

XVIII

“Providing for Culture”

The *Judenrat* received a demand from the authorities to the effect that, in the buildings where the Jewish Hospital had formerly been located, a dormitory and school for German children should be set up. All the premises there were to be renovated - all the halls, rooms and entrances were to be freshened up. The large garden was to be embellished with new plants and everything was to be arranged “in a manner befitting a German school”.

The *Judenrat*'s Technical Department mobilised all its forces. The Employment Office provided the appropriate number of labourers and they set out to build the new “German” works, which took long weeks and cost the *Judenrat* a very large amount of money.

The *Stadthauptmann*'s deputy monitored the work. During his visits, he would insult the Jews, as payment for their labour, with the worst of words. When the renovation was completed, fine furniture was brought in, together with all the other requirements that a modern boarding school needs to have. The *Judenrat* supplied the appropriate *manufaktura* goods [fabrics/soft goods], from which Jewish tailors sewed uniforms for the pupils, who were in readiness for the boarding school.

When the Jewish tradesmen were still engaged in the last works and in preparing the decorations for the opening ceremony, it became known that the governor of the Radom district would attend the inauguration. A few hours beforehand, the deputy of the *Stadthauptmann* arrived holding a *Spitzrute* [pointed rod]. He looked around [to see] if everything was in order and called out, “*Juden, verschwinden!*” [Jews, vanish!]. His *Spitzrute* began to fall over the heads of the Jewish labourers and he continued beating them until he had driven out all the Jews.

When the governor arrived in the city, a dread reigned. Jews were not permitted to leave their houses. The streets were guarded by police and there, in the buildings of the former Jewish Hospital, the grand celebration was taking place. On the following day, we read in the papers that the governor gave held a festive speech and thanked the German leaders of the National Socialist Party for the new, beautiful work that they had built in the German Reich's neighbouring country.

Shortly afterwards, the *prezes* of the *Judenrat* was summoned to the *Stadthauptmann*, who explained to him that every institution and firm in our city would have to give a one-time large monetary payment for the further development of the boarding school and that the *Judenrat* also had to contribute to this cause. The *prezes* of the *Judenrat* understood that this “friendly proposal” must not be turned down, and he declared 50,000 zloty for the Hitler children's boarding school. At that, the *prezes* of the *Judenrat* was wondering from where they would get that extra money – but the *Stadthauptmann* felt insulted that the *prezes* had declared such a small sum for such an important cause. The *prezes* attempted to justify himself with a

lack of funds and promised to increase the sum - and the *Judenrat* had work enough to raise the sum for this “voluntary contribution”.

Below: The Jewish Police offices in the “Small Ghetto”



Above: Jews in the “Big Ghetto”

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Not long afterwards, the *Judenrat* received an order to arrange a swimming pool for the German populace in our city. Also, a sports ground, with all the modern equipment, had to be created. Besides that, the municipal theatre, which was built shortly before the War, was to be completed.

Once again, the best Jewish professional tradesmen toiled many months. The best Jewish sportsmen, with hundreds of labourers, poured out their perspiration working in the fields. Grand celebrations were held at the inaugurations of each of the separate institutions, with the attendance of high-ranking German personalities who, in festive speeches, lauded the great and difficult services, with their professional capabilities, that the Germans were performing in that "neglected country". For their great exertions, the party's members and the officials of the *Stadthauptmannschaft* [City Administration] received awards and vacations, so that they should rest a little after their hard work.