

The issue of the transfer of financial resources for Polish Jews – war refugees in Shanghai. The activity of the Polish government-in-exile

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Abstract

In the autumn of 1941, the Polish diplomatic post in Japan was liquidated. Polish ambassador Tadeusz Romer was evacuated along with the embassy's staff to Shanghai, where he received diplomatic status for the purpose of a special mission. Along with Romer, a group of Polish-Jewish refugees arrived in the Japanese-occupied city, seeking refuge after they had fled Poland through Wilno and the Soviet Union. They joined the Polish residents who had settled in Shanghai before the war. The community under Romer's protection numbered 975 people. His service, along with the support provided by the Polish government-in-exile, enabled the organization of the daily lives of the refugees, whose situation was vastly different from that of other foreigners in the city – the so-called "stateless refugees." This aid involved the organization of the financial resources necessary for funding canteens, committees representing various interests of the refugees, schools and printing offices. Romer's efforts secured the transfer of funds from London to Shanghai through diplomatic posts in Bern and Kuybyshev, with the help of the Red Cross. The present article aims to examine the methods used for acquiring the means for the daily existence of the Polish community in Shanghai in the years 1941–1945.

Introduction

When the Nazi German occupation of Poland began in 1939, a number of Polish citizens (some of Jewish descent) began their attempts to evacuate – mainly through Wilno, which belonged to the Republic of Poland before the war. Following the Soviet Union's attack, the city and the entire region of Wilno were handed over to the Lithuanians, who opened up their borders for Polish refugees and the Jews among them.

The progress of the German operations in Eastern Europe made it difficult and at times even impossible to flee. When an opportunity to obtain transit visas to Japan arose, many people tried to procure such documents at the Japanese consulate in Kaunas. Thanks to the cooperation between Dutch consul Jan Zwartendijk, Japanese consul Sugihara Chiune and the Polish intelligence, the refugees were able to commence evacuation to East Asia. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union succeeded in taking over the entire territory of Lithuania. Those remaining within this territory were forced to accept Soviet citizenship, which precluded their chance of leaving for the United States, Canada or Latin America. A growing number of people were trying to obtain tickets for the Trans-Siberian Railway (Korespondencja T. Romera „W sprawie uchodźców na Dalekim Wschodzie”, 6 lutego 1941, 1941).

The first Polish Jews landed in Japanese harbors in 1940. In 1941, as many as 2,185 Polish refugees (97% of them Jewish) reached Japan through the Soviet Union. For the duration of their stay in Japan, they remained under the care of the Polish embassy in Tokyo, which was headed by Tadeusz Romer. He was in charge of the issuance of passports and he organized the daily lives of the refugees. Most of them arrived in Japan with certificates issued by the British consulate in Kaunas which had taken over the responsibilities of the local Polish diplomatic post after its liquidation. The Polish citizens could acquire only transit visas to Japan, and the main destinations for further evacuation from Japan were Canada, the United States, Palestine and Australia. While some refugees had obtained destination visas even before they got to Japan, most of them sought Tadeusz Romer's help in order to continue their journey (Polish Refugees in Shanghai, 18 March 1941, 1941).

Thanks to his official and personal contacts and connections, the ambassador acquired destination visas to the nations of Poland's wartime allies. Good relations with the Japanese helped him convince the Japanese government to extend the validity of the short-term visas for the duration of the entire stay of the Polish citizens in the country.

After the Polish diplomatic post in Tokyo closed down in October 1941, its staff was moved to Japanese-occupied Shanghai, where ambassador Romer and *chargé d'affaires* Stanisław de Rosset began to organize the daily lives of the Polish citizens and to provide them with further visas.

The situation changed dramatically after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. The possibilities to leave the city became

limited and the position of the refugees worsened. The diplomatic post in Shanghai closed down, while the staff and a number of refugees were evacuated to Lourenço Marques (now Maputo, capital of Mozambique) in the summer of 1942. However, those who were unable to leave Asia – because of the military operations which prevented their evacuation or due to the lack of visas – were not left unattended. Even though Tadeusz Romer had just taken up the post in the Polish embassy in Kuybyshev, which proved to be the most difficult out of all his missions, he still managed to pass on the information concerning the situation of Jewish war refugees in Shanghai to the Polish government-in-exile. After his mission in the USSR ended, he continued to oversee their situation from London, despite his numerous obligations as the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Those who stayed in Shanghai constituted a distinct group among Jewish refugees, because they held Polish passports confirming their citizenship and received continuous support from the Polish government-in-exile and its representatives. In 1943, together with other Jews who had been stripped of their citizenship (Austrian or German), they were placed in a designated area of the Hongkew district of Shanghai, also known as the “Shanghai ghetto.” The literature concerning this period of time tends to present these people simply as Jewish refugees and makes no mention of their connection to Poland. One of the reasons behind this is that they had been forced to settle in a district for stateless refugees, despite their objections. It is important to note, however, that as a result of the earlier efforts of the Polish diplomats to enable them to travel to other destination countries, this group numbering a little under 1,000 Polish citizens (which is not many, in comparison with the refugees from Austria or Germany) functioned in the “Shanghai ghetto” with the help provided not only by Jewish organizations, but also by the Polish authorities. Describing this group simply as Jewish refugees in general in the academic and popularized narratives leads to a disregard of the role played by the Polish government in supporting those of their citizens who found themselves in the Far East, having fled from the German occupier.

The main objective of the present article is to present the significance of the Polish diplomatic post in Bern, Switzerland, which functioned as an important intermediary between the community in Shanghai and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London. Special focus will be placed on its role in the transfer of money and information concerning the situation of the refugees after the evacuation of diplomats from Shanghai. Consequently, the analysis will be based on the following research questions: in what manner did the Polish Jews in Shanghai benefit from the help (mediation) of the Polish embassy in Bern? What was the nature of the relationship between this diplomatic post and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint), and what was the course of the long-distance cooperation between these institutions?

Long before the Second World War, Shanghai was considered a safe haven – mainly for the Russians who arrived there after the revolution of 1917, but also for the citizens of England and Germany (Henriot, Wen-Hsin Yeh, 2004, p. 261). Jews were especially interested in extraterritorial concessions. The Polish consulate in Shanghai, established in as early as 1919, was transformed into a legation in 1928. From 1939 onwards, it was headed by *chargé d'affaires* Stanisław de Rosset.

During the Second World War, the Polish diplomatic post in Shanghai arranged for radio programs to be broadcast via the local English-language radio station which constituted the only source of information for the masses of Polish refugees in Siberia and Turkmenistan (Korespondencja między Ministerstwem Spraw Zagranicznych, 26 listopada 1940 roku, 1940, p. 1). Despite carrying out such an important mission, it suffered from a deficit of personnel and financial resources (Polish Refugees in Shanghai, 18 March 1941, 1941).

Having left the post in Tokyo, Tadeusz Romer was transferred to the Shanghai consulate in October 1941. Together with Stanisław de Rosset he took the refugees under protection. They supervised the functioning of several different organizations which aimed to improve the daily lives of the refugees. On 11 November 1941, they held the first congress of the Advisory Commission for the War Refugees in Shanghai. The Commission consisted of 15 delegates of various professional, social and political groups, who represented all Polish war refugees in the city. The rabbinical students were the only group without a representation in the Commission, as their interests were represented by other delegates. The Polish Committee for War Refugees in Shanghai (Polrelief) was in charge of issues concerning immigration. Responsible for financial matters was the Eastjewcom – Committee for Assistance of Jewish Refugees from Eastern Europe, which cooperated with the Committee for Assistance of European Jewish Refugees in Shanghai, also known as the Speelman Committee, and with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Thanks to this system, the Polish community had access to a mutual aid fund, three kitchens for conservative Jews, schools, printing offices, and the educational center of the Society for Promotion of Industrial, Artisanal and Agricultural Work among the Jews in Poland (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, pp. 3–5).

According to the statistics provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the number of Polish refugees in Shanghai was 975. This figure can be further divided into smaller groups on the basis of various categories such as age, social background, political affiliation, etc. As Polish citizens, they received continuous support from London (Raport na temat okoliczności

tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943). As was pointed out earlier, Tadeusz Romer greatly attributed to the establishment of a system which provided them with security and help in their daily lives even after the diplomats had left Shanghai. According to the consular records, the population of Shanghai also included 230 Polish citizens who had arrived there before the outbreak of the Pacific War, in the years 1934–1941, and who were referred to as “residents” in diplomatic documents.

Groups of refugees and residents differed with regards to what they were planning to do after the war. While some residents had no intention of leaving the city in which they were living and, for instance, ran businesses, the majority of refugees wished to continue their journey, but were unable to do so (Raport dla Konsulatu Generalnego Japonii, 28 maja 1942 roku, 1942, pp. 2–3). On account of these differences, two separate organizations were established for the purpose of representing the disparate interests of both groups: the Union of Residents and the Polish Aid Society, concerned with the matters of refugees (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, pp. 4–5; Raport dla Konsulatu Generalnego Japonii, 28 maja 1942 roku, 1942, pp. 2–3).

Some destination visa holders had no possibility or desire to make use of their documents. It is estimated that more than 180 people were not interested in using their visas. If they had, the general number of refugees in Shanghai would have been as much as 20% lower. Reluctance to leave was usually dictated by a decision of a given religious group. Many rabbis declared:

travels intended for individuals or even small groups, as opposed to all members of a given school, as detrimental to their participants, resulting in separation from the school and a decrease the number of students, posing danger to the school’s existence (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, p. 2).

The community of Polish Jews was deeply divided, not only on account of different moments of arrival in Shanghai and disparate ideas about the temporary or permanent character of their stay in the city, but also due to dissimilar backgrounds. 42% were rabbis or students of rabbinical schools. For the purpose of the present paper, the other 58% will be described as a “secular group.” The rabbinical community consisted of six schools. The majority of students used to belong to the yeshiva in Mir (now Belarus). This group aimed to prevent the separation which could occur if some of its members were to be evacuated.

With regards to visas, Tadeusz Romer tried to develop cooperation with the United States and Jewish organizations – mainly the Joint, as can be seen in his letters from October and November 1941 (Korespondencja Tadeusza Romera, 31 października 1941 roku, 5 listopada 1941 roku, 1941).

The report on the creation of evacuation lists, dated December 1943, clearly shows that most cases of unused visas and cancelled journeys can be attributed to unattainable conditions imposed on the Polish government by religious organizations. The issue of obtaining visas to other countries was further complicated by the problems with finding jobs for the rabbis, who could not labor physically and were consequently unable to obtain visas of such category.

Another reason why the evacuation of rabbis turned out to be so difficult was that they agreed to depart only on the condition that they would be promised a post in the destination country that was equally prestigious as the one they used to hold in prewar Poland (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, p. 3) The situation of rabbis and their students was described in numerous documents published both in London and Shanghai, which drew the attention of international Jewish organizations, especially in the United States. These organizations cooperated with the Polish government-in-exile, supervising the transfer of money and information. One of the most explicit examples of special treatment of the rabbinical group was the telegram that Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski sent to the Union of Rabbis in the United States and Canada in 1942, promising that the Polish government would aid the community in Shanghai. He also stressed that as the result of the help provided by the government-in-exile, the Polish-Jewish citizens had the right to leave the country (Telegram Premiera W. Sikorskiego, 31 października 1942 roku, 1942).

In March 1941, before the Polish diplomatic post in Tokyo closed down, Romer estimated that only 100 refugees in Shanghai did not require financial support (Polish Refugees in Shanghai, 18 March 1941, 1941, p. 2). On many occasions he also emphasized that stateless refugees were living in tragic conditions. The main problems included the growing prices of coal and food – especially flour, vegetables, bread, rice, oils and sugar – as well as vitamin deficiency and the lack of heating in apartments. The situation worsened in 1942, when suicide rates among the refugees increased and the financial support was not sufficient to secure one meal a day (Polish Refugees in Shanghai, 18 March 1941, 1941, p. 5). The issue of financial support became crucial for ensuring prosperity and not infrequently the survival of the Polish refugees. Tadeusz Romer focused on organizing the transfer of funds, working both in Shanghai – for instance, by devising the system of prioritizing certain groups – and on an international level, by exerting diplomatic pressure on the Polish government and Jewish organizations.

In 1943 all foreigners of Jewish descent were ordered to move to the so-called Shanghai ghetto in the Hongkew district of the city (Proclamation, 1943, p. 3), which resulted in more than 25,000 people being settled into a space of 1.6 square kilometers, often with no possibility of finding employment (Barbasiewicz, 2013; Durka, 2013; Pałasz-Rutkowska, Romer, 2009; Martane, 2005; Henriot, Wen-Hsin Yeh, 2004; Heppner, 1995). Due

to a difficult financial situation, many of them suffered from hunger and illnesses (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, p. 4). The disparity between stateless refugees and Polish citizens was growing. The Polish community expressed discontent regarding the relocation, because they did not want to join the masses of stateless refugees (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, p. 4). Tadeusz Romer also emphasized the distinct character of the group in his reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London by maintaining that:

only making a clear distinction between the Polish citizens who receive support from their own government and have the right to evacuate in the process of exchange, and other victims of war in Shanghai (mostly German and Austrian Jews) can help us treat them differently and save them from extermination (Raport na temat okoliczności tworzenia list ewakuacyjnych, 9 grudnia 1943 roku, 1943, pp. 1–2).

Supporting the Polish community in Shanghai – cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Polish missions in Switzerland and the USSR, and the Joint

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (abbreviated to the Joint) provided support to Jews during their stay in Japan and Shanghai. Tadeusz Romer never hid the fact that he made use of the funds provided by the Jewish organization. It was necessary, because there was not enough money even for the functioning of the Polish diplomatic posts. Romer's tasks during his stay in the Far East included such consular activities as acquiring passports and visas, and drawing up evacuation lists (available only to those holding citizenship). He also devoted a considerable amount of time to securing means of survival for the Polish citizens.

The funding did not cease after the attack on Pearl Harbor, but its character changed due to the limitations imposed by the Japanese occupier. The representatives of the Joint in Shanghai started cooperating with local businessmen and offering them loans in profitable currency, with a tacit approval of the local Japanese authorities. Within six months from the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Joint donated 180,000 dollars to support the refugees in Shanghai and 20% of this sum was allocated for the needs of the Polish community (On the issue of the financial support, 31 July 1942, 1942, p. 3). The transfer of funds was blocked in April 1942, when the American laws of armed conflict forced the representatives of the Joint to withdraw from the area.

In search of a safe method of transferring funds, Tadeusz Romer asked the representatives of the International Red Cross in Switzerland for

help on 9 August 1942. London passed on the information about “970 Polish Jews” who were under the care of the Joint, and inquired as to the possibility of transferring money from Geneva to Shanghai.¹ During the Second World War, the Polish Red Cross was represented by Prince Stanisław Albrecht Radziwiłł who after the invasion of Poland left the country and was appointed *chargé d'affaires* of the Polish government at the League of Nations in Geneva by Prime Minister Sikorski. He cooperated with the International Red Cross and participated in aiding the Poles in the territory of the General Government.² In 1942 he attributed to the stabilization of the transfer of funds from the diplomatic mission in Bern to Shanghai by making the Red Cross the main organization assisting in the transfer of money designated for the Polish community. In December 1943, this became the only way of sending money to the refugees (Telegram z Ambasadą RP w Bernie, 31 lipca 1942 roku, 1942).

Tadeusz Romer was working on securing continuous financial support for the Polish-Jewish community by cooperating with individuals and organizations. In the monthly financial report of 24 August 1942, he wrote that more than 330,000 Shanghai dollars were donated to the Polish Aid Society via the mission in Bern and the International Red Cross. The attachment submitted to the report authored by Aleksander Rodkin, representative of the Eastjewcom, included the rules of prioritizing financial distribution. The highest priority was assigned to special, individual cases of poverty and illness. People in need of such help received 10,000 Shanghai dollars from a mutual aid fund consisting of membership donations. The second priority was assigned to maintaining public kitchens for rabbis and students of the Mir, Lubawicz and Lublin rabbinical schools (*yeshivas*), members of the Bund and the so-called secular group. The Polish Aid Society agreed to co-fund each meal distributed by these institutions. The third category consisted of more than 370 people who did not use public canteens. The fourth concerned the issue of changing apartments and moving house due to relocations, the fifth – preparations in case of an evacuation, the sixth – so-called constructive mission, i.e. creating vocational schools and places of employment, the seventh – increasing income support in case of a financial surplus, the eighth – paying the administrative cost of using an office available for the needs of all refugee organizations, maintaining their correspondence and so on (Dodatek do raportu

1 “970 Polish-Jewish refugees in Shanghai. The aid is basically provided by the Joint. Please send information on the methods of transferring money from Geneva to Shanghai” (Telegram do Ambasady RP w Bernie, 9 sierpnia 1942 roku, 1942).

2 In 1940, the local police units discovered Albrecht Radziwiłł’s involvement in aiding escapees from transit camps. Consequently, the Polish Consulate-General in Geneva was dissolved, and Prince Radziwiłł continued his diplomatic work in the post in Bern. In 1943 he asked the International Red Cross to investigate the issue of the massacre of Polish officers in Katyn (Durka, 2013, pp. 64–65).

na temat sytuacji finansowej, 31 sierpnia 1942 roku, 1942, pp. 1–3). These categories are presented in the following table:

Table no. 1 Categories of finance distribution (from the highest to the lowest priority) devised on the basis of the attachment to the report on the financial situation of the refugees in Shanghai, dated 31 August 1942

Priority no.	Category of financial distribution (from the highest to the lowest priority)
1.	special cases of extreme poverty and illness – mutual aid fund
2.	public kitchens for about 600 Polish citizens – Eastjewcom
3.	about 370 people who did not use canteens but received income support from the Eastjewcom
4.	help regarding relocation (especially within the Hongkew district and the French Concession)
5.	preparation for evacuation (equipment and travel expenses)
6.	setting up and managing places of employment
7.	increasing income support issued by the Eastjewcom (in case of a surplus)
8.	administrative costs

When the transfers from the Joint ceased, the situation of the refugees began to gradually deteriorate. According to the correspondence from May 1942, at that time Tadeusz Romer took out a series of loans in American dollars from private funds provided by Polish diplomats (Raport dla Konsulatu Generalnego Japonii, 28 maja 1942 roku, 1942, pp. 1–3). After July 1942, loans started losing viability. At the same time, Japan banned transactions in all but Japanese and Chinese currencies. Romer decided to exchange American dollars on the black market (Raport Tadeusza Romera w związku z finansowym wsparciem, 31 sierpnia 1942 roku, 1942, p. 3). In September 1943, he secured the transfer of 1,700,000 Shanghai dollars from the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare of Poland, estimating that this sum would be sufficient to support the entire community for half a year (Raport Tadeusza Romera z Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych, grudzień 1943 roku, 1943). The total sum of money donated by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs alone to the Polish Jews in Shanghai in 1943 was estimated at 250,000 Swiss francs (Raport Tadeusza Romera z Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych, grudzień 1943 roku, 1943).

Thanks to diplomatic pressure used by Tadeusz Romer on the Polish government, the Polish Embassy in Kuybyshev became another important intermediary in the process of transferring money from the Joint to Shanghai. As a result, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare eventually stated that “providing aid to the Polish citizens who remain under Japanese occupation is a duty of the government” (Korespondencja Ministerstwa Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, 24 lutego 1942 roku, 1942). On 26 February 1942, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs turned to the embassy in Washington in

order to realize the transfer of 1,000 pounds from the Joint for the Polish refugees (Telegram szyfrowany do Polmisson Waszyngton, 26 lutego 1942 roku). On 17 March, Tadeusz Romer confirmed the transfer of 4,000 American dollars at the request of the embassy in Kuybyshev, which he then sent to the representatives of the Eastjewcom. This money allowed to provide 850 people with the income support of 140 Shanghai dollars, purchase materials and medications, and cover the cost of medical care (Odpis listu T. Romera, 17 marca 1942 roku, 1942).

The relief provided by the Polish Aid Society was gradually extending also thanks to the support of the Polish mission in Bern, which was important especially due to the ongoing relocation of refugees. The telegram dated 11 August 1943 stated that 440 Polish citizens were transferred to Hongkew and 788 received support from the organizations established by the Polish diplomatic mission (Korespondencja Aleksandra Ładosia, 11 sierpnia 1943 roku). This message was sent from Aleksander Ładoś,³ Polish ambassador to Switzerland, to the government in London.

Members of the Jewish organizations in Shanghai began to support Romer's diplomatic actions in 1942. When the Polish government was attempting to secure Russian and Iraqi transit visas for the Polish citizens in Shanghai, Ignacy Schwarzbart,⁴ a member of the National Council of Poland wrote to the head of the department of refugees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Józef Marlewski, about the necessity to pursue such activities (Pismo Ignacego Schwarzbarta, 10 lutego 1942 roku, 1942). Schwarzbart informed the councilor about the telegram from Abraham Silberschein,⁵ who headed the Relief Committee for the War-Stricken Jewish Population as a representative of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva, stating that it was necessary to take action in order to evacuate Polish Jews from Shanghai.

After the relocation of Jews to Hongkew, many people were no longer able to manage their businesses, so on 24 August 1943 the Polish Aid Society asked for permission to expand its activity to provide aid to 230 residents (Telegram z Ambasady RP w Bernie, 24 sierpnia 1943 roku, 1943). The growing pressure and conflicts between two rivals – the Polish Aid Society and the Union of Residents – eventually led to major discussions in London pertaining to the centralization of aid in Shanghai. The

3 A member of the Bernese group consisting of Polish diplomats and representatives of Jewish organizations, who participated in the operation of issuing Latin American (mainly Paraguayan) passports to Jews who were trying to evacuate from the ghettos.

4 Ignacy Schwarzbart (1888–1961) – an attorney and MP. In the years 1940–1945 he was a member of the National Council of Poland who represented the Jewish population abroad.

5 Adolf Henryk Silberschein (Abraham Silberschein) (1882–1951) – an attorney, Zionist, MP for the 1st term, representing the Bloc of National Minorities. He was a member of the Bernese group.

note concerning the meeting on 26 January 1944 includes the Polish Red Cross' suggestion to dissolve either one of these organizations. Establishing a dominant institution comprised of representatives of the refugees and residents as well as increasing support provided to the rabbinical group was also taken into consideration (Note concerning the issue of the Shanghai help, 26 January 1944, 1944; Telegram z Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych, 19 marca 1944 roku, 1944). The conclusion of the note includes the information that the Ministry of Labor and Welfare of Poland ultimately decided to centralize the provision of help under the Polish Aids Society and establish a new decision-making body – the Committee of the Polish Residents' Association in China (Note on the conference in the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 31 January 1944, 1944).

Conclusion

After the Polish refugees were evacuated from Japan to Shanghai and the diplomatic post in Tokyo closed down in 1941, Tadeusz Romer's task was to organize the functioning of a diverse group of 975 Polish Jews. The present article shows that from the very beginning of his mission he realized that the Polish citizens who had arrived from Siberia were in need of material help. His first actions focused on consular work necessary to ensure security and organize further travel from Japan with the help of transit visas. He also contacted Jewish organizations which provided financial support to the refugees.

From the beginning of his stay in Shanghai, and especially after the outbreak of the Pacific War, Tadeusz Romer understood that soon he was going to have to leave the Far East. In addition to compiling evacuation lists, he devised a system of communication and organized a representation of refugees who would take up some of the diplomatic responsibilities after the Polish personnel left the Shanghai post. In his reports, he estimated that thanks to this system of communication and such organizations as the Eastjewcom and the mutual aid fund, the situation of the recipients of Polish aid was four times better than that of 16,000 stateless refugees in Shanghai (Polish Refugees in Shanghai, 18 March 1941, 1941, p. 4).

The transfer of relief funds was supported by various Jewish organizations – mainly the Joint, which continued cooperation with the Polish diplomat after the attack on Pearl Harbor, but ended it in April 1942. Both before the evacuation of Shanghai in the summer of 1942 and afterwards, Tadeusz Romer acted on an international level, securing the transfer of funds with the help of the Polish mission in Bern, which in 1943 this became the only available method of transferring money to Shanghai. It required permanent cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Red Cross and Jewish organizations, as is evident from the correspondence between Stanisław Albrecht Radziwiłł, Tadeusz Romer and

the representatives of the Polish government-in-exile. Together with the operation of issuing Latin American passports, the activities of the Polish diplomatic post in Switzerland aimed at aiding Jews constitute another piece of evidence proving that the Polish diplomats in Switzerland played a significant role in helping the Polish citizens subjected to suffering due to Nazi German policies.

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