The World Jewish Congress today (Sunday, November 23) appealed to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to define the scope of the newly-established Allied-German Board of Clemency in the U.S. Zone of Germany, lest the 300 war criminals now imprisoned escape full punishment for their crimes. Further clemency, particularly for the high Nazis convicted in Nuremberg, the WJC congress warned, "cannot but weaken seriously" the Allied position on war criminals, as well as the foundations and authority of Allied military tribunals and would be "particularly unfortunate at the present time when even the Holy See has come to the conclusion that the punishment of war criminals is an inescapable duty of the civilized world."

The WJC appeal to Secretary Dulles, in the form of a letter signed by Dr. Emanuel Robinson, acting director of the Department of International Affairs, was prompted by a recent order of the three Western Allied High Commissioners in Germany calling for the creation of three Allied-German boards, one for each zone, to make recommendations for clemency or parole for the German war criminals still held by them. In the U.S. Zone, where approximately 200 imprisoned war criminals are affected by the new order, the board will reportedly have five members, two of them German.

In calling Secretary Dulles’ attention to the functions of the new clemency board, the WJC congress pointed out that a Board of Clemency,
established in March, 1950, by the U.S. High Commission for Germany, has already reviewed the sentences of a majority of the imprisoned war criminals, drastically reducing a number of them in spite of the crimes committed "entirely of their own free will." The United Nations declared, "The board of Clemency and the High Commission fully admitted that the reduction of these penalties, the United States Congress letter continued, "resulted in the release, as of this date, of more than sixty percent of all convicted criminals and in the commutation of death and life imprisonment sentences to short terms." This action by the United States Congress, the United Nations Security Council who claim that the sentences of the Allied tribunals were motivated more by "vengeance" than by the dictates of justice.

The United Nations warned, further, that a new review of the sentences passed by the Allied tribunals on the basis of alleged "new evidence" or similar considerations "must serve any other purpose than totally to discredit the notion of these courts as well as the whole philosophy which underlined the necessity of adequate punishment of these war criminals against humanity or war crimes." In accepting new evidence, the United States Congress went on, the newly-established Board of Clemency would inevitably call in question the validity of the original sentences, a procedure which is contrary to the Constitution and the principles of justice. In this connection, the United States Congress relied upon the recent decision of the International Court of Justice which, in effect, exonerated the late Nazi General Alfred Jodl as a major war criminal, in a "false violation of the principles of international law in Nuremberg."