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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS MISSION
 Hq. US Forces, European Theater
 APO 757 US Army

6 July 1946

My dear General Clay:

Following our meeting this morning, I have looked into our correspondence file and am happy to send you excerpts from three (3) letters bearing upon the problem of the disposition of Jewish books. The first two (2) letters were addressed to Dr. H. M. Lydenberg who has just returned home from duty with this Mission and who was especially charged with liaison with our British colleagues. I quote first from a letter to Dr. Lydenberg dated 17 May 1946 from Dr. Jean Thomas, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO:

"At the end of 1945, a proposal was made to us through Count Rewentlow, Danish Minister in London and Mr. C. E. AAGAARD, Danish delegate to UNESCO, that we should support the establishment of a world Jewish Library in Copenhagen formed out of the many thousands of valuable Jewish books which have been found in German occupied territory and which cannot be returned to their previous owners.

C. Green

"Later this scheme was further endorsed by the Danish Library Authorities who declared their willingness to defray all working expenses and proposed also that it should be maintained by the Royal Library in Copenhagen, if possible under UNESCO auspices.

"The Preparatory Commission of UNESCO has not met to consider this proposal and I cannot say, therefore, that it has our approval but all the persons here who have considered it agree that the scheme has many merits and is one which the Preparatory Commission should be encouraged to consider at the first possible moment.

"We have been dismayed to hear, in the last few days, from Dr. Schmidt-Hiseldeck, Librarian of the Royal Library, Copenhagen, in a letter a copy of which I enclose, that there is a risk of many of the books with no rightful owners being transferred to Palestine before the Danish Scheme has been discussed.

"These are exactly the books which would form the nucleus of the Copenhagen collection.

"It would be most regrettable if the scheme would be prejudged by the actual removal of any books or by permission being given for their eventual removal until the serious and generous proposal from Denmark has been properly debated."

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A second letter addressed to Dr. Lydenberg dated 28 June 1946 and signed by Edward J. Carter, Counsellor for Libraries and Museums of the same Commission, reads in part as follows:

"Since I communicated with you last and also since the correspondence you had with Professor J. Thomas, with regard to the Jewish Library in Copenhagen, we have had a meeting of the Libraries Committee of the Preparatory Commission, when one of the things which received definite support was a proposal that UNESCO should establish an International Clearing House of publications, which may be able not only to continue the work of the Inter-Allied Book Centre in London, which closes down at the end of this year, and of the American Book Centre, but will also be able to serve as a collecting and distribution centre for material discovered in Europe."

From Dr. Jean Thomas, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO. On 12 June 1946, Mr. Verner W. Clapp, Director of the Acquisitions Department of the Library of Congress, wrote to me as follows: "At the end of 1945, a proposal was made by the Danish delegate to UNESCO, Danish 'Disposition of Jewish Books in Offenbach Disposal Center—Dr. Evans has consulted with Prof. Baron and other representatives of the Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction. Our position with regard to these books is as previously stated. We will not touch them (or the unrestituted residue of them) unless requested to do so through official channels. A possible disposition that has been discussed is as follows: library authorities

"(a) Each of the four occupying powers to assume custody (by Control Council Decision) of unrestituted residues of such books under its zone, final disposition to be made by its national library.

"(b) The national library of UNESCO has not yet to consider this proposal and I Jewish interests and plan a distribution, sort and catalog the books. We have considered it agree that the books should be considered at the first possible moment. (c) Before distribution is effected, any books identifiable as coming from a particular country (Poland, Russia, etc.) even though not identifiable as deriving from a particular library or group would be offered to that country." This lack of information of the books with no right background of the problem.

"These are exactly the books which would form the nucleus of the Copenhagen collection."

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Reuben Peiss would be prejudged by the actual removal of any books or by permission being given for their eventual removal until the reviewed and consensus is reached.
 Chief

Library of Congress Mission

Lieutenant General Lucius D. Clay
 Director, Office of Military Government (US)
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