PERSECUTION OF JEWS IN VIENNA.

I am giving you the following memorandum of my own personal observations of the persecution of Jews in Vienna, and also of accounts given to me by eye witnesses:

On Saturday afternoon, April 23, 1938, I went in my car in the second district of Vienna. I first went down the Praterstrasse and saw pickets in front of numerous Jewish stores. The picket usually was a man in brown uniform of the S.A. but sometimes it was a person in civilian clothes with a Nazi armband. I slowed down in front of some shops and read the signs warning Aryans not to purchase in Jewish stores. I also saw some storekeepers who were themselves forced to hold the signs in their hands while standing in the doorways of their shops.

I saw two cases of people bearing placards on their chest being led down the street by men in S.A. uniforms. The placards bore the inscription: "Ich bin ein Schwein und kauf bei Juden ein". In one case the person was a young girl; in the other case it was a man and he had apparently just been started on his walk down the street. The whole incident struck me as being absolutely brutal with no fair play. It so happened that I was able to block off some of the people that were approaching from one side by driving my car very slowly beside the man for a considerable distance.

I have had a visit in my office from a Jewish father and daughter who had best remain nameless, but who came to see me about securing a visa for America. This father and daughter had personally seen numerous acts of violence. They told me in connection with the picketing of stores in the second district, that groups of S.A. men walked along in front of the
shops and frequently, without any provocation, slapped the faces of Jewish persons who were forced to hold up placards, in some cases they beat these people over the head. The daughter was herself taken several times for the usual cleaning work. She said that a number of Jewish men she has seen personally have returned to their homes showing marks of physical mistreatment.

A Jewish man in whom I have complete reliance came to my office on April 27 and told me about the return of a friend of his from Dachau. This man has been there about two and a half weeks and my informant told me he hardly recognized his friend because he had lost so much weight and had aged so much. This friend of his incidentally was arrested within 24 hours after his return by the Gestapo. He stated that on leaving Dachau everyone is forced to sign a "Schweigeverbot" and is told that if this promise is broken, the most severe consequences will follow not only for the man himself but also for his family. Despite this exacted promise, it is generally reported that persons in Dachau are forced to work ten hours a day in the peat bogs and receive such insufficient food that all of them lose weight.

My informant further tells me that owners of Jewish stores are getting into a completely impossible situation. Their receipts are cut to practically nothing and yet they are not allowed to discharge any Aryan employees. Some store owners who closed their shops on Saturday were rounded up in their apartments by S.A. men, taken to their stores and forced to open. After the stores were opened they were picketed and in many cases the owners forced to hold up signs. The situation of all Jewish store owners has become worse in the last few days and they see no solution of their problems.
Many would prefer to close down their shops entirely but this they are not allowed to do while they have any money or assets left. The present campaign is forcing them into complete bankruptcy at a rapid rate.

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