June 15th, 1919.

Hon. Hugo Gibson,
United States Minister to Poland,
Hotel Bristol, Warsaw.

Your Excellency:

In accordance with your request I beg to submit the following memorandun in regard to the Jewish situation in Wilna and Lida with particular reference to the events that took place immediately following the entrance of the Polish military forces in these towns and in the neighbourhood. This memorandum is based upon the various facts revealed in the course of the personal investigation just made by Your Excellency, in which you kindly granted me the privilege to participate.

There can be no question in my mind that there was an intense anti-Jewish feeling existing at that time in both places, Lida and Wilna. The testimony of the witnesses, without any exception, corroborates this conclusion. It is only as to the reasons assigned for the existing emotions that
opinions differ. In Lida it was stated that the mutilation of a corpse of a Polish soldier and that the fact that this corpse was supposed to have been found in a court-yard belonging to a Jewish family, was given as the key note for the fury with which the soldiers handled the Jewish population. In Vilna war profiteering among the Jews was given as one of the reasons of anti-Jewish feelings [Dr. Ignacy Pilandski].

The results of this anti-Jewish attitude of the soldiers and of the civilian population were everywhere in wholesale arrests of Jews in both places [Testimony of Rabbi Kunitstein in Lida and Mr. Shabad in Vilna]. In Lida a number of Jewish houses were entered by the soldiers and pillaged [Rabbi Kunitstein] and in Vilna stores were ransacked and residences robbed. Mr. J. Pilanski acknowledged that he received reports of some individual actres that were ransacked, whereas the record of the Jews shows that about 60 stores and about 200 residences were pillaged. The statement on the part of some witnesses that there was no robbing, no destruction of property etc. in contradictory to actual happenings. In Lida, in particular, the testimony of Rabbi Kunitstein definitely pointed out that the pillaging of stores and the attacks on the Jewish population continued for two days after the actual fighting.
on the streets was finished. In both places the military authorities issued orders. This pictures the situation. In accordance with the statements of witnesses these orders had a quieting effect. Other witnesses in Wilna have described the difficulties under which the authorities were working, emphasizing the fury against the Jews, describing vividly the reasons, and expressed their satisfaction and surprise that this situation was finally controlled with the result that in Wilna the number of persons actually killed is about 60 and in Lida 25. Among these killed only few /3 in Lida and 10 in Wilna/ are said to have been sentenced by martial court. The rest were killed either on the casual testimony of bystanders, who stated that they belonged to the Communists, or became victims of infuriated individual soldiers. While Mr. Ignacy Pliszaski and Commander Zukowski claim that on account of valid reasons for anti-Jewish attitude it was difficult to control the soldiers, the Jewish witnesses, Mr. Chabad in Wilna and Rabbi Rubinstein in Lida testified that with the arrival of Commandant Joseph Pliszaski in Lida the situation was changed for the better and that in Lida the influence of General Ksentsycki has considerably improved the relationship.
At the present time, in both places there is no indication of the continuation of actual attacks upon the Jews and the situation is essentially improved since June 1st, when the authorities were requested to present an account of the events pertaining to the entrance of the troops in these places from the Foreign Ministry in Warsaw. The relations, however, are exceedingly strained and the Jewish population is living in terror and is afraid of a possible outbreak of the antagonistic feeling which continues to exist. While Mr. Sheba in Riga definitely stated that he receives daily reports of misconduct of soldiers towards Jews and of robberies committed under the guise of revisions, Mr. Ignacy Fliszeck stated that he did not know of such happenings and that such reports have ceased to come to him, though he is the authority to handle these violations of law. The discrepancy in these witnesses can be only explained by the fact that the Jews fail to present their complaints for fear of consequences unfavourable to them.

I wish to call Your Excellency's attention to the simple story of the girl in Binciakowice where she told you without any malice or emotion, in an unsophisticated manner, how the soldiers entered their house, where the people at that time were.
besieged with typhus, how they took away everything they
found of value and how the family had to pay 100 roubles, that
they borrowed from the servant girl, in order to save a sack
of flour, the only food they had in the house.

Thus the conclusions that suggest to me in regard to the
entire situation can be summarized as follows:

1. It is definitely ascertained that the Polish popula-
tion, including the soldiers, are exceedingly provoked against
the Jews considering all of them as enemies of the country,
allies of the Bolsheviks, war profiteers etc.

2. That on entering Vilna and Lida the soldiers, in ad-
dition to fighting their cause, have attacked the civilian
Jewish population as such, have ransacked stores and residen-
tces, indiscriminately arrested people, beaten them, subjected
them to indignities and ridicule and in some instances killed
them without lawful reason.

3. That the military authorities within some time /nor-
er in Vilna than in Lida/ have issued orders against this
pillaging and succeeded in controlling the situation as far as
actual riotous acts are concerned.

4. That at the present time the situation is under con-
trol but that the under current of anti-Jewish emotions is still
existin not only among the masses of the Polish population and the soldiers but also among the higher authorities. That this tenacity of hatred is definitely maintained and promoted by any Jewish press which takes Jew-baiting as its aim.

5. That the Jews are living in a state of terror and distrust the assurances that they will be protected by the existing authorities and for that reason are not in position to express an enthusiastic and friendly attitude towards their new sovereign, who, in the way of introduction, did not show any protecting power to which the Jews, as subjects of the government, are entitled.

The statement of Rabbi Habinstein in reference to the hopes that the Jews had that the Polish troops will end their suffering from the unlawful acts of the Bolsheviks and now he hoped that his property would be protected and how he was finally disappointed in his expectations, tells the story.

On the whole the situation is very depressing and undoubtedly requires intervention.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) Louis D. Boyer

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