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HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND RESCUE NETWORKS IN FRANCE,
1940-1945

presented by

Kelly D. Palmer

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Ph.D degree in History

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HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND RESCUE NETWORKS IN FRANCE, 1940-1945

By

Kelly D. Palmer

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

History

2010

ABSTRACT

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By

Kelly D. Palmer

This dissertation investigates the connections among the collaborationist Vichy state, with its complex political identity, and the humanitarian aid agency network. The Nazi initiative to purge Europe of its "undesirable" populations during World War II set into motion a series of massive deportations of civilians. Out of the approximately 330,000 Jews in France in 1940, 24 percent were deported and/or died during the Holocaust. Conversely, 76 percent of the Jewish population survived the war. The majority of Jews who survived the war were naturalized French citizens while almost all those deported were foreign born. This striking disparity is partially explained by the activism of a network of Jewish and non-Jewish humanitarian organizations. Humanitarian aid organizations including the International Red Cross (ICRC), the YMCA, the Society of Friends (Quakers), Comité inter-mouvements auprès des evacués (CIMADE), Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (OSE), and the Jewish Joint Distribution Agency worked together and independently to find ways to minimize the issues arising from the deportations; these ranged from finding space for displaced persons to saving individuals from the death camps. Some of these organizations had relationships with local and Vichy officials providing leeway in the distribution of aid to the same people that Vichy was persecuting. Between 1939 and 1945, Vichy citizenship policies

became radically more restrictive while simultaneously aid agencies continued their work contradicting many of the newly created racial and citizenship laws. Although these agencies could not prevent the massive deportations to the Eastern European camps, they were given access and permitted to provide aid to displaced persons for the duration of the war. Although the Vichy government was generally recognized to be non-Republican, the universalistic model of government so strongly identified with France could not be wholly erased; this created contradictions for deportees, policy-makers and aid agencies. I seek to understand the disparity between French and non-French Jewish deportations through the lens of humanitarian relief efforts. I ask how did Vichy, with more restrictive racial laws than Germany, make allowances for humanitarian aid to those whose rights were being stripped? How did the humanitarian network adapt to the growing needs of refugees? What do the actions of humanitarian organizations say about Vichy political institutions?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation grew out of my interest to better understand the complicated relationship between the French state and Jews. Leslie Page Moch's passion for France and French scholarship motivated me to examine various aspects of this puzzle. She was unfailingly generous and supportive with her guidance. I could not have asked for a better advisor. Lewis Siegelbaum and Keely Stauter-Halsted suggested thoughtful readings and asked questions that helped refine my perspective and clarify my argument. Kenneth Waltzer provided me with important insights in how to proceed with difficult material suggesting useful ways to think about evidence to make a more powerful narrative. Michael Koppisch kindly spoke with me about libraries in the French concentration camps and the involvement of the Red Cross provoking my curiosity about the role of humanitarian agencies in wartime France.

This project was made possible through fellowships from the Office of International Studies, the History Department and James Madison College. These scholarships allowed me to travel to three countries to undertake research. Thank you to Alice Kaplan whose Paris apartment I rented for two research trips allowing me to have a home away from home in one of the best parts of the city. Without Judith Kalfa and Diane Afoumado at the CDJC, this dissertation could not have been written. Thanks to Josef Keith at the British Quaker Library and Fabrizio Bensi of the ICRC for their kindnesses and for pointing me in the right direction.

I am especially grateful to my father Michael Palmer who encouraged my return to graduate school and who has always been a role model and mentor to me. To Bethany Hicks for providing perspective, a sense of humor and help in all things academic and personal.

Finally, I want to thank my husband Bud Culp who has been unwaveringly supportive of my return to school. His love, generosity and desire to see me succeed provided me the opportunity to complete my degree with few outside distractions.

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List of Abbreviations

AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
AN	Archives nationales, Paris
ARC	American Red Cross
CAR	Comité d'assistance aux refugiés
CDJC	Centre de documentation juive contemporaine, Paris
CGQJ	Commissariat general aux questions juives
CIMADE	Comité inter-mouvements auprès des évacués
CTE	Compagnies de travailleurs étrangers
EIF	Éclaireurs israélites de France
EMIGDIRECT	an organization assisting with the emigration of East European Jews from Germany
FSJ	Fédération des societies juives
HIAS	Hebrew Immigrant and Sheltering Society
HICEM	a Jewish association comprised of HIAS, JCA and EMIGDIRECT
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
JDC	Joint Distribution Committee or Joint
ORT	Organisation pour la reconstruction et le travail
OSE	Oeuvre de secours aux enfants
SAVG	Secour Américain pour Victims de Guerre
UGIF	Union générale des Israélites de France
USJ	Union des sociétés juives
WJC	World Jewish Congress
WRB	War Refugee Board
YIVO	YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Chapter 1
Introduction

On December 14, 1942, a report generated by the Toulouse delegation of the American Friends Service Committee (hereafter AFSC), a U.S.-based Quaker organization, was distributed among the other AFSC French delegations. The report stated that in July a rumor circulated about the deportation of foreign Jews from France and by the end of the month, those rumors had been substantiated. Quakers from all of the delegation outposts (including Toulouse, Perpignan, and Marseille) assisted to give moral, material and emigration assistance. Children of parents who had already been deported were a priority for all aid workers based in France but were of particular concern to Quakers who worked with members of the Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants (hereafter OSE) to help children emigrate from France. This 1942 report documents the steps taken to obtain entry visas to the U.S. for some of these children who were chosen by a delegate of the Toulouse group and a doctor from Union Générale Des Israelites de France (hereafter UGIF).

> The choice was extremely difficult. Almost without exception the children were intelligent, "goodlooking" and well behaved, and with a sweet disposition, which was all the more admirable when one thinks of what these young children had gone through. First from six month up to two years of hard and demoralizing camp life and now this cruel separation from their parents. It sometimes was hard for us to remain composed in front of these children, for instance when a young man of eight, with large blue sad eyes introduced himself to us: "My name is Michel, and here is my dossier, and here is the key of my suitcase..." showing a fat dossier full of his parents' emigration papers practically ready (in spite of which they were both deported) and a little key in a large string around his neck - or when placed in front of a little girl of twelve with a baby brother of 2 1/2 - their parents were deported from Tours, and the two crossed the line with a kind French person who placed them in a children's home. She was so filled by the great responsibility of bringing up her little brother, so the first thing she asked was to learn a métier immediately so that she could take good care of

> him. The understanding director immediately placed her into the leatherwork shop. They baby boy, unconscious of all that happened around him is a happy as sunshine, but when something goes wrong he never calls out "Mama", but "Chaja, Chaja" which is the sister's name....[1]

This is one of many examples of the kind of situation faced by humanitarian workers in Vichy France during the course of World War II. Humanitarian workers from a variety of countries and faiths contributed to saving the lives of those affected most by the war in France ranging from finding ways for children to escape to providing food to the detention camps. The provision of humanitarian aid was the focus of workers until November 11, 1942 when German forces occupied the south of France shifting their priority from humanitarianism to rescue. France differed from other German occupied countries. Aid organizations operated in France through the duration of the war while Vichy imposed its own harsh anti-Semitic racial laws. At the same time one out four Jews present in France in 1940 survived the war. By the end of 1940, there were approximately 330,000 Jews in France. More than 24 percent of this number were deported or died in France during the war and more than 77,000 people were murdered either in the deportations, from the terrible internment camp conditions or killed in French prisons.[2] The converse of this number also merits attention. Of the Jews in France, 76 percent survived the Holocaust. Out of the 330,000 Jews in France, approximately 195,000 were naturalized French citizens, while another 135,000 were foreign-born. This latter group fared much worse than the naturalized group and almost

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[1] AFSC Records Relating to Humanitarian Work in France, 1933-1950, Series II: Toulouse Office, Foreign Service. In *Reports*. Paris: CDJC.

[2] Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, The French, and the Jews* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 280.

45 percent were murdered while as many as 12 percent of naturalized Jews were killed.[3] Foreign-born Jews were targeted with greater focus than naturalized Jews by Vichy but that does not entirely explain the vast disparity in survival rates. By comparison, naturalized Dutch Jews fared far worse than naturalized French Jews. Unlike France, the Dutch Jewish community was comprised of only 16 percent of immigrants but 75 percent of its entire Jewish population were murdered during the war. One reason attributed to this dismal number in the Netherlands is based upon Jewish migration patterns. Peter Tammes illustrates that most Jews immigrated to the Netherlands after 1933 came from Germany and Austria whereas most non-naturalized French Jews migrated prior to 1933.[4] Tammes asserts that Jews in France fared better because of Vichy collaboration and I would add the efforts of humanitarian agencies working in France.

When the Germans entered Paris on June 14, 1940, thousands of people in the capital left the city. This included the provisional French government led by Marshal Philippe Pétain who after signing an armistice agreement with Germany moved the government to Vichy on June 29. The armistice agreement designated occupied and non-occupied zones which generally decreed that land north of the Loire would be German occupied and south of this line would be run by Vichy officials. Alsace and Lorraine would become part of Germany. Racial laws were enacted quickly in the occupied zone by the German authorities. They used the same criteria used in Germany

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[3]Zuccotti, 284.

[4]See Peter Tammes "Jewish Immigrants in the Netherlands during the Nazi Occupation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 37, 4: spring 2007, 543-562 for more information regarding how the date of immigration and country of origin played a role in Dutch Jewish survival.

to define who was Jewish, undertaking a Jewish census, and requiring Jews to use the word "Juif" or "Juive" on identity cards and on Jewish-owned businesses. The German Nuremburg Laws defined Jews as those who had three Jewish grandparents regardless of how an individual identified oneself or whether one had converted to Christianity. Those who fell into this category were disenfranchised, losing their citizenship, the right to work and property rights. By October 18, 1940 German authorities began the process of liquidating and claiming ownership of Jewish businesses. In the non-occupied territory, Vichy officials created their own anti-Jewish laws that were actually more sweeping than those in the German territory. The October 3, 1940 *Statut de Juifs* decreed Jews were defined as anyone with two Jewish grandparents and it also excluded Jews from public service, and most jobs. Only those with a special Vichy approved dispensation, such as veterans could be exempted from these laws.[5] In addition to affecting naturalized French Jews, the *Statut de Juifs* gave authority to prefects to enforce forced labor on foreign Jews and revoked the citizenship of Algerian Jews.

These policies inflicted suffering on the Jewish population in ways that had not been known in France for several hundred years. Aid organizations including the International Committee of the Red Cross (hereafter ICRC), the AFSC, the Joint Distribution Committee (hereafter Joint), OSE, and the YMCA worked to mitigate the growing humanitarian crisis. Efforts until November 1942 concentrated on humanitarian relief such as finding accommodations and providing supplies to camp detainees. Relief work shifted to rescue attempts when information regarding the terrible fate of Jews deported from France began to spread. Detention camps in France

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[5]Zuccotti, 57.

served several purposes. Initially created to intern Spanish refugees escaping the Spanish Civil War, the camps--located mostly along the Spanish border and in the South of France--were used as transitory stops for Jews who were to be sent to concentration camps in the Reich. The camps were also used as prison camps for those whom Vichy had deemed troublesome such as Communists, resistors, criminals, homosexuals and Romany. Between 1939 and 1945, Vichy citizenship policies became radically more restrictive while simultaneously humanitarian organizations continued working despite the fact that the newly created racial and citizenship laws made this work illegal. These agencies could not prevent the massive deportations to Eastern European camps; however, Vichy granted limited access to provide aid to displaced persons for the duration of the war.

This dissertation examines the connections between the humanitarian aid agency network and the collaborationist Vichy state, which contributed to the continuing operation of humanitarian organizations in France. The Nazi initiative to purge Europe of its "undesirable" populations during World War II set into motion a series of massive deportations of civilians. French internees were transported from local prison camps prior to being sent to concentration camps in Eastern Europe. The humanitarian aid network, including the ICRC, the AFSC, Joint, OSE, and the YMCA, found ways to work legally and illegally within France during the war. Relationships with Vichy created a space in which the humanitarian network could operate.

It seems implausible to imagine that Vichy would be a part of any kind of effort to protect or aid the same people it was actively persecuting. Nonetheless, while Vichy created harsh racial laws, deported thousands of Jews to the East and interned many

others, it also protected naturalized French Jews from deportation and worked closely with aid groups such as the Quakers. Although the Vichy government is generally recognized to have been a non-democratic state, the universalistic model of government so strongly identified with France could not be wholly erased; this created contradictions for deportees, policy-makers and aid agencies. I ask how did humanitarian organizations operate under Vichy when other authoritarian regimes prohibited such activity? Did the war influence their understanding of how aid should be provided? Did these organizations reshape their missions to adapt to an unprecedented civilian crisis? In what ways did perceptions of French national identity influence non-French humanitarian organizations? What does Vichy interaction with humanitarian agencies say about these organizations, and is compromise necessary in the provision of aid to countries under authoritarian rule? This is a study of the borders of wartime policies, aid organizations, and the authoritarian state that will provide insight into the operation of the humanitarian network.

I also examine the broader historical ramifications of Vichy and the network of aid organizations. Humanitarian agencies must find a balance between carrying out missions and maintaining credibility with both war victims and oppressive governments. The use of neutrality as a WWII concept can evoke images of cowardice especially in regard to the lack of action taken to rescue Jews from extermination. It was the harshest critique directed toward the International Red Cross and its failure to denounce the Nazi regime. Critiques such as these are made broadly in regard to the ICRC, which did fail in key ways. It is useful to examine concepts such as neutrality and intervention in regard to human rights history in this context to further understand

how humanitarian agencies are shaped internally and externally by public opinion and politics.

Framework

> The construction of the nation, as an expression of interiorized identity, occurred at precisely the moment that the place of the Jews within an imagined community, local as well as national, was subject to redefinition.[6]

Although Helmut Walser Smith was referring to German anti-Semitism in the above statement, the same framework is useful for understanding how humanitarian organizations working within Vichy France adapted within the greater context of the war within France and the rest of Europe and how Vichy constructed itself in terms of its authoritarian ideology. Each aid agency in pre-1942 France faced different tests distributing aid based upon pre-war perceptions of who is victimized by war, French ideals of human rights, and ill-defined boundaries regarding neutrality. The Second World War presented challenges that were unlike those from the first war presenting challenges to aid workers who were forced to think beyond the distribution of aid after German occupation in November 1942.[7] Whereas most of the victims of the first war

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[6]Helmut Walser Smith, *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 220.

[7]During the First World War, much of Northeast France was destroyed leaving thousands of French homeless. Additionally, the number of military losses was staggering. The total number of French military deaths from November 11, 1914 to June 1, 1919 was 1,139,800 and the number of missing soldiers was 258,000 excerpted from Jean-Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 330. Also see Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14-18 Understanding the Great War,* Translated by Catherine Temerson, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000). Chapter 3 examines the camp system and forced displacements faced by soldiers and civilians. There are parallels in the poor treatment of camp

were military, the majority of victims during the second war were civilians made stateless by fascist regimes. Humanitarian groups which were used to working closely with European democratic governments to facilitate aid found themselves having to rethink how to best negotiate with newly created authoritarian governments which were initiating and perpetuating the aid crises. The second war complicated the process for all aid agencies thanks to new and shifting definitions of citizenship by the state and civilian versus military prisoner's status as victims of war. New difficulties arose regarding funding relief and rescue programs. American enemy combatant laws made it difficult to transfer money for aid purposes from the United States to countries occupied by Germany. In turn, these obstacles created conflicts among and within agencies, since they had to alter how to cooperate with one another while still fulfilling their respective missions. Aid agencies operated throughout the war in France but constantly had to renegotiate their relationships with one another and with Vichy officials to continue their work whether legally and illegally.

Historian Stanley Hoffman defined the Vichy regime as a "pluralist dictatorship." He characterized Vichy "as diverse at any given moment of its existence as it was through time."[8] He argued that all of the conservative pre-war political factions were represented in the Vichy regime along with a smattering of those from the Left.[9] The unifying vision of these disparate political factions was the belief that an authoritarian government could reinvigorate a downtrodden France. This vision

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inmates and refugees in both wars. The demographic nature of the detainees and reasons for detention or evacuation are very different.

[8]Stanley Hoffmann, *Decline or Renewal? France Since the 1930's* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), 4.

[9]Hoffmann, 4.

transformed the necessity to politically and physically exclude those who did not represent the "new France" and called for the reinvention of the education system to enforce Vichy values. Those considered "undesirable" to the new French state included foreigners, Jews, Communists and anyone who was in opposition to its goals of French rebirth. Whereas an ideology focused on a racial hierarchy with Jews at the bottom was the focus of Nazi policy, the same cannot be said with Vichy. Vichy policies were not guided primarily by racial politics. They were a feature of Vichy but not its primary point. Vichy politics were informed by a desire to re-energize France and perceived outsiders impeded these efforts. As much as the Vichy government worked to exclude Jews, Freemasons and Communists from French life, humanitarian agencies continued their efforts to protect human rights. Each aid agency had a unique relationship with Vichy officials affecting how aid was distributed in the pre-1942 period, if at all.

Organizations (specifically those with non-French origins) such as the American Quakers and the International Red Cross had relationships with the Vichy regime during the war, which they did not have with Germany. Agencies like the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee were banned entirely from working in Germany and from France when the U.S. entered the war in 1942. Anti-Jewish policies in France affected the ways in which Jewish agencies could operate, forcing them underground in 1942. Other agencies were able to work relatively unhindered such as the AFSC whose director Howard Kershner maintained a strong relationship with Vichy officials, including Marshal Pétain.

Kershner's relationship with Pétain merits attention not only because it was extremely unusual for an American to have such ties but also because the relationship

influenced Kershner's judgment of Vichy officials, which could have been detrimental to the Quaker humanitarian mission, had it not been for the interference of other members. One of the unforeseen benefits of this relationship was that the Quakers found a loophole to continue their work after 1942 as *Secours Quaker*, which provided the same services as the AFSC but as a French organization it could operate legally within France. While *Secours Quaker* was legally incorporated in this period, it participated in covert rescue missions with other aid organizations such as the JDC who were forced underground after German occupation. Organizations such as the politically neutral Swiss ICRC also continued to work legally within France during the war and also served as a conduit (in a manner similar to the AFSC but on a smaller scale) through which agencies such as the OSE and the JDC could operate.

Perhaps the greatest challenges faced by humanitarian agencies revolved around how to define and serve victims of war. Civilian refugees did not fit into any humanitarian aid framework conceived in the Geneva Conventions in 1929. This omission reflected the experiences of World War I when aid was provided primarily to wounded soldiers and POWs rather than civilian populations. A dramatic difference marked the Second World War from the First since vast numbers of civilians were displaced with increasingly harsh racial laws and changing citizenship laws in Germany and occupied Europe. Agencies such as the ICRC that had existed prior to the war had to find new frameworks to provide aid while new agencies were created to solve refugee-specific issues.

Vichy policy makers and aid agencies, working at cross-purposes, attempted to solve refugee issues, which in the case of Vichy were self-created. Vichy policy makers

initiated the incarceration of non-French Jews in detention camps and also stripped rights from French Jews forcing many to emigrate creating a refugee problem as people migrated to the South of France. At the same time, aid agencies tried to provide food and supplies to these same detention camps and later worked to find ways for Jews to immigrate to safe countries outside of France. Prior to German requests for large numbers of Jewish deportees, Vichy policy makers were happy to have humanitarian agencies help in the process of moving "undesirable" people since it facilitated its own agenda. Allowing humanitarian aid to the detention camps also helped to combat the negative publicity generated by morally repugnant policies the Vichy government received from outraged locals and other nations after it began arresting and deporting Jewish children as evidenced by the Vel d'Hiv round-ups in July 1941.

Vichy France illustrates how state politics, national identity and citizenship law can shift in a short time. Its policy makers turned the conception of a Republican France upside down with their exclusionary policies directed toward anyone who was perceived as a threat to the new state including Jews, Communists and Freemasons. Additionally, given the complex and often conflicting dynamic between religious identity and the French state--further complicated during Vichy with its ambiguous pro-Catholic and anti-Republican leanings--it is intriguing to note the range of religious organizations that were providing humanitarian aid. The most visible organizations aside from the International Red Cross frequently had Protestant or Jewish affiliations.[10] Although Vichy is generally assumed to have had far right leanings, recent

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[10]W.D. Halls, *Politics, Society, and Christianity in Vichy France* (Oxford and Providence: Berg, 1995). Halls argues that Christian groups were one of the most important groups fighting totalitarianism. He points to the Protestant CIMADE and the Catholic group Amitié Chrétienne.

historiography has shown that Vichy was a hybrid of far right and left tendencies resulting in its particular exclusionary policies.[11] The ideology found in Vichy that was common to both sides of the political spectrum was authoritarianism as the most effective form of government. Emerging from this ideology was the singular goal of Vichy: to revitalize the nation into a "New France."[12] The notion of preserving "French identity" had been a paramount issue in French politics since the Revolution but it took on new meaning under Vichy. Unlike former political objectives, which encouraged assimilation as a means to political participation, Vichy policies excluded individuals based upon religion and ethnicity, changing the legal definition of French citizenship. After the French Revolution, Jews in France were granted full legal and political rights allowing them to participate fully as citizens. As Susan Zuccotti points out, there was an assumption that Jews wanted to assimilate in order to be a part of French citizenry and "the uncompromising patriotism of French Jews was inextricably linked to their remarkable economic, social and political achievements during the century following emancipation."[13]

Full citizenship rights for French Jews did not mean that anti-Semitism ceased to exist. In the 1880s and 1890s, anti-Semitism became a resurgent problem related to

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[11]Denis, Peschanski, "Vichy Singular and Plural," *France at War: Vichy and the Historians,* Edited by Sarah Fishman (New York: Berg, 2000), 5. Stanley Hoffmann introduced the idea of a "pluralist dictatorship" (see footnote 1). Hoffmann studied the variety of political conservatives within Vichy that ultimately led to its paralysis. Peschanski adds to this work by examining the leftist elements within Vichy. See also Philipe Burrin, *France under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise* (New York: The New Press, 1996); Stanley Hoffman, *Decline or Renewal? France Since the 1930's* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974); Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[12]Phillipe Burrin, "Vichy," "French and Foreigners," *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past,* Edited by Pierre Nora (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 192.

[13]Zuccotti, 7-8.

economic and military losses from the period. Those fearful of Germans and all things related to Germany, including those who spoke Yiddish or had German roots, voiced anti-Semitic outrage, in conjunction with Catholics and those on the political Right who blamed Jews for the economic hardships created by modernization from the Industrial Revolution.[14] The Dréyfus Affair (1898) further polarized those who held to French Republican ideals and those on the right who questioned Jewish loyalty. In the years following the Dréyfus Affair, Jewish participation in WWI helped to reassert strong ties of French patriotism and their loyalty to the French state. At the same time the Affair led to the emergence of politicized anti-Semitism from the extreme Right represented by groups such as Charles Maurras's Action Française.[15] While the popularity of Action Française was uneven in the early twentieth-century, it re-emerged during the time of the Popular Front and during Vichy. Anti-Semitism under Vichy and during Dreyfus shared some common themes such as a fear that Jews were too politically powerful, a fear of Communism (linked with Jews) and xenophobia stemming from the Depression. Differentiating the two periods was Vichy's active participation in genocide. Anti-Semitism played a strong role in Vichy politics but it was not a primary policymaking goal like that of the Nazis. Rather, it was a means to maintain its sovereignty from Germany.[16] Anti-Jewish rhetoric from Vichy was directed toward all

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[14]Zuccotti, 12.

[15]Eric Cahm, *The Dreyfus Affair in French Society and Politics* (London and New York: Longman, 1994), 189.

[16]Henry Rousso, "The Dreyfus Affair in Vichy France," *The Fate of the European Jews, 1939-1945,* Edited by Jonathan Frankel (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 153-170. See also Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (New York: Norton and Company, 1994) for a further exploration of anti-Semitism in 1930s France and the form it took in popular propaganda such as *Je Suis Partout, Petit Bleu* and *L'Ordre.*

Jews in France, but Jews who had been in France for many years (or centuries as was often the case) were given a reprieve from hostile anti-immigrant rhetoric--for a short time anyway.

Since emancipation was granted to Jews in the eighteenth century, foreign Jews perceived France as a sanctuary from anti-Semitic persecution. In the 1920s and 1930s, thousands of Jews fled to France to escape discrimination from Eastern Europe and Germany. Simultaneously within France, anti-immigrant dissent had been stirring again stemming from the Depression, reaching a boiling point before France was swiftly defeated by Germany. When the armistice with Germany was signed in June 1940, an occasion arose for those on the political Right to enact a series of anti-Semitic laws in the form of the *Statut de Juifs*. With an exclusionary political agenda in mind, the question of how humanitarian aid agencies functioned within Vichy France becomes compelling. French laws governing the citizenship of Jews changed. Additionally, the right to work in any job that "influenced public opinion" was taken away from Jewish workers. Jews were only allowed to work in low-level public service fields and then only if they had fought in WWI, and the right to own property was stripped.

This dissertation examines the ways citizenship was constructed during a time of war and the humanitarian response to resulting refugee issues. Shifting definitions of what it meant to be a French citizen contributed to shaping humanitarian interpretations of aid and who should receive it. Examining the ways in which humanitarians faced challenges, we can better understand the operations of these groups historically. Although this dissertation focuses on the past, we continue to see humanitarian crises emerge that are different enough from the last to require new ideas in how to best aid

victims. By examining the relationships between aid agencies and Vichy policymakers I hope to illustrate these dynamics not only within the context of Vichy but also within the greater context of human rights history since relationships between humanitarians and political institutions are part of human rights crises to the present. Investigating the ways in which aid agencies worked with one another and the Vichy government creates a broader understanding of two key areas: the legal, logistical and physical challenges faced by aid agencies, on one hand and to what extent compromise with an authoritarian government is acceptable, on the other.

Literature Review

There is a vast and growing literature on Vichy France. The turning point in Vichy historiography came in 1972 with Robert Paxton's *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944.* From the end of the war until the publication of Paxton's book, the prevailing historical narrative in France revolved around the idea that the occupation years were aberrational. Marshal Pétain worked to save his country (and particularly the military) from the Germans while at the same time he was manipulated by Pierre Laval to accede to German requests to create anti-Semitic laws that led to the deportation of Jews. By the 1970s, Paxton and filmmaker Marcel Ophuls (who directed the film *Le Chagrin et la pitié,* 1970) openly questioned the narrative by showing that collaboration was not only openly sought after by Vichy officials but also "offered more than the Germans asked for, notably, in the areas of anti-Semitic and labor policies."[17]

Paxton relied upon German and American archival sources to illustrate the depth of Vichy collaboration. He argued that Vichy officials wanted to create a place for

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[17]Sarah Fishman and Leonard V. Smith, *France at War: Vichy and the Historians,* Edited by Sarah Fishman (New York: Berg, 2000), 3.

France in a Europe ruled by Hitler, not understanding that Hitler viewed France as a place from which raw materials and labor could be culled to aid the German war effort with or without French collaboration. In the pre-Paxton narrative, Philippe Pétain was often portrayed as senile and unaware of the activities of his cohort such as Pierre Laval. Paxton argued this was not the case. His work created the paradigm for a new French historical narrative in which the Vichy regime was held accountable for playing an active rather than passive collaborationist role during the war. Although widely accepted by French scholars, a few reviewers created controversy by questioning the legitimacy of Paxton as a scholar and his use of sources.[18] Nonetheless, his work influenced generations of Vichy scholars who contributed to the field in a variety of ways but all of whom operated under the original Paxton thesis asserting widespread French collaboration.

In *Vichy France and the Jews,* Paxton and Michael Marrus state that Vichy contributed to the deaths of several thousand Jews (as well as gypsies and political prisoners) through their internment in the more than thirty-one camps in the southern zone.[19] There were also camps in the north but the number is more difficult to ascertain. They wrote that while Vichy inherited the camp system and thousands of internees from the Second Republic, they contributed thousands more people to the system. Vichy found it more economically prudent to intern poor foreign Jews and allow relief agencies such as the Quakers provide aid for them rather than provide

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[18]John Sweets, *France at War: Vichy and the Historians* (New York: Berg, 2000). 6. Paxton used primarily German sources since the French sources were not yet available to the researchers. See also Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

[19]Robert Paxton and Michael Marrus, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 166.

support themselves. Interning foreign Jews was relatively easy for Vichy based on existing local hostility. Additionally, French police had been tracking the locations of immigrant populations since the early 1930s as a means to maintain public order.[20] Paxton and Marrus stated that once news started to spread to the foreign press (leaked by the aid agencies) about the treatment of people within the camps, the tone of Vichy officials changed. Suddenly, "everything must be done for humane reasons as well as to avoid the commentaries of the journalists."[21] Paxton and Marrus's book remains relevant in regard to the camp system, although, I would argue that Vichy cooperation with the Quakers did not result after Vichy started receiving negative publicity but rather soon after the Armistice was signed and Pétain's government established.[22]

The recent additions to Vichy political historiography have challenged the idea of Vichy as a monolithic political entity that was uniform in its right wing political tendencies. Stanley Hoffman, Philippe Burrin, John Hellman and Denis Peschanski have examined the varying ways in which Vichy politics was an amalgam of far right and far left politics coming together to support the common goal of revitalizing France under an authoritarian regime while singling out foreigners as a threat to French security. The current historiography maintains that Vichy authoritarianism was based upon "networks of accommodation that link occupiers and occupied together and make

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[20]Clifford Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control Between the Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 19.

[21]Paxton and Marrus, 172. This is a quote by André Lavagne, chief of staff for Marshal Pétain.

[22] Quakers provided humanitarian assistance to Spanish detainees in the Southern French camps prior to France entering the war.

it possible for the machine to operate."[23] Philippe Burrin specifies three forms of accommodation, which are found under occupations including: adaptation to an occupier, or what he calls "opportunist accommodation," political accommodation, and an ideological framework.[24] In France, deep social and political fragmentation prior to the war opened the door to the conditions that made collaboration look like it could rebuild national pride by accepting anti-Semitism and authoritarianism. Vichy was the mechanism that sanctioned these conditions.[25]

While historians have stressed the social and political aspects of Vichy France, Paxton's work has also influenced cultural and intellectual history. Henry Rousso comprehensively discussed the ways in which the Vichy myth was perpetuated in *The Vichy Syndrome.*[26] He argued that the Vichy years were particularly influential on the formation of French memory because those years were more traumatic for the country after suffering economically in the 1930s, and losing so dramatically (and quickly) to the Germans in 1940.[27] Like Stanley Hoffman, Rousso emphasized the importance of internal conflicts within the Vichy regime between the Left and the Right who viewed the greatest threats to France as Fascism (on the Left) and Communism (on the Right).

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[23]Philippe Burrin, *France Under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 460. See also Jean-Pierre Azéma, *From Munich to the Liberation 1938-1944,* Translated by Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Pierre Laborie, *L'Opinion française sous Vichy* (Paris: Seuil, 1990); Michèle Cointet, *Le Conseil national de Vichy* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1989).
[24]Burrin, 462.
[25]Burrin, 466.
[26]Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944,* Translated by Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).
[27]Rousso, 5.

The only common ground found between the two sides was a concern that immigrants were destroying France.[28]

Rousso notes that Vichy historiography underwent an evolution since the war that saw changes in the way we understand Vichy (no longer a "good and bad Vichy"), and Pétain's legacy are forever linked to accepting responsibility for collaboration and anti-Semitism. In a chapter entitled "Obsession (after 1974): Jewish Memory" Rousso tackles the thorny issue of French Jewishness and memory. He writes that Jews were mostly silent after the war coping with the collapsed notions that France was a refuge for Jews but this changed after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. More recent French Jewish historiography has explored what Rousso calls the "traditional debate of the uniqueness of Jewish history".[29] While it is clear that Nazis and Vichy persecuted Jews as a distinct racial group, it is "not so easy to argue that resistance as well as cooperation on the part of Jews was specifically 'Jewish' in form."[30] Rousso's point in discussing these issues is to highlight the plurality of views within the Jewish community.

The historiography of the Holocaust is vast and cannot be tackled comprehensively in this dissertation. For the purpose of this project, it is the ways in which Holocaust historiography and French historiography overlap that are relevant. Additionally, the notion of rescue understood within the context of Holocaust studies will be an important thread throughout this work. There has been a body of work

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[28]Rousso, 6.
[29]Rousso, 164. See also Maud S. Mandel, *In the Aftermath of Genocide: Armenians and Jews in Twentieth-Century France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) for further reading on how Jewish identity was shaped and shifted before and after the war.
[30]Rousso, 165.

relating specifically to Vichy collaboration with the Holocaust including works by Robert Paxton, Michael Marrus and Serge Klarsfeld which serve as the foundations of scholarship in this area.[31]

Historians such as Michael Marrus, Robert Paxton, Susan Zuccotti, and Serge Klarseld examined the French role in the Holocaust and the ways in which it was different from other countries. We know that Vichy officials actively worked to deport Jews of non-French origin to the east and that had the war not ended, it is likely that French Jews would also have been deported. It is unclear how early Vichy officials knew of the "Final Solution." The deportations were initially a way to solve the "Jewish undesirable problem"--Jews, gypsies and other immigrants were believed to be the root of the erosion of French ideals and nationalism--with no concern about the destination of the deportees. Although anti-Semitism motivated many Vichy officials such as Laval and Darquier de Pellepoix, there was not an overriding anti-Semitic ideology in France as there was in Germany.[32] In Nazi ideology, creating a pure racial hierarchy was the key focus of the regime; whereas, Vichy ideology focused on returning France to its former glory. Anti-racial policies were a method used to reach this goal but not the most important part of it.

One of the challenges placed before scholars of France studying the Holocaust is a paucity of documents: a circular from December 6, 1946 from the Ministry of the

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[31]See Paxton and Marrus in note 17. Serge Klarsfeld, *Vichy Auschwitz: Le Rôle de Vichy dans la solution finale de la question juive en France, 1943-1944* (Paris: Fayard, 1983); Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

[32]See Carmen Callil's fascinating study of Darquier de Pellepoix entitled *Bad Faith: A Forgotten History of Family, Fatherland and Vichy France* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006).

Interior addressed to prefects concerns "the destruction of documents based on racial distinctions." Less than a month later, the Minister of the Interior made a report that the archives in question can be used to "attest to deportations, arrests and serve to deliver certification." A counter-order revoking the request to destroy documents was issued to the prefects less than two months later on January 31, 1947.[33] By the time the retraction was issued, thousands of documents had already been destroyed. Additionally, the Germans destroyed documents from the French camps such as Rivesaltes. Despite the destruction of important documents within the prefectures, the ICRC, AFSC and JDC maintained excellent records within their own archives. This is not to say that historians have not written about the camps. Susan Zuccotti, Serge Klarsfeld and Lucien Lazare to name a few, have effectively used existing archival sources examining the camp system.

Historical narratives of rescue and resistance and the study of rescue itself are controversial within Holocaust history for several reasons. First, there is concern in Holocaust history (not including France) that focusing on rescuers rather than victims mitigates the horror faced by the victims since so few were saved. Second, the historical narrative that the Allies were fighters for good versus evil against the Axis becomes a more complicated story. Wartime American and British anti-Semitism complicate the narrative leading to questions regarding when and if the Allies could have done anything to save the Jews had they known about German anti-Jewish activities. Although my project investigates humanitarian agencies rather than the

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[33]CDJC Introduction-*La Spoliation dans les camps de province.* Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

actions of Allied forces, these groups are all linked in the greater context of rescue historiography in the postwar period.

Yehuda Bauer's 2001 book, *Rethinking the Holocaust* argues that two preconditions affected Jewish rescue. [34] Bauer argues in his book that information about Auschwitz had to be known for rescue to have occurred and the information had to be believed.[35] He states that Polish sources provided information that was not believed by the West (the Allies) and the Soviets did not care about the murder of Jews.[36] After the war, there was a backlash by "commentator, judges, politicians, historians and authors of fiction to denigrate, attack, and accuse those who tried to help" meaning those who participated in rescue and/or aid activities. They were implicated for not only not doing more to help Jews but also for having so little success in their efforts.[37] According to Bauer, the reason for the attacks on rescuers rests in a refusal to recognize the helpless condition of the Jewish people in World War II.[38] He writes that the Holocaust created a social trauma for all Jews and prevented them from seeing the reality of the world of the 1940s, which was, is "terrible and humiliating for a Jew to contemplate."[39] Ultimately, it was easier to accuse one another and others of failing to save the Jews, which in Bauer's view implies that Jews were responsible for their own murder. He sums up by stating that although rescue was attempted, most attempts failed due to

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[34]Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), chapter 10.
[35]Bauer, 240.
[36]Bauer, 240.
[37]Bauer, 240.
[38]Bauer, 241.
[39]Bauer, 241.

terrible times not because those attempting the rescues were inept.[40] Bauer suggests that rescuers did not have the financial, military, or staffing capabilities to combat Nazi forces. In this case, he is generally referring to Eastern European countries in which rescue was extremely dangerous and difficult. In France, rescue attempts were more successful than in Eastern Europe but still severely hampered by a lack of institutional resources and bureaucratic red tape.

In Holocaust historiography, Jewish rescue is often defined as one of many methods of Jewish resistance. The controversial issue that arises is to posit rescue as a form of resistance hinging on whether the rescuer is Jewish. Lucien Lazare writes about Jewish organizations that fought against the Holocaust in *Rescue as Resistance: How Jewish Organizations Fought the Holocaust in France* (1996) arguing that Jewish resistance should be included in the historiography of French resistance.[41] He contends that the French resistance movement included Jewish members but their goal was different from those who worked within Jewish resistance movement. Whereas the goal for French resistors was to remove German occupiers from France, Jewish resistors fought to survive. Their means of resistance also differed. The French resistance relied upon guerilla warfare and the Jewish resistance sought to rescue as many Jews (particularly children) as possible. Lazare focuses on Jewish organizations including the OSE, Joint and the Jewish Scout groups who helped save children and provide assistance to Jewish detainees. Lazare credits the survival of "three out of four Jews

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[40]There were several attempts of Jewish rescue and resistance in countries such as Poland and Belarus but with the exception of the Bielski resistance portrayed in Nechama Tec's *Defiance: The Bielski Partisans* (1993), most of these attempts were overwhelmed by local and/or Nazi forces.

[41]Lucien Lazare, *Rescue as Resistance: How Jewish Organizations Fought the Holocaust in France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

present in France in 1940" to Jewish resistance organizations.[42] He states that these groups provided funds, identity papers, ration cards and lodging that either allowed Jews to leave France or live underground.[43] Rescuing children was the primary goal of Jewish resistance movements that saved 10,000 children from deportation. Lazare's answer to how this was accomplished lies in the perseverance of the rescuers and the strong tie between rescuers and rescued.[44] Lazare created a new framework in which to think about Jewish aid agencies. In addition to providing aid, they were also actively resisting anti-Jewish laws and policies. Lazare examines rescue in a context that empowers the rescuers rather than criticizing them for not saving more Jews. He also helps to redefine the French resistance by suggesting that it was hardly a monolithic movement, but that multiple resistances were waged against the occupying powers, albeit with different goals. Lazare's resistance argument is important because it contributes to the framework of French Holocaust rescue narratives and also investigates how Jews were rescued. Not all of the organizations focused on within this dissertation should be categorized as resisters because the intentions of some of the groups was to provide aid rather than to resist.

The historical frameworks set forth by Bauer and Lazare set the stage for further rescue research. My goal is not to refute these narratives but contribute to them and make the narrative more comprehensive by further understanding the relationships between agencies--Jewish and non-Jewish alike and the Vichy state. Lazare is correct focusing on Jewish agencies such as the OSE that played a key role in saving Jewish

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[42]Lazare, 308.
[43]Lazare, 308.
[44]Lazare, 309.

children (rescue activities would have been more constrained without the assistance of the Joint, the AFSC, ICRC and others). Critics have pointed to the slowness of the ICRC in helping civilian victims. My goal is to present the difficulties faced by these agencies and put agencies and the workers themselves in the context of a war that presented unprecedented human rights challenges.

The historiographies of Vichy, humanitarian aid agencies and the Holocaust have not been examined as interrelated subjects. My goal is to contribute to the historiography of all three areas but ultimately to shed light on the relationships among humanitarian aid agencies and Vichy officials while working under the constraints of increasing authoritarianism. Aid agencies required new understandings of their role in a time of war due to the new challenges put upon the civilian populations, which forced agencies to question themselves and their motives sometimes leading to internal dissent. Unlike the historiography of Vichy, which has seen growth and innovation in the last thirty years, the historiography of aid agencies during World War II is not well developed. Part of the reason for the lack of research is that documents were not available until quite recently.[45] Additionally, while the camps have been the subject of historical works mostly from the perspective of those interned, less attention has been paid to the network of humanitarian organizations working in and around the camps.

Sources

This dissertation examines the organizations that played a visible role in the provision of aid to detention camps refugees and subsequently through emigration efforts. The aid agencies that worked in Vichy (with different missions which

[45] As archival time limits expire more documentation will become available to scholars. There is a forty to sixty year moratorium Holocaust related ICRC archival documents.

sometimes overlapped) which will be examined in this project include the ICRC, the AFSC, the Joint, and the OSE. All of these agencies maintained records of their activities during the war (some more complete than others). When I began examining the available documents, the same agencies appeared repeatedly in one another's archives. There were other agencies that also deserve mention such as CIMADE (Comité inter-mouvements auprès des évacués) and the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) but the documentation available did not mention them with the same frequency as the others. These agencies may not be as visible in the records because they did not work as closely with frequently mentioned agencies or perhaps they were working in a more localized manner (this is particularly true for CIMADE). In any event, it is important to assert the relevance of all humanitarian aid agencies which were working in France during the war but unfortunately, I am only able to focus on those most visible in the available documents.

The documents used for this dissertation include internal and external agency reports, correspondence between agency workers and government officials and newspaper articles. The CDJC (Centre Documentation Juive Contemporaire) in Paris is a repository for many of the Holocaust documents related to France. It is there that I accessed the AFSC boxes, which are also located in Philadelphia, the OSE files and the files pertaining to the Joint. The CDJC also holds several but not all of the ICRC documents pertaining to France. The ICRC archive in Geneva contains all of the files pertaining to the Commission Mixte, the sub-agency that performed most of the work in France during the war. The Commission Mixte (CMS) was established for the purpose of coordinating humanitarian efforts throughout Europe and was in many cases the

conduit through which all of agencies worked. The CMS documents read in conjunction with the ICRC reports and correspondence provide a glimpse into the decision-making processes of the ICRC as a whole.

Chapter Overview

This work includes four chapters and a conclusion. The questions I hope to answer that I listed above will be worked into each chapter respectively. I will devote a chapter to the following agencies: ICRC, AFSC, Joint, and the OSE including other agencies working in France on a smaller scale. While all the agencies dealt with similar challenges working with limited resources, limited access, and Vichy authorities, each agency had its own way of adapting to these issues both in terms of internal policymaking and through negotiation with the humanitarian network. Each agency also had different means of interacting with Vichy administrators from having varying degrees of communication to resistance.

Chapter two will focus on the ICRC. Since the ICRC is the most recognized humanitarian agency in the world today and during World War II, there is accordingly more literature about it than the other groups. However, the secondary sources regarding the ICRC and World War II are extremely limited due to a moratorium on ICRC documents that are less than forty to sixty (range is dependent on whether those discussed within the documents are living or deceased) years old. Although the suspension on documents is ending, the only historian given full access to the archive prior to the expiration had been Jean-Claude Favez who wrote extensively on the ICRC and the Holocaust. Favez's two books, *Une Mission Impossible?* (1988) and *The Red Cross and the Holocaust* (1989 with a reprint in 1999) examine the role of ICRC

policies providing aid to Jewish deportees across Europe.[46] Favez argues that the ICRC failed to help Jews but was placed in a difficult situation based upon its mission of political neutrality. Favez asserts the ICRC was bound to the 1929 Geneva Convention which did not have a provision for civilian detainees; this resulted in the ICRC refraining from providing direct aid to Jewish deportees and making a public denunciation of the Nazis. ICRC delegates did visit the French detention camps to report on camp conditions. By sending these reports to Vichy officials, it tried to make a case to improve camp conditions. It also served as a conduit through which other aid agencies, such as the JDC and AFSC, could provide services to detainees. Visiting the ICRC archive in Geneva twice, I found a substantial collection of primary sources which show the extent to which the ICRC worked with other humanitarian agencies, attempted to work with Vichy officials and most of all, tried to work on behalf of POWs. My research shows that over the course of the war, the ICRC slowly changed how it viewed its humanitarian mission by redefining who could be described as a POW. Its mission is often confusing. Caroline Moorehead wrote a history of the ICRC and describes it:

> calls itself international; yet is a private Swiss company, based in Geneva and governed by twenty-five Swiss citizens. Prides itself on being closer to victims than any other humanitarian organization; yet does not speak for them. Exists to help and heal the victims of war; yet does not itself lobby against war. Have [sic] its roots in precedence and institutional history. Employs delegates, some eight hundred in 1997, for the most part Swiss who gather information about torture, 'disappearances' and

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[46]Jean-Claude Favez, *Une Mission Impossible* (Lausanne: Nadir-Payot, 1988); Jean-Claude Favez, *The Red Cross and the Holocaust,* Translated by John Fletcher and Beryl Fletcher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

> summary executions that no one else has access to; yet under its mandate cannot reveal to the public or media what they know.[47]

The ICRC maintained the 1929 Geneva Convention definition of political as opposed to civilian detainee through the war, which meant that its attentions were focused on aiding POWs. Nearing the end of the war, it began to cooperate with groups such as the JDC. It amended the Geneva Convention in 1949 to include civilians in addition to POWs.

I devote chapter three to the American Quakers. Quaker organizations worked throughout Europe to provide aid during the entire course of the war. Prior to the onset of the war, British and American Quaker groups worked throughout France to provide aid to Spanish refugees interned in the South of France. After France was defeated by Germany, the British Quakers returned to Britain leaving the American Friends a large task. Spanish refugees continued to need humanitarian assistance and stemming from Vichy and German anti-Jewish directives, Jews also required humanitarian aid and after 1942 rescue efforts. The AFSC played an important role in serving as the primary conduit through which outside aid agencies (such as the JDC, OSE, and CIMADE) could assist Jews and it also played a consistent part in providing assistance to anyone who needed it in wartime France. Through its European director, Howard Kershner, it established a strong relationship with Vichy officials, giving it the ability to stay in France during the war (incorporated as *Secours Quaker* after 1942) and to find creative ways to channel money and goods to those in need. I will explore the unique relationship between Howard Kershner and Marshal Pétain, and the manifestations of

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[47]Caroline Moorhead, *Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, Inc., 1998), xxi.

their association. It informed how French national identity was perceived by Kershner and by other members of the AFSC who did not always agree with the perspective of its director.

I examine two Jewish organizations that worked in France through the course of the war. Chapter four studies the JDC based in New York, which provided funds for many of the rescue and aid activities within France. Prior to U.S. involvement in the war, the Joint worked closely with Jewish agencies in France to provide all kinds of assistance to Jews whether it be through emigration efforts or providing goods, funds and/or employment to those in need. After U.S. involvement in the war, the JDC worked from its New York base through other agencies (such as the AFSC and OSE) to channel resources for assistance. There was concern that American anti-Semitism could be aroused if it appeared that only Jews were allowed to emigrate into the U.S. at a time when immigration quotas were being strongly enforced. Additionally, the Joint was concerned with working with non-Jewish aid agencies about how to best serve the Jewish population. While the Joint was relieved to receive assistance from non-Jewish organizations such as the Quakers, there was a mutual understanding among agencies that American Jews were financially obligated to aid European Jews. This was based on a belief that European Jewish needs were best understood by other Jews. Perhaps the greatest difficulty for the Joint came from different Jewish groups within France which were in conflict with one another and were also distrustful of the motives of non-Jewish agencies, American interests (including the Joint) and with reason, Vichy officials.

Chapter five investigates the activities of the OSE, CIMADE, and YMCA. The OSE was created in Russia in 1912 to provide assistance to Jewish children. During World War II, it worked to save Jewish children in France (and other occupied countries) from deportation. It worked closely with the Quakers and the Joint to help children both in emigration efforts and within children's homes (children's refuges) throughout France. The struggles of the OSE mirror in some ways those of the Joint. This is especially true of their clandestine work after 1942 and its need to work through organizations such as the Quakers in order to fulfill its mission to save Jewish children. Dr. Joseph Weill, its Swiss leader, regularly traveled with members of the Quaker and ICRC delegations to make colony and/or camp visits. Additionally, since its mission was to aid children, it was easier to gain financial and moral support for their efforts than those providing aid to adult detainees. The rest of the chapter will be devoted to other agencies working in France for which archival documentation is limited or whose humanitarian span was less broad than the groups discussed above. These groups include CIMADE, and the YMCA. CIMADE was created by Madeleine Barot to specifically aid refugees in France in 1939 and worked mostly in Southern France. Protestant activists founded it but it operated on a secular basis like the Quaker organizations. It worked closely with the OSE and focused on providing aid to children. CIMADE still exists but does not have an archive open to the public.

This study explores the policy dynamics of World War II NGOs--how they shifted and what these dynamics tell us about the nature of humanitarian organizations trying to adapt to unprecedented human rights crises. By further understanding the historical dynamic between NGO's and state policy makers, we can gain new insight

into the unique wartime political identity for both NGO's and Vichy officials. At once extolling the virtues of the rights of man and authoritarianism, Vichy France was a strange amalgamation of ideologies. At the same time, we can learn from a historical perspective about how humanitarian problems are understood and processed institutionally, culturally and politically. This is particularly relevant in view of the struggles still faced by aid agencies in many parts of the world where genocide and ethnic cleansing still exist. From 1789 until the 1930s France was extolled as a place where human rights and representative government were celebrated and as a result it drew people from all over Europe who had suffered oppression from their own governments. Particularly striking about Vichy is the speed at which this ideology changed and reversed itself after World War II. Although early Vichy historians referred to this period as an aberration, we now recognize that this sort of ideological change can occur quickly and there are often warning signals if one chooses to see them.

Through the lens of each aid agency, it is possible to gain a clearer impression of the chaotic state of Vichy affairs. The AFSC documents illustrate the difficulties faced by aid workers to push through Vichy bureaucratic networks showing both the disparate personalities within the government and its lack of organization. Prior to 1942, an extraordinary reciprocal relationship developed between the agencies and Vichy. The agencies provided aid not only to detainees but also to scores of French men and women whose needs could not be met by the French system alone. Vichy officials negotiated with aid agencies for myriad purposes including creating positive propaganda for themselves, distributing aid on their behalf, and for individual reasons.

Exploring the complicated relationships of Vichy and aid agencies and how these relationships resulted in humanitarian action (or lack thereof) provides another look at how Vichy was organized and how aid agencies had to reorganize in order to be effective. Jewish lives were at risk in France during the war and almost all non-French Jews in the country were deported to the East to be murdered in the camps. At the same time, the network of humanitarian organizations banded together to create a series of informal networks to create space for aid and rescue. Ties with Vichy officials allowed access to resources which also enabled the humanitarian network to facilitate its efforts.

Chapter 2
The International Committee of the Red Cross: Neutrality at any Cost?

Introduction

> The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also endeavors to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.[48]

The current humanitarian mission of the ICRC was created resulting from the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Originally, the ICRC was formed in 1863 to provide relief to wounded members of the military. Through the history of the organization, its mission has evolved as the nature of warfare has changed. Historically, the ICRC mission was updated after a war when something unforeseen was introduced into warfare in an unprecedented way, such as poisonous gas in the First World War. This was certainly the case during World War II in which the ICRCs mission was closer to that of 1863--in terms of categorizing victims of war--than that of amended 1949 version which added stateless civilians. The ICRC expanded its wartime focus from helping primarily POWs and civilians (who held citizenship status) to those whose citizen rights had been stripped. Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe had become stateless which placed them in a category outside of the ICRC mandate of 1929. Jews in non-occupied Europe retaining citizenship could and did receive ICRC assistance during the war.

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[48] www.icrc.org/HOME.NSF/060a34982cae624ec12566fe00326312/125ffe2d4c7f68acc1256ae300394f6e?Open.

In the postwar period, the ICRC was roundly accused of being too rigid in its mission and not publicly denouncing Nazi treatment of European Jews. Recently, it acknowledged its failure to denounce the Nazi regime and provide aid to stateless Jews persecuted by the Nazis in an October 25, 2007 memorandum entitled "The Nazi genocide and other persecutions." In the memo, an apology was issued by the organization for being a "prisoner of its traditional procedures and of the overly narrow legal framework in which it operated."[49] It further stated that the organization could not publicly condemn Nazi persecution for fear that it would jeopardize its neutral position and it would hinder its ability to provide aid to prisoners of war. Instead the agency chose to rely upon its delegates, those working for the ICRC, to make "confidential representations to the authorities of the Reich or its satellites. These delegates, however, had no access to the corridors of power. Only toward the end of the war did the ICRCs leaders make high-level representations to certain leaders of the Reich and its satellites."[50] The memo asserts that both more aid should have been provided and a public condemnation should have been made regardless of the consequences.[51] While

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[49] www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/holocaust-position-27042006.

[50] www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/holocaust-position-27042006. ICRC employees stationed in the field were known as delegates.

[51] "Having confined itself to two options--that of the very limited aid operation it was carrying out for the victims of Nazi persecution, with derisory results in regard to the situation of the victims and no impact on the genocide, and that of public condemnation, an ultimate weapon that the ICRC felt it could not use, the organization was unable--until the last months of the war--to make determined, sustained, high-level diplomatic representations to the leaders of the Reich or to those of its allies or satellites, not all of whom shared the destructive fanaticism of Nazi dignitaries. Such approaches should have been attempted, even if it could be doubted that the desired results would be achieved. For if crime meets with no protest--were it only by means of confidential representations--if repeated atrocities meet with no condemnation--even if no material sanctions are imposed--then it is to be feared that the moral values underlying

the memorandum lays out the framework of ICRC operations which may have slowed policy making decisions, it does not justify or adequately explain its inaction.

In 1949 the Geneva Conventions were amended from the 1929 version to reflect WWII methods of warfare. The earlier version extended aid to the wounded and sick in armed forces in the field. It also extended aid to prisoners of war. In 1949, the Geneva Convention was expanded to include wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea and most importantly--civilian persons who were omitted from the 1929 version. It is this omission from the 1929 Geneva Conventions that is at the root of understanding the ICRCs role in the Second World War. The ICRCs mission to remain neutral is equally important since it was and remains one of its guiding principles. To understand the broader role that humanitarian agencies such as the ICRC (which serves as a role model internationally) plays in hostile political environments is not a simple matter. Is it the role of humanitarian agencies to intervene? If so, how? How can an agency maintain its neutrality, which affords it accessibility, if it intervenes? The ICRC delegates faced these questions and the organization's responses succeeded in some ways (mostly regarding POW affairs) but failed to rescue Jews and certainly to denounce the Nazi regime. Although the organization was urged to make an anti-Nazi pronouncement, it remained extremely apprehensive about taking such a measure for fear that it would squander the trust it had developed among nations based upon its impartiality and political neutrality. According the ICRC two basic concerns

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international humanitarian law will eventually wither away." www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/holocaust-position-27042006.

drove this decision: remaining an effective resource for victims and "upholding the authority of the ICRC in the world of the International Red Cross."[52]

It is noteworthy that this memo came out nineteen years after Jean-Claude Favez's 1988 book *Une mission impossible?*[53] Although the timing of the memo remains mysterious evidenced by its release decades after the Holocaust, the ICRC archival moratorium is ending making archive more accessible to researchers. Favez's work was unprecedented since he was the only person who had ever received full access to the ICRC archive until recently. Favez's work, while comprehensive, was limited based on his own time constraints in the archive. While Favez was absolutely correct about his summation of the challenges faced by the ICRC during the war given its interpretation of its mission, there were some attempts to work around it by a few members of the ICRC delegation. The creation of the Commission Mixte (CMS) best represents those attempts.

In the postwar period, we tend to think of the Red Cross as a large and powerful institution based upon its reporting presence at almost all international crises from wars to environmental disasters. At the time of the Second World War, it was morally influential but far from large. Twenty-three Swiss members staffed the ICRC in 1939, from the "liberal-conservative Protestant middle class in Geneva," all of whom were unpaid. Members of the committee were elected and included four women and also two Catholics.[54] The national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are grouped in the League but function independently from the ICRC. The ICRC also worked

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[52]Jean-Claude Favez, *The Red Cross and the Holocaust* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999), 84.
[53]The English title of this book is *The Red Cross and the Holocaust.* See note above.
[54]Favez, 14.

independently from the Swiss government but Swiss governmental cultural/political identity focused on national and political neutrality strongly influenced the philosophical foundation of the ICRC and during the war, the two were tightly intertwined.

Although the Geneva Conventions were amended in 1929 following the First World War, no convention from 1929 covered political prisoners. In 1934, the Tokyo Agreement was adopted at the Red Cross conference in Japan which sought to protect civilian aliens detained by an enemy army occupying the country in which they were citizens.[55] The problem with the Tokyo Agreement was that it had to be ratified at the national governmental level and it was not recognized by 1939. The only way action could be undertaken on behalf of civilian detainees through this agreement would be through the national Red Cross societies since the ICRC could not intervene in the affairs of another sovereign state, besides the organization did not and still does not have the manpower to undertake such missions. The Red Cross national societies in occupied countries were unable to intervene in any substantive way and the amendment did not have any impact.[56] The Red Cross could not foresee the brutality and mass extermination that was about to unfold toward civilians but it could have responded more quickly to the crisis by amending the Convention when it began to understand the dire situation of Jewish refugees. The organization was also fearful that intervention on behalf of the Jews could result in the banishment of all humanitarian activities in

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[55]Favez, 4.

[56]The national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are dependent upon private donations and funding from the state in which each local organization is based. Because local organizations rely upon state funding, their ability to function autonomously from the state can be compromised.

occupied Europe.[57] The Red Cross had already been powerless to prevent the deaths of Soviet POWs because the USSR was not a signatory to the Conventions.[58] Jews were in a tenuous position in the context of how the Conventions were written since the Red Cross considered them civilians rather than POWs subject to their respective national laws even though their citizenship rights were revoked.

The ICRC's position to not interfere on behalf of Jews based upon their status as legal citizens (contrary to the fact that these rights were stripped) was asserted based on its desire remain politically neutral. The Red Cross was not blind to Jewish persecution. It knew that Jews were being treated brutally in Germany and occupied countries such as Poland and Ukraine but it chose to make no distinctions based upon race or religion. In addition to the agency's concern about remaining neutral, the ICRC was also cognizant of Swiss public opinion which was concerned about an influx of asylum seekers from the Reich.[59] While the Swiss were willing to send humanitarian aid to refugee populations, inviting those same prisoners, camp detainees and refugees to Switzerland to possibly stay was another story.[60] For the ICRC, taking a position to help Jews meant taking a side politically.[61] Of course, the primary difficulty with this argument is that while the ICRC was hesitant to make a distinction based upon race,

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[57]Favez, 2.
[58]Favez, 2.
[59]Favez, 19.
[60]Favez, 107.
[61]Favez, 213 Jean-Etienne Schwarzenberg, an official with the ICRC stated, "if the ICRC for its part makes no distinctions where race is concerned, it cannot for all that totally ignore the internal legislation of certain sovereign states which do practise [sic] such distinctions. Care must be taken that the ICRC's interventions on behalf of Jews, although entirely of a humanitarian nature, are not considered--wrongly, of course--as taking up a positions vis-à-vis such internal legislation, and thus assuming a political character incompatible with the principle of neutrality which lies at the heart of everything the ICRC does."

others were making this distinction. Hesitancy on the part of the ICRC to act was less a result of anti-Semitism or approval of fascism but more ingrained in terms of how the organization viewed its philosophical role in all humanitarian efforts. It used political neutrality in the name of helping victims but the reality of that philosophy prevented it from action. Its fear of the Reich undermined its efforts and caused ICRC leaders such as Max Huber to strictly adhere to the law and ICRC principles.[62]

Although the ICRC itself did not see itself as having the justification to intervene in political affairs, it is important to note that outsiders viewed the role of the ICRC quite differently. Humanitarian agencies such as the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and the Joint Distribution Committee (Joint) expected the ICRC to intervene in the persecution of Jews by either actively engaging the Reich or through direct aid distribution.[63] The perception of the ICRC among humanitarian agencies was that it had moral power to wield considerable influence over German authorities and could provide substantive aid to war victims (civilians) in the same kinds of ways that it provided aid to POWs.[64] The ICRC focused on POWs throughout Europe as defined by the 1929 Geneva Conventions. While the ICRC worked throughout Europe to help POWs, I will focus on its work in France because it played an integral role in the French aid network in its role as a conduit for the transfer of money to fund relief efforts and its

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[62]Favez, 21.

[63]Those thinking that the ICRC had moral authority included governments such as the U.S. Government who asked the ICRC to intervene. The ICRC did attempt to engage the Reich on behalf of Jewish detainees but were rebuffed.

[64]In actuality, the ICRC could requisition supplies but it had to work through other agencies to distribute them due to its own lack of staffing resources. It also served as a diplomatic intermediary negotiating distribution transportation issues between governments and aid agencies.

work in providing aid to naturalized French citizens who fell under the Geneva Conventions.

At the beginning of the war, the ICRC was primarily involved with POWs--both German POWs in France and French POWs in Germany. While care for POWs was the focal point for the ICRC, it was not its only concern in 1939 and 1940. French authorities had opened internment camps throughout the country but many were concentrated in the South to hold different categories of people who had fled strife in their own countries. Those interned were not POWs but civilians including Spanish Republicans, anti-Fascist Germans, and Jewish refugees from Germany and Eastern Europe and former members of the International Brigades. ICRC worries regarding the detainees stemmed from Article 19 of the German-French Armistice agreement, which called for some internees to be returned to the Germans. Anyone defined as stateless by the Armistice agreement or a political detainee risked deportation to either Germany or the East from both the Vichy and German officials.[65] Rumors ran rampant about those who had already been deported to the East from other countries whose fates were unknown. After also hearing about terrible living conditions within the Southern French camps, the ICRC asked permission to make a series of visits to the internment camps in order to observe and make recommendations about improving living conditions.

Communication Channels

While it is unclear when the Red Cross committee members became aware of the Final Solution, the archive does present some indications of how and when it

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[65]Favez, 146.

received information pertaining to it. It appears that Carl J. Burckhardt who was vice-president of the ICRC in August 1942 was told by Gerhart Riegner of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) that plans were underway to exterminate Jews. Riegner learned of this information from friends in the German Foreign Ministry.[66] Further confirmation came from the American consul in Geneva, Paul C. Squire but by that time, the ICRC began to rethink its responsibilities toward the Jews.[67] In addition to personal contacts, the ICRC relied upon information it received from the national Red Cross societies. However, the German Red Cross (DRK) refused to provide information about any Jews detained or deported in Germany so found itself having to find different means to obtain information. Even in the 1930s, the DRK was unreliable in transmitting information to the ICRC about German detainees in concentration camps. Run by SS Dr. Ernst Grawitz, the DRK informed the ICRC on April 29, 1942 that it would no longer provide information about non-Aryan evacuees and no further questions should be submitted although it would continue to accept requests regarding "enemy aliens" interned in the Reich.[68] The Swedish Red Cross pushed Geneva on the issue of German detainees. The subject was addressed only because of the personal relationship between Max Huber of the ICRC and Paul Draudt of the DRK and neither group wished to be embarrassed by the Swedes.[69]

Communication among all of the humanitarian agencies was regularly exchanged in Switzerland because it served as a center for the movement of goods, people and information. Not only was the ICRC based in Switzerland but many other

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[66]Favez, 6.
[67]Favez, 6.
[68]ICRC G 44/13, April 29, 1942.
[69]Favez, 17.

organizations established headquarters there as well. Save the Children, the International Migration Service, the YMCA, the Quakers, the Churches' Ecumenical Council, the WJC, the Permanent Bureau of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the Joint and the Swiss Aid Committee for Jewish Refugees Abroad set up Swiss (often Geneva) locations.[70] The benefits to a Swiss location also included gaining information from the Swiss press which despite strict government control did publish information more freely than other countries in Europe. In addition, the close ties of many Swiss people with Germans (plus many Germans living in Switzerland) facilitated the movement of information about events in the Reich. Information reaching the ICRC through its own channels whether it was through its missions or through the national societies was considered actionable whereas information gained from personal contacts was not.[71]

From 1939-1944, ICRC policy prioritized POWs and civilian internees in relief efforts. However, the way in which the Red Cross delegates approached the subject of Jewish suffering reflects the indistinct category the Jews were placed. In terms of communicating with the Germans, Jews were not spoken of and because they did not constitute a nation, they did not fall within the purview of ICRC policy. As a result the Red Cross delegates approach the subject in all of their documentation in neutral and rather evasive terms. As Favez states, "Used as they were to dealing with outside contacts through negotiation--that is in a neutral, self-controlled fashion--they never quite shook it off, even in their relations with each other, the habit of caution, so that

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[70]Favez, 25.

[71]ICRC action should be broadly defined and could be anything from a request for a camp visit or the movement of humanitarian supplies.

reports of camp visits and of discussions are noticeably reticent."[72] The cautious tone found in ICRC documentation is especially noticeable in contrast to the documents of other humanitarian agencies such as the Quakers or Joint. While personal correspondence among ICRC members strikes a more intimate tone, overall the documentation is impersonal and seems distant. Not unlike other humanitarian agencies, the ICRC did not recognize in the moment the importance of distinguishing Jews from other detainees. The Quakers also hesitated to make this kind of distinction. Favez notes that while the ICRC seems lacking in its attention to Jews or better yet, a larger understanding of events going on around them, this is to be attributed to an inability to understand and analyze the information it received in order to act in a way that would seem more proactive.

The ICRC was aware of anti-Semitic persecution in Germany and was also aware of concentration camps. The ICRC's stream of information came from its representatives and based on camp visits in the years 1935-1938, ICRC delegates documented camp conditions which were harsh but not inadequately supplied. Marcel Junod, the ICRCs delegate-at-large traveled to Berlin in 1939 to investigate the treatment of Polish Jews after the Joint and Jewish World Congress asked for its intervention. His account detailed the evacuation of Jews from the Reich to "a huge reservation of about 800 square kilometers inhabited exclusively of Jews, surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by an SS unit." Max Huber, Chairman of the ICRC, confronted Walter Hartmann of the DRK with this information and was assured that the deportations had stopped but camp visits were not possible. The ICRC continued to

[72]Favez, 29.

receive detailed reports from eyewitnesses, charitable organizations and its own delegates. According to Favez, in the years up to 1942, distinguishing the Jews as a special category was considered a "taboo subject" for fear that all ICRC operations could be shut down entirely.[73] While the ICRC as an organization was deficient in finding ways to help Jews directly, this is not to say there was general agreement within the organization about how to proceed or that sub-groups of the ICRC did not find ways to participate in the aid network.

The Documents

Jean-Claude Favez had unprecedented access to the ICRC archive but like any scholar was constrained by time and the volume of available documents. He focused on texts "whose significance arises both from the detail and precision of their contents and from the trust the ICRC put in their source." He concentrated primarily on documents from delegates and representatives but also those from national Red Cross societies and other trusted organizations. He also paid close attention to any ICRC documents which suggested any knowledge of Nazi intent in order to put together a chronology denoting its awareness of the Final Solution.[74] His work examines the ICRC from a broad European perspective with chapters on each of the occupied and non-occupied European countries affected by the war. This dissertation picks up from his work and continues the story by further exploring the work that the ICRC did in France and its negotiations with the aid network and Vichy officials. Favez's work is ultimately critical of the ICRC and its lack of action on behalf of Jews. Jews in France presented different legal issues than Jews in completely occupied countries because naturalized

[73]Favez, 31-36.
[74]Favez, 32-33.

Jews were considered French citizens whereas non-naturalized Jews became stateless. Concerns about Nazi intentions became increasingly difficult to ignore after the round-ups in 1942 France. As a neighboring country, eyewitness reports flooded into Switzerland in addition to reports by the French-speaking Swiss press bringing an awareness to humanitarians of Jewish mistreatment.[75] Pastor Marc Boegner, the head of the Protestant Council in France, sent a letter of protest about the French deportation of Jews to Pétain. It made its way among all of the humanitarian organizations including the ICRC.[76] The letter pleads for better treatment of foreign Jews by Vichy officials on the grounds that France as a Christian nation has acted dishonorably. By examining the ICRC role in the French aid network, we can see that although the organization did constrain itself by its mission to remain neutral, it did find ways to work around itself to participate in relief efforts.

ICRC Methods of Relief

On May 15, 1942, members of the ICRC met to discuss its objectives. The members included: Max Huber, Suzanne Ferrière, Marguerite Frick-Cramer, Jacques Chenevièvre, Carl J. Burckhardt, Alec Cramer and Frédéric Barbey. The outcome of the meeting was a memorandum outlining ICRC Jewish policies:

a. In line with its traditions and statutes, with decisions of International Red Cross Conferences, and with the Conventions, the ICRC never discriminates on grounds of a religious, political or racial nature.
b. The only difference observable in law is that between Jews who belong to a nation at war with the interning power, and Jews of the same nationality as that power. The ICRC is entitled to intervene on behalf of the first category, since an international problem is involved.

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[75]Favez, 37.

[76]ICRC, G-85 August 20, 1942 letter from Pastor Marc Boegner to Marshal Pétain.

c. to request a visit to Jewish camps in occupied France, whether their occupants are foreigners or French citizens, since the latter are in enemy hands;
d. to try to organize aid, in particular by getting material assistance from Jewish organizations;
e. to defend, in discussions with the Germans, the rights of Jewish POWs and equivalent civilian internees
f. finally (a more sensitive issue), to work to get news of deported Jews.[77]

One way that the ICRC attempted to help civilian detainees was to document concentration camp conditions. While permission to access camps in Germany and most German-occupied locations was not allowed by German officials, the ICRC was able to visit camps in unoccupied. Access to the Southern camps, Argèles-sur-Mer, Le Vernet and Gurs was granted to Dr. Alex Cramer of the ICRC in November 1940. It should be noted that the Quakers had already been granted permission to set up semi-permanent quarters near or within the camps that gave them access that no one else had. The ICRC was granted access to the camps to observe detainee living conditions but not to distribute aid. Following the camp visit, the lead ICRC delegate would write a report documenting conditions with improvement suggestions to be filed with the Red Cross[78] The point of these visits was to observe and document--not to provide immediate aid. As a private institution, the ICRC was under no obligation to publish its findings but it did make suggestions to the occupying authorities on how to improve humanitarian conditions. After Cramer's visit to the camps, he wrote a report describing their

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[77]ICRC G 59/1, April 27, 1942.

[78]French camp officials allowed ICRC delegations unlimited access to the camps because they often wanted to improve camp conditions themselves but did not have the means necessary to do so. In other occupied countries, ICRC officials were often not allowed unlimited access or access at all. In Germany, ICRC offers to visit German camps were mostly rebuffed except for an infamous visit to Theresienstadt. The ICRC were shown a staged camp setting that was created to present a good impression to the world of German camps--it was of course, fake. See Favez pp. 73-74 for more information.

abysmal state and his distress over those who were detained, most of whom presented no danger to the rest of society. He wrote:

> While it may be essential to keep some of them out of harm's way (common criminals, or people representing a danger to the state such as those held at Le Vernet), there are others, indeed the great majority, whose arrest, deportation and internment are no way justified by any political or military necessity...."[79]

Cramer reported that the only characteristic shared by those arrested is that they are Jewish or of Jewish descent. This report was sent to the Vichy Foreign Affairs Ministry recommending that supplies be distributed to improve the living conditions of the detainees and to release some of them (the elderly, women and children).[80] Submission of the report to a governmental department is representative of the sort of action taken by the ICRC during the first few years of the war to help camp detainees. In terms of POWs, the ICRC had a different and closer relationship with German and Vichy authorities because it was in each government's best interests to bring its soldiers home. By the end of 1942, rescuing Jews from occupied Europe seemed impossible and as a result the ICRC decided to provide aid by sending relief supplies to deportees in occupied and non-occupied Europe and by appealing directly to governments in Reich's allies and satellites.[81]

The ICRCs main governing body, based in Geneva, continued primarily to pay attention to POWs through the duration of the war, slightly shifting its humanitarian emphasis near the end of the war to a more civilian-based relief goal. The Joint Commission of the Red Cross (also known as the *Commission Mixte de Secours* or

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[79]ICRC Report 1940.
[80]Favez, 147.
[81]Favez, 8.

CMS) was established the following summer July 23, 1941 to offset the lack of aid provided to civilians. The CMS was a joint effort between the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies (national Red Cross societies) comprised of two members from each group and a fifth member chosen from outside the two groups. The ICRC and the League viewed the CMS as a way of facilitating the joint efforts of these two groups rather than creating a brand new branch of the ICRC. The first Joint Commission was comprised of Carl Burckhardt, Edouard de Haller, Bonabes de Rougé, and Georges Milsom. The fifth member was Dr. Robert Boehringer.[82] The CMS was created to help solve the following humanitarian issues: the shortage of available funds, difficulties in obtaining goods, transportation problems and negotiations with Allied officials in regard to the Blockade and Counter-Blockade.[83]

The CMS depended on outside aid agencies to distribute its goods, which meant that it had to take into account the capabilities of the distributing agency before providing assistance. Organizations such as the AFSC had consistent access to the camps frequently worked with the CMS to distribute supplies. The National Red Cross societies were able to distribute goods in limited ways depending upon national laws regarding who was deemed an enemy of the state. In countries in which Jews were deemed enemies of the state such as Germany and over time in France, the National Red Cross societies were not in a position to provide aid for fear of serious consequences of arrest and/or deportation of its members. Not surprisingly, this

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[82]ICRC Inventory O CMS 1942-1948.

[83]Report of the Joint Relief Commission of the International Red Cross 1941-1946. (Geneva, International Red Cross Committee, League of Red Cross Societies, 1948). The Blockade referred to is the British blockade to distribute goods to Axis countries. One could obtain a "navicert"--a license to transport items--but they were increasingly difficult to obtain.

constraint limited the ability of the CMS in myriad of ways since it was unable to rely upon its own organization for assistance--nor could it rely upon the ICRC governing body since its own mission did not provide aid to civilians. Apart from institutional constraints, one of the persisting difficulties faced by all relief agencies was the scarcity of goods--if goods were available--transporting them through the Blockade. The CMS was able to fund aid to twenty-two countries based upon contributions from a variety of sources including the Joint and donations made to the Red Cross.

A focus on the actions of the ICRC and CMS in France during the war shows how its missions evolved from the provision of assistance to POWs to the realization that civilians were the primary victims of this war who did not fall under the 1929 Geneva Conventions. First, I will examine the work of the ICRC in France and its relationship with Vichy authorities in regard to POWs. Second, I will examine the relationship of the ICRC (and CMS) with outside humanitarian agencies and how they worked together to distribute aid to Jews. I will also look at the unique role of the ICRC in terms of its perceived moral authority. Ultimately, the ICRC was moved to change its narrow focus near the end of the war leading to the amendment of the Geneva Conventions in the years following the war.[84] Lastly, to understand the ICRC's actions during the war, one must analyze the broader implications it faced within the context of neutrality. It not only used neutrality as a way to gain access to war victims but it also needed to stay neutral in order to maintain the trust of political entities in order to keep its access.

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[84]The ICRC amended the Geneva Conventions in 1949. The CMS also amended its constitution in 1945.

The Balancing Act

Beginning in 1939, the ICRC developed a relationship with French authorities based upon providing aid to POWs. In the period prior to the German invasion of the unoccupied territory in France in 1942, the ICRC worked closely with members of the French Government to find ways to bring French POWs home from Germany and to transport goods and/or letters to French POWs detained in German prison camps.[85] The ICRC also worked with the German Government on behalf of its POWs imprisoned in France. Typically, the ICRC also worked as the main intermediary between the two governments facilitating the exchange of prisoners. When the Germans occupied France, many of the POW issues diminished from the German perspective because of the Armistice agreement between Germany and France in 1940.[86] Article XIX of the Armistice Agreement was one of the most controversial articles and also the most hotly debated by humanitarian agencies. It stated:

> All German prisoners-of-war and civilian prisoners, including incarcerated and punished captives who were arrested and sentenced for a deed done that was of benefit to the German Reich, are to be unconditionally surrendered to the German troops.
>
> The French government is obligated to return all Germans, who will be requested by name by the German government, living in France as well as the French possessions, colonies, protectorate territories, and mandates.

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[85]For a detailed examination of French POWs, see Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: Daily Life in the Heart of France during the German Occupation* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002).

[86]The Armistice Agreement of June 22, 1940 between France and Germany contained 24 articles. Although Vichy officials liked to perpetuate the idea that the Armistice was a way for the French to have autonomy, the Armistice agreement reads like a surrender treaty to the Germans. The articles that are most relevant to this dissertation are Articles XVI, XVII, XIX, XX. See Appendix for Armistice Articles.

> The French government is obligated to prevent German war- and civil captives are deported from France to the French possessions or to other foreign countries. In regard to the already deported captives, who are now outside of France, as well as the transport-capable sick and wounded German prisoner-of-war, an accurate listing of their whereabouts must be submitted without delay. The protection of the sick and wounded German prisoner-of-war is now taken over by the German High Command.[87]

German authorities no longer needed to rely upon the services of the ICRC for their own POWs. Nor did they feel obligated to work with the ICRC on behalf of French POWs in Germany. Germany continued to maintain some ties with the ICRC but they were superficial at best and resulted in very little action.[88] French authorities, on the other hand, still had ample reason to be concerned about their own POWs and looked to the ICRC to be its voice in these kinds of matters. The ICRC obliged Vichy in continuing its efforts for POWs and also expected French officials to listen to its suggestions regarding civil detainees.

While it was the ICRC's primary mission to help POWs, it was also aware of the difficulties faced by non-military victims of war beginning in 1940. Frequent references to the plight of civil detainees are found in ICRC correspondence to French authorities after November 1940. ICRC delegates wrote to French authorities about the status of French POWs in occupied territory and in the same letters would bring up civil detainee status questions. More often than not, these suggestions were met with a cordial response but a lack of action. Certainly, looking back, these suggestions seem tepid given what we now know about the conditions of the detainees and their fate if deported. However, it is instructive to show the nature of these letters because they

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[87]www.kbismarck.com/frencharmistice.html.

[88]German ties with the ICRC after the Armistice seemed to be maintained solely for the purpose of presenting a positive international public image.

bring to life the relationship between the ICRC and Vichy officials, which was markedly different from that of the Quakers. Generally, the Vichy-ICRC relationship can be described as formal, professional and lacking in familiarity unlike that of the AFSC's director Howard Kershner.

One of the earliest exchanges between the ICRC and Vichy officials regarding civilian detainees resulted from Alec Cramer's visit to three southern French camps in November 1941. After Cramer filed his report with the ICRC in Geneva, Jacques Chenevière (member of the ICRC and head of POW affairs) wrote to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs with a list of camp condition recommendations.[89] This letter perfectly represents the way in which the ICRC used its power in POW affairs as a way to suggest the subject of civilian treatment. Ultimately, the tactic did not prove to be successful but Vichy officials who were extremely anxious about the fate of French soldiers were willing to discuss civilians even if they had no intention of acting on these discussions. Chenevière's letter opens by stating that the ICRC understands the challenges faced by French authorities in view of French POWs and that the organization will devote itself to helping these individuals. At the same time, the ICRC stated it is compelled to make known Vichy officials the difficult living conditions of civil detainees held in French camps.[90] From its perspective, it would subtract from the perceived moral strength of the ICRC not to discuss these issues even if most of the

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[89]Chenevière worked in the Central POW Agency with the ICRC and ran it from 1939-1945. He later became vice-president of the ICRC in 1950.

[90]ICRC G85 1941 "Nous sommes loin de méconnaître les lourdes tâches qui incombent au Gouvernment français pour secourir les prisonniers de guerre français. C'est à cette tâche que le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge lui-même voue la plus grande partie de ses forces et de ses resources. Toutefois, il nous semble que le pouvoir moral de cette action se trouverait encore renforcé si l'affilgeante situation des internés civils demeurés en France faisait promptement l'objet d'améliorations."

ICRC energy is devoted to helping POWs. The letter included a list of suggestions for the Minister including requests for warm clothing, food, medicine, lodging and a request to liberate of some of the internees (women, children, elderly) who could potentially immigrate to the United States. One way in which the ICRC appealed to Vichy officials was to reinforce the idea that camp visits could be refused but that would not stop the problems within the camp. The organization made it known that ICRC reports were not intended for the public so Vichy officials need not worry about bad public relations. Additionally, if a visit had drawbacks from the perspective of the authorities refusing to allow a visit was not also without some disadvantages.[91] Ultimately, a series of letters was exchanged through July between the ICRC and Vichy officials did loosen up some food distributions into the camps but conditions remained miserable.[92]

It is tempting to surmise that the ICRC had a strategy to gain leverage with Vichy officials by offering to help POWs in return for help with camp detainees. ICRC internal meeting minutes present a different story. At a CMS meeting in January 1941 devoted to Cramer's report, ideas regarding how to improve camp living conditions were proffered. The question of who should be responsible for the Jews arose--the ICRC, the national Red Cross societies or the Jewish organizations such as the Joint?

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[91] ICRC G85 report entitled "Visite de M. Fuchs, du Consulat de France à M. Cheneviere le 27. VIII 1 11h. M. Chenevière a rappelé à M. Fuchs que les rapports des délégués du C.I. n'étaient nullement destinés au public at que dans certains cas si une visite présentait des inconvénients aux yeux des Autorités du pays, le refus d'autoriser des visites n'allait pas aussi sans présenter certains inconvénients.

[92] In the conclusion of a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Dr. Marti of the ICRC based on a July 1941 camp visit, camp conditions were found to be difficult. At Beaune-la-Rolande, the camp commandants were found to be unusually strict and the prisoners were malnourished. At the same time, a new barracks was built and fresh water was available.

Or was it the French government's responsibility even though it had created the problem? Nothing was settled in this meeting except to agree that a report would be sent to representatives of the Jewish community in Switzerland and that the ICRC would reconvene to discuss whether or not it was appropriate for it to take special action in the French camps rather than other countries with similar kinds of detention camps.[93] The level of discussion, representative of a series of discussions throughout the duration of the war, among ICRC delegates demonstrates the organization's uncertainty and uneasiness about the actions it should and could take.

While ICRC delegates were in constant contact with Vichy officials, they were also in contact with Charles de Gaulle in London about POW affairs in "Free France."[94] Illustrative of the method through which the ICRC strictly interpreted its bylaws, discussion between de Gaulle and the ICRC demonstrated the new challenges presented in this war not only in terms of civil detainees but also in terms of POWs who served a party in direct opposition to the one in power. The typical reaction of the ICRC to POWs would be to categorize them by country of origin and work with that particular government on their behalf based upon ICRC bylaws. Typically, an ICRC delegate would make an enquiry with the country detaining the POW asking about his status and location.[95] Confusion arose when the POW in question had unclear citizenship status.

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[93]There was disagreement over a course of action between Huber and Burckhardt. Huber asked if the CMS was qualified to undertake special action in France. Burckhardt said that he would consult Rougé (a member of the CMS who was not present) but he thought it was incumbent upon the CMS to take on this task, G71 ICRC.

[94]References to "Free France" in the ICRC documents refers specifically to DeGaulle's forces.

[95]There are many letters in the ICRC G.85 files that are enquiries to the French government on behalf of a prisoner or prisoners of war. The typical letter is not about one specific POW but rather a list of prisoners.

This was true of Jewish soldiers who became stateless based upon anti-Jewish legislation and with soldiers in French uniforms who were Spanish seeking political asylum. Suzanne Férriére of the ICRC and International Migration Service faced this challenge when trying to help Spanish Republicans who were fighting on behalf of France to escape political persecution in Spain. Férriére could not work with Spanish authorities on behalf of the POWs nor could she turn to Vichy officials. Ultimately, nothing could be done to help these soldiers and almost 5,000 out of 8,000 died by the end of the war.[96] De Gaulle's Free French forces were comprised of soldiers from many different countries who had been colonial forces in Africa and the Middle East, but the troops were comprised of soldiers loyal to de Gaulle rather than to Vichy. As in the cases of the Spanish and Jewish POWs, the ICRC could not turn to Vichy for assistance. Instead, delegates such as Max Huber relied upon guidance from de Gaulle on how to best help his loyal POWs in colonial locations outside of Europe such as Syria and North Africa.

In August of 1941, the ICRC sent de Gaulle a memorandum notifying him that it could no longer apply the principle of reciprocity in favor of "Free French" victims of war such as de Gaulle's forces who came from a diverse set of French colonial nations. ICRC delegates asked him for guidance on how to handle these individuals who were considered prisoners by British authorities. De Gaulle asked that the ICRC address concerns regarding Free French POWs directly to him after Max Huber wrote that based upon ICRC by laws that the ICRC "is charged to provide all information about the prisoners obtained through public or private means to the prisoner's country of

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[96]Favez, 57.

origin or whoever is in power."[97] De Gaulle responded that he could not accept this approach since Vichy would then be directly involved in the fate of Free French POWs. The conversation between de Gaulle and the ICRC was not resolved to the satisfaction of either side. However, this interaction shows the weight the ICRC placed upon abiding by its own rules, which would have resulted in placing this group of POWs in danger, had they been returned to Vichy France. This is not to say that the ICRC intentionally placed POWs in danger--they were looking for ways to work with General de Gaulle but the organization's rigidity in certain areas created unforeseen problems. The agency put itself in an impossible situation in regard to stateless soldiers--it could not knowingly put POW lives in danger by returning them to a hostile state nor could it risk its neutrality by taking too strong a stand on behalf of a person considered an enemy of a legitimate state.

Intra-Agency Interactions

Humanitarian relief efforts directed toward POWs in World War I sealed the ICRC's powerful reputation as a model humanitarian agency. Governments and humanitarian agencies alike looked to the ICRC for assistance in wide ranging issues from POW care to the distribution of food and supplies to non-military victims of war. The organization was viewed by outsiders as an intermediary between hostile parties and the Red Cross was also perceived to have influence as a moral authority over governments. While the ICRC was able to provide POW assistance, it often fell short

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[97]Cette Agence sera chargée de concentrer tous les renseignements intéressant les prisonniers, qu'elle pourra obtenir par les voies officielles ou privées; elle les transmettre le plus rapidement possible au pays d'origine des prisonniers ou la Puissance qu'ils auront servie." ICRC G85, May 8, 1942 letter to DeGaulle from Max Huber of the ICRC.

in its role acting as a moral authority. The organization highly valued its neutral position on issues and diligently worked to maintain this stance representing to them moral integrity. The difficulty was that as the events of the war unfolded and the civilian deportations to the east became increasingly ominous, other aid agencies and governments such as the U.S. expected the ICRC, to take a side--and it did not do so until after the war.

Although it can be said that the AFSC (American Quakers) provided the most aid directly to Jews and camp detainees, it was able to do so because the efforts of the ICRC and the JDC made it possible. The Joint provided the assets to fund much of the assistance directed toward Jews within France. The ICRC often helped to coordinate the distribution of funds and to look for diplomatic channels through the British blockades to facilitate these distributions. The British set up blockades in France to stop the distribution of Axis supplies through Europe. The blockades not only stopped Axis trade but also humanitarian relief distributions. In order to move relief supplies through the blockades, agencies had to either have British permission or find covert methods of moving supplies through the system.

Relief organizations were unsure how to proceed on behalf of Jewish detainees because of initial uncertainty regarding Vichy motives--as deportations began, the behavior became clear. It was hard to imagine that the French government, once exalted for liberty and freedom, could enact racist laws and send people to their deaths.[98] During the war, it was also hard to believe that French officials could be responsible for its racist policies without German coercion. However, a series of

[98]It must be said that Vichy officials and the Reich were extremely distrustful of one another but the question of Vichy liability in the deportation of Jews is not debatable.

memos from Donald Lowrie of the YMCA distributed to the ICRC, Quakers, Unitarians, and JDC foretold the ominous intentions of the deportations.[99] In an August 22, 1942 memo titled, "The Deportation of Foreign Jews from Unoccupied France," Lowrie remarks,

> About the beginning of August the first news of the intended deportations of foreign Jews from unoccupied France became known to members of the various philanthropic organizations working in that part of France. Immediately the president of the Coordinating Committee for work in the camps went to Vichy in order to protest against these measures. After some difficulty he succeeded in seeing Marshal Pétain, who at that time was unaware of what was about to take place....The Marshal stated that the whole affair was regrettable, but unavoidable. He promised to talk with M. Laval about it that afternoon and see if certain categories of Jews could not be exempted. In the meantime the American Quakers were seeing M. Laval, after they had been informed that the Marshal could not do anything. M. Laval at first held [sic] a long tirade against the Jews in general and complained of the harm they had done to France. He stated that his at [sic] suggestion the Germans had agreed to accept 10 000 foreign Jews instead of French. The Quakers asked for exemption for about 1000 persons who were in a position to emigrate. M. Laval agreed to consider this category, but he left for Paris the following day without giving any answer. Thus it became quite evident that any intervention in Vichy was useless.
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> It is difficult to say whether the initiative in this affair was the German or the Vichy government. All official sources claim that the Germans had asked for 10, 000 French Jews but agreed to accept 10,000 foreign Jews instead. It is equally hard to find an adequate explanation for this deportation. It can hardly be true that they are to be used as workers as three fourth of those have already left are totally incapable of doing a day's work...

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[99]The following humanitarian agencies concerned with refugees comprised the Comité de Coordination pour le Service dans les Camps of which Donald Lowrie was President: American Joint Distribution Committee, Amitié Chrétienne, Aumônerie Général Catholique, Aumônerie Général Israélite, Aumônerie Général Protestants, Centre d'Aide Tchécoslovaque, Croix-Rouge Suisse, Secours aux enfants, CIMADE--Protestant Youth Federation to aid refugees, Fonds Européan de Secours aux étudiants, Groupement d'Aide aux Polonais--Polish Red Cross, Maison d'Acceuil Chrétienne, Quakers, Service Social d'Aide aux Emigrants, Union Générale des Israélites de France--I.S.E, C.A.R., O.R.T., HICEM; Unitarian Service Committee, YMCA.

> These present events are extremely painful for most of those French people who are aware of what is happening. They are doing everything possible in order to "save" Jews from deportation. One has the impression that even some of the police, who are executing the orders from Vichy, do so only reluctantly.[100]

The reports from Donald Lowrie continued through 1942. On August 22 and 25, 1942 Lowrie distributed two reports to Tracy Strong, the General Secretary of the YMCA. Each of these reports was marked confidential but was included in the ICRC archives. For the most part, each report reiterated the dire situation of Jews in France explaining in greater detail who was to be deported and exempted. [101] Warnings to humanitarian agencies about the racist nature of Vichy intentions were made clear in Lowrie's letters to Strong.

By December 1942, everything changed for the worst for the agencies operating in France when Germany gained control of all of France. Lowrie's Coordination Committee, also referred to as the Nimes Commitee, which was initially comprised of twenty-one agencies, was forced to re-examine itself and its membership in view of Allied efforts in the war. No longer could agencies based in Allied countries work freely (or legally) in German occupied countries. The Quakers found a way to continue its operations by creating *Secours Quaker*--an incorporated French agency. The France-

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[100]ICRC O CMS D-111.01 YMCA 1941 Donald Lowrie and the YMCA are examined in Chapter 5.

[101]ICRC O CMS D-111.01 August 25, 1942 The letter states that those foreign Jews who entered the France since 1933 will be deported except for: citizens of Hungary, Roumania, or Bulgaria; men over 60 and their wives; children (without parents) under 16; ex-combattants in French or allied armies; their families or parents; couples where one is French or those having French children; pregnant women and parents of children under two; the sick or otherwise unfit for transport; those doing work important for the French national economy; those specially noted for their artistic or scientific work; others who are "specially interesting." Lowrie further states that no general exemption has been authorized for persons politically endangered.

based agencies continued their work for the most part unhindered. However, New York based international agencies such as the JDC continued to work covertly in France shifting their efforts from humanitarianism to rescue although there were reports that they had withdrawn altogether from France.[102] Lowrie reported that the JDC left in 1942 but it continued to fund the AFSC and Saly Meyer, Swiss representative of the JDC, continued to work on its behalf in Switzerland. It was at this point that other agencies looked to the ICRC for extra assistance since its presence in France (as the CMS also) appeared to present no threat to Vichy or German authorities based upon its Swiss origin.[103]

Worries about who would be deported were of primary concern not only to the Jewish population in France but also to the aid agencies trying to help them. One technique used by Vichy authorities was to ask Jews themselves (through UGIF-*Union Générale Israélite Français*) who should be deported.[104] The *Service Social des Etrangers,* directed by Gilbert Lesage, was a faction of the French secret police in charge of "protecting and arbitrating the interests of those caught in the new deportation orders."[105] Lesage asked members of UGIF to provide him with a deportation list, which was refused on the basis that one name would only be substituted for another.[106]

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[102]O CMS D-122 Dec. 7, 1942 report to Carl Burckhardt at the ICRC from Donald Lowrie. This was reported by Donald Lowrie although Joint documents assert otherwise--see Joint chapter. Lowrie does not state where he gained this information.
[103]O CMS D-122 Dec. 7, 1942 report to Carl Burckhardt at the ICRC from Donald Lowrie.
[104]UGIF was the French version of the *Judenrat*--a German/Vichy imposed consolidation of Jewish groups whose purpose was to be the "voice" of French Jews. See AFSC chapter for more information.
[105]See above note for deportation orders.
[106]This tactic was also employed by the Germans in Poland via the *Judenrat.* It did not work very well due to strife and lack of unity within the UGIF.

UGIF members did not want to volunteer any names for deportation knowing that Vichy officials would come up with lists with or without their assistance. Rather, it was decided that representatives from the Jewish community would assist in the sorting process at the demarcation line and have access to the camps to "ameliorate the conditions of the camps and deportation transports."[107] Simultaneously, representatives from various aid agencies such as the AFSC and CIMADE were installed with this group and traveled with it to the camps. Lowrie's letters convey a sense of hopelessness about the deportations. He commented on the activities of all of the relief agencies in France noting that the French Jewish organizations in the non-occupied zone will probably continue working although under increasing pressure. He wrote that he heard that the OSE had been asked to move to an interior part of France.[108] In addition, he noted that any organizations dependent upon funds from the United States face a serious situation with the entry of the U.S. into the war. He wrote, "no further funds may be transmitted there from America, thus Quakers, Unitarians, and others will be able to continue only as long as their present stocks last, unless funds are available from other countries.[109] Realizing that nothing can be done by the aid agencies to stop the deportations, he suggested focusing relief activities toward children of those adults deported ranging in number from 5,000 to 8,000, who would effectively become

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[107]Ibid--It is important to note that UGIF in the South operated much more loosely than UGIF in the North.
[108]Ibid.
[109]Ibid.

orphans. To Lowrie, the only way to save these children was to help them emigrate from France.[110]

The ICRC received Lowrie's reports (and others from the Unitarians, Quakers and Joint) and also met with representatives from these groups to determine a course of action. In one case, Ross McClelland of the AFSC asked the ICRC to supply ships to move children from Marseille to Lisbon. The response of the ICRC to McClelland's request was that it would be difficult to find a way to makes several trips to transport the children and the ships in question were to exclusively serve POWs and civil internees (children were not included in this category). It advised McClelland to work with the American Red Cross or other American organizations to find a way to transport the children.[111]

The ICRC initially hesitated to get involved with emigration efforts, however it was able to assist in the distribution of clothing, food and supplies through its sub-committee, the CMS. By 1942 the CMS regularly convened meetings sometimes including members of other aid agencies, such as Lowrie of the YMCA, to discuss the situation within the camps. Typically, the CMS meeting minutes examined the current living conditions in each of the camps followed by a discussion of aid in the camps. While Jews were not the primary focus of these meetings--rather all camp detainees were discussed--it was noted that Jews faced a different kind of containment from other

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[110]Ibid. Lowrie wrote also that he was "confident that the necessary funds and ships can be provided....The critical task is to secure immigration permissions from America." It is unclear from these reports if Lowrie was aware of the complicated process involved with obtaining exit and entry visas. It is meaningful that he realized that emigration would be the best way to guarantee survival. However, putting these words into practice was extremely difficult as evidenced by the effort of the AFSC and Joint.

[111]CMS B-028 report of meeting between Ross McClelland and Hans Bachmann of the ICRC from Sept. 21, 1942

detainees. Jews were separated from other camp internees and were forced to work together in groups. They had less freedom than other detainees and were also under a quasi-military rule that controlled money received from the state to fund each detainee.[112] ICRC delegates delivered camp updates to the coordinating committee followed by later updates on the distribution of that aid.

Aid from the ICRC was different from aid provided by other agencies working in the field. The AFSC not only directly provided supplies, but it also helped with emigration efforts often in conjunction with the OSE and the Joint. The ICRC provided camp detainees with food or clothing distributions but did not directly help with emigration--although indirectly it helped other agencies when possible. It also worked to obtain information about camp detainees for family members (like it did for POWs) that it was sometimes able to provide but was dependent upon a volatile and shifting Vichy government.[113] ICRC rules mandated that it could provide food and clothing distributions to civilian prisoners who were also citizens of the occupied country. It was not mandated to provide relief in the form of rescue but members of the Red Cross found ways to indirectly fund these kinds of efforts.

Typically, the ICRC would act as a middleman, negotiating ways for goods to be shipped into France into the hands of other humanitarian agencies for distribution. For example, around the end of 1941 into the beginning of 1942, the ICRC worked in conjunction with the CMS, British authorities, AFSC and the OSE to transport and distribute fifty tons of clothing from the U.S. into detention camps in the South of

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[112]CMS D-155 CMS report June 23, 1942.

[113]Access to Vichy information was highly dependent upon who was in charge of said information. If it was Laval then access was limited. Sometimes, aid agencies had better luck with other officials.

France. Allied blockades and laws banning the distribution of assets between countries at war stalled the process of moving goods from place to place. The entire distribution process took several months to a year to carry out. Once the clothing was packed up and shipped from the U.S. (which was a process in itself), the AFSC stepped in and worked on moving the clothing through the British barricades through Lisbon. The ships themselves belonged to the ICRC, which moved back and forth from Lisbon to Marseille. Rarely did entire shipments move at once which meant that this process would have to be repeated several times often resulting in shipments not happening at all. On February 14 1942, thirty-four tons of clothing was sent on an ICRC ship from Lisbon to Marseille with the balance of sixteen tons arriving at a later date.[114]

The timing of shipments was often made on a need-based determination. As winter approached, the necessity of shipping warm clothing to the camps became dire. The reason the clothing was not shipped earlier (i.e. summer) was that it could be used for sale in the black market to procure food resulting in people freezing the following winter. This particular shipment of clothing was sent from Marseilles to different distribution centers in December 1942. M. Mende of the CMS and ICRC organized the distribution of clothing in the southern French camps of Vernet, Noé, Nexon, Châteauneuf, Brens, Perpignan and Montauban. The AFSC, which had colonies established in most of the camps, worked with Mende to distribute clothing directly to the camp detainees.[115] The camps varied by size and demographics. Gurs, located on

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[114]O CMS D-155 *"Note sure l'eventual transport part navires CICR de secours aux hébergés en France non occupée.* Unsigned ICRC report June 25, 1942.

[115]O CMS D-157 Quaker report 1942-43 The clothing was distributed to the detainees in the following manner: "Four groups were set up. The first gave to each internee a ticket to be exchanged against clothing. The three other groups distributed the clothing,

the southwest border of France, was the largest camp at the time and was comprised of internees from Récebédou and Rivesaltes camps. It held 2,700 internees (men, women and children) while other camps such as Nexon were comprised of the sick and elderly mostly confined to bed. If clothing were not available due to a lack of available sizes, the OSE would distribute clothing at a later date once the appropriate sizes were requisitioned. Mende returned to several of the camps for a second distribution later than winter.

In the end (by August of 1943 when the distributions were finally completed), the ICRC reported that 8,000 persons received clothing from the distributions. The ICRC delegation visits to the camps that year also checked to ensure that the clothing remained in the hands of the detainees. It was always a concern that that goods distributed to camp detainees would be confiscated. On the other hand, a certain amount of clothing was expected to leave detainee's hands because it was used to trade for food or medicine. When this report was written in August 1943, it was noted that several large deportations had already occurred and those who had received clothing from this set of distributions had remained in the camps.[116]

Ultimately, the ICRC and CMS were willing to assist distributing supplies into the camps although the camps detained civilians rather than POWs. They also

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which was classified in categories (caps, socks, knitted garments, etc.). Each internee was called by name and went round the tables on which the clothing was laid out. Each recipient tried on the clothing before it was given to him. The camp guardian was present at the distribution. A very strict control was exercised and it is certain that no internee was able to pass twice. It had been planned in the beginning that each internee would sign a distribution card, but this idea had to be abandoned as most of the internees do not know how to write, and the lighting was too poor." Many of the internees were either non-French Jews or Spanish Republicans who could not read nor write in French.

[116]O CMS D-157 Quaker report 1942-43.

continued to visit the camps regularly and write status reports about living conditions. They negotiated with Vichy officials on behalf of POWs, other aid agencies, and civilian detainees, to ameliorate camp living conditions.[117] The organization worked with the OSE, AFSC, Joint and CIMADE to disseminate camp internee information provided (at times) by Vichy officials.[118] Although the ICRC provided aid to all camp detainees regardless of religion, it did not actively assist in the rescue of Jews unlike other non-Jewish agencies such as the AFSC or CIMADE.[119]

The ICRC did not actively engage in rescue efforts and published a memorandum describing the kind of aid it had provided to Jews all over Europe. Carl J. Burckhardt outlined the ICRCs relief efforts through 1944 as:

1. In France, blankets, clothing, food were sent to the camps in the south, where many of the internees were Jewish, and medicines and tonics to Montpellier and Chambéry.
2. In Holland, medicines were delivered to the Joodsche Rad vor Amsterdam and to the camps at Westerbork and Vught.
3. In Italy, a consignment of medicines was sent to Delasem.
4. In Latvia, a case of vaccine went to the Riga's ghetto's main hospital.
5. In Poland, there were several shipments between 1941 and 1943, especially of food and medicines.

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[117]O CMS D-155 July 19, 1941 CMS Report from Carl Burckhardt to ICRC--states that the CMS negotiated with Vichy officials to send mail and packages to POWs without duty charges, it must send mail collectively to the camps rather than to individual addresses in the camps, should choose a committee from within the camps to distribute mail and send periodic reports indicating the number of internees in each camp, the quantity of mail resent must be furnished by the ICRC to the competent authorities accorded by the navicerts.

[118]CIMADE, created by Madeleine Barot from Nimes, worked in the camps of Gurs, Rivesaltes, Récébedou, Brens-Gaillac in Marseille and at Toulouse. It is a Protestant organization, which provided aid to anyone regardless of religion. It provided a variety of service to primarily Jewish detainees such as maintaining a library at Gurs, and creating a children's garden at Rivesaltes (with the YMCA). See chapter 5 for more information about CIMADE.

[119]Jewish humanitarian aid was directly used to provide emigration assistance to all Jews available to receive it--this being a dilemma in itself since a myriad of roadblocks were created by Vichy officials to hinder Jewish immigration.

6. In Slovakia, several parcels of medicines and tonics were distributed.
7. In Slovenia, medicines were sent to the children of Ljubljana.
8. At Theresienstadt, medicines, tonics and condensed foods were supplied.[120]

In addition to food and medicine distributions, the help that the ICRC provided in the form of serving as a proxy moving cash cannot be underestimated. Along with the Joint and AFSC, the ICRC was able to transfer assets through Switzerland into France to indirectly help in rescue efforts and with the purchase of supplies.

Neutrality

The concept of neutrality shaped the ICRCs policy-making more than any other factor during the war. Stemming from definitions of Swiss national neutrality, there are some conceptual differences between those of the Swiss state and that of a humanitarian agency although there is overlap. Swiss neutrality became law under the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna and the Second Treaty of Paris of November 20, 1815. The law set forth that Europe recognizes that "the neutrality and inviolability of Switzerland, and its independence from foreign influence were in the true political interests of all Europe."[121] ICRC neutrality was borne from a conference in 1864, which created the first Geneva Convention. It was intended to protect military medical services on the battlefield.[122] Currently, Swiss national neutrality is used as a way to consolidate and promote Swiss national identity by placing emphasis on Swiss independence. The

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[120]ICRC AG, G 59, meeting of August 10, 1944, talk to the associations convened by the ICRC, CMS--*Déportés, réfugiés, et internés israélites dans les divers pay d'Europe,* Geneva, July 1944.

[121]Acte portant Reconnaissance et Garantie de la neutralité perpétuelle de la Suisse et de l'inviolabilité de son territoire, Annexe du Traité de Paris du 20 novembre 1815 in Clive Parry, op. cit., vol. 65, p. 299.

[122]Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Article 5.3, *International Review of the Red Cross (IRRC),* No. 256, January-February 1987, pp. 25-44, ad p. 33.

primary duty of a neutral state is to abstain from war. Secondarily, a neutral state must not make economic or political obligations that could affect it neutrality during wartime. At the same time, a state such as Switzerland can express an opinion on a political, economic or military matter.[123]

The ICRC website asserts that it takes a stronger stance than Switzerland in how it views neutrality and how to apply it. While conceptually, the organization thinks of neutrality as a tool to help all victims of conflict, it also implies an "attitude of openness towards all belligerents."[124] While today the ICRC maintains some distance from the Swiss state by allowing non-Swiss members to join and using English as its official language, this was not the case during war. During the war, the Swiss state and the Red Cross were strongly intertwined and many members of the ICRC during the war were leading members of Swiss society. There was a time when the ICRC was considered an arm of the Swiss state--this is no longer true--although its location in Geneva provides the organization with the security of the neutral Swiss state.

Specifically, the ICRC is best described as a neutral entity because it is a non-governmental organization, which is endowed with legal characteristics under international law.[125] Accordingly, the ICRC does not take sides in hostilities. The key principles by which it operates are:

> The movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

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[123] www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/629cjx?opendocument#notes.
[124] www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/629cjx?opendocument#notes.
[125] www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/57jn2z?opendocument.

> In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.[126]

Neutrality within this context and within the framework of this dissertation becomes controversial when it does not denounce violations of the law, including the Geneva Conventions. The main criticism directed toward the ICRC during the war was that it did not denounce the Nazi regime for its wartime actions. The organization has since changed its outlook on such issues and now maintains the position that "it subjects denunciations to certain conditions, notably the requirement that any such publicity be in the interests of the persons or populations under threat."[127]

As of 1993, the ICRC defined neutrality in the context of humanitarian assistance based upon the current law as:

1. Neutral assistance is assistance whose validity is grounded in international humanitarian law.
2. Neutral assistance does not constitute interference in an armed conflict or an unfriendly act.
3. Assistance imposed by armed force as part of a unilateral action is interference and therefore does not meet the criterion of neutrality.
4. Only assistance of an exclusively humanitarian nature is neutral.
5. Neutral assistance is confined to the purposes hallowed in the practice of the Red Cross.
6. The fact that assistance is provided even though a State or another party to the conflict has arbitrarily refused an offer of relief does not divest it of its neutral character, as long as it is not accompanied by the use of armed force.
7. The fact that assistance provided by one or other of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is protected by armed escorts does not divest it of its neutral character, provided that the parties (or authorities) controlling the territory through which the convoy must pass and to which the humanitarian assistance to be delivered have fully approved the principles and procedures of the armed escort, and

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[126] www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/57jn2z?opendocument The movement is the way the ICRC refers to itself on its website.

[127] "Action in the ICRC in the event of breaches of international humanitarian law", IRRC, No. 221, March-April 1981, p. 81.

that the purpose of the latter is to protect the relief supplies against bandits and common criminals.

8. In order to be neutral, assistance must not be discriminatory.
9. In order to be neutral, assistance must be aimed at relieving the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.
10. In order to be neutral, assistance must not favor certain groups or individuals over others.
11. Unilateral assistance is not necessarily non-neutral.[128]

The ICRC is careful to state that this is not an exhaustive definition of neutrality. It leaves room within the current definition to be flexible depending upon the situation but remains focused on the primary goal of abstention and impartiality. The point that cannot be underestimated is the current ICRC stance on flexibility since it was rigidly interpreting the mission that prevented the ICRC from taking a more pro-active stance during the war to help non-military victims, in addition to denouncing the Nazi violation of human rights.

The way in which the ICRC defines neutrality today contrary to sixty years ago illustrates the way in which the war and public criticism shaped its mission. The 1949 Geneva Conventions need to be placed into a context to reflect they were amended after the war to include civilian detainees. Knowing the results of these changes, it is important to put these modifications into a historical context. ICRC documents written during the war reflect the intra-agency debates that stemmed from uncertainty over how to best provide aid to those not easily categorized by the Geneva Conventions. The primary issue was whether or not the ICRC should help those who were considered enemies of the state by fascist governments. This sort of action could jeopardize the ICRC's neutrality and thus endanger future operations, let alone put its members at risk.

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[128] www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/57jn2z?opendocument.

Jews in France were categorized differently based upon whether or not one could also claim to have French citizenship. Jews from German-occupied Europe were considered enemies of Vichy and Germany. ICRC delegates were concerned that if it reached out to help non-French Jews, its neutral status would be compromised resulting in its possible expulsion from Germany and German-occupied countries. Expulsion would preclude it from providing POW assistance entirely. Its work with the POW population created a space for it to operate in France through the duration of the war. Prior to 1942, Vichy officials looked to the ICRC to negotiate on behalf of French POWs in Germany. After 1942, the ICRC played a role in the aid network in the form of the CMS which provided humanitarian assistance during the war but the organization did not participate in rescue efforts. For the ICRC, the choice to not categorize Jewish civilian detainees as humanitarian victims of war did allow it to maintain its neutral status but it created a shadow over its moral authority that continues to exist today.

Chapter 3
The Quakers Work in France

> "The purpose of the AFSC in Philadelphia and in France is to relieve suffering. We have no political objective. We always work in close collaboration with the competent French authorities and have obtained their approval for all of our activities..."[129]

Quakers founded the American Friends Service Committee in 1917 to provide "conscientious objectors with an opportunity to aid civilian war victims."[130] Its humanitarian mission is generally to help through non-violent means anyone who requires it regardless of faith through its work to "prevent suffering through both immediate aid and long-term development and seek to serve the needs of people on all sides of violent strife."[131] The AFSC and other Quaker organizations emphasize social justice and individual dignity rather than theology or hierarchy. In the 1930s the Quakers worked throughout Europe providing aid as needed. Quaker organizations worked in France prior to the war to provide aid primarily to Spanish refugees who immigrated to France in order to escape the civil war in Spain.

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[129]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Office, Box 54, Folder 46, February 16, 1942 letter from Faure to Kershner.

[130]AFSC http://www.afsc.org/ht/d/sp/i/267/pid/267.

[131]Specifically, their mission is: The American Friends Service Committee is a practical expression of the faith of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Committed to the principles of nonviolence and justice, it seeks in its work and witness to draw on the transforming power of love, human and divine. We recognize that the leadings of the Spirit and the principles of truth found through Friends' experience and practice are not the exclusive possession of any group. Thus, the AFSC draws into its work people of many faiths and backgrounds who share the values that animate its life and who bring to it a rich variety of experiences and spiritual insights. This AFSC community works to transform conditions and relationships both in the world and in ourselves, which threaten to overwhelm what is precious in human beings. We nurture the faith that conflicts can be resolved nonviolently, that enmity can be transformed into friendship, strife into cooperation, poverty into well-being, and injustice into dignity and participation. We believe that ultimately goodness can prevail over evil, and oppression in all its forms can give way. www.afsc.org/ht/d/sp/i/349/pid/349.

After the German occupation of France in June of 1940, British Quaker relief workers in occupied and non-occupied France were ordered to leave the country. Paris was the French headquarters for all of the Quaker delegations and once the Vichy government was established, American aid workers and some British workers remained illegally, relocating to a new base in Marseille, which was part of the non-occupied territory.[132] It turned out that Marseille was a useful place to be headquartered with its active port that gave aid workers access to supplies and ships. The port served as a beneficial point of access not only for receiving supplies but also for facilitating the movement of people out of France into safer territory. To those who were fearful of the German authorities in the occupied zone, relocation to the south was one option outside of leaving France entirely, which was an alternative for those who could obtain exit visas or could be smuggled out of the country. French and non-French Jews fled to the south fearful of Nazi persecution in occupied France along with thousands of non-Jews who were also afraid of German occupation.

After the British Quakers (Friends Service Committee--FSC) were forced to leave France in 1940, the American Quakers (AFSC) became a conduit with most of the humanitarian organizations working in France. This was due to their good working relationship with Vichy officials (until November 1942), which allowed them access to facilities unavailable to other agencies. The AFSC operated children's colonies, provided aid to detainees in camps, and ran workshops initially designed to provide

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[132] When Germany occupied France, Britain became an enemy of France and its workers were no longer able to work legally within France. American workers had to leave in when the U.S. entered the war in 1942.

Spanish refugees with a trade.[133] These trades included carpentry, shoe repair and auto repair. After 1942, the Quakers also helped facilitate rescue efforts with other aid agencies such as the JDC. Beyond this official focus, Quaker aid was designated to provide assistance to anyone affected by the war regardless of religion, citizenry, or political affiliation. Therefore, not only Spanish refugees and French children in the colonies benefited from these aid efforts, but all camp detainees who were suffering from food shortages and Jews who faced deportation to the east under Vichy racial laws did as well.

The French authorities were familiar with the Quakers from their work in France prior to the war. Based on their non-partisan religious doctrine, and the relationship between its Paris based European director, Howard Kershner, and Marshal Pétain, the Quakers were able to work in France for the duration of the war relatively unscathed as an organization.[134] That is not to say that AFSC delegates did not suffer at the hands of the Gestapo or the Milice. Some members were imprisoned or detained. However, overall the AFSC continued to function openly unlike other organizations such as the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC or Joint).

Until his return to the U.S. in 1942, Howard Kershner met regularly with Philippe Pétain and his advisors to negotiate the flow of humanitarian aid into and within unoccupied France. According to the AFSC introduction to their archive, it was Kershner's goal to establish a relationship with the Vichy government to continue

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[133]Children's colonies served several functions where children could be safe from the war while receiving education and/or training and receive food and clothing.

[134]AFSC operated as Secours Quaker from 1942-1944, which was technically a French organization since it became problematic for Vichy officials to allow an American charity to work in France due to American involvement in the war.

AFSC projects.[135] He accomplished this goal and established a friendship of sorts with the Maréchal about whom he wrote extensively. A result of this relationship was that the Vichy government funded many AFSC projects throughout unoccupied France through its humanitarian arm, *Secours National.* These projects included "support for families of prisoners in French camps and jails, as well as a range of feeding and clothing programs for children and their mothers."[136] As I will illustrate later in this chapter, defining who should receive aid became a point of contention between Kershner and other members of the AFSC. The role of the AFSC in France changed in 1942 as a result of the U.S. entering the war, Kershner's departure, and a shift from providing relief to finding ways to rescue.

By December 1941, the AFSC created *Secours Quaker* as a reaction to Vichy legal concerns about a foreign agency receiving French funds to operate. Regardless of Kershner's rosy relationship with Vichy officials, he and his colleagues predicted the possibility of German occupation into Southern France and created *Secours Quaker* with this event in mind. This legal shell agency came to life in November 1942 when the Germans took control of Southern France forcing many Americans to leave. Kershner and his colleagues were able to transfer French AFSC assets to the new agency prior to leaving for the U.S with the idea that the agency could still function in France without causing too much upheaval in any of the local offices. When Kershner returned to the U.S., the organization was able to continue to operate with a new set of directors from France, the Netherlands and a few remaining Americans.[137]

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[135]AFSC RG-67.007.
[136]AFSC RG-67.007.
[137]AFSC RG-67.007.

In addition to providing relief directly to victims of the war, the Quaker relief agencies acted as an intermediary with other relief agencies, Vichy officials and the U.S. government. The French government gave the Quakers permission to have worksites in several of the Southern detention camps to provide humanitarian relief to Spanish refugees in the pre-war period. By having established offices near and sometimes within French detention camps, the Quakers were able to understand and communicate detainee needs better than other agencies. Their ability to live in proximity of the camps allowed them to establish relationships with local officials and camp detainees giving them a deeper perspective than agencies who would visit the camps for a day or two. Generally, the AFSC was a well-organized agency with a sizeable number of workers under their employ. Due to their commitment to provide aid to anyone regardless of religious or political status, Vichy officials and camp detainees trusted the agency. Camp access was not granted to all humanitarian agencies. The AFSC benefited not only from its relationship with local authorities and but also its ties to Vichy officials which supported them financially through *Secours National.* In August 1940 Howard Kershner issued a memo asking Quaker delegates to follow the regulations set forth by local officials since they were working "in close collaboration with the authorities at Vichy in the 'zone non-occupée' and with the approval of both the French and German authorities in the "zone-occupée."[138]

The Quakers created a complex financial system which allowed them to transact business on behalf of the JDC. The Quaker relief organizations served as a conduit for funds transferred from the JDC in the U.S. to Jewish relief efforts in France ranging

[138]AFSC Series I Peripignan Office Box 12, Folder 36.

from disbursements to the *Oeuvre secours aux enfants* (OSE), aid to the camps and the procurement of exit visas from France. Exit visas or *visa de sortie* from France were mandatory by Vichy law for anyone wanting to emigrate. [139] Although the AFSC pledged to help anyone who wished to leave, they were under orders by Howard Kershner to help only those with exit visas.[140] One of the more popular AFSC programs was called Selfhelp, a sort of savings fund administered from Philadelphia for Jews in France to safeguard their funds and/or valuables until they were able to emigrate.[141] The AFSC also created a system by which assets moved from the U.S. through the British Quakers to the AFSC or *Secours Quaker.*

One of the more controversial issues regarding money concerned the role of the UGIF (*l'Union Générale des Israèlites de France*). The UGIF, created in 1941 by German and French officials represented Jewish interests in the north and south. While the two organizations were intended to operate as a French version of the *Judenrat*, they functioned differently from one another. All Jewish agencies were consolidated and their assets merged which was enforced in the north and operated much more loosely in the south. Since German authorities and Vichy officials imposed the UGIF, there was an inherent sense of distrust by members of the Jewish community regarding any sort of interaction with the UGIF.[142] Agencies wanting to work within the law were less

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[139]The OSE is a Jewish children's relief organization which led most of the rescue efforts in the South of France.

[140]AFSC Series I, Perpignan Office, Box 12, Folder 36 In an August, 1940 memo to all of the delegations, Kershner wrote, "It is our desire to help those who wish to emigrate. Under any circumstances--do not aid or abet anyone who is trying to leave France without an exit visa."

[141]AFSC RG-67.007.

[142]More information regarding UGIF is in the chapter on the Joint Distribution Committee. UGIF North operated under Vichy/German control and is the organization

skeptical of the UGIF. In France, Jews were immediately suspicious of the UGIF and fundamentally, the German goal of having Jews organize themselves into their own destruction failed in France. Due to different ideas about the fate of French Jews and foreign Jews, conflict within the UGIF created dissent and distrust within the Jewish community.[143] The community was also divided on relationships with non-Jewish agencies such as the AFSC. Unsurprisingly, not only were Jews suspicious of the intentions of UGIF but they were also uncertain to what extent non-Jewish agencies would assist them. UGIF will be addressed further in the chapter on the Joint. It can be said that the AFSC was hesitant about whether funds should be disbursed to the UGIF based on concerns that it would be diverted by Vichy authorities for uses other than Jewish humanitarian aid.[144] The assets that were allocated by the JDC for Jewish humanitarian relief were set aside instead of being immediately turned over to UGIF. While Vichy law dictated that funds for Jewish relief be turned over to UGIF, Jewish refugees often felt more secure knowing it was in Quaker hands.[145]

The Quaker humanitarian organizations formed a unique liaison with Vichy officials and members of the Jewish community, which ultimately helped many who otherwise would have been deported. Howard Kershner, director of the AFSC, formed close ties with Vichy officials which created controversy among AFSC members, but it

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I am referencing in this case. UGIF South was a loosely organized entity that operated as a "legal" front for many Jewish resistance and escape activities.

[143]More information about internal UGIF conflicts is in the Joint Distribution Committee chapter. In short, French-born Jews who identified as French citizens resented being categorized by religion which contrasted with the views of Jewish émigrés to France.

[144]AFSC Paris Correspondence, Box 52, Folder 1 Dec. 29, 1942 letter from Lindsley Noble to Paul Camoin.

[145]AFSC Paris Correspondence, Box 52, Folder 1 Dec. 29, 1942 letter from Lindsley Noble to Paul Camoin.

can be argued that it enabled the AFSC to continue their work in France whereas they might otherwise have been forced to leave sooner. At the same time, regardless of this relationship, it was still dangerous for AFSC delegates to provide aid to Jews. Mary Elmes, from the Paris AFSC delegation, was arrested by the Gestapo, interrogated and detained for six months.[146] Several other members of the Quaker delegations were arrested and deported while pleas from the AFSC to help them went unanswered. In examining the role of the Quaker agencies, particularly the AFSC, it becomes clear that they adapted to the conditions imposed upon them and continually tried to adapt their mission to the situation, which created internal conflict and controversy.

An Unusual Relationship

The Diary

Beginning in January 1941 through March 1942, Howard Kershner, the Director of the AFSC kept a personal diary. Kershner began his career as a journalist with *The Dodge City Daily Journal* after graduating with a degree in economics from Harvard. In 1939, he started working for the AFSC in Europe to provide aid to Spanish refugees. Kershner also created a large-scale relief effort across unoccupied France to feed children affected by the war. After the war, Kershner worked for Save the Children as its vice-president, was a founding member of CARE and raised funds for UNICEF.[147] For his humanitarian efforts, he was awarded the Order of Leopold by the Belgian Government, the Order of Merit by the International Union for the Protection of

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[146]Mary Elmes was released from the Gestapo in July 1943.

[147]Glenn Fowler, "H.E. Kershner, 98, A Longtime Worker in Children's Causes," *The New York Times,* January 3, 1990.

Children and was a member of the French Legion of Honor. He died in 1976 at the age of 98.

The diary was deposited in the AFSC archive. It is approximately one hundred typed pages. There are also pages tacked on without dates that outline Kershner's daily agenda. Most of the diary is written in a calendar-like format in which he describes his appointments and any business related to the AFSC. He does not include personal information unless it also relates to AFSC business. For example, he includes his wife Gertrude in the diary only if she participates in AFSC business in conjunction with him. Gertrude Kershner came from a long line of Quakers and she ran the children's colonies on behalf of the AFSC. The diary is essentially one-volume including some excerpts from AFSC reports by Kershner and Lindsley Noble. This diary documents several trips to various AFSC children's colonies in addition to his meetings with Maréchal Pétain. The diary is illuminating for both what it actually states and for its silences. Organized chronologically, it includes meeting agendas and various memoranda. His intended audience is unclear but it is interesting to note that Kershner omitted certain conversations with Pétain from the record.[148] The diary is interesting from several perspectives. The reader gets a sense of how Kershner viewed himself in the context of the war. Kershner seemed to idealize France and the French people and he viewed himself as a goodwill ambassador of sorts representing not only the AFSC but also the American people. Kershner gives the impression of being cognizant of presenting a specific positive picture of France, the French people and Pétain. He is unflagging in his support of Pétain, constantly referencing his lucidity, kindness and courtesy.

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[148]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55--Kershner wrote on September 10, 1941 from his diary.

The many references to Pétain in the diary are focused on a central theme: the friendship between France and the U.S. and the gratitude felt by the French toward the U.S. for providing assistance to them.[149] On January 20, 1941, Kershner met with Pétain. During this meeting, Kershner emphasized the friendship between France and the U.S. repeatedly. This sentiment was reinforced by Pétain who stated, "nothing would interfere with that friendship as long as he was in control of the French Government."[150] Pétain enjoyed talking with Kershner to the point that he would wave off his secretary to continue the conversation longer and he also swore Kershner to secrecy.[151] Kershner stresses the secret nature of these conversations and does not divulge their contents to his diary. Later during the meeting, Pétain suggested that Kershner write a news story about their conversation for U.S. readers. This was to be the first of several pieces that Kershner would write to inform the public (in both the U.S. and France) of working conditions in France and the difficulties faced by the French people due to the war.[152] Several of these pieces were published in *The New York Times* and Kershner also regularly talked to journalists from the same paper which

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[149]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55--Kershner wrote in a December 12, 1940 memo, "Including Maréchal Pétain, French officials of the Government of Vichy and of the cities in the départements where we are working have shown the greatest cordiality and expressed the most sincere thanks for the assistance of the American people, through the AFSC....Our work is evidence of the friendship existing between the peoples of America and France."

[150]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, Jan. 20, 1941.

[151]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55--Kershner wrote on September 10, 1941.

[152]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 54, Folder 46, Feb. 11, 1941, Dr. Ménétrel, Pétain's personal secretary, wrote to Kershner, "Je vous envoie la texte de l'interview tel que j'espérais pouvoir le faire parâitre dans la presse. Les services de la Propaganda n'ont pas trouve l'occasion favorable pour faire passer in expense ce texte dans plusieurs journaux; il a donc été modifié et insére sous forme de communique...Un journal, je pense, le publiera en entier."

published his comments. On June 28, 1942 he wrote an article for *The New York Times* called "Defeated France Knows Only Hunger and Want." The article describes the difficulties of French children and housewives who are struggling with too little food. He mentions there are 16,000 political refugees from the Reich who are starving. He states that:

> They are a pathetic lot, rapidly dying from undernourishment. France did not invite them and does not want them but generously attempts to provide for them. Public funds for their care are allotted, but the universal scarcities mitigate against them as it does all others.
>
> The people are standing [sic] their privations with remarkable fortitude. Courage and morale are as yet unbroken. They steadfastly believe that America is their friend and will help them. We receive many thousands of letters from French children, to whom we have been supplying a little extra food, showing the most affectionate appreciation for the help which has come from America.... These letters of thanks are filled with such expressions as "Vive l'Amérique," "Vive la France,".... [153]

Newspaper articles from 1941 and 1942 mention meetings between Pétain and Kershner. In these articles the meetings are similar to those described in Kershner's diary in which he and Pétain discuss the goodwill between American and French peoples. Pétain is quoted in a November 1941 *New York Times* thanking "the generous donors in America who have made possible the task undertaken by the Quakers."[154] A few months later, Kershner was quoted after another meeting with Pétain stating, "Our great desire is to contribute toward creating goodwill to all peoples. We hope that hatred may disappear and that the peoples of all countries may learn to live in peace and

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[153]Howard Kershner, "Defeated France Knows Only Hunger and Want," *The New York Times,* June 28, 1942.

[154]"Petain-Nazi Talk Believed Put Off," *The New York Times,* November 27, 1941. The article further states that Pétain's thanks "will be printed tomorrow in every newspaper of the unoccupied zone. They were expressed in the course of an audience granted Howard E. Kershner, European director of the American Friends Service Committee.

under friendly relations."[155] Kershner was a forceful and innovative fundraiser for Quaker relief efforts. He wrote articles for newspapers, contributed letters to newspaper editors and he traveled around the U.S. speaking to groups about the plight of French children. He also received publicity by asking Pétain's secretary and personal physician, Dr. Bérnard Ménétral, to collect drawings from French children showing their appreciation for American help. These drawings were to be used by *L'Union des Femmes de France* for fundraising purposes.[156] Kershner also worked with John Erskine of *Collier's Weekly* to publish an article about French children during the war.[157]

Strikingly absent from these articles and exchanges are the conditions of Spanish Refugees and Jews. Kershner presented a friendly image of the Vichy government as cooperative and grateful for their friendship with the U.S. He described in his diary several meetings at Vichy with Pétain and other Vichy officials but what makes his relationship unusual was that he was involved with Pétain directly and his

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[155]"Quakers Appeal to Pétain," *The New York Times.* January 26, 1942.

[156]AFSC, Series VIII Marseilles Office, Box 54, Folder 46. *L'Union des Femmes de France* was created in 1871 to advocate for gender equality. During the World War II, the organization fought to introduce voting rights for women. It not only championed women's rights but also the rights of children and the regulation of prostitution and alcohol.

[157]AFSC, Series VIII Marseilles Office, Box 54, Folder 46; John Erskine, "Be Fair To France," *Collier's Weekly*, December 13, 1941, Vol. 108, No. 24.--Kershner sent a translation of the article to Dr. Ménétral on February 13, 1942 with a friendly note stating that John Erskine is a well-known writer and a one of the greatest authorities of education in America.

relationship went beyond administrative meetings.[158] He was also invited in September 1941 to tour the country with Pétain as the only non-French person in the delegation.

In the diary, there is a document entitled "Two Days with Maréchal Pétain" which describes a trip that Kershner took with the Maréchal to visit the Alpine departments of Savoie and Haute Savoie on September 22-23, 1941. During this trip, there are constant references to Pétain's lucidity, tirelessness, kindness and the affection felt by the French people toward him. Kershner writes:

> That the Vichy Government is beset with insurmountable obstacles is well known. The efforts that the Government is making on behalf of the people of France and the great devotion shown by the Maréchal and his associates are not so well known. Neither is it known or admitted in all quarters outside of France that he is physically and mentally alert and the very competent directing head of the government.[159]

In this same memo, Kershner expresses gratitude to Pétain for thinking highly enough of him and the AFSC to include him on the trip since he was the only foreigner invited.[160] The purpose of the trip itself seems to have been to garner support among the French for Pétain. They visited towns and factories and in each location, there were rallies in which Pétain could address the crowd. It is not surprising that Pétain would take trips to create positive propaganda for Vichy but it is interesting that he would consider Kershner a representative of the U.S. who could help him garner American support. While it appears that Kershner did nothing to dispel this notion of himself as a diplomat, it is curious that Pétain and other Vichy officials were not better informed

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[158]Most of the humanitarian agencies had representatives who met with Vichy officials but rarely did any of these meeting include Pétain nor could they be characterized as friendly--sometimes professional and sometimes hostile.

[159]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, 1941.

[160]It is unclear who Kershner intended to read this memo. It has a title but no other information. I found it in the middle of the chronological diary.

about his actual role and potential reach. Until the U.S. entered the war in 1942, the U.S. maintained a diplomatic presence at Vichy with *Chargés d'affaires* S. Pinckney Tuck as the U.S representative.[161] Tuck had a prickly relationship with Pétain and with Prime Minister Pierre Laval based upon the deportation of Jewish children.[162] Tuck had proposed a plan to help children leave France if Laval would grant them exit visas. Laval and General Secretary of Police Réné Bousquet ultimately blocked the exit visas and by November 9, 1942 the Allied landings began in North Africa and Laval no longer wished to work with Americans.[163]

Kershner presented accounts of his meetings and professional conversations with Pétain. However, because he never discussed his personal feelings about Pétain, it is unclear what Kershner intended with his journal. Interacting directly with Pétain was not the norm for humanitarians who worked mostly with Vichy representatives. Several themes emerge. First, his constant references to the relationship between the U.S. and France seem incongruous given his role as a non-political representative of the AFSC. On November 26, 1941, he met with Pétain who asked him to discuss the possibility of America going to war. He expressed to Pétain the "hope that after 150 years of friendship between our two countries, we would not now become involved in war."[164] Later in the day, Kershner met with Ambassador Leahy of the U.S. and was informed of

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[161] Admiral William Leahy served as ambassador to Vichy from January 8, 1941-May 1, 1942. Tuck took office in May 1942 until diplomatic ties with Vichy were severed on November 8, 1942.

[162] Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1995), 266. Conversations among Tuck and Laval began on August 26, 1942.

[163] Marrus and Paxton, 267.

[164] AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, Nov. 26, 1941.

the possibility that the U.S. could break diplomatic ties with Vichy if General Charles de Gaulle was recognized.

It is hard to say if Kershner was trying to maintain good relations with Pétain for the sake of continuing AFSC work or if he had a less altruistic intention such as bolstering his own reputation. AFSC delegates such as Helga Holbek and Ross McClelland were concerned that he enjoyed the position of being a sort of power broker. Reading the diary, one gets the feeling that Kershner enjoyed his time with Pétain and felt honored being the only American on the two-day trip to the Haute-Savoie. Curiously, he does not mention Laval or Bousquet or any other controversial figures who routinely dealt with American officials. It is also clear that Kershner felt great affection for French culture and the people of France. Throughout the diary, there is the strong sense that Kershner was trying to bolster Pétain's reputation to an American audience. His references to Pétain's popularity (in France), cordiality, and lucidity are frequent not only in the diary but throughout all of the AFSC files. Possibilities abound as to the meaning of these references. Two primary motives emerge from the diary. Kershner felt great affection for Pétain and was honored to have a relationship with him and wanted to ensure that Vichy officials felt secure in funding the AFSC. Moreover, he wanted to make Americans feel comfortable donating money to French causes by creating sympathy for French children and French causes.

Being friendly with the Pétain regime afforded the AFSC benefits in addition to funding by *Secours National.* One of the difficulties faced by all humanitarian agencies was transporting goods for distribution and obtaining fuel to transport these goods. The British blockade made the distribution of Allied goods into enemy territory illegal

unless one could receive permission to move these goods from the British government. Vichy officials worked out a system with the AFSC by which they would reimburse the AFSC for rail travel with the idea this would save money otherwise spent on fuel.[165] This arrangement allowed the AFSC to import food, supplies and clothing from Switzerland (which was a point of origin for supplies and also a transitory stop for supplies delivered from other countries) for delivery to Quaker delegations around France. Every humanitarian agency had great difficulty transferring money to France but the AFSC was given some leeway from the Vichy Ministry of Finance. Moving assets was always challenging for the AFSC (particularly after 1942 which was the primary reason for the creation of *Secours Quaker)* but approval to clear certain funds with the U.S. was granted in November of 1941.[166] For example, when American or French citizens who resided in the U.S., there was no limit to the amount that could be transferred to France. In the case of French citizens going to the U.S. to reside with an American resident, the amount transacted could be no more than $1500. For others (non-residents) wanting to emigrate, the amount that could be transferred could not exceed $50 per person.[167] The AFSC also had an elaborate clearing system developed by the British Quakers but that was not a topic of conversation with the Finance Ministry since France and Britain had gone to war in 1941.

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[165]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, September 11, 1941-11:30 am entry, "Mr. Bernadotte offered to arrange a simpler and more complete system of reimbursing us for expenditures for rail transportation. He said also that we could hire our heavy hauling done, and send the bills for reimbursement."

[166]The movement of assets was extremely complicated even with some leeway granted by Vichy officials. In a Nov. 25 1941 entry, Kershner outlined some of the details.

[167]November 25, 1941 Kershner journal entry--clearly the movement of non-French citizens were affected negatively by these rules.

Besides illustrating Kershner's relationship with Pétain, the diary also paints a picture for the reader of the difficulties of daily life for an aid worker in wartime France. Kershner's schedule was filled with meetings determining how to best distribute aid to varying Quaker outposts at the camps and individuals while coordinating with Vichy ways to provide aid within the boundaries of the law which was necessary to continue receiving funding from *Secours National.* Kershner traveled frequently to the various AFSC delegations and he clearly conveys not only the difficulty of travel in wartime France but also a sense of urgency communicated by the large number of agenda items he accomplished in one day often in several locations. He and his team were working under extreme pressure to distribute aid to a large geographic area. In addition, Quaker personnel faced risks associated with difficult economic and military constraints living in a country during a war.

His journal is notable for the lack of discussion of Jews with Vichy officials. This is significant since providing aid to Jews was a frequent topic of discussion in AFSC correspondence, reports and the important role the AFSC played in assisting Jews in France. While internal memos and correspondence with outside agencies show that AFSC delegates' clear concern with the increasing dangers posed to Jews, it is striking that Kershner did not discuss the fate of Jews in France with Pétain--at least he did not record any conversation he might have had on this topic. For example, in a memorandum dated August 1, 1941 of "Concerns to be presented to Maréchal Pétain" he outlines three talking points, which specifically concern non-Jewish children showing that Jewish children were a topic he did not want to address:

> 1. General explanation and interpretation of the whole programme [sic] of AFSC in France. 2. Explanation of the desire of USCOM to bring about eight hundred

> children to the United States. What would be the policy of France with reference to permitting non-Jewish French children to go and with reference to permitting non-Jewish children of other nationalities to go? 3. A specific list of recommendations concerning improvements to be made in the camps.[168]

In an internal AFSC document entitled, "Diary of Emergency Evacuation of Jewish Children" from October 9, 1942 Kershner wrote about a series of events that occurred three days prior to the memo showing the difficulties faced by aid workers in helping Jewish children. On October 7, 1942 he wrote that he received a notice from Donald Lowrie of the YMCA that their plan to help Jews emigrate was hindered by Dr. Joseph Weill of the OSE supposedly acting on behalf of the AFSC and by Vichy officials.[169] This brief document illustrates the difficulties the agencies faced in communicating and coordinating relief efforts. It also seems to express some hostility by Lowrie and Kershner toward Weill. On October 7, 1942, the entry states:

> Received from Weill copy of his memo of Oct. 1st to Fourcade. Received message from Lowry that Embassy reports entire plan in jeopardy because of repeated premature demarches by Jewish representatives. Advised by Vice Counsel of new and more serious difficulties encountered in Vichy. Telephoned Holbek who said she had not authorized Weill to makes demarches in our name.

On October 8 the story continued:

> Wrote to Gourvitch requesting discontinuance of all contact. Message from Lowry again protesting Weill's activities but expressing hope matter would be cleared Saturday 10th October.[170]

At the end of the diary is a summary of Quaker activities and events written by Kershner to "readers of Quaker papers" who customarily received an annual report.[171]

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[168]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.
[169]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.
[170]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.
[171]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55
January 13, 1942.

At the beginning of 1942, there were one hundred fifty workers in France, most of whom were French, twenty-two of whom were American. He noted that despite the "very evident good will shown by French officials towards the internees," there were very limited resources and many people were starving. He described the camp and children's colony conditions as terribly insufficient with everyone suffering from malnourishment and the cold. He noted that in 1940 the infant mortality percentage was forty-seven percent per thousand which was higher than 1939 and the numbers for 1941 and 1942 would be far worse. Although he had been able to use funds obtained in America, he did not see how these kinds of transactions could continue due to the blockades from the U.S. He ends the summary by emphasizing that most resources and personnel come from non-Quakers for which he is grateful.[172]

The tone of the diary changed in 1942 after the U.S. entered the war and Germany occupied the whole country. Although Kershner continued to meet with Vichy officials, he found they were still courteous to him but were increasingly unable to help the Quakers with as many functions as before. Kershner himself also expressed concern about the status of Vichy officials in the eyes of the Germans based on their relationship with an American organization. He met Bernard Ménétrel, assistant to Marshal Pétain, on January 24, 1942 and told him that "since we were at war with Germany, if our presence or our actions in France ever became embarrassing to the

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[172]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.
January 13, 1942 Kershner wrote "We always emphasize the fact that most of our resources and most of our personnel comes from non-Quaker sources. In spite of our emphasis on this fact, we are often humbled by the gratitude and recognition shown for our work and by the faith, which the unfortunate people have shown in our ability to help them.... Everybody in France knows of our work and is profoundly grateful for the help coming from America.... Must a charming and kindly people be stricken from the earth their friends and those whom they must admire?"

French Government, he should please let us know."[173] Ménétrel responded that they had experienced no problems from the German authorities and were still appreciative that the AFSC continued to work in France and they would continue on their end to provide every kind of support. However, it is clear from a meeting with Monnier Bernadotte from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March that AFSC personnel began to rethink its safety in France--especially personnel from Allied countries. Kershner discussed the creation of *Secours Quaker* and the reason for its necessity. By keeping its assets, leases and motor equipment in the name of *Secours Quaker*, it would be able to legally operate as a French organization, which could take over in the event that the American delegation could no longer function.

It was prudent of Kershner to create *Secours Quaker* when he did because in March he met again with Ménétrel who informed him that he had met with German officials after his last meeting with Kershner. The Germans were extremely curious about the AFSC and asked Ménétrel many questions about the purpose of its work and whether it was to be trusted. Interestingly, Kershner notes that "this diary is almost too personal to pass around, but the sake of the record I wish to put down a part of the conversation," clearly indicating Kershner's intention of circulating the diary.[174] Ménétrel told Kershner that in response to the German queries he had a long, serious conversation about their concerns and received assurances that there would be no difficulties working with the AFSC, even though there may be further occupation (German occupation of Vichy France). Curiously, this last point about further occupation in France was not elaborated upon nor even noted as significant by Kershner

[173]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.
[174]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, March 6, 1942.

(outside of his actions to create *Secours Quaker*). In regard to working openly in France, he stated "this is an additional reason why we should not seek to conceal our identity but should continue to work openly in our name as heretofore, regardless of what events may transpire."[175] Kershner and his wife Gertrude returned to the U.S. in April after this meeting.[176] Lindsley Noble of the AFSC took over for Kershner and found the attitude of Vichy officials changed toward the organization based upon meeting notes he took in Kershner's diary dated September 24, 1942.

Noble met with Bernadotte and discovered that although the meeting was friendly, there was a newfound sense of suspicion regarding the role of the AFSC because it was an American organization. There were questions about how Americans were able to work abroad rather than taking part in the war effort. Noble assured Bernadotte that the Quakers were conscientious objectors and had permission from the U.S. to leave their country. He wrote "We also gave him in detail the names of all American delegates who had left our staff to return to the United States since last January. It is apparent that the four new delegates will not receive French visas unless and after the *Sûreté* is satisfied that we are not importing too many and that we have the right kind."[177] That same month, Noble received word from Helga Holbek's delegation in Toulouse that thirteen of her workers had been sent to the detention camp at Rivesaltes. Noble attempted to meet with several Vichy officials about the detained

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[175]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, March 6, 1942.

[176]The specific date of Kershner's departure from France is unclear. He wrote a memo in the diary to Lindsley Noble on April 21, 1942 from London and should he not return to France, his funds should be turned over to the AFSC. There is no indication that he returned to France during the war. AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55, March 6, 1942.

[177]AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.

employees and about transporting four hundred tons of dried vegetables but was put off by three different officials. He finally met with a Mr. Dongelzer who was unable "to find anyone who had considered our previous requests concerning protection for his employees."[178] Noble wrote that the "general impression was that we were making very little progress in these quarters."[179] The issue of protecting Quaker workers from the Gestapo or Milice was not a new one but it was exacerbated by the large number of employees detained at Rivesaltes. There was also a lack of interest from Vichy officials assisting Quaker personnel. At this point, Noble seemed resigned that he would receive no further assistance from Vichy officials and commented that perhaps there would be some success in working with the Commission Mixte of the ICRC and the French Red Cross.

In reviewing the diary in conjunction with other AFSC documents and the archives of other organizations, a disconcerting theme stands out. Kershner writes about the events going on around him in terms of the actions of Vichy officials toward Jews in a disconnected way. One does not get a sense of urgency from his entries that one reads from other members of the delegations such as Helga Holbek or Ross McClelland. Among the heads of the ICRC, the Joint, the YMCA and other AFSC members there were many meetings and conversations focused on the effects of the anti-Jewish policies of Vichy. It seems unlikely that Kershner was unaware of the dire situation but it is possible that he feared alienation from his Vichy contacts if he discussed these matters publicly. This lack of public attention to Jews did not go

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[178] AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.
[179] AFSC Series VIII Marseille Box 57-62, Folder 55.

unnoticed by other AFSC members who were working diligently to provide aid in the field to everyone who needed it. Kershner did not publicly voice concern regarding the treatment of Jews but he frequently asserted that anyone who needed AFSC aid should receive it regardless of religion.

The AFSC Delegation Work

Aid to All

> "...from the Quaker viewpoint, the way in which relief work is done is as important, if not more important than concrete results."[180]

> "The Quakers were the first foreign organization to come to [their] rescue, by organizing soup kitchens and more particularly, by taking care of the children..."[181]

The AFSC delegations maintained outposts in Montauban, Perpignan, Toulouse, Caen, and Marseille, which provided access to the camps at Gurs, Rivesaltes, Vernet, Récébedou, and the Les Milles and Marseille detention centers. Quaker personnel saw firsthand the suffering of camp detainees and worked hard to lessen that suffering where they could. Frequently differences among the delegation leaders and Kershner arose from trying to determine how best to distribute aid. As the head of the AFSC, Kershner was the face of the organization to the Vichy government and it was his job to find legal ways to distribute aid to the delegations. Not surprisingly, Kershner's relationship was prickly with some of the AFSC regional personnel who often felt that the needs of their outposts were not being met or that Kershner was making poor judgments on behalf of the AFSC.

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[180]October 24, 1943 from Lindsley Noble to Toot Van Ordt AFSC Box, Folder 77.
[181]JDC Bobine 6 December 10, 1940 report.

The AFSC was successful in several of its aid programs. In addition to the aid efforts such as the children's colonies and workshops, their programs included the provision an extra meal at noon to thirty thousand children in French public schools (in eight cities in the South) and a half-liter of milk daily to ten thousand babies.[182] The Quakers also operated a maternity hospital in and a home for delicate women and children. Aid distribution methods changed with the migration of Jews to the South to escape Nazi persecution. Tensions arose between Kershner and some of the regional delegation leaders who had to quickly contend with providing aid to many more people than they had anticipated. Limited delegation resources forced members of the AFSC to ask Kershner to find new ways to allocate funds and work cooperatively with other agencies who could fund their work.

In the period prior to 1942, members of the AFSC struggled to decide who should receive aid when so many people were affected by the war. A series of letters between several AFSC members illustrated the confusion and concern about aid distributions amplified by a lack of resources and reliance upon Kershner's negotiations with Vichy officials. A series of conversations took place in which there seemed to be consensus among Quaker personnel to provide aid exclusively to French people in need (particularly children) but when faced with people in need including foreign and French Jews, and Belgians, this perception changed. The Quakers felt its resources being stretched thin because it continued to work with Spanish refugees in addition to French children. Initially, there was a widely held belief that Jews could be better helped by Jewish organizations and Belgians by the Belgian government. However, this

[182]AFSC Box 52, Folder 1 Jan 22, 1941 correspondence.

perception shifted when people showed up in person asking for help. There was an influx of new people to help when thousands of non-Jewish French migrated south to escape the Germans, in addition to the detention of thousands of Jews in the southern camps. It was neither easy nor simple to turn people away who were requesting assistance. In a letter from August 29, 1941 Margaret Frawley of the AFSC voiced this concern to Helga Holbek.

> There will for instance be a great number of Jews of all nationalities, several organizations have asked if we would help with the organizing of a huge center for them somewhere, but it was all so vague that I asked for a more definite suggestion and figures...I think we all here feel, as you do, that our work should primarily be to help French needy people , where there is a question of equal suffering.[183]

Although Kershner was quiet in regard to Jews to Vichy officials, he would not allow distinctions to be made regarding who should receive aid from the AFSC. He commented to Helga Holbek that "we make no distinction as between Jews and other refugees. Apparently now we shall have to reorganize on a child feeding basis and if so we will admit Jewish children the same as any other--on the basis of need."[184] Kershner was not always consistent in this message nor did he seem aware of the increasing needs of Jews in contrast to non-Jews. Many non-Jews were camp detainees and they were often separated from Jewish camp detainees. It was not unusual for non-Jews to be treated marginally better than Jews who received less food and supplies and who were also more alienated from the outside world. The difference in treatment was noticed by those who visited the camps such as the ICRC but may not have been obvious to people like Kershner who had not spent a lot of time with camp detainees.

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[183]AFSC Box 27, Folder 1, August 29-31, 1940.
[184]AFSC Box 27, Folder 1 September 2, 1940.

In October 1940, Kershner wrote to Holbek that the AFSC received a gift of 200,000 francs, which was to be allocated for clothing at Gurs, St. Cyprien and Vernet. The gift was from the Joint but Kershner noted that the distributions were to be based on a non-sectarian basis.[185]

The allocation of money from the Joint was a frequent topic of discussion for all of the non-Jewish organizations working in France. The Joint typically asked that their money be used to help Jews in need but ultimately, it was up to the operating agency in France to allocate the funds as they saw fit. Not surprisingly, these kinds of decisions were controversial stemming from the difficulties involved with transferring money and the Joint often had no alternative but to agree with the distributing agency's decision making. The Joint did have a presence in France during the war but the AFSCs presence was more dispersed due to its regional delegations within or near the camps. Within the AFSC, Joint funds were controversial since several members agreed with the Joint that the money should be allocated to Jews but others, including Kershner, felt that the money should be distributed based on need rather than religion.

Kershner's decision-making regarding the distribution of Joint funds may have been based on his desire to appease Vichy officials so that the AFSC could continue working in France rather than understanding the realities faced by AFSC workers at the camps. He discussed the allocation and use of Joint money in internal AFSC correspondence but it is omitted in any of his Vichy communications. Rather there are many references to the AFSCs mission to provide based on need not religion. There was concern among AFSC personnel that Kershner's decisions were self-serving,

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[185] AFSC Box 27, Folder 1.

motivated by a desire to remain relevant in Vichy circles. It is hard to dispel that notion based on his diary and AFSC correspondence.

An interesting exchange among Kershner, Holbek and Ross McClelland in 1941 illustrates the contentious dynamic among them. Kershner wrote in a May 23, 1941 letter to Holbek that "to accept Jewish money and buy food for this purpose when it is a known fact that many French people outside the camps do not eat as well as a foreigner in the camps would probably make it impossible for us to secure the unblocking of foodstuffs. If we could import food, it would be different."[186] Kershner was responding to Holbek's request that she use Joint funds to help Jewish detainees who were in dire need of food and supplies. Holbek ran one of the largest AFSC delegations located in Toulouse. Helga Holbek, a Dane, was one of several Europeans employed by the AFSC. She was a passionate advocate for human rights who firmly believed in the AFSC mission to provide assistance to anyone who needed it regardless of religion. She went to great lengths to protect her employees (some of whom were Jewish) from the Gestapo and it appears that she had earned the respect of other AFSC members. Her emotion is clear in hastily written letters with incomplete sentences and misspellings. She regularly pointed out to Kershner that he was not confronted with the realities of Jewish suffering and was careless in his decision-making. The letters between Kershner and Holbek can be characterized as angry and frustrated on Holbek's part and accusatory and condescending on Kershner's part.[187]

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[186]AFSC Box 27, Folder 1.

[187]Holbek regularly threatened to quit and accused Kershner of never believing anything she wrote. "Still, I suppose it is no use trying to convince you, as you seem instinctively to believe the other sort and I am somehow accustomed to having my veracity doubted. It would be a very pleasant change if you sometime would back me

Ross McClelland, coordinator of the Southern camps, weighed in on the battle between Kershner and Holbek. He noted in a letter to Holbek that Kershner "keeps making ridiculous general statements to the effect 'that many children in the camps are better fed than lots of children outside." He further states:

> Kershner's remark that he 'wished sometimes that you had as close contact with French children as you do with the camp populations' is of course, entirely uncalled for. You have close contact with both, whereas he really has contact with neither one nor the other. As far as we know here in Marseilles he has never visited a *cantine scolaire.* The story about the children with the thin legs and the distended stomachs here in Marseille was told to him by Gertrude. He never saw it himself. In any event he has thrown this in my face every time I ask for something extra for the camps, and I am getting sick and tired of it. If I could only really feel that he was sincerely interested in the lot of French children, rather than in getting a little 'red ribbon' for himself, it might be different. But since one is always suspicious that his propaganda for aiding French children is motivated by a desire to receive favorable personal publicity (which helping the camp children certainly would not bring him!) one cannot go on tolerating his remarks. I have written him a memorandum today in which I do not mince words. I do not like to stir up trouble but I am getting thoroughly fed up on his quasi-hypocrisy, and I could no longer keep quiet after I read his sickening self-righteous letter to you in which he holds forth at great lengths as a sort of 'guardian angel' for the camp populations.[188]

Comments like these from McClelland are striking because most of his letters are even-handed even when critical. McClelland told Holbek in this same letter they would both work with Joseph Weill of the OSE, to ensure that food (15 tons of dried vegetables) purchased with JDC money would go to the camps. The primary source of internal tension within the AFSC revolved around Kershner, his relationship with Vichy and his decision-making based upon maintaining that relationship. Even with these problems,

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up instead of always feeling that you must refuse, or disbelieve as the case may be anything I ask or say..." AFSC Box 27, Folder 3 March 1941.

[188] AFSC Box 27, Folder 9 Feb. 10, 1942. The "red ribbon" reference either refers to the French Legion of Honor which Kershner was awarded.

the AFSC was still able to work effectively with other Jewish and non-Jewish agencies to provide assistance where needed.

The Intermediary

Although Howard Kershner's relationship with Vichy was controversial within the AFSC, it did not adversely affect how the organization worked in cooperation with other humanitarian agencies. The AFSC worked in conjunction with the JDC, the OSE and the ICRC or Commission Mixte Service (CMS). It also had working relationships with the YMCA, and CIMADE. Prior to the war, the AFSC worked to provide aid primarily to Spanish Refugees in Southern France who had fled war torn Spain. As Jews began to migrate south, there was a scramble to determine who could and should provide assistance to them. Among the aid agencies, the primary question was who should take responsibility for these people since they did not fall into any previously defined aid category.[189] Additionally, could these Jews be defined as victims of war or prisoners of war? All aid agencies except the AFSC posed these questions, which forced them to rethink their aid categories resulting in modifications to their humanitarian missions. Some agencies such as the ICRC struggled with these definitions more than others, which resulted in inconsistencies in how aid was provided.

The AFSC as an organization did not face this challenge philosophically (although practically, it was discussed amongst its members) since its mission was to provide aid to anyone regardless of religion, nationality, or political affiliation. From the beginning, the AFSC worked with the OSE to protect Jewish children. Their efforts

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[189]Categorization was complicated because some Jews were French and defined themselves by nationality, some were not French and were defined by others as foreigners.

included placing Jewish children in Quaker children's colonies, and working with HICEM on emigration efforts.[190] While distributing funds to protect Jewish children was complicated prior to 1942, it became much more difficult after 1942 not only because moving money from the U.S. became problematic but also because inter-agency relationships were complicated by distrust.

The AFSC worked with the Commission Mixte of the ICRC, which had the ability to assist distributions from Switzerland diplomatically. The role of the ICRC is examined in chapter 3 but its relations with the AFSC were collaborative in facilitating aid distributions and they were in frequent contact. Ross McClelland wrote to Lindsley Noble in an Oct. 1, 1942 letter that the CMS did not actually need to be present for the distributions, but simply informed prior to the actual distributions.[191] The AFSC (and the OSE) directly provided help to detainees and children while agencies such as the ICRC or the Joint provided aid through circuitous means, which was due to either the agency's mission or an inability to provide aid directly as a result of political circumstances. Donald Lowrie of the YMCA is a predominant figure in all of the humanitarian organization archives because he wrote descriptive (and chilling) reports of his experiences visiting the camps, meetings with Vichy officials and his perceptions of the treatment of Jews[192]

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[190]HICEM is an acronym for HIAS, ICA, and Emigdirect. It formed when HIAS, ICA and Emigdirect merged in 1934. The mission of HICEM was to help European Jews migrate and was based initially in Paris and then the agency moved to Lisbon that served as one of the most important transit spots for Jews since Portugal was a neutral country. After the start of the war, much of HICEMs work was funded by the Joint.

[191]AFSC Box 35, Folder 15.

[192]More information regarding Donald Lowrie's reports can be found in the chapter about the Joint--interestingly, every agency I examined had the same copies of Lowrie's reports.

Unfortunately, the AFSC association with the Unitarians was troubled. The Unitarians had worked with the OSE in Paris but decided to distance themselves after being accused of acting as a "cover for nefarious Jewish activities."[193] One of its representatives, Dr. Dexter, was poorly received by AFSC members as, "a narrow-minded, nationalistic, poorly informed, American-Legion temperament. I think I prefer HEK [Howard E. Kershner]" commented Ross McClellend to Lindsley Noble in October 1941.[194] Dissimilar to its relationship with the AFSC, the Unitarians provided valuable assistance to the OSE and others in need in France.

The relationship between the British Quakers (FSC) and AFSC was strained primarily because they had different approaches to their work. Although there are very few references to these problems in the AFSC archive, the British Quakers wrote about some of these differences in internal correspondence prior to leaving France. Generally, the FSC felt the AFSC was more concerned with paperwork and bureaucracy than necessary which impeded its ability to provide aid effectively. However, these differences did not prevent the FSC from finding ways to channel funds covertly to the AFSC in France.[195] The AFSC worked well with the OSE throughout the war and constantly found ways to help it in its efforts. There were regular requests made by the

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[193]AFSC Box 35, Folder 15.

[194]AFSC Box 35, Folder 15.

[195]AFSC Box 53, Folder 27 In a Jan 23, 1942 letter from FSC member Emily Hughes to AFSC member Lindsley Noble--"From the beginning, we have felt that under present circumstances, it was quite impossible for us to accept any legal responsibility for any of the transactions on your side, and all with whom we are in contact are aware of that. The matter could be dealt with satisfactorily if in place of the word "de la part due FSC" you would be willing to substitute "de notre part" and delete "suivant ses instructions" but if that were not acceptable to you we wish to suggest the following: "It is understood that these funds are held by us for the purpose of making payments to necessitous people in unoccupied France and if not so used, they will be returned to you, if practicable, in whole or in part."

AFSC to include Jewish children in convoys out of France. Marjorie McClelland of the AFSC, co-coordinator with Ross McClelland of efforts in the South of France, wrote to Lindsley Noble on May 17, 1942 that she would like to include 15 OSE children in the convoy with some of the Spanish children because the "Jewish organizations give us so much cooperation in getting them off and it means so much to them. I believe they would be badly disappointed if we took none of their candidates."[196] Helping children emigrate from France was complicated on both the American and French sides of the Atlantic since there had to be families willing to take the children on the American side before any steps could be taken to obtain exit visas for the children in France. The following section will illustrate how obtaining exit visas posed problems through the duration of the war. The AFSC worked to obtain visas on a large scale, often for 1000 to 5000 children at a time.

Attempts to Rescue

From a 1942 AFSC report

> In July the rumor went around about the deportation of foreign Jews, and at the end of the month the fears were realized. Between Nôe and Récébedou the internees were exchanged and those who came from Nôe to Récébedou were put behind barbed wire...The Quakers assisted at the various departments and gave what moral and material help they could.[197]

Exit visas were granted through officials at Vichy but were very difficult to obtain for those who were considered "stateless" or who already had passports from other countries. Vichy officials took their cues from the German Government regarding who could be issued a valid passport in order to be considered for an exit visa. The

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[196] AFSC Box 53, Folder 41.

[197] AFSC Box 10, Folder 6, December 1942 Report from the Toulouse Delegation.

Germans only issued passports to German and Austrian immigrants but they also had indirect control over the issuance of Czech passports. Poles were considered enemies of the state and were not permitted passports at all.[198] Jews from occupied Europe became stateless since they were considered enemies of the state and thus ineligible to receive passports. Many Jews were left to depend upon humanitarian agencies to either obtain the appropriate paperwork for them or to take matters into their own hands and try to smuggle themselves out of France. The exit visa/entry visa process was a nightmare designed to hinder migration. In order to receive an exit visa, one had to show proof an U.S. entry visa, which was impossible to obtain without already having an exit visa.[199] The challenges of this process cannot be overestimated. If someone could actually obtain an exit visa, the process could take as little as a month to many months. Refugees applying for visas independently (without the help of a humanitarian agency) would have to visit the U.S. consulate regularly to check on their status since notifications were not mailed to Refugees. It was not unusual for refugees to wait in line at the consulate for hours every day of the week for weeks or months before information regarding their visa application was released.[200]

Refugees wanting to leave France not only required an exit visa but they also needed a place to go. Due to tightening immigration quotas in the U.S., émigrés were required to either work with a humanitarian agency such as the AFSC or HICEM or

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[198]AFSC Box 10, Folder 8 January 23, 1941 memo entitled "Confidential Memorandum Concerning Conversations in Vichy with Mr. Mohn from the Swedish Legation."
[199]The U.S. State Department did not allow the consulate to issue entry visas without an exit visa.
[200]Paxton, 164. Paxton states that HICEM helped three thousand people emigrate in the first half of 1942. Without the help of HICEM, barely a few hundred would have departed.

receive an invitation from an individual--typically a relative of the émigré. Hosting an immigrant demanded a promise to financially support that person and a host often had to prove that they were able to undertake such a charge with copies of tax statements. The U.S. government feared that without such support, an immigrant could become dependent upon the state for support. Refugees had to produce reams of paperwork giving examples of their moral character (in the form of affidavits from Americans) in addition to showing that their host could support them. The Quakers attempting to work within French legal constraints asked the following questions to Mr. Danzelger, Secretary to Monsieur Fourcade of the Interior Ministry:

> AFSC: On what basis and for what reasons are individuals interned?
> Mr. Danzelger: The following will be interned: the Communists, those who can be considered undesirable or dangerous to national security.
> AFSC: What is the condition for liberation from the camps?
> Mr. Danzelger: Those who are no danger to national security and who have sufficient means of living will very shortly have the possibility of being liberated.
> Dr. Danzelger: Each individual must apply to the prefecture. [Detainees who wish to emigrate] must have a visa for any foreign country. Then, they must apply for the *visa de sortie*. They must apply for their transfer to the Commandant of the Camp or to Mr. Chave, Sûreté Nationale, Vichy. If in spite of taken these steps, they should not succeed, the Quakers might eventually prepare a list and forward to Mr. Cardin or even to M. Limousin.[201]

The U.S. attitude toward Jewish immigration is examined at greater depth in the chapter regarding the Joint. The U.S. government faced its own anti-Semitism issues which affected immigration quotas to the U.S., such as the law stating that it was illegal for humanitarian agencies to pay for the transportation of immigrants. Rather, the

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[201] AFSC Box 10, Folder 8 no date, I assume this is the same Mr. Donzelger mentioned earlier but here his name is spelled slightly differently.

responsibility for all transportation costs was met by individuals such as relatives or friends.[202]

A good example of the joint effort needed to effectively transport children is the Serpa Pinto trip from Portugal to New York in 1942. The Serpa Pinto was an 8,000-ton Portuguese ship that is credited with moving approximately 7,800 refugees from Lisbon to Rio, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.[203] The JDC coordinated the movement of 677 Jewish refugees on the Serpa Pinta leaving for New York from Casablanca on June 7, 1942.[204] Illustrating U.S. anti-Semitism at the time, a *New York Times* article from June 16, 1942 detailed the trip with no mention of Jews. The article refers to 677 refugees who arrived in New York that day of whom fifty were children.[205] Some of the groups involved with this mission were the AFSC, the OSE, the Joint, and the U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children, an organization formed by Eleanor Roosevelt. This organization operated as the "official" voice of emigration efforts although these efforts were primarily funded by groups such as the JDC.

Some of the biggest challenges faced by the AFSC (and all aid workers) were tightening racial restrictions against Jews and increasing anti-Semitism in France and the U.S. The tone of U.S. anti-Semitism differed from France's given that it did not manifest itself in racial laws but it did exist in a more subtle way. Those working in the

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[202]AFSC Box 10 Folder 12 no date.

[203]"Serpa Pinto: Voyages of Life and Death," *The Globe and Mail,* April 24, 2009.

[204]See resources.ushmm.org/Holocaust-Names/List-Catalog/display/details.php?type=nlcat&id=132424&ord=15 for more information regarding the passenger lists.

[205]NY Times June 26, 1942 The article describes the Spanish children who were among the passengers and mentioned families and children who had escaped persecution in Southern France--including Captain Pierre Dreyfus, son of Lt. Col Alfred Dreyfus who fled France with his wife and four children. The word Jewish is not mentioned once in the article.

U.S. government were concerned that if too much attention were paid to European Jewish issues, congress members could lose popular support. It was becoming clear to AFSC delegates that Jews remaining in France risked deportation and an unknown but certainly dire future, especially after German occupation in 1942. Letters from delegates continuing to work in the occupied zone to those working in the non-occupied zone illustrate the concerns of French Jews. On July 30, 1942 *Secours Quaker,* Paris-based delegate, Marguerite Czarnecki wrote to Noble and Wilhelm Holst who were heading *Secours Quaker* at the time. She was interested in obtaining information on Jews who were arrested in Paris to see if any aid could be provided to the elderly or children.[206] Her letter reflects the sense of urgency felt about the Jewish arrests, which resulted in the infamous Vel d'Hiver round-ups affecting not only the Jewish community but also every aid agency working in France. The questions asked by Czarnecki included: "is there a way to gain any emigration information for Jews? Is it still possible for them to emigrate? Who? Under what kind of conditions? Is it possible to provide aid from the AFSC for the elderly, children, women, etc.?" [207] Aid workers wrote a series of letters regarding the fate of Jews sent to Drancy and the answer was that no information was available nor did anyone know where the Jews were being sent. Two years later in 1944, Czarnecki was still trying to find ways to help Jews interred at Drancy and still was running into roadblocks. She was informed that only the UGIF could work in the camps although they too were given no information. Also, Vichy mandated that no food parcels could be delivered into the camp while clothing distributions continued to

[206]AFSC Box 73, Folder 19.
[207]AFSC Box 73, Folder 19.

be distributed.[208] Letters from the occupied zone combined with reports from Donald Lowrie only reinforced concerns about the fate of Jews--especially Jewish children who stayed in France.

A joint effort to obtain 5,000 exit visas for Jewish children in 1942 did not go as smoothly as what became known as the Serpa Pinta affair. After the Vel d'Hiver arrests, humanitarians understood that the time to act was upon them. After the arrests, a massive number of Jewish children were stranded while their parents were deported to Drancy and then on to the east. The staggering number of abandoned children influenced U.S. officials to amend immigration policies granting 1,000 entry visas with the possibility of granting 4,000 more.[209] Vichy officials, suffering from negative propaganda after the deportations not only from the U.S. but also from French people who, overtly outraged by the treatment of these children, seemed willing to cooperate. The time seemed ripe to ask Vichy for exit visas. As other countries such as Mexico, Uruguay and Argentina also offered to grant entry visas, Vichy officials started to hedge for reasons of increasing concerns that that any action taken might contribute to the bad propaganda.[210] At the onset of these discussions, Vichy still maintained diplomatic ties with the U.S. in September and October of 1942, and Pinckney Tuck of the U.S. Consulate, was able to manage a meager 500 exit visas from Laval. However, Laval and Bousquet insisted on making the transfer of any children difficult by demanding that the children be declared orphans.

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[208]Jan. 29, 1944 AFCS Box 73, Folder 32.

[209]U.S. chargé d'affaires Pinckney Tuck arranged the visas under the supervision of Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Tuck worked in conjunction with the AFSC and Donald Lowrie from the YMCA.

[210]Donna Ryan, *The Holocaust and the Jews of Marseille* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 153.

Negotiations ceased when diplomatic ties with the U.S. ended in November 1942 and no children were allowed to emigrate when Vichy closed its borders and cancelled all visa requests at this time. Prior the border closing, Noble of the AFSC engaged in a series of meetings with Vichy officials in which problem after problem was created to avoid any movement of children.[211] Some children were eventually smuggled out of France but without any official sanction of Vichy officials and the number was nowhere near the original request of 5,000 children. This period was a turning point in AFSC relations in France as it was becoming increasingly dangerous for their workers in France. It was at this point that the AFSC transferred its assets to *Secours Quaker* until it was able to return as an official organization in 1944.

Conclusion

As a pacifist organization, the AFSC focused its attention on alleviating food and clothing shortages in addition to aiding in Jewish rescue efforts. Making political statements one way or another was an anathema to Quaker beliefs about war. Some have criticized the AFSC for not openly rebuking Vichy and bringing to light its overt anti-Semitism.[212] The relationship between Howard Kershner and Philippe Pétain presents many unanswered questions regarding Kershner's motives and his decision-making processes. The Kershner-Pétain dynamic remains mysterious and casts an unsavory pall upon the work of the AFSC. However, AFSC accomplishments in France during the war should not be examined solely only through the lens of what they did not

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[211]First, Vichy demanded that they would only deal with the UGIF, then only orphans could be deported--this was impossible to prove with short notice since most of these parents had been deported, then the chaperons who were to accompany the children were deemed unfit. Bousquet, Laval and Rodellec du Porzic were directly responsible for this fiasco.

[212]Ryan, 151.

say publicly or through the relationships of its director who did not necessarily represent the opinions of those working on the ground.

Each humanitarian agency worked in France under the direction of a mission statement. Each agency had to adapt its mission to the different challenges posed by this war in the context of who should receive aid and how it should be distributed. The AFSC mission was general rather than specific, providing assistance to whoever required it regardless of religion, politics or nationality. In the end, the AFSC did not undergo a transformation in terms of changing its mission but there were internal conflicts that made its members question its mission regarding who should receive aid. Kershner's relationship with Vichy officials did provide the AFSC with access that would have been unavailable otherwise. For the most part, the organization was trusted by local and Vichy officials. Simultaneously, it was also in the unusual position of having the trust of Jewish organizations and camp detainees. Initially, the Kershner/Pétain relationship facilitated the distribution of supplies, provided access to the camps and funded a large amount of the work undertaken by the AFSC. His integrity was questioned when he suggested providing more aid to French children rather than Jewish children at a moment when the needs of Jewish children were dire.

Ultimately, members of the AFSC within the delegations such as Helga Holbek and Ross McClelland found ways to work around Kershner. This is not to say that Kershner did not provide value to the organization. He was able to appease Vichy officials and raise money, so that his efforts generally contributed to the success of the organization. The example of Kershner illustrates how a humanitarian mission can shift based upon the actions of one person. The shifts within the AFSC were subtler than

those in other agencies such as the ICRC who had a specific mission that was re-formulated to adapt to the war. The AFSC was the direct provider of more aid to refugees than any other humanitarian agency. It was able to overcome internal strife stemming from Kershner's actions through its collective commitment to its mission of providing aid on a non-discriminatory basis.

Chapter 4
The Joint Distribution Committee: An Impossible Task

> At the present time, the JDC is spending thousands of dollars monthly for relief, care of refugees and emigration. It maintains six soup kitchens in Paris which feed 5,000 persons daily.[213]

The Joint Distribution Committee (JDC or Joint) funded most Jewish humanitarian efforts in France during the war. It did so legally in the early years of the war then was forced in 1942 to work covertly once the danger to Jews became too great. The story of the JDCs wartime work is complicated. Facing challenges as an American Jewish organization in a country with anti-Jewish legislation and at war with the U.S. placed the Joint in a precarious position. Additional difficulties came from its strained relationships within the French Jewish community and expectations put upon it by other humanitarian agencies working in France.

On October 25, 1914, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) met to discuss strategies to help European Jews facing difficulties due to the war ranging from providing sustenance to job training. The AJC was composed of approximately forty American Jewish organizations representing the broad and diverse interests of American Jews. One prominent faction served the interests of "German Jewish

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[213] *Time*, June 2, 1941 letter to the editor from Edward M.M. Warburg in response to a *Time* article from March 10, 1941 stating that "most of this relief is distributed through the American Friends Service Committee. Another letter from Warburg was written to the editors of *Time* on March 26, 1941 stating "it should be emphasized that the JDC finances its work in France as in all other Nazi-occupied or dominated territories, without aiding the Nazi economy or violating the British blockade. This is accomplished through a financial transfer system under which funds deposited by would-be emigrants in Europe, are used for relief purposes within Nazi territories."

aristocracy of spirit, culture and money."[214] Except for a common German Jewish cultural identity, the political interests of the AJC varied considerably. Some were Zionists, some were not, but all wanted to assist Jews in other countries obtain citizenship rights.[215] Another important group was the Central Committee for the Relief of Jews Suffering Through the War. This organization was comprised mainly of East European Orthodox Jews. On October 25, 1914, a five-person committee was selected to form a new committee called the American Jewish Relief Committee intended to unify Jewish humanitarian interests internationally. This group was comprised of Oscar S. Strauss, Louis D. Brandeis, Julian W. Mack, Harry Fischel and Meyer London.[216] They chose Louis Marshall as chairman, Felix M. Warburg as treasurer and Cyrus L. Sulzberger as secretary.[217] The Orthodox group ultimately chose not to join the AJRC leading to the creation of yet another committee which would act as the body to distribute funds collected by both groups, and thus the Joint Distribution Committee was created officially on November 27, 1914.

In the First World War, the Joint distributed funds and supplies to Palestine to assist those who had already migrated from Europe and Russia. Working with local Jewish aid agencies in Russia and Germany, the Joint was able to assist refugees in occupied areas where they would otherwise be forbidden aid. Austrian Jews who fled to Russia were not allowed to receive aid from Russian Jewish organizations and thus

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[214]Bauer, Yehuda, *My Brother's Keeper: A History of the American Joint Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1929-1939* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of American, 1974), 5.
[215]Bauer, 5.
[216]Bauer, 6.
[217]Bauer, 6.

relied upon the Joint for assistance.[218] Once the U.S. entered the war, the Joint worked with the State Department to find methods to transfer funds to Europe that would ensure that the money would not get into enemy hands. Between 1917 and 1918, funds were sent through a Dutch bank, which distributed resources based upon Joint guidelines.[219] Not surprisingly, given the vast amount of territory affected by the war ranging through Western Europe to Eastern Europe through Russia, it was exceptionally difficult for the Joint to disseminate aid as fast as it was needed. As Yehuda Bauer aptly noted in his first biographical book about the JDC, the memory of the destruction of the First World War in the context of its toll on European Jewry is often forgotten in the wake of WWII.[220] The postwar period was difficult for European Jews who not only required emergency relief assistance but also help establishing future livelihoods. Through the course of the 1920s, the JDC created a series of sub-groups. Orphans were cared for by one group, another group assisted refugees with permanent housing and jobs and yet another focused on education. Emergency relief efforts in Europe were to cease on July 1, 1921. Varying levels of need in Eastern Europe forced the committee to re-examine scarcity levels as necessary and cease emergency operations if possible. The JDC never did cease emergency relief entirely; it only reduced its efforts where possible.[221] The First World War took a tremendous toll on the resources of Jewish humanitarian agencies. The far-reaching scope of aid needed and the wide swath of distribution challenged their already limited capabilities. Already stretched thin into the 1930s by providing aid to victims of Nazi persecution, the agencies struggled not only to raise

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[218]Bauer, 7.
[219]Bauer, 8.
[220]Bauer, 9.
[221]Bauer, 13.

sufficient funds but create more effective methods of relief distribution at the outset of World War II.

Yehuda Bauer's *American Jewry and The Holocaust* tells the story of the JDC's work in Europe during the Second World War.[222] Since his work comprehensively examines the role of the JDC during the war, there is no need to repeat his efforts. This chapter will summarize the JDC's efforts in France during the war based upon Bauer's work. I will also examine the relationship between the JDC and other humanitarian organizations in the French aid network that facilitated the distribution of aid to the camps, children's colonies and to rescue efforts. Last, I will analyze at the difficult role the JDC was forced to undertake in humanitarian relief efforts because it could not work openly in the distribution of its own funds or even direct those funds to specifically meet Jewish needs but still found a way to have a presence through the war in France.[223]

Unlike the eve of the First World War, the JDC did not have available financial reserves. Within the international Jewish community, there were disagreements about whose money should be allocated first to humanitarian relief. Saly Mayer, the leader of the Swiss Jewish community, and representing the JDC, expressed alarm concerning Morris C. Troper's (JDC's European Director) statements that American money should not be used until Europeans had raised the maximum amount.[224] This kind of disagreement illustrates the strained relationships between Jewish organizations prior to the war. In France, there were conflicts among the Jewish community about French

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[222]Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Joint Distribution Committee, 1939-1945* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1981).

[223]The JDC worked with intermediary humanitarian organizations which distributed aid based upon its own mission statements. This subject will be examined closer later in the chapter.

[224]Bauer, 33.

national identity, which over the course of the war had an impact on the JDC and its ability to distribute aid to those in need.

The Jews in France

Historians such as Yehuda Bauer and Lucien Lazare have written comprehensively about Jewish organizations in France. Their work serves as a framework to understand the context within which the JDC operated.[225] French resistance is defined broadly in this dissertation and includes all groups which through political, economic or military means resisted Vichy rule including Jewish resistance, the *maquis,* and groups such as CIMADE.[226] Lucien Lazare's work on Jewish resistance in France examines the work Jewish organizations--including aid agencies but also groups such as the Jewish Scouts--carried out to save Jewish lives through violent and non-violent means, so it is not something I will examine in great detail. Jewish organizations working to provide humanitarian relief in France are defined as acts of resistance against Jewish oppression according to Lazare. While some Jewish agencies were working with the specific intention to resist persecution from Nazi and Vichy oppression, others were focused on distributing aid and facilitating rescue with less of a political intent. In the case of Jewish organizations such as the JDC and the OSE, the primary goal was to save Jewish lives and these goals overlapped and coincided with resistance activities. This is a fascinating subject that Lazare comprehensively examines in his book that complements any examination of the JDCs work in France.

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[225]Lucien Lazare, *Rescue as Resistance: How Jewish Organizations Fought the Holocaust in France* (New York: Columbia University, 1996).
[226]See chapter 5 for more information regarding CIMADE.

Jews in France were granted citizenship rights after the French Revolution. Naturalized French Jews like naturalized German and Austrian Jews typically viewed themselves as citizens of the state who were also Jewish. In France, assimilation was the way to become part of the French polity.[227] Jews outside of France prior to the war viewed the country as a place in which Jews could live with rights and the possibility of gaining citizenship. Jews from all over Nazi-occupied Europe fled to France to live a better life without persecution until 1939. Beginning in the 1920s, French citizenship could be obtained after a naturalization period of three years contributing to an increase in the number of Jews naturalized. At the outset of the Second World War, there were approximately 300,000 Jews in France.[228] Of that number, 110,000 were naturalized French citizens and 190,000 were immigrants.[229] By the time of the July 1941 census, the number of Jews counted in the census grew to 339,962 of which 60 percent were French nationals and 40 percent were deemed either foreign nationals or stateless.[230] The dismal economic aftermath of the Depression cast suspicion on all immigrants to France when unemployment rose in the 1930s. A lack of jobs put pressure on the state to enforce citizenship policies privileging French citizens. In turn this created a rift among the Jewish community which was far from unified but broadly distinguished between those who had French citizenship and those who did not. After the Armistice Vichy anti-Jewish laws were enacted and citizenship distinctions became an issue of life and death resulting in added hostility between the factions. Key to examining why

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[227]See Lazare who writes extensively about Jewish life in France.

[228]Lazare, 12. The numbers are based on the 1939 census.

[229]Lazare, 12.

[230]Lazare, 12. Of the 60 percent Jews who where French nationals, about three-fifths were French by birth and two-fifths were naturalized citizens.

there was conflict among Jewish factions in France is to understand that categorization was both self-imposed by French Jews and by the Vichy Government while German occupiers in France made no such distinction. Although categories based on citizenship were made, there was little homogeneity among Jewish groups in France. As Lazare states, "fragmentation and confusion thwarted any effort at unification."[231] Historian Pierre Vidal-Naquet described his own experience as: "I belong to a family where patriotism, you might even say French chauvinism, had become a kind of second nature.... The immigrants were in general, rather poorly accepted by their 'coreligionists' of French origin, who viewed them as inciting anti-Semitism."[232]

Although French Jewish life was highly fragmented politically, socially and economically, there were structures created to advocate for Jews--even if in reality, these organizations represented only a few voices. Formally, the Consistoire Central acted as the primary organization representing French Jews. It was created by Napoléon in 1808 and was broken down by département to administer to the needs of Jews throughout France. Based in Paris, it administered local religious associations and had the responsibility of playing an advisory role in the appointment of rabbis.[233] In 1939, it included approximately 6,000 families who belonged to synagogues in the Paris area.[234] Established families such as the Rothschilds were chief supporters of the CC. Generally, CC members self-identified strongly as French citizens who had Jewish religious beliefs. The arm of the CC providing humanitarian aid was called the *Comité*

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[231]Lazare, 13.
[232]Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Les Juifs, la mémoire et le présent* (Paris: François Maspero, 1981), 96-97.
[233]The CC continues to operate today.
[234]Bauer, 153.

d'assistence aux réfugiés (CAR), created in 1933 to provide help to German Jewish refugees.[235]

In addition to the CC, there were several organizations representing Eastern European Jews including the *Fédération des sociétés juives* (FSJ) and the Communist *Union des sociétés juives* (USJ) created in 1938. Although the USJ was a Communist organization, many members were drawn to it were non-communists based on its more radical political stance which was appealing in a France that was becoming more xenophobic as the economic crisis worsened.[236] Youth organizations also played an important role in wartime France. The Jewish scouts *Éclaireurs israélites de France* (EIF) were popular among young people and later played an important role in rescue. The OSE (*Oeuvre secours aux enfants*) also played an extremely important role in the education and rescue of children.[237]

While there were humanitarian and political groups administering to the needs of Jews in France, they could not prevent public hostilities toward Jews and other immigrants. French public sentiment regarding the migration of refugees into France was typically negative because of economic and political concerns stemming from the Depression. In the 1930s, the far-right xenophobic political platform of groups such as Action Française resonated among those who felt disenfranchised by high unemployment. Immigrants were blamed for economic ills and for perceived threats to French national cultural identity. Any group that was perceived as a potential hazard to French stability was deemed threatening. Jews, Italians, Spaniards and North Africans

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[235]Bauer, 153.
[236]Bauer, 153.
[237]See chapter 5 for more information regarding the work of the OSE.

were monitored for anti-Republican activity. Clifford Rosenberg shows that the French police created a widespread surveillance program of immigrants to Paris with the intention in preventing political violence and controlling labor markets in reaction to rising xenophobia.[238]

Vidal-Naquet's observations about the tone of French Jewish life were not unique. French Jews felt they had little in common with newly arrived Eastern and Central European Jews culturally and economically. The biggest cultural disparity was in how French Jews perceived their own identity as principally French citizens who were also Jewish. When 15,000 German and Austrian Jewish refugees were interned in 1939 in Southern camps, French Jews did not rush to their aid. The French government had deemed this group of refugees as "undesirable strangers" and French Jews were fearful of being associated this way by their fellow Frenchmen and they also did not see themselves as linked culturally let alone politically. While it seems that CAR would have been the practical choice to provide aid to non-French Jews, the office was shut down in 1938 from a lack of financial support.[239] The lack of French Jewish support for non-French Jewish refugees represented not only a desire to disassociate but also a deeply held belief that anti-Semitism would not touch their lives as French citizens. Relief efforts fell to other organizations such as the JDC, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and French Red Cross which were able to provide some assistance to those interned.[240]

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[238]Clifford Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control Between the Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), xiv.

[239]Bauer, 155.

[240]Bauer notes that (155) "French Jewry disassociated itself completely" from any activity in behalf of refugees and JDC claimed that 'even French relatives of refugees

The notion among French Jews that anti-Semitism would not affect them was not understood by international humanitarian organizations. In late 1940, Herbert Katzki of the JDC expressed the view that French Jews were the only people who could effectively help Jewish refugees since they had credibility with Vichy as French citizens.[241] Katzki, born in Elizabeth, New Jersey began his work with the JDC in 1936. In 1939, he was assigned to the Paris office and was named secretary of the European executive council the following year. With the defeat of Paris, the Katzki moved the Joint's base of operation to Lisbon. Ultimately, Katzki changed his mind when the first anti-Jewish act of September 27, 1940 was announced decreeing that all Jews in the occupied zone had to register with the authorities. On October 8 1940, the *Statut des juifs* mandated that all Jews be removed from public office, the press, radio, theater, agriculture, industry and trade.[242] French Jews still did not completely understand the dangers they faced and persisted in believing they could disassociate from the new policies which in turn added to the tensions between them and non-French Jews. Conflict among Jews in France would persist through the war and complicate the work of the JDC and other relief organizations. Realizing that all Jews in France were in jeopardy, Katzki concluded that if the JDC could not operate openly, then Christian groups such as the AFSC had to be engaged in providing humanitarian relief to Jews.

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from Germany and Austria seemed to have forgotten that they were relatives." The JDC, with the help of the French Red Cross, the AFSC and the French Minister of Health procured a decision by the French government to allow male refugees of military age to volunteer for the Foreign Legion or the auxiliary work battalions as of December 21, 1939. By the end of 1939, half of the internees remained detained. The intent behind this decision was to provide foreign Jews with French military experience which in turn would hopefully better their chances for citizenship. Unfortunately, the defeat of France thwarted these efforts.

[241]Bauer, 159.

[242]Bauer, 160.

However to fully understand the complexity of Jewish affairs in France in terms of humanitarianism and internal strife within the Jewish community, the role of the UGIF first needs to be put into historical context.

The Role of UGIF

L'Union Générale des Israélites de France (UGIF) was modeled after the Polish *Judenrat* intended to promulgate Jewish anti-racial policies in France. This dissertation will not address the morality of the UGIF or its own activities except within the context of the humanitarian aid of the JDC, AFSC and ICRC.[243] The UGIF is controversial because its leaders were forced by Vichy officials to make impossible choices. I examine the UGIF and its role in the occupied and non-occupied zones to better understand two related issues: dissent within the French Jewish community and the difficulties faced by the JDC in providing humanitarian aid to a group that was divided.[244]

SS General Reinhard Heydrich, Director of the Reich Main Security Office and Deputy Protector of Bohemia and Moravia formed the Polish *Judenrat* on September 21, 1939 to be an "intermediary" between German occupiers and the Jewish community. Leaders of the *Judenrat* were forced to provide slave labor and help with deportations to the camps. Those who refused to follow Nazi orders were deported or killed themselves. Because the *Judenrat* worked effectively to fulfill Nazi anti-Jewish goals in Poland, it was believed that a *Judenrat* could also work in France. Adolf Eichmann initially appointed SS Captain Theodor Dannecker, as the head of the

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[243]The UGIF archive is located at YIVO in New York with microfilm copies available at the USHMM and the CDJC.

[244]Not only were those forced to participate in UGIF divided but also because it was a German-imposed creation, many Jews were justifiably suspicious of it.

notorious Gestapo Office of Jewish Affairs in France was charged with creating a French *Judenrat.* Dannecker's first attempt to organize the Jewish community failed based upon Jewish distrust of him. His next step was to issue an order to Xavier Vallat, Commissariat-General for Jewish Questions (CGJQ), to mandate the creation of an all-inclusive Jewish organization in the occupied zone. Because Vallat also wanted control of Jews in the non-occupied zone, he organized two groups: one for the North and one for the South. The underlying idea behind the UGIF was to force all Jewish organizations in each region to consolidate their activities and assets under the UGIF umbrella, giving Vichy officials' ultimate control of their actions and money. In the North, the Consistoire leadership was adamantly opposed to the UGIF since its establishment was based upon racial criteria which contradicted how Consistoire members identified themselves, first and foremost as French citizens. Opposition by the Consistoire ultimately could not prevent the creation of the UGIF on November 19, 1941. The southern division of the UGIF was created on January 8, 1942.

While Vichy authority theoretically stretched into both the occupied and non-occupied zones, the division of the UGIF (until 1943) into two organizations reflects the reality of the situation. In the occupied zone, the UGIF North was under the jurisdiction of both Vichy and German authorities. It was a centralized and tightly controlled organization whereas the UGIF South operated more loosely and agencies such as the OSE and HICEM were able to continue functioning somewhat autonomously.[245] UGIF

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[245]HICEM was established in 1927 to help European Jews emigrate. It was created based upon the merger of three organizations: HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) based in New York, ICA (Jewish Colonization Association) based in Paris and Emigdirect based in Berlin. Its acronym comes from each of the merged organizations names. From 1940 on, HICEM was funded partially by the Joint and was based in

South operated as the legal face of many covert underground resistance movements that assisted in emigration and rescue efforts. After 1943, the German authorities sought to merge the two groups together although with much opposition from the Southern group. Ultimately, the UGIF dissolved in 1944 after which several of its leaders were deported leaving both groups in disarray.

Not surprisingly, the role of the UGIF in assisting Vichy and German authorities in the deportations is controversial. Leaders of the UGIF--especially the UGIF North--tried to retain a sense of normalcy in terms of their institutional and welfare structures and were unprepared for the level of anti-Semitism they faced which was unprecedented in modern French history. The JDC had routinely worked with a variety of Jewish agencies prior to the war and was placed in a difficult position after the UGIF was formed for several reasons. Realizing that JDC contributions to the UGIF North would be directed for Jewish aid became problematic because the zone was under German and Vichy control. For this reason, it was impossible to determine whether JDC funds would be directed appropriately to Jewish assistance or end up in Nazi hands. After 1942, directing money to German-controlled France from the U.S. sources became illegal once the U.S. entered the war. Working with UGIF South was less tenuous since it operated mostly as an undercover resistance organization without a centralized system of authority.

Lisbon. It functioned to help Jews with immigration efforts. Although there was sometimes friction between the Joint and HICEM, it helped over 90,000 Jews escape from Europe.

The JDC Activity in France

In 1933, the JDC began its work in France to help German Jewish refugees escaping Nazi persecution. It operated primarily as a financial backer to Jewish and non-Jewish organizations providing social, medical, cultural, and educational aid to this group of refugees. Typically, the Joint allocated money to local Jewish communities which could take out loans to be paid back when hostilities ceased.[246] After France entered the war in 1939, the JDC not only continued its support but also increased its efforts. It also moved its Parisian base to Lisbon in 1940 after the fall of Paris. Operating in Paris became too dangerous and Lisbon, with its port, was a good solution to the problem. In 1941, a snapshot of the JDC's work in France consisted of providing relief and assistance for over 16,000 non-interned refugees in several Southern cities including Marseille, Toulouse, Montpellier and Perpignan. It also provided relief to internees of the camps by distributing food, clothing, medical care and blankets. The distribution of camp provisions was coordinated with the Quakers, YMCA, ICRC and Unitarians.[247] The JDC also had an outpost in Marseille in the non-occupied zone through which it was able to transport goods into France.

When diplomatic ties between Vichy and the U.S. were cut off in 1942, the JDC closed the Marseille office but continued to work clandestinely through its Lisbon office. Jules Jefroykin, the French director of the JDC since 1941 continued to run French affairs on behalf of the organization. The pre-war system of providing loans to local Jewish communities continued to operate administered by Jefroykin after the

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[246]Lazare, 257.
[247]AJDC May 31, 1941.

move to Lisbon. Although transferring funds from the U.S. to occupied France became illegal and American workers were now in danger of arrest, JDC representatives continued working in France aided by the support of the informal humanitarian network. Moving money to the non-occupied zone was possible albeit complicated until 1942 when Vichy was no longer considered a neutral administration by the U.S. government.

While moving money across national borderlines presented difficulties, so was moving non-monetary items such as food and clothing. British naval blockades generally forbade aid distributions into France, but the British were willing to make exceptions for the ICRC and Quakers.[248] Rather than challenging the blockade, the Joint decided to work through the British approved agencies to move its supplies into France.[249] Thus, relationships were formed among the Joint, ICRC and Quakers to facilitate aid distribution to Jews in France. Additionally, the Joint used Saly Mayer to deliver money directly to Jewish agencies such as the OSE.[250] Jefroykin was given complete control in 1942 to allocate JDC funds as he deemed appropriate. While Jefroykin allocated money for legal aid activities, he also clandestinely funded some illegal activities without the knowledge of JDC leadership in New York. According to Lucien Lazare, Jefroykin was a leader of the Jewish Resistance and was the head of the Zionist Youth Movement (*Mouvement de jeunesse sioniste*).[251] Jefroykin used JDC funds to facilitate rescue efforts through illegal border crossings which the Lisbon office deemed necessary in order to save Jewish lives. However, alerting the New York office

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[248]Lazare, 258.
[249]Lazare, 258.
[250]Lazare, 258.
[251]Lazare, 258.

that he was secretly helping armed resistance efforts would have placed the Joint in a potentially embarrassing position with the American government had this information became known.

While Lazare mentions the use of the ICRC and Quakers as a conduit for Jewish aid, he places little emphasis on the cooperation among the agencies which was one of the primary methods of relief particularly prior to the creation of the War Refugee Board (WRB) on January 22, 1944. The WRB was formed by the White House to recommend ways to help political and racial victims of Nazi persecution in occupied Europe. After the formation of the WRB, it became much easier to move money for humanitarian purposes from the United States to Europe. Prior to the creation of the WRB, the JDC was faced not only with distribution challenges but internal, domestic challenges.

Histories of the JDC's work in France focus on the difficulties the organization faced in sending funds to an occupied France. The organization had to mobilize quickly to raise money for European humanitarian relief. American Jews through the JDC funded assistance outside of the needs provided by local resources.[252] Lazare estimates that the Joint covered sixty percent of total expenses of "local resources."[253] "Local resources" were in short supply for several reasons. Anti-Jewish legislation had stripped many Jews of their assets and also the Jewish population in neutral countries such as Switzerland was small so it could not begin to fund relief efforts in one country such as France, let alone the continent. While Bauer, Lazare, and Zuccotti devote scholarly attention to the Joint, a further examination of The JDC's work in France

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[252]Lazare, 260.
[253]Lazare, 260.

shows how the climate of domestic American politics shaped Jewish advocacy efforts and how the humanitarian network came together despite politics. While the JDC garnered a lot of American Jewish support and money for humanitarian purposes, it was not as unified an organization as Lazare implies. Additionally, its relationships abroad were complicated--there was initial distrust toward non-Jewish aid agencies and the role of the Swiss intermediaries such as Saly Mayer merit further study.

JDC Cooperative Operations in France

Reading through the Joint files, one of the most striking dissimilarities from the existing secondary sources about the JDC is the number of references to other humanitarian organizations. Beginning in 1939 into 1940, red flag memoranda from other agencies such as the YMCA and AFSC about the perilous position of Jews in France were included in the archive. Already, the JDC was aware of the danger faced by Jews in occupied countries and working to try to save them. In June 1940, a JDC report documenting the situation of Jews in France noted that emigration efforts by the state had ceased, and foreign Jews were vulnerable to internment and deportation.[254] It was also noted that there was great discord between French and foreign Jews who had separate governing organizations based on completely contradictory notions of self-identification. French Jews according to the report believed that anti-Semitism would be directed toward the "Eastern" Jews.[255] In regard to the French government, the report noted that Vichy was being forced into a program of anti-Semitism and anti-alien activities. At the same time, the U.S. government was dubious that the German authorities were controlling the French. Since the U.S. government was unsure of

[254]AJDC 9/25/40.
[255]AJDC 9/25/40.

French loyalties, it enforced Treasury rules barring the transmission of money to all American humanitarian agencies in German occupied countries.

> While no one in Europe doubts the goodwill of the JDC or of American contributors. [sic] The only question is whether in America all hope was lost of rescuing the Jews in Europe. Perhaps they cannot be rescued? Perhaps the transmitted money aids Hitler more than the Jews?[256]

While the JDC's Joseph Hyman's comment reflects concern about the fate of European Jews, it should not be misunderstood as a decision to give up on Jewish aid. Rather, Hyman was actively looking for other ways to send Joint money to fund relief efforts that could have a direct effect on Jewish lives regardless of political constraints.

Consistently trying to raise public awareness of the European Jewish crisis, the JDC was initially hopeful that the AFSC and ICRC would make a joint appeal to the U.S. public for help which did not materialize. However, notwithstanding the lack of public outcry from non-Jewish agencies, the Joint decided it should pursue humanitarian opportunities with the Quakers. Howard Katzki from the Lisbon office wrote a report on September 14, 1940 alerting the New York headquarters of the increasingly difficult situation in France stemming from the dangers posed to Jews and also the barriers to providing relief. Katzki's report emphasizes the unstable French political environment. In 1940, it was unclear what position the Vichy government would take with the Germans. While there was hostility toward the Germans as occupiers, there was also a sense that as Germans could win the war, collaboration was a strong possibility. In regard to the treatment of Jews, Katzki noted that employment could become scarce since jobs were only available to the children of non-Jewish

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[256]AJDC 9/18/40--letter from Joseph Hyman to Maurice Taylor from the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of Pittsburgh.

Frenchmen. The imposition of the German Nuremberg Laws in France was of great concern. When the report was written, Katzki noted that French-German friction was growing everyday and while the French were not giving in to many German demands, there was a good possibility that the French government could devolve or break down completely.[257] He argued that should the French objections to German demands break down, the "consequences which will follow from such measures are only too clear."[258] The Joint was fully aware of the consequences for Jews in Germany and the German-occupied countries based upon its experiences in Eastern Europe. It knew all too well that Jews could not survive anywhere that the Nuremberg Laws were enforced.

The plight of Alsatian Jews presented unique problems since they were French nationals and thus due the rights of French citizens but it was unclear whether they would receive any special consideration by French authorities. Katzki noted that French authorities were providing help to refugee French nationals in the non-occupied zone especially if the nationals were veterans of the First World War. However, based upon the large numbers of people needing help and the complete disorganization of the French government, Katzki was skeptical that this aid would continue.[259] Not only was Katzki nervous about the disarray of the Vichy government but also the lack of leadership he perceived in the French Jewish community. He stated "there is no leadership to be found among the Jewish people in France at the present time." Given the precarious state of the government and the plight of French Jews, he suggested that the Joint might consider working with the Quakers who had a "unique relationship with

[257]AJDC 9/14/40 Katzki report.
[258]AJDC 9/14/40 Katzki report.
[259]AJDC 9/14/40 Katzki report.

the governments of various countries in which they conduct their activities," by directing some money to Jews through the Quakers.[260] The AFSC was granted permission to establish outposts at the Southern camps prior to the war in order to provide relief to Spanish Republicans. Early Quaker involvement in the camps produced a level of trust among local and Vichy authorities and AFSC delegates which proved to be beneficial to everyone in the aid network.

Katzki discovered through various conversations with humanitarians at the local level (such as AFSC members who were stationed at the camps) that while a large number of camp detainees were Jewish, it might be prudent for Jewish organizations to work outside of the camps particularly in the areas of food and equipment distribution. If Jewish organizations operated as the primary caretakers of Jewish detainees, there was concern among the humanitarian community that a disastrous precedent would be set. French authorities might want to pass the entire burden of camp maintenance to Jewish agencies and also might establish additional camps to intern non-French Jews.[261] Since the AFSC already had access to the camps and were able to distribute aid supplies with permission, it was logical to ask for cooperation in distributing aid to Jewish detainees in the camps.

The Quaker organizations were known to the Joint (and the international humanitarian community) to provide aid to those in need regardless of religious affiliation. In 1940, Quakers questioned how to best serve the needs of the increasing number of detainees and wondered whether Jewish needs could be best met by Jewish agencies since AFSC funds were extremely limited. However, the AFSC had the

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[260] AJDC 9/14/40 Katzki report.
[261] AJDC 9/14/40 Katzki report.

opportunity to fully understand the dire conditions of the detainees--Jewish or not--and wanted to work with the JDC to provide relief. While distribution negotiations continued with the Quakers, the Joint was also talking with the American Red Cross (ARC) to see how it could help. The ARC had already created a program to distribute aid known as *Secour Americain pour Victims de Guerre* (SAVG) which sent aid through the French gas company to local organizations approved by the ARC. While the ARC was willing to assist the Joint, Katzki was doubtful it understood the "actual situation in the unoccupied area." Besides, the program seemed unorganized and its effects were unnoticeable at that time.[262]

Joseph Hyman agreed that the ARC was ill-equipped to help Jewish detainees primarily because its work was far from the border of the occupied territory where many refugees were located, substantiating Katzki's report. Additionally, the OSE which would be a major beneficiary of Joint aid, worked in the South in places such as Nice, Pau, and Perigeaux far from the ARC's range. On the subject of the Quakers, Hyman agreed with Katzki that although the AFSC had a non-sectarian mission, it was worrisome that the question of raising funds within the Jewish community to help Jews was a recurring issue. "Why doesn't the rich American Jewish community do more for its own people?" was the question asked frequently by non-Jewish agencies. Hyman noted that question was not based on any kind of discrimination but was based on a sense of complete inadequacy to help the vast numbers of people needing assistance. "There is no intimation that either the Red Cross or the Quakers would wish in any way to discriminate between Jew and non-Jew; but the feeling does come to us that over and

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[262]AJDC 9/14/40 Katzki report.

above what we do as American citizens by making our contribution to the Red Cross, we have a special job to do in special situations and needs, and for Jewish victims, which no other agency is in a position to meet..."[263]

In September 1940, the JDC realized that efforts had to be intensified as internal French tension worsened and news emerged that Vichy wanted to reduce the number of Jews in its territory. The New York office was notified that Vichy agreed to finance a scheme to resettle mostly Polish Jews (approximately 5,000) to Madagascar and to allow several hundred North African Jews to emigrate to the U.S. As it became increasingly dangerous for the Joint to operate in Vichy France (as Americans and Jews), it agreed to turn more functions over to the Quakers. In December 1940, the non-Jewish humanitarian organizations with a presence in the non-occupied zone were the AFSC, YMCA, American Red Cross and Unitarians. The American Red Cross soon ceased providing relief to camp detainees and closed its office in 1940.[264] The only aid it provided was to POWs in the occupied zone. The Quakers "are doing a good job and have developed excellent relationships with the authorities arising out of the fact that they are helping the French population." The YMCA worked only in the camps and assisted with education and morale. The Unitarians distributed food and had helped bring 30-40 children out of France while trying to find additional ways to provide aid. The International Migration Service worked on a case-by-case basis to find

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[263]AJDC August 14, 1940 letter from Joseph Hyman to Aaron Rauh--this same letter was sent to the Department of Treasury.

[264]ADJC Memorandum by Katzki, no date, filed in the 1939-1940 box. In a letter from John Rich to Cordell Hull from February 26, 1941, he states that the ARC does not include relief to the concentration camps in its current policy.

ways to help difficult migration issues.[265] The International Migration Service attempted to reunite families separated by war and also receive news of their families through Geneva. The Mennonites were assisting the Quakers but not much was known about them.[266] Lastly, Varian Fry was able to help a limited number of intellectuals from lists created in the U.S. Varian Fry was considered a "maverick" by U.S. intelligence sources and based on his unwillingness to work with others and the unpredictable nature of his rescue efforts.[267] Because of his questionable reputation, the JDC was hesitant to be associated with him.[268]

On September 30, 1941, *Secours National*, the Vichy humanitarian arm could no longer directly administer aid to Jews. Because of the close relationship between Quakers and Vichy officials, the AFSC was able to receive funding on behalf of *Secours National* which it could distribute as it deemed appropriate. At this time AFSC delegates also attempted to intercede on behalf of Jews with a letter of protest to Xavier Vallat, who was in charge of Jewish internal affairs. The Quaker letter noted that Jesus belonged to the Jews and it was unfair to place the responsibility of the war on them alone noting that violence brings violence.[269] Vallat responded, "I naturally pass over all that would lead us to a useless discussion on the grounds of governmental decisions

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[265]Suzanne Férriére, head of the International Migration Service was also a member of the International Red Cross.

[266]The Mennonites are committed to non-violence and social justice. Their humanitarian arm provides relief around the world.

[267]Varian Fry was an American Harvard-educated journalist who created a rescue network in France to save Jewish and anti-Nazi intellectuals from Nazi persecution. Some of the people he helped rescue include Hannah Arendt, Jean Arp, Marc Chagall, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ophuls and Max Ernst to name a few. www.ushmm.org/wlc_le/article.php?lang=en&ModuleID=10005740.

[268]AJDC December 1940 Katzki report.

[269]AJDC July 18, 1941 letter from Quakers to Xavier Vallat.

against Jews. I limit myself to retain the feeling of Christian charity which has inspired you and to confirm to you that I shall gladly accept your offer of voluntary services to help particular distresses endured by unhappy Jewish families." While the sincerity of Vallat's response is questionable, it is noteworthy that he responded to the Quakers politely. His response to a similar letter from the Chief Rabbi in France, Rabbi Kaplan, concerns about the Jews differed. "I have the honor acknowledge receipt of your letter dated July 31 in which you quote a number of writers. These quotations are well known and would never have been acted against in French legislation if it had not been for the fact that many Jews had invaded our territory during the last several years who have absolutely no ties with our civilization."[270] While Vichy was making life dangerous for the Jews in France, it simultaneously was working to improve public relations abroad by explaining its "role" in Jewish affairs. In a February 24, 1941 *New York Times* article, the Vichy government justified itself in the following terms:

> It was not that we were unwilling to help these unfortunates, but their very own numbers, coupled with our own grave difficulties, overwhelmed us... There have been many terrifying stories in the foreign press about conditions in French camps. They are all absolute lies... A special branch of the police is examining the case of each interned person carefully. That work in recent weeks has resulted in the liberation of about 1000 foreigners.[271]

After the complete breakdown of communication between Jews and Vichy, the JDC broadened its aid network to include other non-French humanitarian groups such as the International Red Cross, YMCA and CIMADE. Donald Lowrie of the YMCA noted that the tone of Jewish-Christian relations had shifted in the minds of Christian (particularly Protestant) leaders. "During that time, bonds of confidence between

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[270]AJDC August 5, 1941 letter from Vallat to Rabbi Kaplan.
[271]*New York Times* February 24, 1941.

Christians and Jews have been firmly established and without this past experience the present relations would not have been possible." Lowrie wanted the readers of his memo to be aware of the protest efforts to Vichy officials by Protestant Pastor Marc Boegner and Catholic Cardinal Gerlier. For Lowrie, the most noteworthy aspect of shifting confessional relationships was the "confidence with which the Jews have both asked and accepted the aid of Christian groups. The 90 children kidnapped by a group of Protestant and Catholic workers from the prison in Lyons where they are awaiting deportation with their parents." *Amitié Chrétian*, a Catholic aid organization, engineered the kidnapping that Lowrie mentions. The parents of these children agreed to release them to the *Amitié Chrétien* because it was operating in conjunction with the OSE.[272] A Protestant himself, Lowrie's memorandum is full of examples of Protestant aid to Jews which deserves attention illustrating the risks for all involved. Lowrie's memos to the Joint also alerted it to Vichy intentions regarding the Jews of France.[273]

Although Lowrie's notes paint a mostly rosy picture of the relationship among Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, there were many tense and contentious moments. For example, the AFSC submitted a report about its work at Gurs (one of the Southern concentration camps) and sent a copy of the report to the JDC. The publicly released report omitted any mention of the Joint or any other Jewish organization unlike the copy sent to the JDC which designated them as a contributor of funds. Members of the JDC decided to stay silent about the omission formally but instead mention it informally in

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[272]AJDC Sept 19, 1942 Lowrie memorandum.

[273]See chapter 5 for more information regarding Donald Lowrie and the YMCA. His memorandum were disseminated among the humanitarian network. Because of his contacts in Eastern Europe, he was able to pass along information about the treatment of Jews in the East including suspicions of Nazi intentions.

the future to a member of the Quakers as a way to maintain its peaceful relationship.[274] As much as the Joint relied upon Quaker help, trust remained a concern for JDC members. One Joint member commented that he was certain that no "united front" could be had with the Quakers based upon its "lone-ranger" attitude. There were concerns that the Quakers were privately negotiating milk prices through Switzerland and receiving better rates than other organizations. However, because of the weak bargaining position of the Joint, it felt it had no choice but to work with the Quakers but make sure that its proceeds be closely monitored and remain under Jewish authority.[275] Part of the deal the Joint made with the AFSC was that it was up to AFSC delegates to determine who needed aid the most in the camps which meant that Jewish aid did not always go to Jewish detainees.

Relations with the ICRC are less clear than those with the AFSC because Red Cross involvement with the camps and non-interned refugees is harder to pin down in the documents. The Joint was informed in February 1941 by Cordell Hull of the U.S. State Department that the ICRC was approached to help determine the number of internees in the camps and to investigate the conditions of the camps. If the ICRC would agree to take on these tasks, the British might be willing to ease its wartime blockade to allow distributions into the camps.[276] In June 1941, a liaison group was established comprised of the Quakers, YMCA, and the French Red Cross. This group intended to provide aid to the internees and it was granted access to the camps--

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[274]AJDC May 9, 1941.

[275]AJDC February 16, 1941 Katzki memorandum to Marseilles.

[276]AJDC April 1, 1941, Cordell Hull to John Rich--See chapter 3 on the ICRC for more information regarding the British blockades. The national Red Cross Societies are related to the ICRC but not linked in a hierarchical way--they are governed by their respective nations.

although some groups already had access--with the knowledge that Jewish representatives would no longer be allowed to enter the camps based on Vichy orders. The group would distribute aid to all who needed it regardless of race or religion. The notion of providing aid based upon need alone did not always work in practical terms. In one of the initial clothing distributions administered by the ICRC, Jews received very little to nothing since they were not called until the end of the distribution when hardly anything was left.[277] Jews were called last because they were interned after many of the Spanish detainees. The ICRC made a false but legitimate assumption that the date of detention determined internee condition--this was not always the case because Jews were often detained separately and in worse conditions than the Spanish Republicans.

On September 27, 1942 the YMCA's Lowrie stated in a memorandum that French Jews might be spared from deportations based upon an agreement between Laval and the Germans.[278] Laval chose to deliver foreign Jews from the unoccupied zone and should he fail to meet the German quota, French Jews from the occupied zone would take their place.[279] Laval was using special "anti-Jewish" police to make arrests since he could not trust the regular police. By 1942, French public opinion about Vichy was at a low point and for many the Drancy roundups proved to be too much even for some within Vichy circles. Lowrie wrote that "the events in Paris made an extremely strong impression in official circles in Vichy. They are discussed everywhere. Some

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[277]AJDC September 30, 1941 memorandum.

[278]The Vel' d'Hiv roundup began in July 1942 when more than 13,000 Jews were taken to the Vélodrome d'Hiver and Drancy, then deported to Auschwitz. The roundups were ordered by the Nazis but carried out by French police. The roundup targeted foreign Jews rather than naturalized French Jews.

[279]AJDC September 27, 1942 Report on Deportations in Occupied and Unoccupied France.

high officials of the Commissariat for Jewish Affairs in Vichy and in the province offered their resignation.[280] Laval's actions in regard to French Jews should not be interpreted as anything but a bargaining chip he used to try to retain some autonomy from Nazi control.

Lowrie had several conversations with a man he called Mr. X who was a high ranking official in the Office of Jewish Affairs. These conversations not only show the lack of organization within the office but also a growing lack of political will at least on the part of this particular official. Lowrie asked if he could arrange for Jewish needs to be met by varying organizations, would Vichy be willing to leave Jews who had crossed the demarcation line alone? Mr. X said that everyone in Paris was dismayed about what was going on and that measures will be taken with regard to the demarcation line. However, with the various decrees and orders pertaining to foreign Jews, this group could not be helped but French Jews will be left alone if caught crossing the line.[281] Lowrie's response to Mr. X is unknown. Lowrie was very effective in ensuring that information he received was transmitted to the Joint, the AFSC and the ICRC. Because of his warnings, these groups could have some idea of what was to come even if they were unable to mobilize quickly enough to act. August of 1943 marked a turning point in the relief work performed by Jewish organizations in France. At this time, the deportations from France to Germany and Poland were in full force. Up until this time, Jewish organizations were able to work more or less openly in France albeit with difficulties. In the first round of deportations, the Germans made no distinctions regarding age, sex, or state of health of the individuals. At this point the Joint realized

[280]AJDC August 11, 1942.
[281]AJDC August 11, 1942.

that French authorities were unable and unwilling to help them in preventing the deportations and were actively coordinating them.

By November 20, 1943, the Joint knew that there was a systematic campaign to exterminate Jews in France and that these efforts were escalating. With this knowledge, the role of the Joint became more complicated and urgent. It concluded that to rescue children, they either had to be hidden within France or sent to a non-occupied country such as Switzerland without delay. The Joint in its archival documents emphasizes its role as the sole organization contributing to Jewish rescue efforts and also of encouraging the rescue of children by other agencies. It asserts this point in reaction to later criticism that it was a funding agency only.

Another layer of complication was created by the disunity of the Jewish community within France. Prior to the creation of the UGIF, members of the Joint discussed with French Jews the need to find a French Jewish representative who could advocate for French and non-French Jews in Vichy. The Joint was concerned that non-French Jews were not represented within the Consistoire and thus had no voice.[282] With the creation of the UGIF in 1942, Vichy formally dissolved all Jewish organizations in an effort to centralize them. In the South, these organizations continued to operate under the "direction" of the UGIF. In the North, Jewish organizations were dissolved and centralized making aid efforts incredibly difficult since the Germans closely monitored the UGIF North. Aid distributions to the UGIF South (until 1943) were used to finance a multitude of activities under the UGIF umbrella including rescue efforts, aid distributions and even armed resistance.

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[282]AJDC July 3, 1941 Letter to Morris Troper from Bernhard Kahn.

Vichy officials enacted Vichy racial laws. For French Jews, it was more feasible to believe that German authorities imposed many of the anti-Semitic laws in France. The JDC understood this was not the case during the war. It was duly noted that French racial laws "did not emanate from the military occupation authorities, as was the case in other countries, but rather from ministers of a French government which was supposed to be independent."[283] The Joint suggested that it is crucial to understand this fact to understand the general initial passivity of the French in regard to Vichy. Slowly, French public opinion changed as it became increasingly clear that Vichy no longer had any autonomy or power. After the French recognized this, there was a tendency for the French to blame the anti-Jewish laws as a German imposition which it later opposed.[284]

However, prior to any consensus about who was to blame for the deportations, it was unclear at the time where the orders originated, whether it was the Nazis or Vichy. On July 30, 1942, it was learned by the JDC that the French Government had made arrangements to hand over 20,000 Jews from the occupied zone and 10,000 from the non-occupied zone to German authorities. Pinckney Tuck commented "the impression I have is that the French government considers the Jewish problem as of no importance and is going to use first the foreign Jews and later, if necessary French Jews to bargain with the Germans, again the silly promise which Laval made to furnish 350,000 workers which he will never get."[285] He noted that if Doriot should come into power, "we will have what amounts to a wholesale pogrom and no distinction will be made

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[283] AJDC November 1942-1944 Jefroykin report.
[284] AJDC November 1942-1944 Jefroykin report.
[285] AJDC July 30, 1942.

between French and other Jews." He hoped that he could share something more concrete but he did not honestly believe that anything could be done at that moment since the only language understood by the government was force. Tuck stressed that the French government was fully responsible for its activities and some day it would have to answer for its actions.[286]

After the Germans occupied Southern France in November 1942, the UGIF South could no longer operate as a legal, centralized front for pre-existing Jewish organizations. The organizations which had functioned under the UGIF umbrella moved underground and for the most part continued to operate but apart from the UGIF. Prior to 1943, the Joint insisted on finding ways to distribute aid within a legal framework even if those distributions had to be made via a conduit such as the Quakers. After 1943, the Joint took on a new role as it began to encourage active and passive rescue and resistance. "First of all the Jews had to be saved physically, to be hidden, given non-Jewish names, and new ID papers." One such group funded by the Joint was called *Le Sixième Direction* which distributed fake identifications, ration books, and birth certificates to Jews. The Joint sent funds via Switzerland to *Le Sixième Direction*, the OSE, the French Scouts and the Young Zionists to save several thousand children.[287]

As the situation become more desperate into 1943, difficulties arose for all humanitarian groups to work in France. Katzki wrote to the New York office that while organizations associated with the Joint continued to operate, even they found it more difficult to proceed unimpeded. As it became known that Jews in the Italian-occupied

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[286]AJDC July 30, 1942.
[287]AJDC November 1944 report by Jeffrey Jefroykin.

area of France were treated far better than the German-occupied areas, people began to migrate further south.[288] Likewise, many of the Jewish organizations previously working in German occupied France were forced to dissolve and some were able to continue work in the Italian occupied zone. At the time, most aid efforts stemmed from Switzerland either through the OSE or the ICRC. In February 1943, Ross McClelland, the AFSC representative based in Switzerland, wrote a report regarding the Jews in France and the role of the Swiss Red Cross. McClelland was concerned after discussing aid efforts with Swiss Red Cross leader Rudolf Olgiatti that the Swiss were not in a position to help large numbers of European Jewish children publicly. Olgiatti asked that the less said about Swiss Red Cross efforts, the better since it was felt by "certain numbers simply do not want the Swiss to receive moral credit or otherwise for a generous and humanitarian action." Thus, the AFSC (or Secours Quaker at this time) could not work with the Swiss Red Cross any further for fear that it would jeopardize its neutral status.[289]

While non-Jewish and Jewish agencies found common ground for the most part especially as illustrated by the relationship between the Quakers and Joint, there was continuing discord among international Jewish agencies. The Joint and WJC based in Geneva frequently disagreed about aid efforts and how to allocate funding. Fundamentally both of these groups had the same goals but each wished to control the money flowing from Switzerland to France on behalf of Jewish needs. Typically, the

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[288]The Italians occupied a small swath of France in the Southeast including the cities Menton, Nice, and Grenoble. In November 1942 the Italians took over the area and lost control of it to the Nazis in September 1943 when the Italians surrendered to Allied forces.

[289]AJDC February 2, 1943, McClelland report.

Joint would allocate money to Jewish organizations at the local level for distribution, which concerned the WJC because it appeared to it that all Jews were not benefiting from Joint allocations.[290] Needless to say, the two groups communicated little and felt resentment toward one another.

Conclusion

Of the Jews present in France in 1940, three out of four survived the Holocaust. Without the support of the Joint, that percentage would have been far smaller. The JDC contributed to providing material assistance to refugees within and outside of the camps, in addition to finding false identity papers and the means to hide and/or escape the authorities. In addition, the Joint found ways to help children leave France for the safety of Switzerland and Spain. This work was not done in isolation but with the help of many from other aid agencies, both Jewish and non-Jewish. The AFSC was the Joint's best ally in providing aid to the Jews of France in all respects despite some tensions early in the relationship.

The Jewish community in France was forced to redefine itself after Vichy imposed harsh racial laws which affected all Jews regardless of citizenship. The experience of exclusion based upon religion contributed to the division within the French Jewish community. Groups outside of France such as the JDC did not view French Judaism in naturalized/immigrant categories and as such were able to provide help to the group collectively. Ultimately, most of the Jews deported were foreign-born and thus, aid efforts to non-French Jews were unsuccessful. However, one cannot understate the success rate of saving children from deportation. Statistics show that the

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[290]AJDC November, 1944 letter from Joseph Hyman to Laura Huntsinger from ARF (American Relief for France).

Nazis murdered 27 percent of adults and 13.8 percent of the children among the Jews in France.[291] No deported children survived the war while three percent of deported adults returned to France. These numbers illustrate the numbers of children who were able to escape as a result of help from the Joint and other humanitarian organizations.

Unlike the other humanitarian agencies studied in this dissertation, the Joint did not negotiate directly with Vichy officials. Vichy anti-Semitic laws and its treatment of Jews determined the way in which the Joint could conduct any humanitarian efforts in France and influenced its actions. At first working within the legal framework of French law and after 1942 working around it, the Joint was able to continue its work in France in spite of it being a Jewish organization in an anti-Jewish state. What we do know based upon indirect conversations about the fate of Jews in France is that several Vichy officials were disgusted by the Drancy round-ups and resigned. At the same time, more powerful forces within Vichy ranks actively enacted policies to remove all Jews from France. Chaos within Vichy reigned in regard to Jews as was apparent by assurances from some officials that French Jews would be left alone at the demarcation lines and other reports that all Jews would eventually be deported. The Joint as a part of the humanitarian aid network played a crucial role in the survival rates of French Jews, especially children, but could not unfortunately prevent the deportations and deaths of non-French Jews.

[291] Lazare, 308.

Chapter 5
The Others--OSE, CIMADE, and YMCA

While the larger humanitarian agencies were equipped to raise funds, distribute aid and rescue Jews, smaller relief organizations played a vital role in these efforts. The factors differentiating an agency as smaller or larger are for the purposes of this dissertation based upon an agency's ability to distribute relief to large numbers of people across France. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was not well known internationally but the organization was able to establish relief centers across Southern France, many of which were located in or near detention camps. The AFSC, particularly its director, Howard Kershner, also had close ties with Vichy officials facilitating the ability to provide relief. The International Red Cross (ICRC) had international name recognition and was able work effectively with Vichy officials in the coordination of aid efforts because of its politically neutral status. The American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) raised substantial sums of money, which it was able to direct to humanitarian efforts throughout the unoccupied territories through the network of small and large aid organizations.

The focus of this chapter is on the organizations which were perhaps not well equipped with independent resources to reach a large area of France or were not known to the French or mainstream public. Humanitarian aid and later rescue efforts in France was through an overlapping informal network of agencies--small and large, which worked cooperatively. Each of the agencies examined in this chapter contributed crucial resources to the refugee population in France but this group is by no means exhaustive. The smaller agencies studied here worked closely with the larger agencies within the

humanitarian network but there were many others working on the fringes which would merit further study.

The ties binding the smaller agencies together were their respective roles within the network and their ties to religious institutions. Relief from wartime struggles came not only from the provision of food, clothing and shelter but also from organized rescue efforts and in the case of the YMCA, moral support and education to camp detainees. While the efforts of the *Oeuvre secours aux enfants* (OSE) were focused on helping Jewish children, the smaller agencies operated in a manner similar to the Quakers by providing aid based upon need regardless of religious persuasion. Working with Vichy officials in some capacity allowed access to distribute supplies to refugees in the camps. This of course implies that an organization was working within a legal Vichy framework. The humanitarian network employed both legal and illegal means often simultaneously to provide assistance.

While agencies such as the Quakers and ICRC worked mostly within the law, the smaller agencies viewed the Vichy legal system from a pragmatic point of view and often worked around it in conjunction with the AFSC or Joint. The smaller agencies dealt more frequently with local authorities than those based in Vichy. The ICRC worked mostly with the other large organizations such as the AFSC or Joint but it did have contact with groups such as the OSE and the Comité Inter-mouvements Auprès Des Evacués (CIMADE). The OSE worked closely with the Joint and Jewish resistance organizations, also participating in the Jewish resistance effort by actively saving Jewish lives. CIMADE could also be considered a resistance organization. A Protestant organization created to help wartime refugees, it quickly became part of the Jewish aid

and rescue effort in conjunction with the OSE, World Jewish Congress (WJC) and the Quakers. By its very nature as a French Protestant organization it was extremely empathetic to the plight of those persecuted for religious reasons.[292]

This chapter will explore the OSE, CIMADE, and YMCA by examining the work that each agency did in France and its relationships with local and/or Vichy authorities. Each group's interactions with other agencies within the humanitarian network will be examined in addition to interactions with government officials at the local and national levels. It was through each of these interactions that aid agencies were able to operate through the duration of the war.

The OSE operated mostly on behalf of Jewish children. Its primary wartime function was to house and educate children and then as conditions worsened, help Jewish children find safety from deportation. The OSE employed varying means of rescue ranging from placing children in safe houses to manning escape expeditions most frequently to Switzerland. It worked closely with the Joint, Jewish Scouts, CIMADE, Quakers and a multitude of underground Jewish groups operating in the South of France. CIMADE was originally formed by French Protestant student groups to assist those uprooted by the war primarily those who were evacuated from Alsace and Lorraine. It became part of the underground network that provided help to Jewish

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[292]CIMADE members used Huguenot history in France as a source of moral strength. Empathizing with refugees persecuted for religion, members of the organization recalled its own history as 16th century Protestants to resist Vichy authority. Although Jews were not persecuted for only religious reasons, members of CIMADE understood Jewish persecution in the same ways as Protestant persecution of the 16th century. In a letter from Pastor Marc Boegner to the Protestant General Assembly on October 24, 1945, he states, "Our church, which knew in the past all the sufferings of persecution, feels an ardent sympathy for your communities whose liberty of worship has already been jeopardized, in certain places, and whose members have been so abruptly thrown into misfortune."

refugees fleeing from German and Vichy persecution. Lastly, the YMCAs official role was to provide moral support to camp detainees in the form of educational programs, musical instruments and books. It attempted to fulfill the cultural void that existed in camp life. Its vocal representative, Donald Lowrie, was the link among almost all of the humanitarian groups. He provided critical detailed reports to all of the agencies and to the U.S. government about the status of Jewish affairs in Europe. His reports appear in all of the studied humanitarian organization archives.

Contact between Vichy officials and the smaller agencies were less frequent than the larger agencies. The limited number of personnel and resources curtailed access to those in Vichy. Equally important, Vichy officials may not have met with representatives from these groups for these groups often had limited name recognition outside of France or were perceived by Vichy to carry little political weight in the international arena. While the OSE was eventually forced to operate underground because its mission to aid Jews in France became illegal, contact with Vichy was not actively sought. In the case of the YMCA, Lowrie met with Vichy officials including Laval, but was repeatedly dismissed. The contacts among the smaller groups with Vichy heighten the contrast with groups such as the AFSC and ICRC and show why humanitarian organizations were forced to create a network since working alone would limited their access to those in need of help.

The OSE

The OSE was created in Russia in 1912 to protect Jews from anti-Semitism and pogroms under the Tsarist regime. The organization provided health education and care

to mothers and children.[293] After political pressure to leave Russia increased, the OSE moved its base of operations to Berlin in 1923. With the rise of National Socialism, it was forced to relocate to Paris in 1933. The OSE's mission to provide aid to Jewish communities in distress soon became more focused on helping Jewish children in need with the creation of children's homes in Paris and the opening of vacation colonies or *colonies des vacances.*

Among humanitarian organizations including the OSE, the AFSC and CIMADE, there was a prevailing notion that children could be kept safe from the war by relocating them away from Paris. This was true for Jewish and non-Jewish children who were placed in rural summer camps, farm families, *colonies des vacances* and other summer programs. The concept of the summer camp for children was not unique to the war years. Prior to the war, almost every French political faction had a summer camp program for young people focusing primarily on education and the widely held belief that city life was unhealthy for the physical and spiritual well being of children.[294] For the OSE, the pre-war focus of its vacation colonies was to educate poor Jewish children to improve their hygiene and diet and to participate in sports.[295] The OSE doctors understood that so-called Jewish racial traits were caused by societal factors and if the organization could improve Jewish living conditions through education, public

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[293]Shannon Fogg, *The Politics of Everyday Life in Vichy France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 156.
[294]Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies des Vacances in France, 1880-1960* (Durham, North Carolina and London: Duke University Press, 2002), 3.
[295]Fogg, 157.

perception could also be altered.[296] The idea of moving children to rural areas expanded under the Popular Front in the mid-1930s, and by 1939 nearly 700,000 children spent the summer in a vacation colony.[297] For all families in France, Jewish and non-Jewish, the idea of sending one's child to a rural vacation colony was familiar prior to the war and even desirable during the war.

When the war broke out in September 1939, children were evacuated from Paris to vacation colonies outside of the city. The OSE working with the Jewish Scouts and the Joint moved Jewish children from areas outside of Paris into central France. The organization rented three châteaux in the Creuse to house over 450 children during the fall of 1939.[298] Because the idea of the vacation colonies was familiar, local authorities worked with the OSE to make the children feel welcome. Shannon Fogg asserts that a general demographic decline in this part of France contributed to the official welcome since the children's colonies represented economic and population possibilities.[299] Fogg examines the Haute-Vienne and the Creuse departments that gave Jewish aid organizations protection. In these two regions, not only were 750 children housed and cared for at any time but another 280 Jewish adults were employed as doctors, teachers, cooks, maids and gardeners.[300]

In addition to helping children in the colonies, the OSE also acted as an intermediary in moving Jewish children from dangerous situations to safe places either

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[296]Fogg and also Ph. E. Landau, "L'Oeuvre de secours aux enfants ou les péripéties d'une organisation juive," in *Au secours des enfants du siècle,* edited by Martine Lemalet (Paris: Nil Editions, 1993) 48-52.
[297]Fogg, 157.
[298]Fogg, 158.
[299]Fogg, 158.
[300]Fogg, 159.

run by OSE personnel or by other trustworthy aid organizations. When foreign born Jews were interned in the Southern French camps such as Gurs, the OSE stepped in to see if it could help allay the suffering of children. For example, Jakob Lewin was interned in Gurs with his family when an OSE representative asked them if they were willing to send him to a home for refugee teenagers run by Swiss Aid for Children. Jakob went with six other children to Le Chambon-sur-Lignon and survived the war.[301] Jakob was later reunited with his brother Martin who had escaped to Switzerland. The OSE also received permission to send medical teams into Gurs in February 1941.[302]

In the early years, while some aid organizations such as CIMADE placed children in individual as well as group homes, the OSE's mandate of providing education to children was best fulfilled by placing children in group settings. In addition, placing children in group homes prevented complicated situations such as finding French families to take foreign Jewish children. Xenophobia was on the rise and Jewish organizations and families feared bonds forming between foster families and refugee children. In some regions such as those examined by Fogg, many French families welcomed the arrival of Jewish children into their communities but this was not always the case in other parts of France.

Groups such as the OSE were placed in a strange situation once the Vichy regime came into being. As Philippe Burrin argues, some French chose to accommodate the Nazis as a means of survival--"all practical considerations, structural needs, political aspirations, and opportunism influenced one's decision to make

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[301]Deborah Durland DeSaix and Karen Gray Ruelle, *Hidden on the Mountain: Stories of Children Sheltered from the Nazis in Le Chambon* (New York: Holiday House, 2007), 94-105.
[302]Zuccotti, 69.

accommodations to the occupiers."[303] Until August 1942, Jewish organizations working in France strove to provide aid within the legal framework of the time. While doing so, organizations such as the OSE passively accepted the Vichy regime while simultaneously working actively to protect Jewish interests.[304] In trying to work within the Vichy legal framework, the OSE sought to find ways in which Jews could be trained to be productive citizens in the New France. This is not to say that the OSE was complicit in Vichy anti-Semitism but that it obeyed Vichy laws until doing so put Jewish lives at risk.

A way in which the OSE's (and the AFSC's) mission fit into Vichy's National Revolution was to teach children a trade in order to find work within an increasingly restricted Jewish employment landscape thanks to the anti-Jewish statutes limiting Jewish occupations.[305] Working with the Organisation Réconstruction Travail (ORT) and funded by the Joint, the OSE created training centers similar to the Quaker workshops for Spanish refugees--to learn trades such as carpentry and leather working.[306] The OSE workshops were intended to provide job training and to inculcate students to be conscientious citizens who loved and respected their work.[307] In addition to learning a trade, children in OSE homes learned to have a deep respect for the land

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[303]Philippe Burrin, *France under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise,* Translated by Janet Lloyd (New York: The New Press, 1996), 460-4.
[304]Fogg, 165.
[305]CDJC OSE Box XXV--Dossier 1. "Rapport sur l'activité de l'Union OSE pour les mois de mars, avril et mai 1941." 3.
[306]The ORT (Organisation Réconstruction Travail) was created in St. Petersburg in 1880 by Jewish intellectuals to provide aid to impoverished Jews within the community. It created professional schools and model farms and after World War I expanded its efforts to Eastern Europe. Its primary function during World War II in France was to provide training to Jews in the areas of farming and manual labor.
[307]Fogg, 167.

which also fit into Vichy ideology. Children studied gardening and they used the food grown in OSE gardens in daily meals. Although most of the food in OSE homes was comprised of dry goods such as pasta, rice and potatoes, the gardens did help break up the monotony when fresh food was available. The OSE and ORT also worked with HICEM to help children emigrate.[308]

Shannon Fogg's work comprehensively describes the relationship between Vichy and the OSE. While it is unnecessary to repeat her entire argument here, it is useful to briefly discuss it because it illustrates the different kinds of relationships aid agencies had with Vichy. Some agencies such as the AFSC had direct contact with Vichy officials while others such as the OSE had more of an abstract relationship with Vichy. Fogg argues that the OSE "seemed to accept the subordinate role of Jews in the 'new' France, where they could only participate in menial jobs or manual labor."[309] Fogg is not alone in asserting this argument--Hillel J. Kieval also argues that the OSE and ORTs missions to provide education to children shows the level of belief in "Vichy's traditionalist social critique." However, both argue that these organizations did not recognize the reality of the Nazis "Final Solution" until the deportations of 1942.[310] Unlike Kieval, there is another point of view expressed by Renée Poznanski who argues that the OSE recognized the dilemma of being a Jewish organization in an anti-Semitic state and it tried to survive to lessen the suffering to Jews imposed by the Jewish statutes. When the OSE could no longer survive operating within a legal

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[308]HICEM was the primary Jewish emigration service.

[309]Fogg, 170.

[310]Fogg and Hillel Kieval, "Legality and Resistance in Vichy France: The Rescue of Jewish Children," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 124:5 (October 1980), 339-66.

framework, it went underground.[311] Fogg argues that neither Poznanski nor Kieval's interpretations fully explain why OSE reports "continued to emphasize the importance of training the refugee children for a life of agricultural labor even after Vichy's policies clearly shifted from exclusion to deportation in August 1942."[312] Fogg situates only Jewish organizations within a Vichy framework. However, there are broader implications for both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations who reacted to Vichy impositions in similar ways. It is also useful to recognize that there was communication among all aid groups since they did not operate in a vacuum but rather as a network.

Another way to think about the function of aid agencies is how each understood the notion of work within an ideological context. Fogg suggests that in order to understand the role of Jewish organizations, it is important to place their attitudes toward work in such a framework. Education and work training were goals of Jewish agencies long before the war and were emphasized as a way to help in the emigration to Palestine where workers could be prepared for agricultural efforts. When understood within the perspective of the deportations, it was much easier for Jewish agencies prior to 1942 to adapt to the circumstances presented and often this meant looking for ways to shift the public perception of Jews.

Unlike the Nazis, Vichy sent inconsistent messages regarding the role of Jews in agriculture and manual labor. On one hand, Jews could not own property unless they themselves maintained it--in other words, they could not profit from the work of others

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[311]Renée Poznanski, "De l'action philanthropique à la résistance humanitaire," *Au secours des enfants du siècle,* edited by Martine Lemalet, (Paris: Nil Editions, 1993) 63.
[312]Fogg, 171.

on their land.[313] From this perspective, it is understandable that agricultural training would benefit Jews. On the other hand, Vichy also voiced stereotypical concerns about Jews lacking the appropriate moral traits to work in agriculture which could lead to increased black market activities.[314] Local governments received conflicting information from Vichy which led to confusion at the local level. Local governments required Jews to work in agriculture. Labor shortages in agricultural regions in both zones created mandates that "inactive" Jews be put to work on farms.[315] Prior to 1942, Vichy also gave legal status to Jewish aid agencies as evidenced by the creation of the UGIF. Although the UGIF was created by the Nazis to mirror the *Judenrat,* aid agencies were not immediately aware of its underlying meaning.[316] While the UGIF is still controversial today for being complicit in the deportations (especially in occupied France), there was always contemporary skepticism about its function.

Additionally, Vichy was unclear in the reasons it provided for the deportations--as voiced to the public though it was quite clear within its own ranks about why it was deporting Jews. Vichy officials asserted that those deported were either returning to their country of origin or for labor.[317] While this reasoning might have eased the minds

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[313]AN AJ 38 122 dossier 33. "Projet de décret en Conseil d'Etat pris en vertu de l'article 4 de la loi du 2/6/1941 réglementant l'accés des juifs aux professions agricoles et assimilées" and "Accès des juifs à la terre."

[314]Fogg, 172.

[315]Fogg, 173.

[316]The UGIF is discussed in more detail in chapter 4. When the UGIF was formed in November 1941, all Jews were required to belong to it and a 1943 law required Jews to pay a tax in each zone to the organization to cover its costs. After March 23, 1942, the ORT and the OSE were incorporated within UGIF but remained largely autonomous--more so in the South than the North. Although there was division within UGIF in both zones, Jewish organizations mostly accepted the situation and worked within the legal Vichy legal framework until the deportations of August 1942.

[317]Zuccotti, 136.

of the deported and French officials, it was blatantly untrue. As Susan Zuccotti points out, anyone who really wanted to know the truth did not have to look very hard. No one made an effort to sort out people from different countries--Czechs, Poles, Germans and Russians were deported together. Who could possibly believe that the Germans would return these people to their countries once they had been sent to the East?[318] While extermination was hard to believe despite reports seeping in from the East, it was easier for Jewish and non-Jewish French to believe that deportees would be used as a labor force since the Germans were in desperate need of workers. The mixed messages left little room for the OSE and ORT to understand the future implications of the anti-Jewish statutes although they understood that Jews were at risk in France.

According to Georges Garel of the OSE, the July 1941 ordinance requiring Jews in the occupied zone to wear the yellow star was of serious concern to the agency.[319] The deportations in August and September 1942 forced the OSE to change its method of operations. While the OSE did not have the ability to stop the deportations, it did get authorization from Vichy to staff the convoys with a doctor.[320] Beginning in late August 1942, arrests of children from the OSE group homes convinced it to find different ways to protect Jewish children. While education had been the OSE's primary goal in the early years of the war, saving Jewish lives became the priority after the arrests. Knowing that OSE group homes were no longer safe, it was time to work with other aid agencies such as CIMADE and the AFSC to protect Jewish children from persecution. Garel was put in charge of the Clandestine Network created as a response

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[318]Zuccotti, 136.
[319]OSE G. Garel memorandum no date.
[320]OSE Garel memorandum no date.

to the deportations. The mission of the network was to administratively integrate several of the humanitarian agencies in order to:

> Establish a new non-Jewish project to assist disenfranchised children and it was decided to forgo the establishment of any new group. The search for the safety of children led to the following guiding principles which should govern the installation of new actions: 1. Necessity to disperse Jewish children to a non-Jewish environment in which they are not known. 2. Necessity to confer upon them an Aryan identity. 3. Necessity to entrust the monitoring of these hidden placements to a non-Jewish staff, in reality or appearance.[321]

In the South, concerns about deportations were the focus of meetings of the Nîmes Committee, another network headed by Lowrie of the YMCA and representing many of the aid agencies working in France.[322] This group which had the power to bring attention to the poor conditions within the camps, worked closely with the OSE to help obtain the release of Jewish children from the camps. The Nîmes Committee tried to make conditions in the Southern camps better by working collectively to supply food and clothing and obtain rights for the detainees such as receiving mail and parcels.[323] Additionally, the committee worked to provide medical services and education to the detainees. For the OSE, the collaboration with the Nîmes Committee did not in any way signify that it thought the principle of the camps were desirable or that it agreed with Vichy decisions to detain Jews.[324] It was becoming increasingly aware of the dangers to Jews as evidenced by the worsening conditions in the occupied zone and in the camps. While Jewish agencies understood that deportation was to be avoided at all

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[321]Ibid.

[322]The Nîmes Committee was comprised of the YMCA, AFSC, Unitarians, Swiss Rescue Organization, Secours national, French Red Cross, Service social d'aide aux émigrants, CIMADE, and Amitié chrétienne. Representatives from OSE, ORT, HICEM, Jewish Scouts, Joint, CAR, and FSJF also participated in meetings.

[323]Lazare, 91.

[324]OSE E2-3 Notes for the Minister of the Interior, Vichy Annex 2, not dated.

costs, it was not entirely clear to them at the time who was initiating them; this is clear from a September 1942 OSE dossier.

> People coming into the non-occupied zone are immediately deported. It is written that the conditions of the trip from the occupied zone to Drancy are decent. The convoys have stopped coming from the non-occupied zone these last days; one thinks that this is the effect of protestations made by Laval. It is said, besides that after the agreement between Laval and the occupying authorities, the French Jews must be treated the same way as the Jews in the occupied zone. If the government doesn't agree to these meetings, the occupying authorities will use a free hand and could deport French Jews from the occupied zone.[325]

While the Nîmes Committee helped thousands of people detained in the camps, it could find a way to rescue most of the adult camp population from extermination.[326] Andrée Salomon, the OSEs social service director, and Joseph Weill, the medical advisor, convinced the committee to release Jewish children into the care of OSE homes. The committee effectively negotiated with Vichy to release approximately 1,340 children, Jewish and non-Jewish in October 31, 1941, about half of who were put into the care of the OSE. Rescue had always been part of the OSE's mission and it had helped approximately 250 children move to the United States in 1941 and 1942. However, as emigration became more complicated, other methods of protection were explored such as placing children with local families, with CIMADE or the AFSC and moving people through the underground network across the border to Spain and Switzerland.

Non-French Jews were the first to be targeted by Vichy officials looking to fill deportation quotas. The OSE subverted orders from Vichy officials to reunite children

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[325]OSE Sept. 9, 1942 Free France Dossier B n. 551.
[326] Lazare, 91.

with their families in order to deport them as a group by getting to the children first and moving them to safety. Unfortunately, the fate of non-French Jewish children is generally grim. Jews who were deported to Drancy and then typically to Auschwitz were not seen again. Before the German occupation of the non-occupied zone, Vichy sent approximately 11, 012 foreign Jews--including children--to Drancy and then to Auschwitz. Of the 9,383 deported from the unoccupied zone, only 100 to 200 were to return.[327] While these numbers reflect the reality for Jews in France, the OSE was able to help as many children as it could through the network of aid providers--funding from the Joint and support from the AFSC and CIMADE. While the OSE might have outwardly complied with Vichy's policies as a way to continue operations, it quietly worked with local officials and other aid agencies to subvert these policies.

CIMADE

Unlike every other humanitarian organization explored in this dissertation, the mission of the Comité inter-mouvements auprès des evacués (CIMADE) intended to subvert and resist Vichy from its inception. CIMADE was created by several Protestant youth movements, the Boy and Girl Scouts, the YWCA and YMCA and the Federation of Student Christian Movements to help refugees displaced from Alsace and Lorraine after forced evacuations in September 1939. This group was comprised originally of women, ten of whom traveled among villages who spent months serving as a link among the Alsatians and the rest of the community.[328] The male members of these groups were drafted into the war effort. The Alsatians were considered foreigners by

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[327]Zuccotti, 135.

[328]Madeleine Barot, *God's Underground.* Collected by Jeanne Merle d'Aubigné and Violette Mouchon, Edited by Emile C. Fabre, Translated by William and Patricia Nottingham (St. Louis, MO: The Bethany Press, 1970), 28.

the majority of the French population not only because of their language but their cultural differences as well. Madeleine Barot became the general secretary of CIMADE on May 10, 1940 and according to her, the mission of the organization was: "the youth movements must unite in a common service to those whom the war had torn from their homes, the 'displaced."[329] Barot began her work by conducting a study of the "displaced" to determine which population needed the most assistance. She found that Alsatians who were been displaced after the defeat of France no longer required special help since they had either returned home or had disbursed to find work. However, the foreign refugees (mainly Jews) who had escaped the Reich fleeing anti-Semitism were in desperate need of help. Many of these refugees had already been detained in camps or had fled to the unoccupied zone where arrest and detention was an also a possibility. Barot decided that those who migrated south were in particular danger given the ambiguity of the French political situation.[330]

The next step for Barot was to determine how to help refugees in the south and particularly those interned at the southern camps such as Gurs and Rivesaltes. CIMADE differed from other aid agencies in that it did not attempt negotiations with Vichy. Once it saw that Vichy denied the YMCA entrance to Gurs, it decided to work its way into the camp through more subtle means. Barot sent two CIMADE delegates to a local village near Gurs who made daily visits to the camp in order to accustom the guards to their presence. As more detainees were sent to the camp, the camp management was quickly overwhelmed with keeping people alive and welcomed any help they could receive. While CIMADE never received official authorization to set up

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[329]Barot, 28.
[330]Barot, 28.

a base in Gurs, it established itself in an office as the organization soon became enmeshed with camp affairs. Jeanne Merle d'Aubigné and Madeleine Barot lived and worked in the barracks at Gurs giving them direct access to prisoners. While CIMADE had been created to help "displaced" persons, it quickly became clear to its leadership that anti-Semitism was a guiding Vichy principle and the organization would best be served by focusing on victims of religious persecution. As a devoutly Christian organization, CIMADE believed that racism in any form was inadmissible. Thus, "it was necessary to give tangible signs of this conviction, alert public opinion, protest to responsible authorities, mobilize Protestant forces and above all help those who suffered most."[331]

Madeleine Barot claims that CIMADE was the first organization to install itself in the camps and while this may be true in some of the camps, we know that the AFSC had itself prior to the war in many Southern locations to help Spanish refugees.[332] Once CIMADE teams were installed at Rivesaltes, Berns, le Récébédou and Nexon, Barot became a team liaison among the teams facilitating communication. CIMADE's efforts expanded into finding homes appropriate to receive detainees in the spring of 1942. With the approval of camp authorities, the elderly, sick, women and children were allowed to move into mini-villages established by CIMADE. The system decided upon by local authorities and CIMADE delegates was that the "mini-villages" would be granted approval to receive specified detainees as long as Vichy-authorized

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[331]Barot, 29.

[332]Barot claims that "slowly other organizations succeeded in penetrating the camps and receiving permission to live in them: the Quakers, Swiss Aid to Children, Jewish welfare agencies," 30-31.

humanitarian organizations agreed to work under police surveillance.[333] People were moved into Naillat in la Creuse, the camps of Douadic in l'Inde Séreilhac and la Meyze in Haute-Vienne, Combronde and Châteauneuf in Puy-de-Dôme. However, since this stage was created in 1942 at the same time the deportations were becoming more frequent, CIMADE had to find new ways to facilitate rescues. Delegates were fearful that local authorities could easily make arrests since they knew, based upon their arrangement, where Jews were housed. As the deportations increased in frequency, CIMADE delegates realized that no one was safe in the mini-villages.[334]

Since the safe houses were under threat, CIMADE found it necessary to look for viable escape routes. CIMADE was able to quickly assess the situation and understood the consequences of arrest under Vichy. The organization may not have known in August 1942 about the Final Solution but it knew that grave danger faced anyone deported. CIMADE was able to work swiftly from its strong collective memory of sixteenth-century Protestant persecution in France which for members functioned as a motivation to resist Vichy authoritarianism. CIMADE members found parallels between the persecution of Jews and the Huguenot persecution making them empathetic to Jewish refugees.[335] The sense of identity based upon Huguenot history and the role it played for CIMADE members cannot be underestimated.[336] With this history in mind and its importance in the mind of its members, CIMADE had no qualms about finding

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[333]Barot, 32.

[334]Barot, 32-25.

[335]Napoleon granted Huguenots protection under the law on April 7, 1802.

[336]Robert Zaretsky, *Nimes at War: Religion, Politics and Public Opinion in the Gard, 1938-1944* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 118-124.

illegal means to rescue people, unlike several of the non-French, non-Protestant agencies working in France. Barot stated,

> The more the situation deteriorated, the less it was possible to respect legality.... It became more and more clear to us that there could be no neutral or apolitical action for a Christian who wanted to be fully involved in the milieu in which he lived. If the structures of the society do not permit all to live, and condemn some to a brutal or slow death, these structures are evil and must be changed or, as a temporary solution, ignored and disobeyed.[337]

Although no one from CIMADE had direct contact with Vichy officials, it did work closely with Pastor Marc Boegner, the head of the French Protestant church, to gain a better understanding of how citizenship laws were applied to foreign refugees in the camps. Boegner, an influential voice in France, wrote a letter to Marshal Pétain criticizing the government's treatment of Jews. He was also able to pass along information to the members of CIMADE regarding the legal status of detainees and how Jews were categorized by Vichy.[338]

With this knowledge in hand, CIMADE worked to furnish detainees with false identity cards, ration cards, the means to escape to Switzerland and to hide people who were in immediate danger of arrest. It worked in conjunction with the Quakers, YMCA, YWCA, the OSE and World Council of Churches to facilitate the movement of children into Switzerland. Its work did not end at the border. Concerned that the Swiss would not accept those crossing the border, it negotiated with the Swiss government to ensure that people would not be sent back. Switzerland had closed the border but that

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[337]Barot, 35.
[338]Barot, 33.

did not stop humanitarians from moving people across it regardless of Swiss approval.[339]

In order to raise funds and bring awareness to its fellow Protestants, CIMADE representatives met regularly with Swiss parish members. Georges Casalis, a member of CIMADE, recalled one meeting in which he tried to explain to church members the organization's mission to assist Jewish victims as a Christian obligation. While the response of the parish may or may not have been typical, it was striking enough for Casalis to mention it in his memoir after the war. He noted that after he spoke, there was a long silence and finally a person stood up and asked, "But these people for whom you go to such trouble and take so many risks, are they 'interesting?" Casalis was stunned by the enormity of ignorance in the response and tried to explain the dire consequences awaiting those who stayed in France.[340] While the Swiss parish members could be frustrating, CIMADE found the response of the ICRC to also be disappointing and made a public statement about it in the 1960s in *God's Underground,* a series of essays by CIMADE members documenting its humanitarian efforts during the war.

The events culminating in the protests of 1968 refocused CIMADE's efforts to help the displaced. The agency asserted that emergency intervention by CIMADE had to be permanently available to mobilize teams at any moment. "It also prevents CIMADE from stagnating in routine or its own structure."[341] CIMADEs statement about the ICRC is a direct reflection of its own concern about being trapped by a mission that may be too rigid. Criticism of the ICRC was not unknown in the 1960s but

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[339]Barot, 34.
[340]Georges Casalis, *God's Underground*, 208-213.
[341]Barot, 223.

until CIMADE's statement, the tone of it was mostly subtle.[342] Not until Jean-Claude Favez's work in the 1990's was there specific overt criticism of the role of the ICRC during the war.

CIMADE asserted that while it did not have specific evidence to make an overall claim about the ICRC's response to the "civilian victims of the Hitlerian regime and the genocide it undertook," it was disappointed when it called upon the ICRC for assistance. CIMADE states that it was met with coldness and diplomatic reserve, "particularly when we had tried to call upon it for aid to the tortured Jewish population in Poland."[343] While the organization criticized the ICRC, it also justified its wartime activities by issuing a statement pointing to some possible reasons for its actions. The list included some of the same arguments used by the ICRC itself. For example, the primary role of the ICRC was to help prisoners of war. Second, the committee members had to remain politically neutral..[344] The Joint and AFSC were successful in working with the ICRC through its sub-committee CMS in the distribution of aid and in the movement of funds. Perhaps, the small size of CIMADE and its resistance activities influenced the way in which other humanitarian agencies such as the ICRC interacted with it. Overall, the ICRC response to CIMADE mirrored its response to other humanitarian agencies regarding civilian victims of the war--with reserve and caution.

CIMADE continues to help displaced groups in France today placing emphasis on those minorities fighting discrimination in the workplace and racism in the public realm. Currently, its attention is focused on immigrants from former French colonies

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[342]Criticism of the ICRC in the last twenty years has taken a much harsher tone evidenced by writers such as Caroline Moorehead and Naomi Baumslag.
[343]"Attitude of the International Red Cross," *God's Underground*, 233.
[344]Ibid, 234.

such as Algeria. CIMADE remains an important agency for refugees in France but it remains largely unrecognized by the mainstream public historically. Part of the reason for this is that the organization does not proselytize. It was formed based upon religious principles but in practice functions as a secular organization and focuses its attention on its mission. Also, perhaps because the organization has remained small--based in France and working in France rather than branching into international refugee issues, it has not garnered the same kind of attention as the other organizations discussed.

YMCA

Known today throughout the United States as locally run community centers, the Young Men's Christian Association was founded in London on June 6, 1844 as a response to poor working conditions brought on by the Industrial Revolution. Children and young adults (boys and young men) working in factories lived either in the factories or in crowded tenements. The mission of the YMCA was to provide a safe place for these young men to gather in addition to providing them with opportunities for Bible study and prayer. A distinctive feature of the YMCA is that although it is an evangelical organization, it welcomes all Protestant churches and all social classes to participate in its community. From its creation, the YMCA integrated members of the Church of England, Methodists, Congregational and Baptist Churches into its community.[345] In 1855, Jean Henri Dunant (one of the founders of the International Red Cross) asked for a meeting to discuss the organizations global development leading to the formation of the World's Alliance of YMCAs based in Geneva to "coordinate and

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[345]Kenneth Steuer, *Pursuit of an "Unparalleled Opportunity: The American YMCA and Prisoner of War Diplomacy among the Central Power Nations during World War I, 1914-1923* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 8.

support Association movements around the world."[346] The YMCA worked primarily in Britain and the United States but branched out in the twentieth century to other countries by sending missionaries abroad. Called foreign secretaries rather than missionaries, these emissaries created local YMCAs run by people within the local community and encouraged to operate autonomously.

The World Alliance in Geneva changed its name to World's Committee and like the North American association sought to expand itself around the world. It differed from the North American association in its development approach. Whereas the North American association encouraged autonomy in its expansion efforts, World's Committee sought supervised expansion.[347] Initially, overseas missions were not a primary function of the World's Committee. Its focus until 1913 was to support weaker European movements and provide assistance to Armenians who were persecuted by the Ottoman Empire. At a meeting in 1913 for all YMCA associations, there was a call to branch out in terms of missionary work.

The nature of foreign YMCA work shifted when the United States entered World War I in April 1917. John Mott, a leader of the YMCA in the U.S. raised substantial funds to operate military canteens in America and France. It also hired thousands of people locally to operate the canteens. It took on relief efforts to assist refugees and prisoners of war. These efforts varied internationally. In China, the YMCA worked to increase literacy and in the American South, it tried to help African American soldiers find a way in the segregated South through job training. During World War II, the stated mission of the YMCA was to "assist" prisoners of war and to

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[346]Steuer, 8.
[347]Steuer, 10.

run community centers for soldiers.[348] While the missions of the YMCA and the ICRC share similarities in terms of wanting to provide support to prisoners of war--the practical application of the missions were quite different. The resemblances in the language of the missions are not accidental given the crossover participation of Swiss members such as Henry Dunant, founding member of the International Red Cross.

In France, the informal mission of the YMCA was to provide "moral" education and support to camp detainees. There are several important distinctions to be made in the kind of aid provided and to whom the aid was given. While the ICRC defined prisoners of war as members of the military, the YMCA had a looser definition including civil detainees in its outreach--most importantly, the civil prisoners held in the French camps. Secondly, the kind of aid the YMCA provided was largely in the form of items to educate and entertain the detainees. In World War I, the YMCA established libraries for prisoners to provide relief from incarceration. This tradition continued during the Second World War and also included musical instruments, sports equipment, art materials and gramophones. While this might seem to be a mundane kind of effort, it was actually logistically complicated. Purchasing books in several languages (camp detainees read a variety of languages including French, German, Russian and other Slavic languages) could be difficult and distributing the books and other materials was no simple matter.

Although the assistance of the YMCA to camp detainees should be recognized as important, its primary contributions come from the reports of its European representative Donald Lowrie. Lowrie's reports are unique because they were eerily

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[348] www.ymca.net/about_the_ymca/history_of_the_ymca.html.

insightful and disseminated widely. Unlike any other humanitarian organization, the reports appear in every organization's archive. In the archives of the AFSC, the ICRC and the Joint, Lowrie's reports appear unedited. The responses to his reports differed but Lowrie illustrated aspects of camp life, refugee conditions and witness testimonies to events unfolding elsewhere in Europe that no one else provided. Due to the importance of Lowrie's reports in the context of rescue, I will focus on them rather than the work of the YMCA as a whole since its work was largely confined to education rather than rescue.[349]

Donald Lowrie (1889-1974) represented the YMCA outside of the United States for most of his working career. Before serving in Europe, he was the Assistant Secretary in the Cleveland YMCA. Receiving a Ph.D. from the University of Prague, he worked for most of his long career in Russia and Eastern Europe working to aid prisoners of war in locations such as Odessa, Moscow, Czechoslovakia and Constantinople.[350] Stationed in Paris prior to American involvement in World War II, Lowrie had a different view of the war than most Americans. In the spring of 1940, Lowrie already had established excellent contacts within the Polish and Czech communities in France based upon his previous work in Czechoslovakia. Members of these communities had experienced German occupation and understood the consequences of Reich power. Fluent in Czech and Polish, Lowrie was a trusted member of these communities. As a result, he was able to gain information about

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[349]Donald Lowrie's reports provide a insightful examination into camp life during the war. Another important but often overlooked source is his 1963 autobiography, *The Hunted Children* published by W.W. Norton & Company in New York.

[350]University of Illinois Archives, Donald A. and Helen O. Lowrie Papers, 1911, 1916-29, 1939-44, 1946-65; Series Number 15/35/053.

events in the East prior to many of his humanitarian colleagues. When the U.S. entered the war, Lowrie was prepared to return home after learning that U.S. funds could not be transferred to France and that the U.S. government requested non-military personnel leave. According to Lowrie, he changed his mind after discussing the relief situation with Waistill Sharpe of the Unitarians and decided that he and his wife Helen could contribute to relief efforts.[351]

During the Second World War, Lowrie worked in France and Geneva on refugee issues, concentration camp conditions, German conscription of French labor and Jewish deportations. After the U.S. entered the war, Lowrie asked and was granted permission to switch from the American YMCA umbrella of employment to the Geneva-based YMCA World's Committee. The World's Alliance was mandated (like the ICRC) to provide aid to war prisoners but its mission also loosely included civilian detainees. Since there were no soldiers to help because they were being demobilized, Lowrie decided to focus his attention on civilian detainees.[352] Lowrie started the process of getting access to the Southern detention camps after other groups such as the AFSC and CIMADE had already established themselves.[353] Lowrie's description of his engagement with Vichy officials is insightful and furthermore differs from that of AFSC director Howard Kershner and other AFSC members.

Throughout Lowrie's reports, his interactions with Vichy officials formed his perception that the Vichy government was chaotic in its organization and decision-

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[351]Lowrie, 40.

[352]Lowrie, 45.

[353]CIMADE did not go through official Vichy channels to gain permission in the camps. Members showed up daily and eventually wore down local authorities who allowed them access. The AFSC was granted permission by Vichy officials and Lowrie sought the same kind of access--although on a smaller scale.

making. He characterized the Ministry of the Interior (who controlled the camps) as follows:

> This responsibility was natural for this his department, whose prime function was command of the country's police force. Like other ministries in Vichy, this one exhibited a curious mixture of subservience to German orders and more or less secret sympathy with the Allied cause. Success in Vichy depended on the man you had to deal with, and whether or not he was willing to bear responsibility for any decision the Nazis might not like.[354]

Lowrie gained access to the camps thanks to the YMCA's work helping French POWs in Germany similar to the work done by the ICRC. Yet, unlike Howard Kershner who spoke glowingly of Pétain's spirit of cooperation and his excellent health, Lowrie presents a different picture. He paints Pétain as clearly motivated to change the way which France was governed by making assertions that dictatorships were advantageous to democracies because there would be no Parliamentary discussion to slow the process down.[355] With no Parliament, Vichy was able to enact a series of edicts including anti-Jewish legislation and the reconsideration of recent cases of naturalization. Lowrie's observations of Pétain's popularity among the French are also strikingly different from Kershner's positive image. Lowrie discusses a staff of approximately two hundred people devoted to popularizing Pétain throughout the unoccupied territory. One method used to enhance Pétain's image was to place his likeness in as many places as possible including stamps, milk bottles, coins, all public buildings and telephone poles.[356]

Once Lowrie was given permission to access the camps, he introduced himself at Gurs and St. Cyprien where the ICRC and AFSC were already known. Camp

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[354]Lowrie, 52.
[355]Lowrie, 55.
[356]Lowrie, 186.

conditions were universally reported as dire. In St. Cyprien, Lowrie described the arrival of two trainloads (approximately 8.000 people) of German Jews from the Palatinate. This particular group arrived from Mannheim, Frankfurt and other areas in the region. The Gestapo had knocked on doors and given this group (mostly women, children and the elderly) an hour to gather their items before embarking. This is a familiar story except for the fact these people were deported to France rather than camps in the East. Lowrie later discovered that the men from the area were sent directly to Poland and murdered. Lowrie had a conversation with the camp commandant Monsieur Bourdet who told him that he received his orders from the Germans ("you know we're only eight kilometers from the demarcation line") and was told to show no goodwill toward the Jews.[357] A few weeks after arriving at St. Cyprien, the prisoners were transferred to Gurs. However, a typhus epidemic had already taken the lives of many in the camp.

Because Lowrie was fluent in several Eastern European languages and Russian, he was able to provide firsthand reports from witnesses who had experienced the conditions of German occupied Europe. Between his own experiences traveling through Europe and witness accounts, he wrote and disseminated reports detailing refugee and camp detainee conditions. Additionally, he led the previously mentioned Nîmes Committee--a conglomeration of aid organizations dedicated to providing assistance to the camps.[358]

The Nîmes Committee formed because Lowrie received no relief assistance money from his employer, the World's YMCA in Geneva. With limited funds, he

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[357]Lowrie, 69-71.
[358]Lazare, 90.

suggested the coordination of humanitarian efforts to provide more effective assistance. Lowrie ran the committee from Nîmes until 1942 when the Germans occupied all of France and he then moved the operation to Switzerland. While Lowrie provided important information to all of the aid agencies, it is important to note that not everyone in the aid network viewed Lowrie in a positive light and his accounts of his own relief efforts could be exaggerated. Ross McClelland of the AFSC, who collaborated with Lowrie in trying to conduct talks with Pétain and Laval, viewed his move to Geneva with some skepticism. He wrote that:

> Mr. Lowrie has already fled from the contemporary scene. He was pretty scared and hoped to get off for Lisbon as soon as possible. We felt very sorry for the man, he was in such a pitiful state of agitation (that is, when one didn't feel somewhat disgusted with his cowardice), especially when at the last minute orders arrived from New York telling him to go to Geneva instead. He is to replace Mr. Davis of the YMCA there since Davis has returned to the States to and Tracy Strong's father was not able to return to Europe. Both Lowrie and his wife were not particularly anxious to go to Geneva either, although I personally can think of worse places to be stuck. I guess they really wanted to return home, or as he put it, "I should like to be somewhere where I could really be belligerent again." Not an especially Christian sentiment.[359]

The Nîmes Committee was comprised of the AFSC, CIMADE, the OSE, HICEM, ORT, the Joint and others.

With Jewish organizations facing increasing hindrances to aid distribution, the Nîmes Committee was able to push Vichy for concessions such as access to mail, the creation of schools and workshops, and the ability to protest against abusive camp

[359]AFSC Folder 10, December 19, 1941--correspondence from Ross McClelland, Director of the AFSCs southern French outposts to Helga Holbek, leader of the AFSC Toulouse outpost.

practices.[360] One of the more successful efforts run by the Committee was to establish welcome centers (*centres d'accueil*) which were supervised residential environments for detainees outside of the camps. The welcome centers were to give detainees a more comfortable place to live--particularly children. However, as Susan Zuccotti points out, the welcome centers were controversial based on an ongoing debate that money would be better spent improving the camps themselves.[361] Strangely, fears of deportations did not seem to come up in these conversations. Lowrie's accounts of the Committee argue that its apolitical status gave it legitimacy and influence with French officials which he believed was more important than the effort of coordination itself.[362] He argues that the Committee was so trusted by Vichy that it asked them to provide aid to camps where French citizens were imprisoned. He specifically states that the Committee's greatest success came from not protesting, rather "by viewing the situation from the internees' standpoint and collecting data on one or another problem, the Committee was often able to present possible solutions and even to propose cooperative effort by government and private agencies. Such suggestions were usually accepted by Vichy."[363] One example of this kind of negotiation (which contrary to Lowrie's accounts, often failed) occurred in a meeting among Helga Holbek and Herbert Lagler of the AFSC, Lowrie and René Bousquet, the Secretary General of the Vichy Police. The relief organizations sought to exempt their own employees from arrest. Bousquet claimed he was finished granting such exemptions. He stated that because Vichy had granted exemptions to the UGIF

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[360]Zuccotti, 73, There were monthly meetings of the Committee and these particular conversations occurred in December 1940 and January 1941.
[361]Zuccotti, 73.
[362]Lowrie, 86.
[363]Lowrie, 87.

and it had tried to bring in 300 additional people for exemption, he would no longer consider such requests.[364]

The Nîmes Committee, through the welcome centers, ultimately provided relief from camp living for thousands of Jews and non-Jews. Some non-Jewish residents lived in the centers until the end of the war while Jews were provided with fleeting relief, since most were forced to return to the camps in August 1942.[365] An organizational breakdown of the communal efforts by the participating agencies would include: the *centres d'acceuil* opened by either the "Jews or Quakers," medicine provided by the Unitarians, a library from the YMCA and Vichy legal arrangements and permissions handled by the French Red Cross.[366] While the numbers are unknown, it is known that some Jews were given notice of their imminent return to the camps and were able to escape and go into hiding. The Committee also worked closely with forced labor units including Jews and non-Jews to advocate on their behalf. The forced labor units faced not only brutal working conditions but also terrible living conditions. The Nîmes Committee was unable to secure the release of forced laborers but it was able to distribute supplies to them.

While the Nîmes Committee could not prevent the deportations, it urged all of its participating agencies to follow Pastor Boegner's example of writing a letter of protest to Pétain. Lowrie went to Vichy with Ross McClelland of the AFSC to meet

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[364]AFSC October 21, 1942 correspondence from Helga Holbek to Lindsley Noble.
[365]Zuccotti, 76. According to Zuccotti, the forced labor groups or *compagnies* or *groupements de travailleurs étrangers* (CTE or GTE) were dispersed throughout the unoccupied zone. There were as many as 60,000 workers by the end of July 1941 and were comprised of refugees from the Spanish Civil War, foreign volunteers in the French military and the Foreign Legion. In late 1941, the demographic of the group shifted to include Jewish and non-Jewish foreigners arrested by Vichy.
[366]Lowrie, 88.

with Pétain about the deportations which resulted in an anti-Semitic tirade from Laval and apathy from Pétain. The meetings with Pétain and Laval were documented by Lowrie and McClelland. The tone of these meetings could not have been more different than those described by Howard Kershner. When Lowrie and McClelland confronted Pétain about the Jewish deportations, the exchange according to Lowrie (also detailed in a similarly by McClelland) was unproductive:

> We have been deeply moved and profoundly hurt by the present measures, I continued. We cannot believe, Monsieur le Maréchal, that this has been done with your knowledge (this I emphasized, but Pétain did not react) or that it is inevitable. Pétain make a gesture of helplessness, open hands and a shrug of his shoulders. 'You know our situation with regard to the Germans.'[367]

Pétain told Lowrie he would speak to Laval about exempting some Jews from deportation. However, Lowrie was not swayed that Pétain would take any action because the Marshal seemed "not altogether aware of what went on around him." His doubts were confirmed in a later meeting with Laval.

> The total result was nil. The old Marshal could do nothing, Laval would not. His tirade against Jews in general gave every indication that he approved the atrocious measures. All that was left for us to do was fight things out on the local level.[368]

In one of the most famous rescue attempts, Vichy agreed to grant permission to the OSE to move 1,200 children from occupied France to children's colonies in the south. No one at the time understood why this permission was granted. The stories circulating included concerns by the Germans of shrinking food supplies or perhaps someone had bribed a high-ranking Nazi official. In any event, the Committee received Laval's promise to leave the children in the colonies alone. However, Laval did not agree to let

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[367]Lowrie, 207.
[368]Lowrie, 208.

the parents of these children go to the South. They had to make the impossible choice to let their children go alone or take them to the East.[369]

Under the auspices of the Nîmes Committee, members of the participating agencies attempted to give children living at Rivesaltes (approximately 2,000) a school. The argument was if children had to live in the camps--if emigration and children's colonies were not options--then the agencies would do what they could to provide some semblance of a normal life. The Vichy government provided teachers and textbooks, the Unitarians provided equipment for kindergarten including supervising recess and crafts.[370] However, these efforts were short-lived because rescue became the primary goal after the deportations became more frequent. After 1942, the YMCA, like other agencies working in France turned to illegal means to rescue Jews.

One method used by the Committee was to hide children in villages which entailed moving anywhere from twenty-five to forty children at any given time. Children often had to be moved several times. Lowrie noted that the French police often gave the agencies notice of imminent searches giving them time to move children to a new location. According to Lowrie, the operation to move children was coordinated by Jewish and Christian organizations such as the OSE and CIMADE. Often Catholics played an important role as well because they had places to hide children whereas the Protestant groups did not have such access such as boarding schools and private homes. One of the unforeseen consequences of the aid network was improved relations between Catholic and Protestant leaders. Lowrie noted in a memorandum from September, 1942 that, "incidentally, this has brought about a close

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[369]Lowrie, 217.
[370]Lowrie 130.

cooperation between Protestant and Catholic leaders which in pre-war France would have been unthinkable."[371] When Marc Boegner, the head Protestant pastor of France met with Laval to speak on behalf of Jews, he did so on behalf of Cardinal Gérlier as well.[372] Lowrie noted that Laval told Boegner that he ordered frontier guards on the Swiss border to thwart Protestant efforts to help Jews escape across the border.[373] In terms of Protestant support, according to Lowrie, "there is scarcely a community in the whole country where Protestant people, led by their pastors, are not helping hunted Jews to avoid arrest or even to escape from France."[374] At the same time, Cardinal Gérlier informed Vichy that should police attempt to remove children from Catholic institutions in Lyons, he could not be responsible for public order in the city. The governmental response varied based on region. The Assistant Chief of Police believed that in Chambon, a Protestant stronghold, the refugee homes were special Swedish projects and that while Protestants in France may not be very powerful, they were the majority in other countries so it would be wise to show caution in these areas.[375] Internal Catholic divisions erupted in reaction to the defense of Jews in some areas. Newspaper articles quoting Catholic pronouncements against Jews originating from the thirteenth-century began to appear indicating the church's lack of consistency and

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[371] JDC #614, France, Deportations, Bobine 5, "Confidential Memorandum from Donald Lowrie," September 19, 1942 sent from Geneva.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid.
[374] Ibid.
[375] Ibid.

hypocrisy on the issue.[376] Lowrie states that the articles came from Vichy or Berlin and appeared in different cities as a way to counter any kind of Catholic support of the Jews.

By the summer of 1943, representatives from the participating relief agencies were specifically trained to secretly move children into hiding. By the beginning of 1944, three thousand children had been moved and were under the supervision of "sector" managers. There were three sectors in the south which were managed independently from one another. In the sectors, the children were either hidden with families or in group living situations. Additionally, there were two thousand children hidden with their parents throughout the south. Lowrie was not the only person to provide these numbers, the same information was reported by the OSE. Lowrie noted that there was only one major misstep during the war. The details are sketchy but he notes that Nazis set their dogs loose on a group of children escaping to Switzerland. On the Swiss border, the group was caught and died. They were discovered after the war when the grave of the French guide was found.[377]

Like all of the aid agencies after the war, the Committee was criticized for not doing more to draw attention to the fate of Jewish detainees. The Committee tried like the OSE to work within the legal Vichy framework, which meant that it attempted to negotiate with Vichy rather than repudiate it and rebel against it until 1942. There is no easy answer to these charges because while it is true that the Nîmes Committee did not actively encourage camp detainees to rebel or try to escape, it did provide some temporary relief to an increasingly terrible situation. It also helped thousands of

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[376]Ibid.

[377]Lowrie, 140. It is unclear whether the children's graves were also discovered. Lowrie only commented on the French guide's grave.

children go into hiding. Without the humanitarian network working clandestinely after 1942, many more children would have perished. The burning question after the war was how could any of these organizations accept the idea of the camps and not push for a different outcome than simply providing aid to them? As we know now, knowledge of the Eastern camps of 1940 and 1941 was different than it was even in 1942. While relief agencies understood that deportation to the East was to be avoided, the full extent of the horrors of these camps took time to leak westward.

Conclusion

Groups such as CIMADE, the OSE, and the YMCA and many others contributed untold support and aid to refugees, detainees and most of all, children. Without the smaller agencies, the larger agencies would not have been as successful in the dissemination of resources. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the smaller agencies was the willingness to work outside the legal framework once it became clear after 1942 that the deportations would lead to Jewish deaths. With the exception of CIMADE, critics have accused the agencies of being complicit with Vichy. The OSE chose to integrate the ethos of work and land while also training Jews for jobs per Vichy mandates. Also, one may legitimately ask why the YMCA focused on books, musical instruments and education within the camps which assumes the legitimacy of detention. From its inception, CIMADE decided to work outside of a Vichy legal framework which was due in large part to its collective historical memory of Huguenot persecution making it empathetic to the persecution of other groups of people based on race and/or religion.

Ultimately, without the cooperation either legally or illegally of the smaller agencies, fewer people would have been saved from deportation. Prior to 1942, the smaller agencies provided crucial humanitarian assistance within the camps in the form of food, supplies, and clothing. After 1942, rescue work became their primary focus and because of the smaller size of these organizations, they were able to adapt faster than the large agencies to change. It is impossible to know the repercussions had each agency worked against Vichy from the beginning. It is also impossible to castigate relief workers who could not know the intentions of Vichy in regard to Jews before 1942. While Nazi persecution was obvious, Vichy anti-Jewish policies were inconsistent in enforcement. The imposition of wearing the yellow star for example, was not imposed in the South with exemptions made in the North for French Jewish WWI veterans although no less terrible in sending many people to their deaths. The smaller groups, like the larger groups, could do little to save foreign-born adult Jews from deportation, but they were able to protect thousands of children through the children's colonies by hiding them in homes throughout France or facilitating escape to Switzerland. Their smaller size also enabled them to operate more easily underground creating space for them to operate in authoritarian France.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

Humanitarian relief efforts in wartime France forced the community to re-examine who should receive aid, who should distribute it, and ultimately how to operate in an authoritarian state. As this dissertation illustrates, organizations found a way to function in authoritarian France by forming overlapping informal networks creating a humanitarian division of labor. It was also through the relationships of some agencies, such as the AFSC, with Vichy officials that provided a space for the network to operate. The networks enabled agencies to not only continue their work after the 1942 German occupation but also to shift their focus from the provision of assistance to rescue.

The role of humanitarians in saving Jewish lives in France is difficult to quantify but important to recognize. Out of approximately 330,000 Jews in France by the end of 1940, nearly 80,000 men, women and children were deported or died during the Holocaust.[378] Those who did not die as a result of the deportations perished in French concentration camps from disease or starvation. The round-ups of targeted foreign Jews in 1941 Paris initiated by Nazi occupiers and carried out by French police was a wake-up call to anyone who thought the Jews in France might be safe. Vichy racial laws and deportations from the South pushed agencies to rethink how to save Jewish lives. Until 1944, almost all of the Jews rounded up for deportation came from the Reich, Poland, Bulgaria, Belgium, the Netherlands and Greece. As Susan Zuccoti states, the categories of Jews eligible for arrest expanded gradually. When the rules shifted to include more categories of Jews, those who did not hide or escape risked arrest and deportation.

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[378]Zuccotti, 280.

Approximately 250,000 Jews (or 76 percent) survived the war. The proportion can be explained by the way persecution of Jews was carried out, Vichy concerns about its public relations nationally and internationally, and humanitarian efforts to feed, hide and save Jewish lives. Other factors contributing to the survival rate include the size, location and terrain of France. France has expanses of land which are mostly rural and many areas that are mountainous, giving refugees a variety of hiding places. In addition, after the armistice, the Germans decided to post fewer personnel in France than in countries such as Belgium or the Netherlands which meant that the pursuit of Jews was more difficult.[379] Lastly, the location of France between two neutral countries with a viable port with access to the Mediterranean in the unoccupied area (Marseille) made it possible to move people and supplies in and out of France much more easily than other occupied countries.

Susan Zuccotti states that the composition of the Jewish community in addition to the method of Jewish persecution are factors in understanding why so many French Jews survived. Non-French Jews were targeted by Vichy whereas Laval ordered that French Jews be excluded from arrests and deportations. Laval's reasons to initially protect French Jews were political. As German requests came in to fill deportation quotas, Laval tried to fulfill them with foreign Jews, holding back French Jews to maintain political leverage. This is not to say that French Jews were not sometimes caught in the roundups but until 1944, for the most part, they were excluded from the deportations. For those non-French Jews who survived, living in France provided some opportunities that were unavailable in other occupied countries. Social and institutional

[379]Zuccotti, 282.

networks in the form of Jewish relief organizations provided the means and contacts necessary for survival.[380] Zuccotti also asserts that assistance from the non-Jewish world in the form of Christian groups who hid children and civilians helped contribute to the number of Jews who survived the war. While it is true that Jewish and non-Jewish organizations both played a role in Jewish survival, I argue that these groups worked together to form aid networks that facilitated the rescue of Jews. These groups did not operate in Jewish and non-Jewish spheres but in conjunction with one another.

The aid network would not have worked without the help of French citizens. French public opinion toward Jewish arrests and deportations cannot be characterized simply. Xenophobia was on the rise in the years up to the war facilitating resentment toward all immigrants including Jews from Germany and Eastern Europe, Italians, Spaniards and anyone else who migrated to France to find employment and/or safety. Most French seemed ambivalent about the fate of Jews and did not protest the racial laws nor was there outward worry about the deportation of young men. However, the roundups of children and entire families brought attention to the issue and many French found these actions shameful. At the same time, increasing skepticism about Vichy and its relationship with the Reich opened the door to questions about the consequences of collaboration. Popular reaction to active resistance varied. Some did nothing but in turn helped humanitarians and Jews by not speaking out about their activities. Others worked in collaboration with Vichy or German authorities to pursue Jews. While the numbers of those who actively engaged in rescue and/or resistance attempts were few, their efforts helped keep people alive. French men and women who did nothing other

[380]Zuccotti, 284.

than mind their own business gave some Jews the opportunity to hide, escape and scatter through the country to evade notice leading to arrest.

Humanitarian organizations like individuals cannot be characterized easily or simply. Missions based on religious tenets linked organizations such as the AFSC, YMCA, and CIMADE each had its own mission regarding the provision of aid dictating its wartime activities. The one unifying factor of these groups was to provide help to those who needed it most regardless of religious persuasion. The JDC and CIMADE's mission was to help Jews regardless of national status. The Red Cross provides a different example of humanitarian relief from religious institutions. Not only was its mission focused on POWs rather than all victims of war but its identity was more closely tied to the neutral ideals of Swiss diplomacy than to any religious agenda. For the most part, each agency generally adhered to its mission statement but some agencies showed more flexibility in adapting to the growing humanitarian crisis. The specificity of mission statements could dictate who should receive aid, how to provide it, how to work within the law and how to intervene with political authority but only the ICRC seemed limited by its mission.

The Red Cross's mission was purposely written to maintain political neutrality and to provide aid to POWs during the war. Of course, the problems are clear in hindsight because World War II brought different challenges to bear than the previous war. The ICRC's mission was well suited to help victims of World War I but it was severely limited in providing assistance to the majority of civilian war victims in the Second World War. Its policy of neutrality at all costs, while a benefit in providing relief to POWs, was not helpful to the civilian population. The Red Cross was able to

effectively negotiate French POW relief with Vichy officials who welcomed its work as an intermediary on behalf of its soldiers. Vichy also welcomed assistance from the national French and American Red Cross societies in providing local and regional aid. The ICRC hesitated to intervene on behalf of Jews who were not French nationals based upon its mission from the Tokyo Conventions to only intercede on behalf of civilian prisoners detained in their country of citizenship. While the collective body of the ICRC was apprehensive about violating its mission on behalf of stateless Jewish war victims, Red Cross internal disputes about this issue led to the formation of sub-committees created to address the civilian crisis. Ultimately, the ICRC provided some humanitarian assistance in the form of the CMS through the aid network but it did not participate in rescue efforts.

One important area in which the ICRC provided direction was through its camp visits and ensuing reports documenting living conditions. The ICRC was granted permission by Vichy officials to visit the Southern concentration camps giving the government a list of ways to improve conditions. No other occupied country allowed the Red Cross such unlimited access. Perhaps fearful of the ICRC's international status and not wanting to bring negative attention to the treatment of its prisoners, Vichy officials accepted the reports and did allow concessions to be made. While the Red Cross (as a private institution) was under no obligation to publish or share the reports, it did communicate information with other humanitarian groups such as the Joint and American Quakers who were working in the camps. The ICRC changed its mission

after World War II to include stateless civilians.[381] Some critics such as Naomi Baumslag and Caroline Moorehead write about ICRC efforts as a complete failure, particularly in Germany. Baumslag points to anti-Semitism factoring into its decision-making regarding its mission.[382] She notes the Swiss government passed a law in 1942 sealing the borders to Jews. She adds that the national Red Cross societies also condoned anti-Semitism.[383] While anti-Semitism may have played a role in ICRC decision-making, it is unclear that it had any direct effect on its actions. Baumslag's assertions do not point to any specific action by the ICRC and the documents do not show any evidence of blatant anti-Semitism within the ICRC minutes. As to the national Red Cross societies, they were funded and run by their respective nations, so anti-Semitism was rife in the German Red Cross which was led by a Nazi and prevalent in the French Red Cross society during the war.

International Red Cross resources were very limited given the small size of the organization with 25 total members. With so few members, it could only extend itself to camp visits and helping to coordinate relief efforts with either Vichy officials or other humanitarians. One also cannot underestimate the power of Swiss political identity, which permeated the ICRC and served as its guiding force. The ICRC relied on neutrality to gain the trust of foreign governments and individuals. Of course, in regard

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[381]Germany allowed the ICRC access to visit Theresienstadt in July 1944. The visiting delegation was shown a "normal" town with cafés, kindergartens and a school. Nazis deported thousands of Jews to Auschwitz prior to the ICRC visit to ensure that the camp did not look crowded. Favez, 73-74.

[382]Naomi Baumslag, *Murderous Medicine: Nazi Doctors, Human Experimentation and Typhus* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing, 2005), p. 187; See also Caroline Moorehead, *Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998).

[383]Baumslag, 188.

to Germany, the ICRC's political neutrality had no influence and the agency was continuously ignored and/or dismissed when it asked for permission to access German camps. The International Red Cross did not act to help Jews or other stateless citizens during the war compared to other humanitarian organizations such as the AFSC and YMCA. However, the CMS helped move substantial funds on behalf of aid agencies such as the Joint and it also distributed aid directly to the Southern camps. The ICRC reports describing camp conditions bore witness to the terrible circumstances inside. Red Cross actions during the war mirror the tone of its documents--detached, professional and neutral.

The American Friends Service Committee exemplifies a completely different example of humanitarian operations. It moved swiftly to distribute aid to anyone in need and its leader, Howard Kershner had a strangely intimate relationship with a few Vichy leaders. The Quakers were able to take action quickly because the organization already had outposts in the Southern camps. Its assistance to Spanish refugees prior to the war gave the organization an advantage in understanding the complexities of camp life. The Quakers earned the respect and admiration of other humanitarian organizations early in the war because of its ability to balance negotiations with Vichy officials and help Jews, Spaniards and children of all nationalities. The Quakers were the ideal conduits for Jewish aid and the agency's ability to be amiable with all sides but to keep its mission intact was not an easy task. In fact, it was an impossible task which created internal discord and almost derailed the organization entirely.

The relationship between Kershner and Pétain merits further examination. The Quakers had earned the trust of local and Vichy officials prior to the war. Its work

providing Spanish refugees with job training and education was uniformly admired. Unlike any other humanitarian organization, the AFSC's working relationship with Vichy, under Howard Kershner, was mutually beneficial. In the years up to 1942, Vichy funded (through *Secours national*) humanitarian relief efforts and gave the AFSC transportation vouchers to facilitate the movement of supplies. Its access to the Southern camps gave delegation members a chance to move quickly in order to find ways to provide relief to the growing number of camp detainees. Although it could not on its own provide sufficient aid to all of the detainees, it coordinated work with other relief agencies to move goods and funds.

The locally based AFSC members such as Helga Holbek in Toulouse quickly understood that Jewish victims of war, especially children, should receive extra attention. Her disagreements with Howard Kershner about how to distribute aid were angry and frustrating. On one hand, Kershner found creative ways to work with Vichy to benefit the AFSC in terms of giving it humanitarian access. He was the only humanitarian and American to travel with Pétain in addition to having the Marshal's ear whenever he visited Vichy. On the other hand, Vichy benefited from the relationship too because Kershner wrote several public relations pieces in American newspapers highlighting the "goodness" of the French people and making a sympathetic plea to Americans to donate money to assist hungry French children. Kershner was an excellent fundraiser and able to convince audiences around the U.S. to donate money to the AFSC. There is no evidence that Kershner was anti-Semitic or had a clear awareness of the immediate dangers facing Jews in France. He repeatedly directed all of the delegations to treat all camp detainees equally regardless of religion even after

Helga Holbek suggested that perhaps Jews should receive extra attention. Kershner's responses in correspondence and AFSC reports show concern about Jewish treatment but the focus remained politically neutral and pro-France--by insisting that the AFSC help as many French children as possible in addition to its work in the camps. Although Kershner praised Pétain frequently in his diary and other documentation, he never mentions Laval or extols Vichy policy but instead shows appreciation for the French people for whom he had great respect and French ideals of liberty that no longer existed under Vichy. Kershner's relationship to Pétain concerned other AFSC delegates who were worried that it could derail its humanitarian mission--it did not and the AFSC provided more direct aid to refugees and detainees than any other organization.

The AFSC worked within the aid network to coordinate relief measures in the camps for other humanitarians including the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). The JDC faced challenges unlike any other agency working in France. As a Jewish organization working on behalf of European Jews, it was placed in a difficult situation as soon as the anti-Jewish statutes were passed. Although the organization itself made no distinctions based on nationality, Jews in France and the Vichy government categorized Jews according to national status leading to friction within the French Jewish community and made distributing aid taxing. Within the JDC, raising funds was not necessarily difficult. American Jews wanted to help Europeans. The hard part was convincing the American government that it should loosen immigration controls to allow Jewish children to enter the country. Afraid of arousing anti-Semitism in the U.S., American lawmakers were hesitant to push the issue and the JDC had to maneuver strategically in the political realm to apply pressure. The JDC's political savvy helped

it coordinate relief efforts in France with other agencies such as the Quakers, the OSE and ICRC. It understood that it had to operate cooperatively to rescue Jews and find ways to provide assistance to those detained in the camps. In a climate of anti-Semitism and wartime identity politics, placing trust in other agencies created uneasy relationships. With time, the JDC and the Quakers formed a relationship that was based on a mutually shared understanding of humanitarian action although the distribution of aid specifically to Jews instead of all detainees remained a point of dissension.

The smaller aid agencies played a crucial part in the aid network in several ways. Agencies such as the OSE, CIMADE and the YMCA tended toward narrower aid distribution. Less constrained by politics or mission statements, these agencies were able operate effectively within the Vichy legal framework and adapted to working outside of it when the law became too restrictive. The OSE and YMCA preferred to work within the law and did so prior to 1942. Only after the deportations picked up in frequency and it was clear that Vichy was pursuing policies that were deadly to Jews did both of these organizations resort to covert operations. Rescuing children was the primary goal and the OSE, YMCA and CIMADE worked together with the JDC and AFSC to create channels and means of escape.

Resistance used in the context of wartime France has come to have many different participants and definitions. For decades, the term was used to describe the *maquis* omitting any kind of Jewish or Protestant movements. Lucien Lazare's book *Rescue as Resistance* (1996) changed the paradigm and showed that Jewish organizations resisted Vichy authoritarianism and anti-Semitic statutes. Jewish survival alone constituted a method of resistance but the efforts of Jewish organizations in terms

of rescue attempts and staging military options were also means of resistance. Case studies of Chambon-sur-Lignon and the town's collective ability to rescue and hide Jewish children illustrate some of these resistance efforts. CIMADE was formed as a resistance movement and its mission to subvert Vichy deserves further study. Sharing a collective historical Huguenot identity, CIMADE members strongly reacted to the religious persecution of Jews and the poor treatment of Alsatian refugees. Its formation was founded on the premise of political resistance, which included providing assistance to those cast out by Vichy. CIMADE never cared about working within the Vichy legal framework and actively sought to help refugees regardless of whether the means were legal or illegal.

The organizations examined in this dissertation all took risks on the side of protecting human rights with some agencies taking the idea of intervention further than others--CIMADE in contrast to the ICRC for example. When thinking about the roles of humanitarian agencies, the question of how human rights are best protected and whose responsibility is it to step in are just a few questions that come to mind. Historically, intervention is a recent development. In the twentieth-century, the Holocaust forced nations to rethink the idea of intervention. At the outset of the 1920s, humanitarian intervention itself was uneasily defined as:

> the reliance upon force for the justifiable purpose of protecting the inhabitants of another state from treatment which is so arbitrary and persistently abusive as to exceed the limits of that authority within which the sovereign is presumed to act with reason and justice.

or as critics of intervention would assert:

> Starting from the premise of the independence of states, they fear to recognize the right of another state to step in as policeman, even though a neighbor state should treat its nationals in a barbarous manner. Instead,

> they would proclaim as sacred or inviolable the right of every state to regulate its internal affairs and then condone as excusable violations of the law such corrective intervention as another state, urged on by public opinion, might undertake.[384]

In the postwar period, documents such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and the United Nations Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1951) directly address the primary human rights violations inflicted by the Reich and Vichy.[385] Unfortunately, while many of these documents were ratified by U.N. member states, they remain documents that define political and economic rights but do little in terms of action or enforcement.

The concept of humanitarian intervention has also shifted since World War II. Guided by the International Red Cross and the U.N., the implementation of an aid network that works together but also specializes in particular areas is necessary to provide effective assistance. The humanitarian network is most successful if it is comprised of independent organizations rather than political or military actors. The importance of neutrality has not changed but the idea of intervention has shifted. For example, the ICRC has integrated a degree of flexibility in its approach to the confidentiality of its reports. It now asserts that its reports can be made public if a "detaining authority" does not take its requests seriously.[386] While it remains to be seen how often the ICRC will release information, flexibility on its part shows that it is willing to listen to feedback and adjust its mission.

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[384]E.C. Stowell, "Intervention in International Law," 1921 from *The Human Rights Reader,* Edited by Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (New York: Meridian, 1990), 172.
[385]There are numerous United Nations documents that protect human rights--these two are just an example of two written soon after the war.
[386]www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/confidentiality-interview-010608.

Humanitarian organizations have shown the ability to adapt to changing political and economic dynamics usually occurring after an event presenting a new humanitarian challenge. To react to a situation in the moment seems best left to organizations with either informal or minimal bureaucratic operations who can navigate the decision-making process faster or those with broad mission statements. A recent challenge facing humanitarians is that non-state actors are the perpetrators of human rights abuses against civilians. Humanitarians are developing ways to provide aid to victims who fall under this heading but as the actors shift, so do the rules of how to remain neutral. Negotiating with a government even one that is authoritarian implies a working through an organizational structure. This is quite different from negotiating with a group of individuals who have little to no organization and no legitimacy or accountability to the rest of the world. In this context, when humanitarian organizations rather than nations are examined, the question of intervention presents a different set of issues. While humanitarian intervention by nations is debated to this day in cases like Rwanda and Bosnia, the decision for humanitarian agencies to intervene is expected. Often these organizations are called upon to act as political actors to stop human rights abuses instead of state intervention--the United Nations is one example of an organization that uses peace-keeping forces but it is often effective in name only and other organizations not have the will nor means to take on responsibilities of this sort.

The events of World War II changed the landscape of humanitarian action. France is unique from the rest of occupied Europe given that humanitarian organizations operated through the war. The gray area that encompassed relief and later rescue efforts combined with relationships with Vichy created a space for humanitarians

to operate. This is not to say that humanitarians alone influenced who would live and who would be deported. However, it did play a contributing factor in terms of Jewish access to aid and the ability to escape persecution. History could not have prepared humanitarian organizations for the events that unfolded in World War II--the kinds of human rights abuses perpetrated such a large-scale were new to every group studied in this dissertation. Adapting and shifting, humanitarians seem relegated to play a lagging role in the ever-changing political and economic landscape. However, the work that is done on behalf of human rights victims should not be dismissed but rather encouraged and properly funded so that when crises occur, humanitarians can jump to action with speed and efficiency.

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