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**ILLEGAL MIGRATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES FROM POLAND
TO THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION ZONE IN EUROPE IN 1945 – 1948**

Abstract. *The purpose* of the research is to analyze the causes, dynamics, and consequences of the illegal migration of the Jewish refugees from Poland to the American occupation zone in Europe in 1945 – 1948, highlighting its political, social, and geopolitical implications. **The research methodology** is based on the principles of a concrete historical approach – historicism, objectivity, comprehensiveness, integrity and systematicity, as well as on the methods of analysis and synthesis, historical and comparative, problem-chronological methods. **The scientific novelty** of this research consists in its detailed analysis of how the illegal migration of the Jewish refugees from Poland to the American occupation zone shaped and was influenced by the U.S. policy during the post-war period. By analyzing archival materials and declassified intelligence reports, in the study there have been highlighted the strategic and humanitarian dimensions of American responses, including the interplay between refugee management, geopolitical interests, and the evolving stance on Palestine. This research provides new insights into how the U.S. policy adaptations to migration crises reflected broader objectives, revealing the intersection of domestic priorities and international diplomacy in the mid-20th century. **Conclusions.** The illegal migration of the Jewish refugees from Poland to the American occupation zone in Europe in 1945 – 1948 was a complex and multifaceted phenomenon shaped by the interplay of political, social, and economic factors. Key drivers included anti-Semitism, economic instability, and widespread disillusionment with the post-war political order, but the movement's motives and organization remain subjects of debate. While some migration was spontaneous, others suspected coordinated efforts by Zionist organizations or external actors, which prompted the U.S. authorities to launch investigations into the causes, motives, and nature of these flows. American intelligence agencies and counterintelligence units played a critical role, uncovering both humanitarian and political dimensions of the migration, as well as alleged collusion between certain organizations and the Soviet authorities.

In response, the U.S. government implemented specific measures, including the establishment of separate refugee camps, diplomatic negotiations with Allied powers, and policy adjustments to address the influx. Simultaneously, the issue of Jewish refugees intersected with the geopolitical future of Palestine,

where their plight became a critical factor in the U.S. and British deliberations on the establishment of the Jewish state. The migration crisis not only underscored the urgency of resolving the Palestinian issue but also demonstrated how displaced people became a catalyst for broader shifts in international policy. Thus, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of post-war migration processes, the political and humanitarian strategies they inspired, and their enduring impact on global geopolitics.

Key words: U.S. refugee policy, illegal migration, Jewish refugees, post-war Europe, American occupation zone, displaced people, Palestine issue.

НЕЛЕГАЛЬНИЙ МІГРАЦІЙНИЙ РУХ ЄВРЕЙСЬКИХ БІЖЕНЦІВ З ПОЛЬЩІ ДО АМЕРИКАНСЬКОЇ ОКУПАЦІЙНОЇ ЗОНИ В ЄВРОПІ У 1945 – 1948 РР.

Анотація. Метою розвідки – є аналіз причин, динаміки та наслідків нелегальної міграції єврейських біженців із Польщі до американської окупаційної зони в Європі у 1945 – 1948 рр. із акцентом на її політичні, соціальні та геополітичні аспекти. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах конкретно-історичного підходу – історизму, об'єктивності, цілісності, комплексності та системності. Використано також методи аналізу й синтезу, історико-порівняльний і проблемно-хронологічний. **Наукова новизна** дослідження полягає у вивченні того, як нелегальна міграція єврейських біженців формувала американську політику у повоєнний період і водночас зазнавала її впливу. Завдяки аналізу архівних матеріалів і розсекречених звітів, дослідження розкриває стратегічні та гуманітарні аспекти американської політики, включно з її реакцією на гуманітарні кризи, підозрювану участь сіоністських організацій, а також еволюцію підходів США до питання Палестини. Робота висвітлює, як американські спецслужби та політики адаптували свої дії до міграційної кризи, відображаючи ширші стратегічні й дипломатичні цілі у середині ХХ ст.

Висновки. Нелегальна міграція єврейських біженців із Польщі до американської окупаційної зони була багатограним явищем, зумовленим переплетенням політичних, соціальних і економічних чинників. Серед основних руйнівних сил були антисемітизм, економічна нестабільність, страх перед комуністичним режимом і загальна недовіра до повоєнного політичного ладу. Попри часткову спонтанність міграційного потоку, деякі аспекти вказують на можливу організовану участь, зокрема сіоністських організацій, що спонукало американську владу до розслідування причин, мотивів і характеру цих переміщень. Звіти американських спецслужб засвідчили як гуманітарний вимір, так і політичні мотиви міграції, з-поміж іншого, припущення про співпрацю певних організацій із радянськими структурами.

У відповідь уряд США вжив низку заходів: організацію окремих таборів для мігрантів, дипломатичні переговори з іншими союзними державами, розробку директив для управління міграційними контингентом. Особливе місце в американській політиці посіло питання Палестини, де доля біженців стала важливим фактором у дискусіях про створення єврейської держави. Ця криза не лише висвітлила гуманітарні виклики, але й стала каталізатором глобальних змін у міжнародній політиці. Дослідження робить внесок у розуміння повоєнних міграційних процесів і стратегій великих держав у відповідь на ці виклики.

Ключові слова: політика США, єврейські біженці, нелегальна міграція, повоєнна Європа, сіоністські організації, американська окупаційна зона, палестинське питання, переміщені особи.

Problem Statement. The early postwar years marked a period of recovery from the global catastrophe. Through the efforts of the Allied countries and international organizations overseeing refugee assistance, a process of organized repatriation of populations to their stable countries of residence commenced.

On the eve of this unprecedented population transfer campaign, Germany and Austria hosted 11,078,000 individuals identified by the Allies as eligible for repatriation. Specifically, 5,992,000 individuals were under the control of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary

Force (SHAEP), while 4,502,000 were located in the Soviet-occupied zones (Proudfoot, 1956, p. 189). By August of 1945, 65% of displaced people in the American zone (1.66 million individuals repatriated to 17 countries) had been relocated. In the three western zones, 2,174,182 individuals remained, with the Poles forming the largest group at 899,950 (*The Evening Star*, 1945, № 36981, Aug. 4, p. 2). At the same time, the most intense phase of repatriation occurred in May and June of 1945, with 5.25 million people returning home (Proudfoot, 1956, p. 228). The peak eastern flow occurred on June 5, 1945, when 600,000 individuals were transferred to the Soviet zone in a single day. By September 30, 1945, when 2,034,000 individuals had been moved to the Soviet Union, large-scale repatriation ceased effectively. Meanwhile, between May and September of 1945, the Soviet authorities transferred 22,279 U.S. citizens from Europe and 1,275 from the Far East (Proudfoot, 1956, p. 220).

However, the challenges associated with population transfers did not end with organized repatriation efforts. By late October of 1945, the American occupation authorities in Europe were confronted with a new and unexpected wave of illegal Jewish migration from Poland. This movement posed significant logistical, political, and humanitarian challenges. The situation further complicated the U.S. policies, particularly as it intersected with a broader geopolitical issue of Palestine and its role as a potential destination for the Jewish refugees. The illegal migration of the Jewish refugees became a focal point in the postwar migration crisis, highlighting the tensions between humanitarian obligations, national interests, and international diplomacy. Understanding the causes, dynamics, and implications of this migration is critical to shedding light on the broader context of postwar displacement and the role of the U.S. policy in addressing these complex challenges.

Review of Recent Research and Publications: The issue of post-war refugee migration has been studied extensively, yet the illegal migration of Jewish refugees from Poland to the American occupation zone remains an underexplored aspect of this broader phenomenon. Hilton (2001) and Lavsky (2002) focus on the experiences of Jewish refugees in displaced people camps, shedding light on their living conditions and efforts toward social rehabilitation. Kochavi (2001) examines Allied refugee policies, emphasizing the geopolitical challenges of the immediate post-war period. Genizi (1994) and Wyman (1998) did the research on the role of international organizations and resettlement programmes in addressing the refugee crisis. Friedla (2021), Antons (2014) and Huhn (2023) suggest valuable insights into the socio-political, legal, and humanitarian dimensions of displacement, which are essential for contextualizing the movements of Polish migrants into the American zone.

However, the clandestine movement of refugees from Poland and its implications for the U.S. policy in Europe represents a lesser-known chapter of post-war history, necessitating further scholarly attention.

The purpose of the study is to explore how the illegal migration of Jewish refugees influenced the U.S. post-war policies concerning refugees and displaced people particularly in the context of the emerging geopolitical order and the resolution of the question of establishing the State of Israel.

Results of the Research. A new challenge for the American occupational authorities in Europe arose with the robust wave of illegal Jewish migration from Poland, which began in late October of 1945 (Antons, 2014, p. 98). Initially, migrants were accepted without objections. However, as the flow intensified, discussions among the Allies questioned whether the migration was part of an organized plan. On December 5, 1945, the British refused to accept refugees in their sector of Berlin, alleging the entire process was a conspiracy. In

contrast, the Americans continued to allow migrants in 1946 and partially in 1947, though debates about border closure frequently arose.

American authorities sought to address this new issue through coordination with other occupying powers in Germany. However, in early December of 1945, during a quadripartite meeting of the Directorate on Prisoners of War and Displaced People, the Soviet side rejected an American suggestion to distribute the Jewish refugees. If approved, the plan would have allocated 34% of migrants to the American zone, 41% – to the Soviet zone, 22% – to the British zone, and 3% – to the French zone (Kochavi, 2001, p. 167).

Notably, differing perspectives existed within the American leadership on how to respond to the influx of refugees (Gatrell, 2020, p. 292). The War Department advocated for the immediate closure of borders in the occupation zones of Austria, Italy, and Germany. In contrast, the State Department advised closing borders only in case of a sharp increase in migrant numbers and adhering to principles of hospitality if current levels persisted. Additionally, Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson proposed convening a conference with State Department, War Department, and the Jewish organizational leaders to discuss border closures in the occupation zones (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 62, img. 23–24). Subsequently, on December 9, 1945, the United States Forces European Theater (USFET) issued a directive concerning illegal migrants (infiltrators), stipulating that they should be accommodated in camps but kept separate from displaced people and provided assistance until an official policy was established (Hilton, 2001, p. 325).

By mid-December of 1945, the scale of Jewish refugee influx from the east had grown significantly. According to the U.S. refugee official D. Warren, an average of 550 individuals arrived daily from Poland. This information was corroborated by a telegramme from the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, which reported the daily crossing of 300 Polish Jews into Bavaria and 250 into Berlin (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 133). Defense Department officials suspected collusion between Zionist organizations and the Soviet authorities (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 122). On December 19, 1945, General D. McNarney sent a request to the State Department seeking guidance on further actions – whether to continue accepting refugees on humanitarian grounds or to apply Military Government Law No. 161 on border control, which provided for a complete ban on civilian border crossings, including the movement of goods or property (Law № 161, 1944, p. 30).

Soon, on December 21, 1945, the issue of the influx of Polish Jews into the American occupation zone was discussed during a special meeting at the State Department (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 123–124). George Warren suggested that the military command would not be able to handle the influx of refugees and that it should be halted. Conversely, John Hickerson, Head of the European Affairs Division, pointed at the presence of anti-Semitic sentiments among the Poles and the government weakness, which was unable to control its borders. Deputy Secretary of State Dean Acheson warned against adopting inconsistent decisions that would contradict the presidential course on refugees. It was decided that the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department would receive temporary approval to continue this “humanitarian action” until the end of the year, with a final decision to be developed after direct consultations with the White House (Kochavi, 2001, p. 137).

Meanwhile, the U.S. Secretary of War Robert Porter Patterson expressed the view that providing food and shelter for refugees was insufficient to meet their needs. He noted that the department consistently adhered to the policy of transferring DP camps to international organizations. Consequently, Patterson advocated for the U.S. government to establish a

civilian agency, similar to the War Refugee Board (WRB), to manage the growing number of German and Jewish refugees in Europe (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 116–118).

Secretary of State James Byrnes, citing refugee testimonies, considered pogroms the primary reason for the migration of Polish Jews. He opposed their return to Poland and proposed developing a plan for further migration to other countries (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 128). Byrnes also supported the War Department's proposal to create a dedicated governmental or international body to oversee DPs in Europe. He emphasized that the U.S. would continue providing asylum to all individuals seeking it in territories under American administration.

However, E. Dubrow, Head of the State Department's Polish Section, believed that the migration movement was orchestrated by Zionists and should therefore be stopped (Kochavi, 2001, p. 137). In a private conversation in early November of 1945, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, the Second Deputy Chairman of the Provisional Government of National Unity, informed Dubrow that there were no significant pogroms within the territory of the Polish Republic (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 119–121). Mikołajczyk added that anti-government elements, which had become active following the inclusion of Jewish ministers in the transitional government, were behind the pogroms. Referring to Emil Sommerstein, Chairman of the Central Committee of Polish Jews, Mikołajczyk stated that the Jews did not want to remain in the new Poland due to the loss of their businesses and property, financial ruin, and physical annihilation during the war. Ultimately, the Polish government allowed the Jews, unlike other citizens, to leave the country (Friedla, 2021, p. 276).

On December 20, 1945, Dubrow, in a letter to U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Dean Acheson, speculated that the ultimate goal of the migration effort was to maximize the Jewish population in Palestine, potentially exacerbating the Arab-Jewish tensions in the Middle East and complicating U.S.-British relations (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 121). He advocated for negotiations within a month with government representatives of eastern neighbouring countries to the American occupation zone – namely, the USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia – to halt the mass influx of the Jews. Dubrow believed that refugees should remain in the American zone only temporarily, with the ultimate aim of returning them to their countries of origin.

The U.S. ambassador to Warsaw, Arthur Bliss Lane, shared a similar view. Vice President of the National Council of Poland, Stanisław Szwalbe, told Lane that the scale of the pogroms was exaggerated. The Polish politician suspected that the influx of the Jews into the American zone was part of an effort by the Jewish organizations to pressure the American and British governments into opening access to Palestine (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 162–163). In early January of 1946, Ambassador Lane telegraphed Washington, indicating that reports of harsh treatment of the Jews were exaggerated significantly. He found no evidence of mass persecution of the Jews in postwar Poland and noted that anti-Semitic sentiments were publicly condemned by the Polish Prime Minister Edward Osóbka-Morawski (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, img. 6–8). However, Lane believed that changes in Poland's borders were a significant factor in accelerating Jewish migration, as many Jews came from territories east of the Curzon Line, which Poland had ceded to the USSR in agreements of July 27, 1944, and August 16, 1945 (*Dziennik Ustaw*, 1947, 35, poz. 167). Psychological factors also played a role, as Poland remained for many Jews a symbol of the Holocaust and the site of mass exterminations during the German occupation.

In addition, the ambassador noted that Jewish political and civic organizations, including the Zionist movement Poale Zion, parts of the Jewish Party of Poland, and the Central Jewish

Committee, supported mass emigration from Poland. These organizations assured migrants of a better future outside Poland. The British Communist MP Phil Piratin, after a two-day visit to Poland, reported to the ambassador that he observed no evidence of widespread anti-Semitism or violence. However, Piratin acknowledged the organized nature of the migration, attributing it to economic and psychological factors (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, img. 20–21).

Another proponent of the theory of an organized migration movement was Frederick Morgan, the British Lieutenant General and head of UNRRA operations in Germany. On January 2, 1946, he stated at a press conference in Frankfurt that the Jewish influx from Poland showed signs of coordination by a secret, unidentified structure providing migrants with food and money (*The Evening Star*, 1946, № 37138, Jan. 8, p. 4). Morgan's views were echoed by George Meader, an advisor to the U.S. Senate Immigration Committee, who, after examining the status of European DPs in 1946, concluded that the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) was involved in facilitating the mass exodus of the Jews from Poland and Czechoslovakia. However, General McNarney dismissed this scenario, asserting that the JDC only provided transportation to Palestine and that migration was driven by internal tensions in these countries (*The Evening Star*, 1946, № 37467, Dec. 3, p. 2).

Earlier in January of 1946, at Morgan's request, the U.S. counterintelligence conducted an investigation to determine whether the migration was organized, identify routes and documents used by illegals, and uncover the motives for migration. A Polish Jewish agent, 44-year-old Shmuel Nicinski from Zloczew near Lodz, was chosen for the operation. Nicinski travelled from Poland to Berlin's camps in the Soviet zone. According to the agent, the primary causes of the Jewish exodus were pogroms in Kraków and Bolesławiec carried out by Polish nationalists, economic boycotts of the Jews by local populations in towns, threats of property nationalization by the pro-communist government, the presence of relatives abroad, and fear of Russian pogrom traditions. Nicinski reported that refugees crossed borders using public transport with old German documents and that Zionist organizations played no significant role in the migration (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 109–115).

Similarly, the capabilities of the U.S. intelligence services were utilized to verify reports from the U.S. ambassador in Warsaw. Counterintelligence officers from the Berlin Regional Office of the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) under USFET conducted inspections and interviews with refugees, UNRRA officers, representatives of the JDC, and Berlin magistrates in two DP camps in Berlin. The interlocutors blamed the violence on supporters of the National Democratic Party ("Endecja"), which aimed at creating "Poland for the Poles". Agent Jack Eisenberg found no signs of an organized migration movement or involvement of any structure in encouraging Jewish exodus from Poland and denied the presence of the "Soviet trace" (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 35–37).

At the same time, Alfred Lovell, the third secretary of the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, wrote in March of 1946 about the de facto facilitation by the Warsaw authorities of Jewish emigration from Poland, which, according to the diplomat, was part of a policy aimed at creating a mono-ethnic state (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 222–227). Lovell noted that in addition to the Jewish associations, migration was facilitated by corrupt UNRRA employees and Soviet soldiers, who allowed the Jews to cross the border for a bottle of vodka or "sold" a spot on a military truck from Łódź to Berlin for 10,000 zlotys. While acknowledging the presence of anti-Semitic sentiments in contemporary Poland, he did not consider them decisive. Instead, the Jews were compelled to leave the country due to disillusionment with Poland's future and fear of the communist regime.

The diplomat's observations were corroborated by military intelligence. On April 3, 1946, officers of the U.S. Strategic Services Division reported to James William Riddleberger, head of the State Department's Central European Affairs Division, that the mass departure of the Jews to the West involved bribery, with average amounts reaching 900 Polish zlotys (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 62, imgs. 1–2). Intelligence also indicated that the migration was supported by Zionist organizations, certain UNRRA members, the Polish Red Cross, and even members of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Illegal migrants entered the American zone through two primary routes: the first via the Czech town of Zelená Ruda to Nuremberg and the second from Western Poland, passing through the Soviet-occupied zone and the Thuringian forests into the West.

Edwin Hartrich, Frankfurt correspondent for the "Herald Tribune", reported on the infiltration of Soviet agents alongside the Polish Jews and claimed Moscow's support for the movement. However, the U.S. Consul General in Berlin, Maurice Eltaffer, in March of 1947, disagreed with Hartrich's conclusions regarding the Soviet orchestration of the migration, though he acknowledged the presence of the Soviet agents and a high level of organization within the movement (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 68, imgs. 8–12).

Conversely, representatives of the Jewish organizations entirely denied the organized nature of illegal migration from Poland. For instance, Isaac Dijour, head of the German branch of the Society for Jewish Immigrant Aid, after interviewing dozens of the Polish refugees in the American sector of Berlin in late 1945, attributed the mass influx to ethnic persecution by the Polish population and the unwillingness of Jews from annexed territories to become Soviet citizens (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, img. 166). Meanwhile, on December 13, 1945, members of the Committee for Jewish National Liberation addressed the U.S. Secretary of War, identifying mass killings and pogroms as the root causes of the Polish Jewish migration and advocating for the "opening" of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, img. 5).

It is worth noting that reports of Polish anti-Semitism towards the Jews emerged even before the onset of mass migration. In August of 1945, representatives of the World Jewish Congress informed Robert Murphy, Political Adviser in Germany, of persistent anti-Semitic and anti-Soviet sentiments among Polish refugees in displaced people camps in Sweden (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 59, imgs. 47–48). By December of 1945, during the peak of migration, David Guzik, director of JDC operations in Poland, asserted that postwar Poland was experiencing "terror and coercion forcing the Jews to leave the country" (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, imgs. 162–163). His claims were corroborated by five former Polish officers of Jewish descent who fled to the West in early 1946. These individuals cited threats, intimidation, blackmail, and murders by the Poles after the return of the Jews as the primary causes of mass flight, coupled with government inaction (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 229–233). Refugees reported that the main perpetrators of pogroms were underground nationalist organizations (the Home Army and National Armed Forces) and that the ideologies of anti-Semitism were propagated by Roman Dmowski, Kazimierz Kowalski, and members of the London exile government.

On January 21, 1946, Rabbi Solomon Wohlgelemler informed the U.S. chargé d'affaires in Copenhagen that the cause of the mass exodus was persistent anti-Semitic attitudes among the local population, further inflamed during the war by the Nazi propaganda (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 146–149). Similarly, Philip Bernstein, Advisor on Jewish Affairs to the EAC, who visited Poland from July 23–30, 1946, reported to General Dwight D. Eisenhower

that Poland was a land with centuries-old traditions of anti-Semitism, where the Jews were often labeled as “Christ-killers” (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 64, 1946, imgs. 14–23).

Bernstein identified civil conflict, economic collapse, and a societal approval of postwar violence against the Jews, such as the Kielce pogrom on July 4, 1946 (in which 41 Jews were killed and 60 injured), as primary factors driving migration. He also recommended accelerating DP repatriation to make room for incoming Jewish refugees.

Meanwhile, Jacob Pat, Executive Secretary of the Jewish Labour Committee, linked the migration movement to political realities and argued that the Jews, given the opportunity to leave the USSR, were fleeing communism. He also highlighted the Polish government’s nationalization of trade, which undermined the economic foundation for local Jewish communities (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 20–21).

The persistence of large-scale migration necessitated a definitive U.S. policy response. In February of 1946, at meetings of the Anglo-American Palestine Commission, the U.S. representatives B. Crum and R. Grossman declared that borders would remain open to protect Jewish lives. Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower and John H. Hilldring expressed support for continuing to accept refugees under their full responsibility, a policy soon termed “Eisenhower’s program”. On March 21, 1946, American occupation commanders Generals Joseph McNarney and Mark W. Clark received orders from the State and War Departments not to close the borders (Kochavi, 2001, p. 138).

Simultaneously, G. Emerson, Director of the IRO, urged the Polish government to combat anti-Semitism, which he deemed the primary cause of migration through Czechoslovakia to American occupation zones in Germany and Austria (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, imgs. 106–108). However, the IRO was not prepared to assume responsibility for these migrants (Huhn, 2023, p. 399). In a memorandum dated April 23, 1946, Emerson proposed solutions such as repatriation to Poland (if conditions improved), transoceanic migration to Canada, Australia, and South America, or creating large group settlements in Palestine (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 61, imgs. 193–207).

By 1947, reports from the Joint annual review highlighted improvements in the situation of Polish Jews, including stabilization of migration, a willingness among the Jews to remain in the country, and the establishment of a government office – the Commissioner for the Rehabilitation of Polish Jews (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 69, imgs. 89–99). However, the U.S. vigilance regarding Polish Jewish migration remained high. In August of 1946, the State Department requested updates from the U.S. embassies in Warsaw and Vienna. Ambassador John Erhardt in Vienna reported no significant increase in anti-Semitic sentiment due to the influx of the Polish Jewish refugees, noting that most migrants used Austria as a transit point to Palestine (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 64, img. 4). The majority of migrants used Austria as a bridge for further movement to Palestine. Meanwhile, Arthur Lane noted that as of September 30, 1946, approximately 100,000 Jews remained in Poland. At the same time, he believed that the mass influx was not yet over, as a significant portion of the Polish Jews had concentrated along the western border – 62,000 individuals (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 64, imgs. 53–54).

In the summer of 1946, General D. McNarney proposed to the U.S. State Department to close the borders to Jewish infiltrators starting September 1, 1946. However, he soon abandoned this initiative (Hilton, 2001, pp. 333–334). On April 21, 1947 the U.S. War Department issued an order to halt the reception and maintenance of individuals in camps who had arrived in the occupation zones after the publication of the document (Kochavi,

2001. p. 143). In practice, this decision was scarcely implemented, as the border remained open, and the Joint Distribution Committee took over the funding for new refugees. This allowed for the support of 70,000 individuals over the next two years. Overall, between 1946 and 1950, the Joint provided Jewish displaced people with 79 million pounds of food and 10 million pounds of clothing (Sapir, 1949, p. 2).

It is worth noting that several American public organizations, such as the American Federation of Polish Jews, the Central Committee of the Jewish Bund in Poland, and the Jewish Labor Committee, launched a campaign to support Jewish refugees from Poland and called for the allocation of \$100 million from the U.S. federal budget (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, imgs. 32–33). At the same time, FBI informants reported that the American Association of Polish Jews, which urged the President and Congress to accept 100,000 Jews instead of German scientists, had pro-communist tendencies (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 68, imgs. 79–86). According to the informant, the organization's leaders echoed statements by Soviet representatives at the United Nations regarding the need for the forced repatriation of most displaced persons to the East. Additionally, according to FBI data, the leaders of the Jewish organization Yidishe Kolonization Orbayter (ICOR) maintained close ties with the Soviet embassy, organizing joint events, raising funds to aid Jewish children in the USSR, and disseminating materials opposing the “defamation” of Soviet policies by the American media (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 58, imgs. 90–96).

The influx of Polish Jews began to stabilize after the countries of the Eastern Bloc, in response to the mass westward migration, implemented border closures. As a result of migration from Poland and Czechoslovakia, the number of Jews in the western sectors of Germany reached 69,739 by February of 1946 (46,084 of them in the American zone). By June 1946, this number had increased to 105,927 (71,963 in the American zone). In addition to the 86,000 Jewish migrants who entered Germany illegally, 8,000 individuals reached Austria, and 16,000 moved to Italy (Holmgren, 2020, p. 239). Following the stabilization of migration flows, by September 30, 1947, the total number of Jewish refugees and displaced people (DPs) in Germany, Austria, and Italy amounted to 247,000, including 157,000 in the American zone of Germany and 20,000 in Austria. Notably, 167,522 Jews in these three countries were receiving assistance from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), 122,313 of whom were of Polish origin (*PCIRO News Bulletin*, 1947, № 6, p. 3).

A significant development in improving conditions for the Jews in DP camps was the establishment of a specialized position within the U.S. military. On August 22, 1945, General Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Chaplain Lieutenant Colonel Judah Nadich as the first Advisor on Jewish Affairs to the U.S. military command in Germany (Nadich, 1953, p. 16). In October of 1945, he was succeeded by Simon H. Rifkind, a former New York judge and vice president of the New York City Board of Higher Education. Rifkind submitted a detailed report on his activities in April of 1946, a copy of which was presented to President Harry S. Truman (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 62, imgs. 7–14). He noted that the majority of Jewish DPs in the American zone originated from Poland and the Baltic states. To improve the conditions of camp residents, Rifkind recommended increasing caloric food intake, expanding religious, educational, and vocational programs, and facilitating access to the German labour market. Moreover, he emphasized that addressing the issue of Jewish DPs could not be fully achieved without resolving the question of Palestine's future.

During his tenure, Rifkind encountered a controversial incident in the American occupation zone. On March 29, 1946, a German police raid in Jewish DP camps aimed

at combating illegal trade triggered a brief uprising that resulted in the death of one camp resident. Congressman Emanuel Celler demanded sanctions against the German police, accusing them of using Nazi-era methods. In response, on March 30, 1946, General Joseph T. McNarney issued an order barring German police from entering Jewish camps and stipulating that searches and arrests would fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. occupation authorities (*The Sunday Star*, 1946, № 2139 (37220), March 31, p. 6).

In May of 1946, Rifkind was succeeded by Rabbi Philip Bernstein, a spiritual leader of the Reform synagogue Brit Kodesh in Rochester, New York, and the executive director of the Committee on Religious Activities in the Armed Forces and Navy of the National Jewish Welfare Board. In February 1947 report, Bernstein noted that the Jewish population in the American zone of Germany had reached 155,000, mainly due to new arrivals (Genizi, 1994, p. 139). From August 1947 to January 1948, Louis E. Levinthal, Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice and former president of the Zionist Organization of America, held the position.

On January 20, 1948, Professor William Haber of the University of Michigan assumed the role of Advisor on Jewish Affairs. In his report, Haber noted that by early 1948, there were 130,000 Jewish DPs in the American zone of Germany and 22,000 in Austria. By October 1948, 22,000 DPs had left the American zones, motivated in large part by the proclamation of Israel's independence. However, Haber recommended relaxing the U.S. immigration legislation to facilitate the closure of all Jewish DP camps by 1950. He also opposed the potential transfer of camp administration to German authorities (NARA, RG 59, S. IRO and DPC, I. DPC, B. 8, 1948, n/a).

On October 20, 1948, Haber was succeeded by Harry Greenstein, who had previously managed UNRRA programs in Greece, Albania, and Yugoslavia. Greenstein's final report highlighted significant progress in resolving the Jewish DP issue, attributing it to the establishment of the State of Israel and the passage of the Displaced Persons Act. Between January 1 and October 15, 1949, 54,700 individuals were resettled from the American zone in Germany and 12,500 from the Austrian zone. By then, only 43,000 Jewish DPs remained in both American zones (NARA, RG 59, S. IRO and DPC, I. DPC, B. 2, 1949, n/a). Additionally, efforts to consolidate DP camps succeeded in reducing their number in the American zone of Germany from 48 to 10, and in Austria from 13 to 7. Another notable achievement included lifting restrictions on the export of personal property by camp residents and adopting measures for future financial compensation for Nazi victims. In October of 1949, Major Abraham Hyman became the last Advisor on Jewish Affairs, with the position abolished on December 31, 1949.

In Austria, the U.S. occupation authorities adopted a slightly different approach. Following a meeting with Vienna's Jewish community leaders Adolf David Brill and Bernhard Breiver, Four-Star General Mark W. Clark established a special committee on December 7, 1945, led by Brigadier General Lester Flory (NARA, RG 59, M 1284, R. 60, imgs. 129–131). This committee, comprising the U.S. military officers in Austria and U.S. embassy staff, focused on improving living conditions and food supplies for Jews in DP camps.

Conclusions. The illegal migration of Jewish refugees from Poland to the American occupation zone in Europe in 1945 – 1948 represents a multifaceted phenomenon reflecting the complexity of the post-war migration crisis. Key drivers of this movement included anti-Semitism, economic instability, and fear of the communist regime. Despite Allied efforts to regulate population transfers, many migrants exploited administrative loopholes to cross borders. American authorities took specific steps to address the influx, such as

establishing separate camps for migrants, engaging in diplomatic negotiations with other occupying powers, and temporarily tolerating illegal migration on humanitarian grounds. At the same time, the broader political implications of this migration influenced the U.S. policy on Palestine, where the refugee crisis became a significant factor in discussions about the establishment of the Jewish state. This migration flow not only emphasized the urgency of resolving the Palestinian question but also highlighted the role of displaced people as a catalyst for international policy shifts. Overall, this study makes a substantial contribution to understanding the history of post-war migration processes, the political strategies accompanying them, and their lasting impact on the geopolitical landscape.

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