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1834 Broadway

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CIRCLE 6 - 1900

October 9, 1945

Dr. C. Irving Dwork  
Office of United States Chief of Counsel  
For Prosecution of Axis Criminality  
Room 4E 859, The Pentagon  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dr. Dwork:

We were visited by a German Jew who came over to this country before the war. He came in answer to the call in the newspapers for eye-witness reports, and brought us a letter from his niece who is now in Sweden. Arrested in Berlin in June, 1942, this girl went through almost all the German concentration and death camps. You will find a copy of her letter enclosed.

We have some hesitations as to the advisability of producing this letter. As you will see, although giving a very striking picture of the sufferings which Jewish women and young girls had to bear in the forced labor battalions, the letter speaks of Theresienstadt as a "paradise;" in many passages it emphasizes that in some camps there was plenty to eat.

Psychologically, of course, one might easily understand such a presentation of facts, particularly now by a person who escaped the gas chambers of Belzec, Bergen and who is giving a retrospective account of all she experienced. There is no doubt that in comparison with Auschwitz, Theresienstadt was a "paradise." After all, the people there — especially in the beginning — did have some liberties and considered themselves as living in an "autonomous" Jewish center. It is needless to point out to you the purpose of camouflage and the misleading of world public opinion which determined the Nazis' giving to Theresienstadt a color of so-called "cultural and administrative autonomy."

While on the one hand we deem parts of this letter concerning Auschwitz and the conditions of life in the labor battalions to be of interest, especially coming as it does from a person who might eventually be called as a witness, on the other hand we are afraid that those parts concerning Theresienstadt and particularly the period which followed the retreat and decomposition of the German army might create the impression that the living conditions of the inmates became inhuman only during the last period and as a result of the disintegration of the German army and the German state. You know that that is exactly the thesis set forth by the defense at the trial of Lamsberg. Of course, were the defense counsels at the trials before the international military court given access to all the materials produced by the accusation, a letter such as the enclosed would do more harm than good.

If after having read the enclosed copy you think you can make use of it to good advantage while discarding the "unfavorable" parts, we will send you the German original. In any case, we would ask you to please return the enclosed copy.

Sincerely yours,

Gerhard Jacoby

Henri Sinder

CS  
encl.