

December 17, 1941—In the morning at the Community. Later with Iwanka on the contribution from the municipality. We agreed to ask Kunze for the money on Monday. I discussed our budget with Auerswald and Rodeck. The *Kommissar* demanded 880 pounds of bread for the Aryan workers of the Münsterman[n] firm (it appears that this is a bonus or some special holiday distribution). The bread is to come from the contingent of the Jewish quarter. A photographer brought me a number of photographs of me. One should never look at one's own portraits. A man always has a different notion about his own appearance. I have always believed that I look younger than I appear in the photographs.

December 18, 1941—Current business.

December 19, 1941—Current business.

December 20, 1941—Current business.

December 21, 1941—In the morning at the Community. At 12:30 an official ceremony honoring the Community schools. Niunia and I spoke, as well as representatives of the former educational organizations.

It is rumored in the ghetto again that eight points were read to me about patches, etc. [sic]. A councilor from Slonim visited me.

December 22, 1941—In the morning at the Community. A possible deportation of 120,000 Jews from Warsaw. The Provisioning Authority submitted a proposal for increasing the price of bread, since the present price is economically unfeasible. I called a meeting of the Council, which voted the increase by a majority.

I received the following letter from the Jewish detention center. [The letter is missing from the diary.]

December 23, 1941—In the morning to Auerswald. I would like to go to Otwock with Niunia for a day or two. I drew his attention to the rumors circulating in the ghetto about some 8 points for the Jews. He asked: What points? I replied that I was interested in only one: the prohibition of marriages. I got the impression that something is in the offing. I added that it might be the time for a change of attitude toward the Jews. I reminded him of Bismarck's dictum.

December 24, 1941—I left by car, in terrible weather, with my wife and Szerynski for "Zofiowka." To make things worse, I have a cold. In the evening I became sick. Nausea and vomiting. I received a message from Warsaw that—according to an edict—we must surrender all the furs—both men's and women's. I am to be personally responsible. The deadline has been set for December 28, 1941.

December 25, 1941—At 8 in the morning I left for Warsaw. In the Community building, in the large conference room, and at 27 Grzybowska Street a collection of furs. At 1 o'clock Auerswald appeared. I asked him for an exemption from the requisition for the members of the Order Service and the doctors. He promised to give me his answer tomorrow. I am still sick.

December 26, 1941—In the morning I got up aching. At the Community building, etc., the collection. By 12:30, 1,100 fur coats and fur pieces had been gathered.

At 1:30 Auerswald and Jesuiter came. Auerswald signed a letter authorizing electricity for the Community Authority building, since it is difficult to work without it. He informed me that the requisition edict applies not only to the Jews of the G.G.⁷ but also to the "foreign" Jews. The only exception is the Jewish citizens of neutral countries, such as Sweden and Switzerland.

December 27, 1941—There are enormous lines in front of the 7 fur collection points. By noon 8,870 receipts were issued. In Radom they do not have to surrender the lining or the top cover. In Kraków, also, only the furs themselves. But, in addition, it was announced there that new unused underwear and high and Zakopane-type boots must also be surrendered. Jews were forbidden to leave their apartments. In Lublin also the pelts only. It is anticipated that woolens as well will be requisitioned. Each family will be required to contribute to the quota.

A. Szpinak died in Otwock [see footnote for Dec. 2, 1939].

December 28, 1941—An immense line of people with furs in front of the Community Authority and at 27 Grzybowska Street. Auers-

7. Jews of the GG—Jews resident in the now five districts of the *Generalgouvernement*.

wald visited the Community. In our large conference room huge piles of furs. All normal work in the offices has stopped. Everybody is busy with fur collection. I managed to bring back Niunia and Roma from Otwock. Their trip to Warsaw is a story in itself.

December 29, 1941—In the morning at the Community. Auerswald and Jesuiter arrived, complaining furiously that by 9 in the morning they had not received a report on the collection. It has been explained to them that it has been impossible to sort and count the huge piles that would fill perhaps 6 large boxcars. They ordered us to have the inventory ready by 3 P.M. (This was said at 12 noon.) The staff in all the departments was drafted for counting the furs. At 3 P.M. it was ascertained that by 6 P.M., December 28, the collection yielded 690 men's fur coats, 2,541 ladies' fur coats, 4,441 men's fur linings, 4,020 ladies' fur linings, 222 silver fox pelts, 258 blue fox pelts, 872 red fox pelts, 5,118 fur handwarmers, 39,556 fur collars, 7,205 assorted pelts, 2,201 sheepskin coats; and 25,569 receipts were issued.

Wiesenberg⁸ and Popower were summoned to Rodeck at Brühl Palace, for 3 P.M., on the subject of the budget. Wiesenberg was stopped at one of the guard posts for wearing two jackets (in place of his fur coat that was taken away). They barely let him go.

	<i>Funerals</i>		
	1941	1940	1938
October	4,716	457	379
November	4,801	445	413
December		581	437

	<i>New Cases of Typhus</i>	
	1941	1940
October	3,438	16
November	2,156	23
December		17

December 30, 1941—Yesterday the inhabitants of the ghetto have surrendered: 23 men's fur coats, 113 ladies' fur coats, 358 men's coats, fur linings, 287 ladies' coats fur linings, 14 silver fox pelts, 7

blue fox pelts, 144 red fox pelts, 553 handwarmers, 4,972 fur collars, 485 assorted pelts, 281 sheepskin coats; 2,834 receipts [sic] were issued.

I telephoned A[uerswald] at his apartment at 8:30 A.M. He has not yet returned home.

I saw Dr. Rathje in the Provisioning Authority. I mentioned to him that the walls were constructed without any previous examination of the Community balance of payments. He retorted that somebody must be responsible.

Detainees in the Jewish prison staged some skits. I received one of their couplets. [Rumors are being spread that they are checking receipts] of those who did not surrender any furs.

December 31, 1941—In the morning at the Community. I telephoned Auerswald suggesting that the collected furs be moved to the *Umschlagplatz* for sorting before their delivery to the authorities. I am seriously worried about theft. Yesterday, while some furs were being transported from 27 to 26/28 Grzybowska Street, some of the parcels were thrown aside for "friends."

At 10 o'clock the *Kommissar* announced that tomorrow, January 1, 1942, there will be a holiday for the Community. At 3 P.M. we received a letter from him postponing "for the last time" the deadline for the surrender of furs until January 3 and ordering us to announce this through the loudspeakers.

New Year's eve gathering at Zabłudowski's in which I took part. I addressed myself to the occasion briefly, which moved one of those present so much that he gave me 10,000 zlotys (ten thousand) for charities.

January 1, 1942—In the morning at the Community. The collection of furs continues. In the afternoon many well-disposed people with New Year's wishes.

January 2, 1942—In the morning at the Community. An official communication from the *Kommissar* arrived yesterday on the subject of allocating bread rations according to privileged and non-privileged categories of the population. In addition, he has instructed us to impose a tax on bread, sugar, etc. In this way 1 kilogram of bread will cost 90 gr. [.9 zloty].

Auerswald gave us permission to remove the linings and top

8. Wiesenberg was a Jewish Council official.

covers from the fur coats. We are earmarking those for public assistance.

Today is the first day of severe cold, -4°F to -5°F .

January 3, 1942—At 8 in the morning [one of the] Zabłudowski[s] sent a message that Councilor Benjamin Zabłudowski died at 3 P.M.

At 9 I went with Szerynski to see Mende. Niunia is sick with bronchitis.

January 4, 1942—In the morning at the Community. The weather has relented. Work on the walls will again be resumed. At 1 P.M. Zabłudowski's funeral. I delivered a eulogy at the coffin in the apartment of the deceased. The funeral procession reached the cemetery through a gatepost using passes issued by the Community.

January 5, 1942—In the morning at the Community. The collecting of furs was completed yesterday. Then the furs were moved by the SS trucks to the *Umschlagplatz* for sorting. Jesuiter and Auerswald were present. Each truck was escorted by guards on motorcycles armed with rifles. We are worrying about the possibility of theft. The furs were packed in paper bags.

I spoke to Auerswald about compensation. He believes that he might be able, perhaps, to give us an extra food allocation. I have an idea of my own. I will present it to Auerswald this Wednesday. Somebody reported to the authorities what went on at our school ceremony. The work of a well-known scoundrel.

January 6, 1942—In the morning at the Community. I increased by 10,000 the number of vouchers exempting their holders from the requirement of the bread tax. These [exemptions] now number 150,000. I discussed with a delegation from the House Committees the arrests by the Order Service of the chairmen of these committees for not carrying out instructions aimed at helping the poverty-stricken tenants. Once more, I enjoined the Order Service not to make these arrests without my [specific] authorization.

January 7, 1942—In the morning at the Community. Later with Auerswald. I submitted my proposal requesting him to petition his superiors for the release of the condemned men (in the Jewish prison). This would be our compensation for the furs that we have

delivered. I stressed that I had been asking previously for an additional food contingent, but I would be willing to forego this food, since the saving of lives of so many people is at stake. I added that the official channels do lead, after all, from the *Kommissar* to the Governor to the Governor-General. The *Kommissar* replied that the release of the prisoners is solely in the hands of the Governor. This being so, I implored him, in the name of humanity, to submit the appropriate plea to the Governor. After a lengthy discussion he promised to raise the issue earnestly with the Governor.

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I read in "Popioly"⁹ by Zeromski: "Don't I, indeed, have under my command all manner of thugs, cutthroats, and murderers, and yet I spare them and prize them; for it is they that know best. . . . They are the very ones that will lead you safely out of an ambush." These are the words of Captain Wyganowski.

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In the afternoon, 3 functionaries from the *Schutzpolizei* [German Street Police] with a Lieutenant from the *Ghettowache* [Ghetto guard], all armed with loaded submachine guns, appeared in the office asking whether I telephoned them about an alleged attack by the Poles on the Jews of the ghetto. I informed them that I knew nothing about it.

It is impossible to buy a calendar of any kind either in the ghetto or outside the ghetto. I had to devise my own.

January 8, 1942—In the morning at the Community. Once more, plus or minus 4,000 inhabitants of the ghetto (from the vicinity of the Tobacco Monopoly Authority) are to lose the roof over their heads. At home, in the afternoon, a meeting of the executive committee of the Association of the Friends of the Prisoners in the Jewish Detention House, with the prison superintendent participating. Certain procedures within the framework of regulations were agreed upon. I passed on to them the 10,000 zlotys donated during the New Year's Eve gathering for the families of the prisoners.

January 9, 1942—In the morning with Szerynski to Mende. Later to Iwanka. Fribolin is opposing any new subsidies to the Council.

9. "Popioly," a Polish epic about the Napoleonic wars.

He is of the opinion that they should be replaced with funds from payments by the Jews for water, gas, and electricity.

While I was talking to Iwanka, I was summoned to Auerswald. He informed me that the Governor was willing, in accordance with my proposal, to release the condemned prisoners and also those who are about to be condemned, if we supply 1,500 sheepskin coats within a week. I immediately set the appropriate machinery in motion to cope with the task. At this moment there are 40 condemned men, as well as 800 persons detained in prison.

January 10, 1942—In the morning at the Community. Later on, at the opening of an orphanage *Dobra Wola* [Good Will] at 61 Dzielna Street. I addressed the gathering.

January 11, 1942—In the morning at the Community. A meeting on the budget of the JHK (lunches). Later, a special benefit performance for the hospital fund. I gave a speech. Return to the Community.

For several days we have had extremely cold weather, the more difficult to endure since the people lost their fur coats. Niunia wears Jas's topcoat. It seems that everybody has a cold. At Chlodna Street they are building a wooden overpass for the ghetto pedestrians.

January 12, 1942—In the morning at the Community. In the afternoon with Auerswald. He summoned me in the matter of the budget. Rodeck, his financial expert, is "familiarizing" himself with the data to prepare the budget.

January 13, 1942—I called a meeting of the Council and of the rabbis for 9 A.M. I formed a committee to coordinate the collection with two subcommittees: a financial one and one to purchase the sheepskin coats.

I managed to obtain passes to the Warsaw District for four of our buyers, experts in the trade, for the purpose of procuring the sheepskin coats. I received Auerswald's permission to supply just the sheepskins in place of the complete coats.

In the afternoon, with Szereszewski and Wielikowski at Auerswald's on the JHK budget. I informed Rodeck in their presence of the burden on the population (in the price of bread) in connection with building the wall. A[uerswald] retorted that he would deduct

250,000 zlotys from the 500,000 zlotys (import taxes on the food products) for the cost of the walls. As a result, we do not have as much as we need for lunches.¹⁰

January 14, 1942—In the morning in the Brühl Palace. A[uerswald] was not in his office. Supposedly, yesterday was the Russian Christmas.¹¹ I wanted to ask him about the prisoners who have not yet been sentenced. In the Community Authority they have been collecting money from the public for the [sheepskin] project. The results today were meager. I, myself, borrowed 250,000 zlotys from the Provisioning Authority. By Friday the suppliers are to deliver 350 sheepskin coats and enough sheepskins for 150 coats. Subsequently, they will furnish 100 per day.

This morning fire erupted at the *Umschlagplatz* in the fur decontamination chamber (the furs in question were not collected from the Jews). Most likely, the faulty servicing of the furnace was responsible. There were many suspicions and much excitement.

January 15, 1942—In the morning at the Community. Later with the *Kommissar*. I requested that the amnesty should include the other categories of prisoners in addition to those already sentenced or about to be sentenced to death, with the exception of [common] criminals. A[uerswald] instructed me to prepare a list of all the prisoners for tomorrow; I passed on this order to the prison superintendent. I asked A[uerswald] for an additional food contingent for the ghetto population. In the Community Authority a large traffic of people and much bargaining in connection with the sheepskin fund collection; the money is to be used to release the condemned men. Some members of the families of those imprisoned are unwilling to make any contribution, in anticipation that the Community Authority itself will ransom the prisoners. Others claim that they have already given to the *machers* [organizers] considerable sums of money for this purpose. Yesterday, out of the 700 who were summoned, only 170 reported. I issued instructions for the rest of them to be forcibly brought in.

10. Apparently, Czerniakow had been counting on a rebate of the entire 500,000 zlotys (paid in food import taxes) to finance free distribution of midday meals.

11. Russian Orthodox Christmas (actually, New Year's). It is not clear whether the Auerswalds were celebrating Russian Orthodox holidays.