WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS MAKES SECURITY ATTACK AGAINST FURTHER CLEANCEY TO NAZI WAR CRIMINALS

"WJC Congress Letter to Dulles Charges that Post War Review Boards Have Turned Over 400 of Convicted War Criminals and Executed 100 and Sentenced 100 to Life Sentences to Short Terms." (More)

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 wrote, "cannot but mean seriously" the Allied action on war criminals, as well as the foundations and authority of allied military tribunals, and would be "particularlly unfortunate at this present time when even the Holy See has come to the conclusion that the punishment of war criminals is an inseparable duty of the civilized world."

The WJC Congress appeal to Secretary Dulles, in the form of a letter signed by Dr. Samuel Rosenzweig, acting director of the Department of International Affairs, was prompted by a recent order by 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 Germans.

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 this progress, the U.S. Congress declared, "the Board of Clemency and the High Commission fully admitted," the reduction of these penalties, in the interest of "the safety of the peace, and in the conservation of life and limb and imprisonment sentences to short terms." This action by the Board of Clemency, the U.S. Congress charged, "has served to strengthen the position of the Republic who claim that the sentences of the Allied tribunals were motivated more by vengeance than by the dictates of justice."

The U.S. Congress warned, further, that a new review of the sentences passed by the Allied Tribunals on the basis of alleged "new evidence" or similar considerations "cannot serve any other purpose than totally to discredit the notion of these courts as well as the whole philosophy which underlay the necessity of adequate punishment of these who committed crimes against humanity or war crimes." In accepting new evidence, the U.S. Congress went on, the newly-established Board of Clemency would inevitably call into question the validity of the original sentences, a procedure which is contrary to the Convention prepared to make no end to the occupation of Germany. In this connection, the U.S. Congress cited the recent decision of a German demobilization court which, in effect, exonerated the late Nazi General Alfred Jodl as a major war criminal, in a "clear violation" of the judgment of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg.