

**On 16 September 1939 the Plenipotentiary for the Four-Year Plan hosts a meeting
in Berlin to discuss the emigration of the Jews and their deployment
as forced labourers¹**

Notes compiled by the Reich Ministry of Finance (Section V/3), Berlin, signature illegible, dated 16 September 1939 (copy)²

Re: emigration of the Jews.

Notes: The above matter was the subject of a meeting attended by representatives of the departments involved, which was hosted by Staatsrat Wohlthat³ in his capacity as representative of Field Marshal Göring.

1. The first item discussed was the organization of labour deployment for able-bodied Jews. The representative of the Chief of the Security Police reported on this subject. He summarized the situation as follows:

According to provisional investigations, it seems likely that approximately 60 per cent of the Jews cannot be deployed as labour, as they are either under the age of 16 or over the age of 55. Relatively few Jews are currently in employment at all. Estimates indicate that there are still around 50,000 men and 60,000–70,000 women who could be conscripted for work. The total number of Jews still living in the Reich is not yet known. Aside from that, the Führer reserves the right to take a decision on the employment of the Jews. That decision has not yet been made.

2. The political departments argued that further Jewish emigration is desirable, regardless of whether the destination is neutral or hostile countries. At present, Jewish emigrants receive in foreign exchange only 4 per cent of the money provided by them in Reichsmarks, instead of the 6 per cent previously allocated. The Reich Ministry of Economics will obtain a decision on the issue of whether it is still possible to grant the 4 per cent without prejudice to our foreign-exchange holdings.

It is assumed that under the present circumstances, foreign countries will be more willing to assist and support Jewish emigration from Germany. If it is decided that Jewish emigrants should not be allocated any foreign exchange at all, the question arises as to what should happen to their residual assets (after deduction of all charges). Leaving these residual assets untouched, e.g. in blocked accounts, would be problematic, because the Jews might try to gain access to their money from abroad. This being the case, it

1 BArch, R 2/14195, fols. 17–18. This document has been translated from German.

2 The original contains handwritten annotations and underlining. According to the distribution list at the end of the document, copies were sent to 'Sections Uhlich, Prause, Schmidt-Schwarzenberg, Richter'.

3 Helmuth Wohlthat (1893–1982), economist; worked as a businessman, 1920–1933; headed the Reich Office for Foreign Exchange Control in the Reich Economics Ministry from 1934 to 1938; worked in the Prussian Ministry of State and in the office of the Plenipotentiary for the Four-Year Plan, 1938–1945; joined the NSDAP in 1940; commissioner at the Dutch Central Bank, 1940–1941; head of delegation for economic negotiations in Eastern Asia, 1941–1945; cleared by a denazification tribunal, 1948; served thereafter on the supervisory board of various companies.

would be preferable to insist that the Jews hand over their residual assets to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany. The Reich Association is required to fulfil various tasks associated with the Jews, and adequate financing of its work from Jewish resources is in the interest of the Reich, since the responsibility for providing support would ultimately rest with the Reich.

Those present at the meeting also agreed that it would not be appropriate at present for the German government to provide additional support for emigration through the formation of a special trust fund by way of levies on Jewish assets.⁴ This cannot be entertained for reasons of financial and foreign-exchange policy.

For submission by the State Secretary⁵ to the Minister,⁶ for his information and attention.

4 In the negotiations with the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, which had been established in 1938 at the Evian Conference, Wohlthat had agreed to the establishment of such a trust fund: see PMJ 2, p. 48, as well as PMJ 2/207 and 2/230.

5 The incumbent at the time was Fritz Reinhardt (1895–1969).

6 Count Johann Ludwig Schwerin von Krosigk: see Doc. 25, fn. 3.