

QUOTES FROM THE BOOK

Hillel Kook: “We started off [in December 1942] by saying a memorial to two million dead Jews, save the others, while the figures were changing like in a race, so many killed and so many to go. You didn’t really know if there were still Jews there, you hoped there were.” (epigraph)

“...not until January 1944, fourteen months after it had incontrovertible evidence that genocide was occurring, did the United States government begin to take even limited steps toward rescue.” (p. 1)

David Wyman: “How could the annihilation have happened? And how could the world let it happen?”

Hillel Kook: “The world is still letting it happen. Humanity is going to pay a price...I think...many of the mean and barbaric things that are happening, maybe even subconsciously come from the fact that the people grew up with the knowledge that it was possible to deliberately exterminate millions of people, and there was no reaction.” (p. 186)

“...as additional information became available...the press continued to treat the systematic murder of millions of Jews as though it were minor news.... The failure of the press to inform the public severely handicapped all efforts to build pressure for government action to help the Jews.” (p. 30)

“Attempts to have Bergson deported had been underway since 1942. With the encouragement of the State Department, this objective had been pressed on the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Justice Department by various opponents of Bergson, including some American Jewish leaders, Congressman Sol Bloom, and the British Embassy in Washington. Active proceedings to deport him went on through much of 1944 and 1945.” (p. 179)

Hillel Kook: “Jews could have been saved....If the Jewish leadership would have acted, if the Jews would have acted, the number of the survivors could have been doubled.” (p. 186)

Hillel Kook: “We didn’t think the reaction would be as violent as it was....There was a time there in which all the Jewish leaders seemed to do nothing else but fight us.” (p. 169)

Hillel Kook: “We failed.... We failed in getting across to the government of the United States....We came close.” (p. 164)

Will Rogers, Jr.: “The major achievement of the Bergson group was making things so hot for the administration that they could no longer do nothing....And so they did set up the War Refugee Board. And that was due to the actions of the Bergson committee.” (p. 155)

Hillel Kook: “My anger, which is not diminishing but getting bigger, as the years go by, was that I am still totally perplexed as to how it was possible not to react – the way the Jewish leaders didn’t react.” (p. 133)

Max Lerner: “This was the first time that any group of Jews really made use of the state of the art in publicity, in public relations.” (p. 90)

Will Rogers, Jr.: “We knew the Jews were under attack, the Germans were killing them, the Poles were throwing them out....But I was just like anybody else – all right, what could I do about it....Peter Bergson stimulated me.... slowly it dawned on me that it was my duty to go out and speak against the destruction of the Jews.” (p. 80)

From the Jewish Spectator: “‘It is shocking and – why mince words? – revolting that at a time like this our organizations, large and small, national and local, continue ‘business as usual’ and sponsor gala affairs, such as sumptuous banquets, luncheons, fashion teas, and what not....How shall we feast while our brothers and sisters are perishing?’” (p. 32)

Hillel Kook: “Our whole activity was zeroed and concentrated on producing government action. In two ways – one, by lobbying, and the other by building public opinion.” (p. 58)

Hillel Kook: “...after the news came out concerning the extermination of the Jews. Nothing! I wasn’t acting as a lost fellow, we were lost.... And we felt something ought to be done....It wasn’t a question here that we had ideas, we hadn’t any ideas, we’ll take anybody’s ideas.... we had no preconceived notions, there was no ideology, there was nothing.” (p. 58)

Hillel Kook: “I didn’t pretend that we had wisdom. I wasn’t crusading for an idea. I was a guy yelling, ‘Help!’” (p. 68)

Will Rogers, Jr. on the ads: “They carried tremendous impact....I can remember when they appeared in the paper, even around the halls of Congress, there was conversation....I would go down to the floor of Congress and they would be talking about it.” (p. 74)

