionist ideals of restructuring (Ger. *Umschichtung,* Pol. *przewarstwowienie*) and reconstruction of society, as well as the education of a Jewish farmer, who would later build the future state in Eretz Israel. In the modern and equipped dormitory, approximately 120 charges were staying; working in workshops and in the field, they learned self-reliance, which Rumkowski thought to be of utmost importance as "powerful forming and educating force."[22] The institution employed educational methods developed by Janusz Korczak, considered highly innovative at the time. In the late 1930s, Helenówek

[20] Ibid., p. 217; M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 51–52.
[21] *Lodzer Gezelszaftlechkajt Almanach...*, unpaginated.
[22] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 31.

struggled with financial difficulties that contributed to its decline. Pinchas Gerszowski, member of the board of the Association, said bitterly in an interview for a Łódź newspaper, "Helenówek was developing fantastically, exceeding our expectations and capabilities; serious mistakes were made that led to the current situation."[23] In spite of the difficulties, people still had confidence in Rumkowski,[24] who held the position of the president of the dormitory until the outbreak of the war.

As an educator, Rumkowski also wrote for various publications. Aside from the magazine titled *Helenówek*, published by the dormitory in Polish and Yiddish, Rumkowski communicated his ideas in the Yiddish language periodical *Sierota* [Orphan]. Rumkowski published there articles on educational ideals and reports on the activities of the dormitory. He did not hesitate to publish texts openly attacking his orthodox opponents from the Community.[25]

The outbreak of the war placed Rumkowski in a completely new situation.

> "Before the war, [the Community – AS] served a fairly modest role, the average citizen rarely came into contact with it, and the Community itself was not overly eager to represent his interests when dealing with the authorities. How strange and distant that period seems and how vastly different the role of that Community from the role and difficult tasks that Chairman Ch. M. Rumkowski has had to take upon himself as the head of the Łodź Jews!"

wrote the author of the *History of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto*.[26] As has been mentioned in the first chapter of this volume, Rumkowski stayed in Łódź after the outbreak of the war and decided not to escape, unlike Jakub Mincberg and Abram Pływacki. As the only member of the prewar board of the Community that stayed in the city he was appointed the Eldest of the Jews by the German Commissioner of the city, Albert Leister on October 13, 1939. Over time, he gradually expanded his powers regarding the organization of life of the Jewish Community in the occupied city and, utilizing them, he proceeded to create the foundations of administrative structures that would allow him to implement German orders. Without a doubt, his prewar experience proved highly valuable.

Family and Home

There can be no doubt that Rumkowski had a leading role in organizing life in the ghetto, standing out in that field by his energy and initiative. The German administration

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[23] Cited in ibid., p. 32.

[24] The author believes that he should mention here the accusations made against Rumkowski by a former employee of the dormitory, Jechiel Kac. On the one hand, he made charges that included using brutal methods of education and of the lack of qualified educators in Helenówek, on the other, accused Rumkowski of sexual harassment of underage girls. The latter allegation was continued in the stories that circulated in the ghetto. Unfortunately, except for the few testimonies and recollections (including the dubious account of L. Eichengreen, *Rumkowski and the Orphans of Lodz*, San Francisco 2000), there are no sources to verify this information. Cf. M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 34–39; J. Podolska, *Nie w naszej*..., p. 208–209.

[25] M. Polit, *Moja...*, p. 41–47.

[26] *Kronika getta łódzkiego / Litzmannstadt getto 1941–1944*, ed. J. Baranowski et al., vol. 5: *Suplementy*, Łódź 2009, p. 2.

found in him not only "servant of the regime" executing the commands given by superior authorities but also an ingenious business partner, which is particularly evident in the organization of production in individual departments. Just like before the war, very little is known about the private life of the Eldest of the Jews during the occupation. In the case of the lack of Rumkowski's own testimony, the main source of information on his personal life are the accounts by his closest associates and family members.

Most likely he moved from his place at 105 Kilińskiego Street in a Łódź to the area of the future ghetto in the late 1939, along with his brother Józef and his family. Rumkowski took the spacious apartment located in the left wing on the first floor of the former building of the *Kasa Chorych* [State Health Insurance] at 34/36, Łagiewnicka Street, which housed the Hospital No. 1. Residents of the closed district knew that place very well. During periods of dissatisfaction with Rumkowski's policy, protests were held under his windows; for example in January 1941, as reported in the *Chronicle*. During one demonstration, unhappy ghetto inhabitants demanded larger food rations, chanting "Death to the Chairman." One month later, during another protest, a large group of children carried banners that read "Rumkowski, you are our misfortune." According to an eye witness, the crowd tried to break into the apartment of the Eldest of the Jews, but they were prevented by the Order Service.[27] In September 1942, Rumkowski moved to a tenement building at 63 Łagiewnicka Street, where he lived on the first floor in apartment No. 1 with his second wife Regina Wajnberger, her father and their adopted son Stanisław Stein. In that house, located midway between Marysin and Bałucki Market, also lived Dora and Bernard Fuchs with families (apartment No. 2), Aron Jakubowicz with family (No. 3), and Chaim's brother Józef with wife Helena (also in No. 1).[28]

As has been stated above, Rumkowski was widowed in 1937. He had no children from his previous marriage, which ended tragically. Although he was regarded as handsome and popular with women, he remained single for many years. The situation did not change until the late 1941, when he married Regina Wajnberger, sparking comments all over the ghetto. Two days before the ceremony, the *Chronicle* noted that the Registry Office received banns. The ceremony was scheduled on December 27th at 6pm:

> The news of the nuptials of our Chairman that spread throughout the city like a wildfire was the culmination of rumors circulating for the past two weeks, and made a large and good impression on the populace. People expect that on the occasion of the first citizen of the ghetto. They will be given an extra food ration, while the clerical circles keep whispering about potential bonuses. We are recording these versions as faithful chroniclers.[29]

It was expected, therefore, that that happy "Chairman" would share his joy with the inhabitants of the ghetto, which would translate into concrete financial or food-related perks.

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[27] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1: 1941, entry dated January 2, 1941, p. 3; ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 328; Y. Nirenberg, *Memoirs of the Lodz Ghetto*, Toronto 2003, p. 39.

[28] APŁ, Przełożony Starszeństwa Żydów (henceforth: PSŻ) 1026, Księga meldunkowa domu Hanseatenstrasse 63, p. 697.

[29] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 1, entry dated December 25, 1941, p. 403.

Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski with his wife Regina (left)
and sister-in-law Helena (right)
(State Archive in Łódź)

As previously announced, the wedding took place on Saturday, December 27th. The ceremony was held in the apartment of the eldest of the Jews on Łagiewnicka Street. According to a brief report in the *Chronicle*, it lasted two hours and was attended by Rumkowski's family members and closest associates. The wedding was officiated by Eljasz Jozef Fajner, former Łódź Councilman and Chief-Rabbi of the Polish Army, a very respected man in the ghetto.[30] The marriage certificate was written on a parchment. The report cites 600 congratulatory messages, including one from the Union of Christians in the ghetto, which were sent to the bride and groom.[31] The author of each congratulatory letter later received a reply from the newlyweds.[32] The ghetto Chroniclers did not stop at a brief note, as the event was so important that a longer report was devoted to it, published in the last December issue of the *Chronicle*, quoted below in extenso:

> All local sensations where, in one stroke, reduced to nothing, swept aside, and deprived of all interest, becoming unreal, as sound and fury signifying nothing... All this was caused by a single sentence composed of a mere five words: "the Chairman is getting married...

[30] Ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 296.
[31] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated December 28, 1941, p. 406–407; ibid., entry dated December 31, 1941, p. 409.
[32] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated January 1–5, 1942, p. 7.

Probably no wireless telegraph in the world ever functioned as efficiently and swiftly, as intensely and incessantly as the ghetto's "whispering Telegraph." The news travelled by word of mouth on the streets, in the lines, in the store's pastry shops, the market squares, the offices, and the factories; in a matter of seconds. It was all over town, from Zagajnikowa to Gnieźnieńska streets, from Żabia to Wolborska.

In seven-league boots, the news ran through the ghetto gates, barbed wire and bridges, electrifying everyone without exception, young and old, the healthy and the sick, and even those who already become insensitive, apathetic, indifferent to everything...

After the first sensation had subsided there was a flood of questions: "To whom?", "Who's the lucky woman he's chosen?", "What does she do?", "Is she pretty?", "When's the wedding?' The questions multiplied and touched on the most intimate matters. And answers to those questions multiplied at the same rate and were, for the most part, contradictory and fantastic... An entire pleiad of the "initiated" went about with enigmatic expressions, smiling their "Pythian" smiles in an attempt to heighten the atmosphere of suspense and mystery in which they were glad to steep themselves...

Everything that had been a topic of interest before − potatoes, soup kitchens, rations and briquettes − ceased to be if current interest...

The next day curiosity had not only not abated but, quite the contrary, had gained strength and momentum. Facts began to crystallize and emerge from the flood of gossip and talk.

Interest grew... Just as a voice in a large, vaulted hall reverberates off the ceiling and returns several times in the form of echoes, booming and droning as if trying to smash through the walls and make its way out into wider spaces, so did the news batter up against the barbed wire and the gates, and thenm unable to force its way through, return as an echo, magnified many times, and speeding through the ghetto no one knows how many times over.

The city already knew beyond doubt that the Chairman's lucky choice was Miss R. W., that she was a lawyer by profession that she was young pretty and uncommonly wise, that she had already been named legal adviser to the Chairman and been working in the secretariat of the Health Department.

The popularity of the workers in that department increased dramatically. They became the most sought-after people, they were literally chased and inundated with questions...

There were those who expressed their doubts, the born skeptics, people distrustful by nature... They claimed it was a fairy tale, a fiction... But even those unbelievers had to believe when, on Wednesday evening, the news spread that the lucky woman was sitting in the front row at that Wednesday's concert, that the Chairman had kissed her hand in greeting and, finally, that they had driven off together in a coach which, nota bene, had arrived in the ghetto the day before. The unbelievers were dealt the decisive blow on Thursday. The Chairman's carriage stood for an hour in front of the Rabbinate's office on Miodowa Street. And for what purpose? That was no secret. The Chairman was handling the wedding formalities personally... And the Chairman was actually inspecting a coat workshop located in the same building!

A new batch of gossip came out. People talked about the fantastic dressing table that had been ordered for the young woman and the apartment they would have, people argued about whether the wedding would be modest or sumptuous, the officials were happy about their prospective raises, and there was talk of an amnesty for the more minor criminals...

The ghetto was in a stir. Different people took different views of the step the Chairman was taking, which was, no matter what, a serious one.

In general, everyone approves; but the most interesting thing here is the older generation's opinions. They are in accord in proclaiming that for a man occupying the most prominent position in our society to enter into matrimony is well-advised on all accounts, both in setting an example and as a matter of prestige, as well as for other reasons.

Quite apart from all the individual views and opinions, we must say that the impression made by the news was enormous and brought the interest of 160,000 people to a fevered pitch; and for a long time that news was the sole, the most important and the most sensational event of the hour.[33]

The report indicates that both the event and Rumkowski's wife were of enormous interest to the people.

The new wife of the Eldest of the Jews was born in Łódź on May 22nd, 1907. According to the biographical note prepared for the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto*, she was highly independent, which was reflected by her graduating private trade courses after finishing secondary school and starting a job in a Łódź company. At the same time, she enrolled at the Department of Law at the University of Warsaw and having graduated, she started working as a legal trainee in the Łódź court. She was planning to open her own law firm. In Łódź, she lived at 37 6-Sierpnia Street. After the outbreak of the war, she was employed by the Jewish administration beginning January 26, 1940. She worked in the Presidential Secretariat and then, until April 1, 1940, in the Health Department. In early June that year, she started working as the legal adviser in the Secretariat of the Eldest of the Jews at Bałucki Marketsquare. In September 1940, when the court was established, she was appointed defense attorney, where she continued to work until November 1941. She worked as an attorney, particularly in divorce cases, which the *Encyclopedia* describes as follows:

The particular conditions of life in the ghetto − hunger, poverty, the need to share housing with other people and lack of hygiene − caused marital quarrels, and as a result people decided to go to court even if under different circumstances they would normally grow old together in harmony. If the cause for the divorce was the specific nature of ghetto life, Wajnberger always represented the defendant and, with iron logic and oratory talent, refuted the allegations put forward by the plaintiff. Only on rare occasions did she grant her permission to divorce, especially if the couple had children and the parents' separation could have a negative impact on their further development.

[33] Ibid., vol. 1, entry dated December 31, 1941, p. 411–412.

From May 1942, Wajnberger worked as an inspector at the Department of Kitchens, where she monitored food quality and hygienic conditions in individual distribution points. At the end of January 1943, she returned to practicing the legal profession[34] (a separate Divorce Department was established in the Court at the time), but she continued working as an inspector in the kitchens. She was active there until the autumn of 1946. It was suspected in the ghetto that her resignation from working in the Department of Kitchens could have had something in common with removing Rumkowski from issues related to the food supply in the ghetto, which was one of the manifestations of the struggle for power.[35] Next, Weinberger took a position in the Undergarment Division, and later in the Metal Division, all the while working as an attorney.[36]

Regina Wajnberger frequently accompanied Rumkowski during official meetings and ceremonies as the "first lady." which is illustrated by numerous surviving photographs and accounts. She accompanied her husband at the anniversary exhibition organized by Glazer's Undergarment Division, at a conference with representatives of the Western European Jews deported to the ghetto, and during concerts in the Culture House.[37]

She and her husband adopted Maks Krążek – and probably also Stanisław Stein – during the adoption operation inspired by Rumkowski after the deportations of September 1942.[38] The preserved adoption records of Max Krążek (born February 20, 1926) describe him as follows: "intelligent, subtle, nice boy. Looks bad." The document also indicates that he was taken from the Dormitory on Staszica Street to the home of the Eldest of the Jews on May 16, 1943. Rumkowski's house was described there as "in a garden, clean and nice."[39] The boy's later fate is unknown.[40] He was not listed in the register of residents of the house at 63 Łagiewnicka Street. In the registration records of Rumkowski's house, there is the name of another boy presumably adopted by Rumkowski, Stanisław Stein (born July 8, 1929), who was supposed to live at that address from August 1943. Numerous references to Stanisław can be found in the account of Edward Klein, who was adopted by Dora Fuchs. In his testimony he described lessons they both attended in Rumkowski's office. On the desk, which the boys had to tidy up before each lesson, there were gifts for the Eldest of the Jews – poems, drawings, pictures and etchings, "one of them praised him, marveled at his genius and compared him to the great heroes of history."[41] Edward Klein noted that Stanisław was a very serious young man and the Rumkowskis treated him as if he were their own son. He spoke with particular fondness

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[34] The Chronicle also cites another date September 1943, cf. ibid., vol. 3, entry dated November 24, 1943, p. 489.

[35] Beginning in January 1943, provisioning was handled by the Special Department of the Order Service, headed by Dawid Gertler. Cf. Chapter 3.2. Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated January 20, 1943, p. 18–19; ibid., entry dated September 17, 1943, p. 599.

[36] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Wajberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 271–273; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Wajnberger-Rumkowska Regina, p. 419–422; *Księga adresowa...*, p. 443.

[37] Photographs of Rumkowski and his wife taken at various events, cf. APŁ, PSŻ 1108; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated January 17, 1942, p. 34; ibid., entry dated February 1, 1942, p. 48–58; ibid., entry dated May 30–31, 1942, p. 254.

[38] Cf. Chapter 3.3.

[39] APŁ, PSŻ 1620, Dekret adopcyjny Krążek Maks, p. 36.

[40] All attempts to locate the registration card in the name of Max Krążek have been unsuccesful. It is possible that Rumkowski sent the boy to the dormitory, as such practices took place – Stanisław Jakobson, president of the Court, sent back the girl he had adopted.

[41] Edward Klein's testimony (manuscript in the collection of the Center for Jewish Research), p. 15.

Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski's so-called Summer House on Marysin, Okopowa St.
(Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw)

of Regina Wajnberger, emphasizing her calm, intelligence and kindness. In his opinion, the reason for the adoption could be that Stanisław reminded Regina Weinberger of her younger brother, who had died of tuberculosis.[42]

Rumkowski also had a house in Marysin at 125 Okopowa Street. The quiet, green district of Marysin was a place of respite for many ghetto dignitaries. In the immediate vicinity of the Chairman's house, there were holiday homes, the so-called *heims*, where summer regenerative stays were organized for employees.[43] Some senior officials, just like the Chairman, had their summer houses in Marysin, or flats, where they moved in warmer months, while others stayed in *heims*. "Nearly all the dignitaries have moved to Marysin for the summer; a small world unto itself, so to speak, has developed there. People there live in villas, some small, some large, but all primitive, almost as if they were at a resort," the *Chronicle* reported in July 1943.[44] Frequent stays in holiday houses were considered a criterion of one's membership in the ghetto elite.[45] Rumkowski often stayed in his summer home in warmer months; he received visitors and continued to work there; for example, visiting the neighboring holiday houses and officiating marriages.[46]

From August 1943, after the unexpected visit of Hans Biebow in Rest House No. 1 in Marysin where Józef Rumkowski had his second apartment, all "double" apartments had to be registered. The circumstances of the visit of the head of the Ghetto Board where described by Jakub Poznański in his diary.

> One Saturday, [Henidrich] Schwind, member of the Gettoverwaltung, came to one of the shoemaking divisions, and when he asked the workers why they were looking so bad, they replied that their heads go to the heims, while they have to work hard, without any holiday. Immediately, Schwind went to Heim No. 1, where he so very fat faces. He told Biebow, who came to check himself.
>
> As a result, Heim No. 1 was closed again, and all guests [were] sent home. The Chairman's brother, as well as many other dignitaries, had two flats, one at 63 Łagiewnicka Street, in a special house together with the Chairman, and another, a summer one, in Marysin. Biebow also learned about that and immediately ordered him to vacate one flat. All pleas that his wife was sick were to no avail [...].
>
> Next, Poznański spares no words of criticism:
>
> In general, it has to be admitted that the Chairman makes a big mistake, allowing two such flats, because, as it turns out, [Stanislaw] Jakobson (head of the court) and [Marian] Kleinman (head of the [Transport Department]), as were as many other *szyszki*[47] ["fat cats"] have second summer flats in Marysin. Their wives and

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[42] Another version states that Regina married Rumkowski in order to save her brother, who, however, was too weak to survive. Cf. ibid., p. 17.

[43] House No. 1 at 121 Okopowa Street for 26 officials and No. 4 at 110 Okopowa Street for 16 workers and officials. *Kronika getta łódzkiego...,* vol. 3, entry dated May 4, 1943, p. 201.

[44] Ibid., entry dated July 25, 1943, p. 360.

[45] Ibid., vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 293.

[46] Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated June 30, 1943, p. 308; ibid., entry dated May 24,1943, p. 234.

[47] In the ghetto, the term *szyszka* or *jachsent* (Yiddish *yachsonim* – noble born, privileged) was defined as a member of a group of influential people, the highest officials in the hierarchy of the ghetto. Marysin was called "Szyszkowice" or "Jachsentówka" – AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Szyszkowice, p. 389; ibid., entry: Jachsentowka, p. 191.

other women, or even men sunbathe all day long and lie on the grass. Apparently, they even play and dance, joking around, all that is not that far from the wires, all in the plain side of the Germans.[48]

The order of registration of double houses and the case of Jozef Rumkowski caused nervousness among their owners, the so-called "holiday-makers." Some of them, fearing the consequences, decided to opt out of having two apartments and returned to the center of the ghetto.[49]

Rumkowski was forced to move once again in March 1944 when the Board of the Ghetto demanded that the tenement at 63 Łagiewnicka Street be vacated. Along with the Eldest of the Jews, other residents of that house were also forced to move out, including Bernard Fuchs, Dora Fuchs, Aron Jakubowicz and Jozef Rumkowski with their families. Initially, Rumkowski planned to move to his house in Marysin, ultimately, however, he moved to a flat at 22b Zawiszy Street, where he stayed until the ghetto was liquidated.[50]

The Last Days

It is extremely difficult to reconstruct the last weeks of the life of the Eldest of the Jews. The last reference to Rumkowski in the *Chronicle* is the entry dated July 30, 1944, which reads, "the Chairman held various meetings. But all in all, the ghetto is peaceful and orderly."[51] Thus far, all attempts to establish in detail what the last month of the life of the Eldest of the Jews looked like have failed. It has been confirmed that during the liquidation of the ghetto, Rumkowski's family members were on the deportation lists, including his brother with his wife. One version says that the Chairman approached the head of the management board of the ghetto and asked him to release his loved ones. Biebow was reported to say that Rumkowski could go with them if he wanted, which the latter accepted. Therefore, Biebow walked Rumkowski to the wagon, where members of his family and several close associates had been placed, and then, after several dozen people were forced to board the train, the wagon was sealed.

Several days later, Rumkowski died in a gas chamber in Birkenau.[52] Jakub Poznański refers to Rumkowski's final days in his diary. Describing the departure of the last transports from the ghetto, he recorded on August 31st, "apparently, they are going to Vienna. There will travel in the company of Rumkowski, who has been stripped of the function of the Eldest of the Jews. Better late than never."[53]

One of those deported from the ghetto on August 28th, Moniek Kaufman, mentioned that he saw Rumkowski soon after arriving in Birkenau:

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[48] J. Poznański, *Dziennik z łódzkiego getta*, Warszawa 2002, p. 96–97. More on hems, cf. *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Domach Wypoczynkowych na Marysinie, p. 121–124.

[49] Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated August 10, 1943, p. 390; ibid., entry dated August 8, 1943, p. 387; ibid., entry dated August 26, 1943, p. 427.

[50] Ibid., vol. 4, entry dated February 15, 1944, p. 126; ibid., entry dated February 22, 1944, p. 141; ibid., entry dated February 29, 1944, p. 158.

[51] Ibid., entry dated July 30, 1944, p. 458.

[52] A. Löw, *Getto łódzkie...*, p. 369; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 209–210; J. Podolska, *Nie w naszej...*, p. 231–232.

[53] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 210.

> Sitting next to me, on a stepladder like the one used for the gallows, was Rumkowski with his family: wife, brother and sister-in-law, and with his ward [that is, his adopted son – A.S.]. His grey hair was disheveled, his eyes downcast. Though he was sitting, the old murderer, and in his final hour before his death he was looking at the end of the ghetto. [...] Once we were arranged in lines of five, we set off. Immediately, a lorry passed us, with Rumkowski sitting at the back with his family and some woman with a child in her arms. As he was going past the line, Rumkowski was crying. Curses and insults that have been flung at him throughout the entire era of his rule, followed him now, too, on his final journey.[54]

There are many versions of Rumkowski's death, all impossible to verify. One of them says that Rumkowski was recognized by Łódź Jews after disembarking on the ramp in Birkenau and they beat him to death. Another version says that he was recognized by residents of Łódź working in the Sonderkommando and was beaten to death by them while the supervising SS were looking on. According to another version, he was burnt alive in the crematorium. One thing is certain, namely that the eldest of the Jews, who was an elderly man at the time, was sent to death during the selection and did not end up in the camp.[55]

2. Rumkowski's Closest Circle

In establishing individual branches of the administration he supervised, the Eldest of the Jews had a say in who will was appointed as head of each section. Along with the expansion of the administration structure, a group of senior officials emerged, and as a result of their close relations with Rumkowski, they achieved a unique social position and were treated as the upper class by the "regular" citizens of the ghetto. The formation of the group of privileged officials was reflected in the language of the ghetto – specific phrases are recurrent in accounts and diaries from the ghetto, they also cited in the *Encyclopedia of the Ghetto* compiled in the Archive Department of the Jewish administration. In the ghetto parlance, a privileged person was described as *jachsen*,[56] and Marysin, where the holiday houses were located, and where the privileged spend a lot of time, was known as *jachsentówka*.[57] The green border of the ghetto was also called *Szyszkowice*, where influential figures (*szyszki*, lit. pine cones; meaning 'fat cats') had their private summer homes and where they spent time in rented holiday houses.[58]

Chairman's Trusted Associates

Already before the ghetto was established, it was evident that the Eldest of the Jews had a habit of appointing for positions in the emerging Community administration people

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[54] Moniek Kaufman's account [in:] A. Strzelecki, *Deportacje...*, p. 308.

[55] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 369–370; Jehuda Widawski's account [in:] A. Strzelecki, *Deportacje...*, p. 324–325; H. Langbein, *Ludzie w Auschwitz*, Oświęcim 1994, p. 211.

[56] *Yachsen* (Yiddish) – a well-connected, privilidged person, also: noble-born.

[57] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Jachsentówka, p. 191.

[58] Ibid., entry: Szyszkowice, p. 389.

Pinkus Gerszowski (left) and Luzer Najman (right)
(State Archive in Łódź)

who were close to him: friends from prewar times, "trusted" people. People who enjoyed this status were employed in key institutions, which on one hand, ensured Rumkowski that he had as say in how they operated, while on the other, guaranteed that even without the intervention of the Eldest of the Jews they would carry out policy according to his guidelines.

In January 1940, when the Provisioning Department was founded, Maks Szczęśliwy was employed there:

> Mr. Chairman, realizing the vast responsibility had taken upon himself, sought to appoint for that extremely significant institution, a person who deserved his unconditional and unlimited trust. He chose Mr. Maks Szczęśliwy, whom he had known from the old times as a man honest and capable of heading such a responsible division.[59]

Rumkowski knew Szczęśliwy from prewar times, as the latter was partner in the company "Rumkowski and Szczęśliwy." After the outbreak of the war, he was planning to flee from Łódź, as many other representatives of the Jewish middle class did, however, Rumkowski persuaded him to stay in the city and become involved in the Community,

[59] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Opracowanie Wydziału Archiwum o Wydziale Aprowizacji, p. 92.

where he took the position of the head of the Provisioning Department.[60] He was by no means the only prewar associates or friend of Rumkowski's who was recruited for various new institutions of the administration of the close district. Another member of that circle was Pinkus Gerszowski, "personal friend and associate of Chairman Rumkowski from prewar times."[61] Before the war, Gerszowski gave money for Rumkowski's orphanage and was a member of the board of the dormitory in Helenówek along with his wife Chana.[62]

In October 1939, he was appointed to the first Council of Elders, and after its members were arrested on November 11th, he was released on Rumkowski's personal intervention. After the ghetto was established, he was appointed member of the Presidium of the Supreme Control Chamber and the Advisory Committee. In August 1942, he was made head of the Bank of the Eldest of the Jews and after it was liquidated, one of the heads of the chemical laundry. Gerszowski was one of the few members of the "elite" who was respected in the ghetto "due to his elegant and proper manners."[63]

Other people who enjoyed the trust of the Eldest of the Jews were also those who had not been his prewar friends but whom he valued for their skills. One of them was Henryk Neftalin, who already in 1939 was one of Rumkowski's closest associates. Neftalin, graduate of the Faculty of Law at the University of Warsaw, worked in Łódź as a trainee lawyer and translator of German and Russian. After the war broke out, he was employed in the Community as a translator, then as a liaison with the German authorities, responsible, for example, for helping those imprisoned in Radogoszcz and handling contacts with the Institute of Racial Research. After the members of the first Council of elders were arrested, Neftalin was appointed to the second Council. During the forced displacement from the city to the ghetto, he earned a name for himself for his organizational skills, thus gaining Rumkowski's enormous trust. In the *Encyclopedia*, he is characterized as "one of the most versatile and respected associates of the Eldest of the Jews." It was also emphasized that "despite being very influential, he always remained modest and restrained, which distinguished him from most of the dignitaries in the ghetto." Surviving testimonies confirm such image of Neftalin.

Aside from Neftalin, another important figure was Dawid Warszawski, head of the tailoring headquarters, who also considered a trusted associate of Rumkowski. Before the war, Warszawski had a small business in the textile industry – the experience he gained there would later prove invaluable. In October 1939, Warszawski was appointed to the First Council of Elders. After its members were arrested, he was one of the few who returned from prison and become involved in the activities of the Community. In the ghetto, he was described as "entrepreneur who rules his businesses with an iron hand." His harsh attitude earned him the hatred of his workers. He was called "one of the most influential people in the ghetto."[64] The best indication of his high social standing was the fact that he introduced Rumkowski's speeches on numerous occasions, including the infamous speech announcing the expulsion of the elderly and children delivered on September 4th, 1942. In

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[60] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Szczęśliwy M., p. 244–245; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Szczęśliwy M., p. 374–375.

[61] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 90; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 141; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated June 13,1943, p. 278.

[62] APŁ, UWŁ, Akta Towarzystwa Internat dla Dzieci w Helenówku, unpaginated.

[63] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 90; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Gerszowski Pinkus, p. 141.

[64] Ibid., entry: Warszawski Dawid, p. 427.

Dora Fuchs and Bernard Jakubowicz
(State Archive in Łódź)

June 1944, Warszawski and his family were arrested under unclear circumstances, which caused great concerned in the ghetto.

Another close associate of Rumkowski was Aron Jakubowicz, before the war a commercial clerk. From 1940, he worked in one of the first tailoring divisions in the ghetto, and was soon promoted to the head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions.[65] He quickly became one of Rumkowski's most serious competitors. Using the support of the management board of the ghetto and the Gestapo, he established one of the centers of power is in the ghetto.[66]

A particular role in the hierarchy of the ghetto elite was reserved for people employed on Bałucki Marketsquare − in the central Secretariat and other institutions located in the immediate vicinity of the offices of the Eldest of the Jews. The most important person in that circle was undoubtedly Dora Fuchs. The daughter of Polish immigrants living in

[65] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated June 27, 1944, p. 391; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 174–175.
[66] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Jakubowicz Aron, p. 192; ibid., entry: Arek, p. 17; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 307.

Hanover, she returned to Poland in 1938 along with other Jewish holders of Polish citizenship expelled from the Third Reich.[67] The circumstances of her employment as the head of the central Secretariat are unknown; however, she was most likely recommended to Rumkowski by Aron Jakubowicz, as his brother, Bernard Jakubowicz, was Dora's fiancé. As head of the secretariat, she held a very important position, part of her responsibilities were accompanying Rumkowski during most meetings with German authorities as his interpreter. "The secretary Dora Fuchs pulls all the strings," Oskar Rosenfeld wrote in his diary.[68]

3. Rumkowski's Competitors – Dawid Gertler and Aron Jakubowicz

Dawid Gertler

The office of the Eldest of the Jews was not the only center of power in the ghetto. While in the first months of the existence of a closed district no one had any doubt as to the real influence wielded by Rumkowski, over time his position weakened and new "centers of power" arose in the ghetto, inspired by the German authorities.

As the significance of the Special Unit increased as discussed in the previous chapter,[69] the head of the formation, Dawid Gertler, rose to power. He came from a religious family from Chęciny. After the death of his father, he was taken in by his uncle for whom he later worked in a hosiery factory. However, the earnings he received there were not sufficient for the young man, so he started stealing from his uncle and was consequently dismissed from work and thrown out of the house. After a while, he found himself a new job, bribing the officials of the Taxation Office to reduce the tax owed by his employers or cancel their arrears. In the last years before the war, he became an informer of tax inspectors in charge of finding property hidden from the fiscal authorities. After the German troops seized the city, he was promptly recruited by the police authorities, continuing his work as an informer, only this time he was employed by the Gestapo, and later also the Kripo.[70]

On May 1, 1940, Gertler was made a full-time employee of the Gestapo, working as agent V. 43:17 code-named Hermann and assigned to the division II B 4. He worked for the German police outside of the Łódź ghetto and in Pabianice and Warsaw, where he was tasked with uncovering the manufacturers and distribution network of false birth certificates, the so-called "Aryan papers." Often, he travelled to the cities listed above, as well as to Wieluń, Częstochowa and other cities, where he developed maintained a network of informers.[71]

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[67] A. Kempa, M. Szukalak, *Żydzi dawnej Łodzi. Słownik biograficzny Żydów łódzkich oraz z Łodzią* związanych, vol. 3, Łódź 2003, p. 31; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 297.

[68] O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu noch Welt. Auszeichnungen aus dem Getto Litzmannstadt*, ed. H. Loewy, Frankfurt am Main 1994, p. 147.

[69] Cf. Chapter 3.3.

[70] I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 384.

[71] Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (henceforth: AIPN) Ld, 247/8, Akta osobowe Gertler Dawid; ibid., Pf3/61, Sprawa ewidencyjno-poszukiwawcza: Gerler Dawid; ibid., GK 164/60, vol. 1–2, Gertler Dawid; AŻIH, 313/64, Gertler Dawid.

Until the autumn of 1942, he was not particularly important in the Łódź ghetto. Before that, from the spring of 1942, that is during the deportations, he organised transports of people to the Warsaw ghetto, where it was believed to be safer. For the sum between 1,000 up to 6,000 RM, he arranged the departure of dozens of people desperately looking for the last resort. In this way, 120 people left the ghetto in March, and 147 in April. He collaborated with Warsaw Gestapo agents Moryc Kon and Zelig Heller.[72] He was appointed to the leadership of the Special Unit in June 1941, after Bronisław Dancyngier was suspended. He was made independent head of the formation in March 1942. From that moment on, the importance of the Sonderkommando gradually grew.[73] As its head, he introduced harsh discipline to the formation, requiring his officers to be blindly obedient and at the same time providing satisfactory food rations. Therefore, he punished those members of the division who openly abused their position all the more harshly, as they could put him in negative light. When in April 1943 a group of thieves of flour were discovered to be operating within the formation, the *Chronicle* reported about the confrontation between the dishonest policemen and their superior: "It was obviously quite dramatic. When first called to confess voluntarily, none of the men came forward. However, when called by name, they confessed very quickly when the superior, who had a heavy hand, slapped them in the face."[74]

Gertler played a special role during the deportations in September 1942 – without Rumkowski knowing, he organized assistance for Gestapo units deployed for the operation. Officers of the Sonderkommando were active during the evacuation of hospitals, and after the German troops entered, they secured the operation, guarded the streets and participated in roundups. On that occasion, the *Chronicle* mentioned Gertler by name for the first time.[75] For the help he provided during the General Curfew (*Wielka Szpera*) Gertler earned the gratitude of the Gestapo, which made it possible to separate the special unit from having to report to the Eldest of the Jews. The Sonderkommando, often dubbed "Gertler-Jugend," became "the most important institution in the ghetto."[76] Jakub Poznański noted in his diary that "well-informed persons" believed that in the first half of 1942 Gertler was going to take over Rumkowski's office.[77] His stronger position following the September deportations only identified that drive for power.

In the ghetto, Gertler was considered the counterweight for the hated Rumkowski. Gradually, in the eyes of the ghetto in habitants, the head of the Special Deparrtment became a person who could arrange almost anything, "the two magic letters DG make miracles possible in the ghetto," Poznański wrote in his diary. As he rightly pointed out two months later, no one in the ghetto to accurately determine the competences of the influential Gestapo agent.[78]

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[72] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 227; B. Engelking, J. Leociak, *Getto warszawskie. Przewodnik po nieistniejącym mieście*, Warszawa 2001, p. 233.

[73] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 2, entry dated March 17, 1942, p. 75; vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 290, 299; I.(H.) Rubin, *Getto...*, p. 385.

[74] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated April 8, 1943, p. 147.

[75] Ibid., vol. 2, entry dated September 1942, p. 481.

[76] A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 265–266.

[77] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 71.

[78] Ibid., p. 59, 70.

The confrontation between Rumkowski and the ever-stronger Gertler was only a matter of time. The growing tension between the two centers of power –from the end of 1942, the Special Department could indeed be called such – was evident for the inhabitants of the ghetto. Poznański openly wrote about a "war," and several months later, Oskar Rosenfeld noted, "the struggle for power. Legends about Dawid Gertler and Mark Kliger against the Chairman."[79] The growing conflict was also followed by the ghetto Chroniclers. From time to time, the *Chronicle* printed perfunctory information about "the differences of opinion" on issues of such as the supply of the ghetto.[80]

The test of power took place in connection with the formation of the aforementioned Economic Police.[81] In the conflict that broke out between the head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions and the Commander of the Order Service Leon Rozenblat, Rumkowski sided with the latter, while Jakubowicz had Gertler's support. Ultimately, the dispute surrounding the Economic Police was alleviated.[82] Nevertheless, it did not solve the growing conflict that at some point turned into an open rivalry. If the Eldest of the Jews distributed vouchers for extra rations, the head of the Sonderkommando promptly did the same: "On Pesach, there was a small rain vouchers. First the Chairman gave appropriate vouchers to 'his people,' then David Gertler did the same courtesy to 'his people.' The Chairman offered holiday vouchers to about 50 doctors, and Gertler on his part made the same gifts to other doctors."[83]

Regardless of the conflict, they both showed often appeared in public to reassert their power before the inhabitants of the ghetto. Whenever Rumkowski appeared somewhere, the head of the special department immediately followed: "Suddenly, the Chairman appeared at the vegetable market at the intersection of Łagiewnicka and Pieprzowa streets, with Dawid Gertler immediately behind him. Both men inspected the potato storehouse and that got into a horse cab, where they engaged in a lively conversation. People try to decipher the expressions on the faces of these two men of authority."[84] They attended all Jubilee celebrations organized by individual departments, especially since in the beginning "hymns in honor of the two men"[85] were often performed. The aforementioned conflicts also became the subject of jokes circulating around the ghetto. Oskar Rosenfeld noted one of them, "Joke: Old Man and Gertler agree on everything with the exception of agriculture. Old Man wants Gertler to lay in the ground, while Gertler wants the Old Man to lay in the ground..."[86]

The power of the head of the Sonderkommando ended with his the flotation from the ghetto on July 12, 1943. Reasons for his arrest are not clear. In his report, Otto Bradfish, head of the Gestapo who personally made the arrest, listed the reason as some unspecified "irregularities." After the war, Gertler apparently testified that the head of the Łódź

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79 Ibid., p. 21, 27; O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu...*, p. 217.

80 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated May 26, 1943, p. 239.

81 Cf. Chapter 3.3.

82 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated March 16, 1943, p. 108; ibid., entry dated March 19, 1943, p. 112.

83 Ibid., entry dated April 18, 1943, p. 166.

84 Ibid., entry dated May 3, 1943, p. 199.

85 Such as the jubilee of the Vegetable Department – ibid., entry dated April 18, 1943, p. 166; the jubilee of the Order Service – ibid., entry dated April 4, 1943, p. 258.

86 O. Rosenfeld, *Wozu...*, p. 213.

Gestapo was the only person with whom he had not negotiated.[87] According to Henrik Rubin, the reason for his removal from the position of the special department was most likely his overconfidence in fueling the conflict with Rumkowski and his attempts to orchestrate a coup and seize power in the closed district, which could adversely affect the production output of the ghetto.[88] Most likely, Gertler ceased to be useful as an agent for the Gestapo − the ghettos in Warsaw and Pabianice had been already liquidated, and in the Łódź ghetto there was a network of agents who fulfilled their tasks without generating as many problems as the head of the special department. However, Gertler was not murdered, but was sent to Auschwitz.[89]

Ivan blust schojfer[90]

After Gertler was deported from the ghetto, his policy was continued by his successor as Commissioner of the special department, Marek Kligier,[91] albeit adopting a more subtle approach. The constant bone of contention was the issue of food supply. Kligier engineered the liquidation of the system regenerative kitchens introduced by Rumkowski.[92] In November 1943, the Eldest of the Jews announced that rations would be reduced as a result of decreased supply of food to the closed district. On that occasion, he temporarily cancelled bonus rations for the "B" voucher (Beirat), with the exception, however, of the group of about 50 people.[93] Several days later, after a heated debate with heads of labor divisions and closest associates, including Ludwig Winograd and Dawid Warszawski, the Eldest of the Jews decided to partially reinstate bonus vouchers.[94] The confusion surrounding the "B" rations provoked dissatisfaction from Kligier and Jakubowicz. They were particularly unhappy about convening a meeting with heads of divisions without the head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions knowing:

> The leadership [of the Central Bureau] of Labor Divisions Jakubowicz and head of the Special Unit Kligier formed an opposition against the Chairman's food policy. First, they criticized the Chairman for convening the meeting of heads of divisions without consulting the leadership of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions on such a crucial matter,

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87 A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 268–269.

88 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 390–391.

89 Dawid Gertler survived the war and later settled in Munich, where he played an important role in the local community. He probably tried to emigrate for the United States and Israel. In the 1970s, an attempt was made to put him on trial in Poland and an arrest warrant was even issued – *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 5, Leksykon, p. 299; *Kto zna hitlerowskiego zbrodniarza*, *Życie Warszawy*, March 21, 1973, p. 4.

90 Ivan blust schojfer (Yiddish) – Ivan blows the horn. Saying used when non-Jewish authorities decided on internal affairs of the Jews.

91 I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 393.

92 *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated Nonmember 15, 1943, p. 593–595; A. Löw, *Getto...*, p. 269.

93 YIVO Archive in New York (henceforth: AYIVO), RG-241/528, Announcement 402 dated November 5, 1943, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated November 5, 1943, p. 578; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 124.

94 AYIVO, RG-241/529, Announcement no. 403 dated November 8, 1943, p. 1; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated November 8, 1943, p. 580; ibid., entry dated November 9, 1943, p. 582–583.

Occasional ceremony in the ghetto – sitting at the table from right to left: Dawid Warszawski, Aron Jakubowicz, Dora Fuchs, Dawid Gertler
(State Archive in Łódź)

the *Chronicle* recorded, adding that "the Chairman paid no mind to that quite academic opposition, but carries on and in spite of any conferences and meetings, that is what he believes to be the best.[95]A few days later Biebow responded to Rumkowski because a reduction in food rations and the confusion surrounding this issue led to a real risk that could affect the production. On November 15th, after a consultation with Kligier and Jakubowicz, the head of the Ghettoverwaltung went with head of the Special Unit to the print shop, where he ordered the printing of a new notice. On the same day, a notice signed by Biebow appeared on the walls of the ghetto announcing the restoration of the existing rations before Announcement No. 401 of November 3rd. At the same time, it called for the suspension of all vouchers, extra meals, etc. "in order to eliminate privileges." At the end of this Announcement, Biebow declared that from that day on, all issues related to food like all food stores and distribution points, would be handled by the Ghetto Board.[96] This situation, in which the internal conflict in the ghetto was solved with the intervention of the German authorities, was commented on with the Encyclopedia of the ghetto

[95] Ibid., entry dated November 11, 1943, p. 587.
[96] Ibid., entry dated November 15, 1943, p. 593.

slogan "*Ivan blust schojfer*" (Ivan blows the horn), noting that it introduces additional "ambiguity in this area of autonomy of the ghetto."[97]

The dispute ended with a severe defeat of Rumkowski. He was virtually deprived of his right to decide all matters relating to food supplies. "Taking matters of supply out of his hands is a tough blow to the authority of the Chairman," commented the announcement in the *Chronicle*.[98] Biebow's announcement was adopted in the ghetto with great satisfaction. "It is hard to describe the joy of the people. [...] It seemed as though the war was over and the ghetto was dissolved," Jakub Poznański wrote in his diary.[99] Afterwards, issues having to deal with supply were in competence of the already mentioned Committee, called Triumvirate or the Committee for Supplies, in which were next to Kligier also other close allies of Biebow – Zygmunt Reingold and Wiktor Miller.[100]

The new system of food rations was presented to the inhabitants of the ghetto personally by Biebow in a speech on December 7th, 1943, in the hall of the House of Culture. They liquidated existing vouchers, but leave the power to issue them in the hands of the Superior Eldest of the Jews, Jakubowicz (head of the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions) and Kligier (head of the Special Unit.)[101]

A few days later, on December 14th, Rumkowski was summoned to the city, provoking a wave of enormous concern in the ghetto. "We were all gripped by fear, and no one had ever felt so undeniably that Rumkowski is the ghetto," wrote one of the Chroniclers.[102] The Eldest returned to the district on the same day. In early January 1944, Gestapo officers once again came to Bałucki Marketsquare and ordered Zygmunt Reingold to report. It turned out that the reason was the discovery of irregularities in the statistics on the number of inhabitants of the ghetto made by the German authorities. The Jewish administration of the ghetto had been exaggerating the numbers of population of the ghetto since September 1942 in order to obtain greater food supply. At the request of the German authorities Rumkowski, together with Henryk Neftalin and Zygmunt Reingold, had to amend the statistical data.[103]

Gradually, a new system of food rations was introduced. Rumkowski was no longer in charge in that field; he was responsible only for explaining how the new system worked to the ghetto residents. Kligier, however, was the person with whom the head of the Gettoverwaltung discussed all issues related to food supply.[104]

Provisioning was not the only sector in which the German authorities intervened, taking complete control. From March 1944, at the discretion of the Gettoverwaltung, there was also the issue of separation of cultivated gardens in the ghetto. On March 8th,

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[97] AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Ivan blust schojfer, p. 188; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated November 16, 1943, p. 596–597.

[98] Ibid., vol. 3, entry dated November 15, 1943, p. 594; ibid., entry dated November 16, 1943, p. 597.

[99] J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 130–131.

[100] APŁ, PSŻ 1103, entry: Triumvirat, p. 267; AŻIH, 205/349, entry: Triumvirat, p. 406; *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 3, entry dated November 15, 1943, p. 594.

[101] Ibid., entry dated December 7, 1943, p. 638–645.

[102] Ibid., entry dated December 14, 1943, p. 656–657.

[103] Ibid., vol. 4, entry dated January 3, 1944, p. 5–6; ibid., entry dated January 4, 1944, p. 11; ibid., entry dated January 5, 1944, p. 12; J. Poznański, *Dziennik...*, p. 142–143; A. Löw*, Getto...*, p. 273. According to Rubin it was Marek Kligier who noted that the number of ghetto inhabitants was too high and notified the German authorities – I.(H.) Rubin*, Żydzi...*, p. 430.

[104] *Kronika getta łódzkiego...*, vol. 4, entry dated April 21, 1944, p. 256–257.

Biebow announced to Rumkowski that this problem would be dealt with henceforth by Heinrich Schwind from the Gettoverwaltung. Biebow asked to assign only someone who understood these matters. Actually, the authority to distribute arable land was still held by the Management Department, but "under the watchful eye" of Kligier and Jakubowicz.[105] Thereby, another important area was taken from Rumkowski's hands. The extent of his power underwent increasing depletion.

[105] Ibid., entry dated April 8, 1944, p. 235–236; ibid., entry dated April 11,1944, p. 239; I.(H.) Rubin, *Żydzi...*, p. 445.

CONCLUSION

Researchers estimate that over 200,000 people went through the Łódź ghetto. Only 5–7 thousand people survived the hell of the ghetto and camps. Others died of starvation, as a result of disease, or were killed in gas chambers of the camps in Chełmno on the Ner and Auschwitz-Birkenau. The representative of the population imprisoned in the ghetto was Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, the only remaining active member of the board of the prewar Community, who was appointed the Eldest of the Jews. Rumkowski gradually organized the extensive administrative apparatus, through which he ruled in the closed area. The administration of the Łódź ghetto was the only entity of its kind. Its structure was a continuation of prewar institutions of the Jewish Community as well as private institutions and associations. Others were created from scratch in response to the needs of the moment or by the orders of the occupation authorities. As a result, from 1940 to 1944, several dozen different kinds of departments and bureaus were formed, employing nearly 15,000 officials at the peak of their activity. This apparatus exercised control over almost all spheres of life of the residents of the closed district.

The administrative structure of the Jewish Łódź ghetto emerged as a result of two factors. As mentioned above, it was a continuation of institutions of the Religious Community operating before the war, which retained the same powers in the ghetto, only partially adapted to the changed conditions. Examples of such agencies include the Civil Registry Office, the Funeral Division, or the Rabbinical Office. To some extent, the Social Welfare Department could be included on this group, especially at the beginning. The vast majority of units, however, were created from scratch, at the request of the German authorities, or on the initiative of the Eldest of the Jews, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski. Nevertheless, these institutions were not developed in complete isolation from the prewar experiences of their officials. Many of them, including the Court, the Fire Brigade and the Order Service, were in fact established by the people who had been involved in a similar prewar agencies in Łódź.

The extensive Jewish administration of the Łódź ghetto was managed single-handedly by the Eldest of the Jews, and the direct impact of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski on its shape and functioning was clear, especially in the first stage of the ghetto, i.e., the autumn of 1941. Gradually, along with the implementation of the policy of the "final solution of the Jewish question," the German authorities found competitors that, with their help, were able to threaten the position of the Eldest of the Jews. Supported by the German police authorities, officers of the Special Unit of the Order Service, the Sonderabteilung, Dawid Gertler and Marek Kligier played an increasingly important role in the ghetto, at

one point reaching a very high position and a varied range of competences taken away from Rumkowski, such as issuing food rations.

The operation of the Jewish administration of the Łódź ghetto bore some resemblance, if on a limited scale, to some of the features found in authoritarian states, including the growing centralization, the increasing importance of the police, as well as the gradual distortion of the functions of individual agencies and the growing corruption and inefficiency of the administrative apparatus. All these features were evident to the residents of the closed district. In the ghetto, terms such as *protekcja* (favoritism) and *plecy* (lit. "back," preferentialism) became popular, referring to ways to reach people who decided who to employ in departments or allocated rations of food and medicines.

After the German authorities decided to implement the "final solution of the Jewish question," the Jewish administration was faced with a new task – to prepare the deportation. Jewish officials were forced to decide who was to remain in the ghetto and who had to leave. The occupier's policy led to a situation where victims were cast in a new, tragic role – as implementers of the German extermination plans. During the deportations, a special body was established in the Łódź ghetto – the Resettlement Committee – whose members decided the fate of the inhabitants of the ghetto. The Commission had the power to accept appeals, but it Eldest of the Jews made all decisions about which groups were to be sent for deportation. Rumkowski also kept for himself the right to make the final decision about accepting appeals to be spared from deportation. When the German authorities demanded subsequent groups to be deported, the Eldest of the Jews took upon himself the task of informing the inhabitants of the ghetto about this. Here, Rumkowski's attitude was clearly different from the one adopted by Adam Czerniaków – Chairman of the Jewish Council in the Warsaw ghetto, among others. The decision to fulfill subsequent demands made by the authorities, including the famous speech delivered on September 4, 1942, during the so-called *Allgemeine Gesperre* (General Curfew), earned Rumkowski hatred of the ghetto inhabitants, and the grim notoriety of the Eldest of the Jews continues to the present day.

One of the tasks of the administration was also supervising the developing production in labor divisions operating in the ghetto. Units designated specially for that purpose – with the Central Bureau of Labor Divisions at the helm – were responsible for organizing and supervizing the implementation of orders coming to the ghetto via the German Board of the Ghetto. Evidence of the role played by the Central Bureau is the fact that aside from the Sonderabteilung managers, another center of power in the ghetto formed around the head of the Bureau, Aron Jakubowicz.

Employment in the ghetto administration was a method to ensure the survival of as large a number of ghetto inhabitants as possible. As a result, the number of officials was disproportionately high, which was, however, meant to justify the allocation of rations for the members of the administrative apparatus.

In the author's intention, this volume has only just commenced in-depth study of the history of the Jewish administration in the Łódź ghetto. It seems important to examine the impact that the extensive bureaucratic apparatus had on the daily life of the inhabitants of the ghetto. It would also be interesting to compare the functioning of the administrative system Łódź ghetto with other similar entities in Jewish districts formed by the occupant not only in occupied Poland, but also in other European centers of Jewish population.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AmŁ	– City of Łódź Files
APŁ	– State Archive in Łódź
AYIVO	– YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York Archive
AYV	– Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem Archive
AŻIH	– Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw Archive
GFH	– Ghetto Fighters' House Archive
GG	– General Gouvernment
HIOD	– Auxiliary Order Service
HTO	– General Trustee's Office – East
KMO	– Home Militia Headquarters
ŁGWŻ	– Jewish Community in Łódź Files
NIK	– Supreme Control Chamber
NSDAP	– National Socialist German Workers' Party
OS	– Order Service
PPS	– Polish Socialist Party
PSŻ	– Eldest of the Jews
Ring	– Ringelblum Archive
RSHA	– Reich Main Security Office
SD	– Sicherheitsdienst [Security Service]
SS	– Schutzstaffel [Protection Squadron]
USHMM	– United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington Archive

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