A Statement by the World Jewish Congress

The unprecedented place which the present war holds in the history of humanity is due not only to its magnitude but to the ruthless barbarities with which it has been conducted by the Führer regime and its allies. Not only have the laws of war as accepted by civilized nations been repeatedly violated, but new methods of warfare have been developed by Germany unprecedented in the history of Western nations and designed to ensure German hegemony in Europe, irrespective of the outcome of military operations.

Accordingly, the Germans have started and used biological warfare and have determined whole groups and classes with the object of permanently weakening peoples and thus in the end of German expansion. The most monstrous of these crimes has been its purpose, the destruction of an entire people, the Jews of Europe.

This crime, which has been described by President Roosevelt as "one of the blackest crimes of all history," was the result of a carefully prepared and openly armed policy. First in Germany and then in the successively occupied territories, the Jews were systematically deported, dispersed in overcrowded ghettos and camps, subjected to a system of penal starvation and forced labor. The randomizing of the Jewish population, as a result of these appalling losses, which this policy assured, did not prove rapid enough to satisfy Nazi desires. The Nazi and their satellites therefore resorted to the methods of mechanical deportations and mass murder. Among millions of Jews have been done to death in Europe and it is believed interned among them a majority of whom the world will never learn.

The leaders of the United Nations have repeatedly taken note of the crimes perpetrated by the Nazi powers and have pronounced it to be their resolve, in the words of Prime Minister Winston Churchill, "to place retribution for these crimes among the major purposes of this war." The declaration to this effect made by the government of the occupied territories on January 13, 1942 at St. James' Palace, London, was signed and ratified by the governments of November 2, 1942, signed by the heads of the governments of Great Britain, Soviet Russia and the United States, "spreading to the interments of 38 United Nations."

In addition to the general warnings to the Axis powers, of which there have been a considerable number, they have been specifically warned that crimes against the Jewish population under their control would be punished. As early as August 3, 1942, such warnings were contained in messages directed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill to a joint meeting of New York citizens. These messages were made even more specific in the Joint statement issued simultaneously in London and Washington on December 19, 1942, by the governments of Great Britain, Soviet Russia and the United States together with the European governments-in-exile. In this formal statement condemning the Nazi policy of exterminating the Jewish people in Europe, these governments reiterated "their solemn resolve to see that those responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution."

The World Jewish Congress accordingly urges the adoption of the following measures and principles:

1) The United Nations will be taken to ensure that no Axis criminal escapes punishment.
2) The terms of reference defining the competences and jurisdiction of the War Crimes Commission, the proposed international tribunal and the national courts shall be the official documents issued by spokesmen of the United Nations. It is not the President of the United States, according to the, determination of the United Nations, that it was "began by the Nazis in the Fifties and multiplied by those hundreds of times, in the Fifties," accordingly, the jurisdiction of the post-judicial authority to be set up to deal with it shall include the territories of Germany and her states, as well as the occupied countries, and the acts for which the criminals will be held responsible must include the occupations of racial, religious, and political minorities committed in the course of and preparatory to the war by the Axis and their satellites and collaborators after January 31, 1938, in countries under their control.

3) The boundaries of the areas of liberation will be furnished with indications on the problem of war criminals and their participation, and on the measures to be taken to assemble and safeguard the evidence of their crimes. Accordingly, all members of the AS and the states, as well as other persons suspected of having committed such crimes, together with their means, will be placed under the control of the Allied military authorities or their civilian agencies in the liberation of occupied territories and in the occupation of the territories of the Axis powers.

4) Provision for the surrender of criminals will be included in emission terms. It will be made clear that no criminal will be permitted to escape punishment, whether through consent of jurisdiction or escape to neutral countries. Any other war criminals will be declared criminals under international or occupation of all countries, whether Axis, satellite, neutral or non-belligerent, will be required to give up. The list of crimes made punishable at the end of hostilities, the crimes against the Jewish people in Europe, and all acts of violence committed against them as defined in the present document and within the territory of the Axis nations and their satellites in whatever form, will file their criminal and proper place together with other violations of law by the Axis and guiding principles.

5) In all trials of Axis leaders the accused themselves shall be the crime of a general character and in cases directed against the Jewish population, adequate evidence will be given of the specific counts dealing with the Axis-Frankish acts.

6) The United Nations, whose territories were occupied by the enemy will prosecute with the required energy and vigor those responsible for the stolen treasures and loot to the Jewish population, irrespective of nationality.

7) The prosecution of those responsible for the crimes committed shall be tried by the UN in the territories and before the territories of the Axis states within the jurisdiction of the International Court of Civilized Nations. The crimes will be tried before the court of criminal courts under the laws of the nearest states.
10. Representatives of the United Nations [World Jewish Congress] shall be officially consulted on all matters before the International Prosecution Body and the International Court of Criminal Justice, whose constituting acts will contain the necessary provisions to this effect.

11. The Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes, or whatever other body may be established for this purpose by the United Nations, will receive and give due consideration to all material which may be submitted to it by the World Jewish Congress and its associated bodies, and will make the necessary arrangements through the establishment of special machinery for the appointment of special representatives to ensure that full weight should be given to the evidence assembled by these bodies.

The re-establishment of ordered society in Europe plainly requires that the war criminals shall be brought to justice, and brought to justice without delay. There can be no peace and security so long as large numbers of self-confessed criminals are allowed to be at large and by their very presence to mock the promises of a new and better international order set by the peoples of democracy. Moreover, if those who are guilty of monstrous crimes against the Jewish people are allowed to escape punishment, it cannot but have the effect of encouraging aggressors in the post-war world to use anti-Semitism as a means of obtaining power and thereafter as an instrument of aggression.