

No. 1258  
Apostolic Nunciature  
Baviera

Monaco, September 4, 1917

Re: Request for the Holy See's intervention on behalf  
of the Jewish community.

To His Eminence  
Cardinal Pietro Gasparri  
Secretary of State to His Holiness

Your Eminence,

The Jewish Community of the German Empire, by means of the "Free Interest Community of Orthodox Jewry" of Frankfort and of Professor Dr. Werner, Rabbi of Munich, who have appealed to the Nunciature for the following purpose:

According to the words of the Bible, the above-mentioned communities for the celebration of Sukkoth or feast of the tabernacles (which occurs on October 1st) have need of palms, which usually arrive from Italy. Now, unexpectedly and against its own interest, the Italian Government has suddenly forbidden the exportation of the palms that are ready in Como, nor have we succeeded in obtaining them, even though they cannot serve for food nor for any other profit. Time is of the essence, since the exportation should take place in a few days, if we are to have the palms on time, especially since they will then have to be distributed throughout Germany.

The Jewish Communities hope that this will happen through the intervention of His Holiness with the Italian Government and beg the Apostolic Nunciature to intercede for this purpose, adding that thousands of members, faithful to their religion, would be profoundly grateful for a happy ending.

It seems to me that we are dealing, not with help to be given to the Jewish communities simply for a civil purpose or for the protection of natural rights common to all men (in which there would not have been any inconvenience), even though material and remote cooperation, but positive and direct for the exercise of the Jewish religion. I have therefore answered respectfully to the above mentioned rabbi that, even though it is not possible for me to telegraph for a similar affair (which, because it is so extraordinary, requires much explanation), I would have however immediately sent an urgent report to the Holy See in this regard, but I foresaw that because of the time element, it would not have arrived on time, and besides I did not know what action the Holy Father would have been able to take in order to explain this to the Italian Government.

In the meantime, I leave this to the superior judgment of Your Eminence, and kiss your ring with profound veneration.

Your most humble and devote servant

Eugenio Archbishop of Sardi  
Apostolic Nuncio

On Sep. 18, the Cardinal Secretary of State replied that he "fully agrees with the way in which you acted in this delicate affair, since the Holy See, obviously, cannot follow the request of Prof. Dr. Werner. Please explain this gentleman in your reply - the choice of the words is up to you - but stress the fact that the Holy See does not entertain diplomatic relationship to the Italian Government."

Pacelli reported in Sep. 28: "Prof. Werner fully understands the reasons which I explained him and thanked me warmly for what we did on his proposal."