

**Special session of the board of directors of the Jewish Community of Berlin
on 24 August 1933 to ensure kosher food in spite of the ban on shechitah¹**

Minutes, signed by Heinrich Stahl and Dr Breslauer,² of the meeting on 24 August 1933 held in the offices of the Prussian Regional Association of Jewish Communities, Berlin³

Subject to the subsequent approval of the Repr[esentatives'] Ass[embly], it is resolved that a sum of up to RM 5,000 should be made available for testing a shechitah device that conforms equally to the legal regulations and the ritual ones,⁴ plus the costs of a trip to be made by Rabbi Dr Weinberg and the costs of obtaining expert opinions from professors.

The commission, consisting of the four rabbis present and Rabbi Dr *Hoffmann*,⁵ Frankfurt am Main, in consultation with Mr *Schoyer*,⁶ is to be authorized to control these funds.

Starting on 1 November 1933, kashrut⁷ measures in the homes for the elderly and in hospitals are to be organized by dividing them among the institutions or by creating special facilities in the hospitals, in such a way that facilities that comply with the strictest ritual standards are available to all those for whom this is of great importance, along with facilities catering for those who place a greater importance on a more abundant supply of meat.⁸ This decision is not to be implemented if the aforementioned commission of the five rabbis should be in a position to state, by the time specified, that there henceforth exists a shechitah procedure that complies with the legal regulations and may be used at least for the elderly and the sick in accordance with the commission's understanding of the ritual regulations.

1 Archives of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York, at the Jüdisches Museum Berlin, MF 587. This document has been translated from German.

2 Dr Walter Breslauer (1890–1981), lawyer; practised law in Berlin, 1919–1931; administrative director of the Jewish Community of Berlin, 1931–1936; he emigrated via Switzerland to Britain in 1936.

3 Present were (a) Stahl (chairman), Graetz, Dr Sandler for Dr Kollenscher, and also from the board Schoyer (at the start of the meeting), Rosenthal; (b) Dr Breslauer; and (c) as guests, rabbis Dr Freimann, Dr Jacobovits, Dr Unna, Mannheim, Dr Weinberg, Berlin; Dr Moses was absent, excused: *ibid.*

4 On 21 April 1933 the Law on the Slaughter of Animals and the Regulation on the Slaughter of Animals were made public, prohibiting the shechitah method of slaughtering warm-blooded animals according to Jewish law: *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1933, I, pp. 203 and 212. The ritual requirement of shechitah in Judaism involves the slaughtering of animals by a specially trained shochet without stunning the animals first.

5 Jakob Hoffmann, later Jacob Hoffman (1881–1956), rabbi; initially worked in Austria, Moravia, and Bukovina, then from 1922 in Frankfurt am Main; member of the Prussian Regional Association of Jewish Communities; arrested by the Gestapo in 1937 and, as a Hungarian citizen, expelled from Germany. He emigrated to the USA in 1938 and to Israel in 1955.

6 Adolf Schoyer (1872–1961), businessman; co-owner of the Schoyer metal trading company in Berlin; Orthodox representative on the board of the Jewish Community of Berlin, later its deputy chairman, 1931–1938; emigrated to Britain in 1938; returned to Germany in 1945.

7 Religious dietary laws for Jews.

8 Since the ban on shechitah, there had been a shortage of kosher meat in Germany, which could be offset only to a limited extent with imports.