Jeremy Ginsberg

HIST 133C

Marcuse W’14

The Harrison Report

1. Harrison Report, full title, *Report, on a mission to Europe to Inquire into the condition of the Displaced Persons* (full text)
   1. The original document can be found in the Jewish Women Collection. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, I found the original document on the Library of Congress website <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/images/images/hh0174p1s.jpg> full text can be found on http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\_document.cfm?document\_id=4108
   2. The Harrison Report is a letter to President Harry Truman in summer 1945, and was requested by the President in a letter dated June 22, 1945. This report is the partial findings of Earl G. Harrison in his attempt to relay and evaluate the conditions of the, “displaced persons in the liberated countries of Western Europe and in the SHAEF area of Germany-with particular reference to the Jewish refuges-who may possibly be stateless or non-repatriable.”[[1]](#footnote-1) It was presumably written and sent from London that summer. It not only gives his report but he also makes suggestions on actions to improve the lives of displaced people.
   3. Within the letter Harrison reported on the grim conditions that the Jewish and Eastern European refugees were experiencing in Germany and Austria. He noted that the conditions had not changed much from when these people were under Nazi control. Many of these people were still living in the camps and prisons that they were previously held in, with similar conditions. In the report Harrison noted lack of food, clothing, and winterized buildings along with the lack of appropriate psychological care and the non-existence of reunification and repatriation services. He criticized the Allied governments and especially the behavior of the officers who were supposed to be helping. These officers were more interested in maintaining the relationship between the German populations instead of helping the victims. Harrison recommended that the Jews who survived should be allowed to emigrate to what was then called Palestine, which would later become Israel, and allowing more into the United States.
   4. Earl G. Harrison was an American attorney and academic who served in FDR’s administration as Director of Alien Registration in the Department of Justice, and worked in other Immigration and Naturalization offices. He eventually worked with Roosevelt after WWII, who appointed him the US representative on the Intergovernmental Commission on Refugees, which eventually led to the writing of his report on the majority Jewish displaced persons in Europe. His experience with Displaced People, Aliens, and Immigration made him a respected figure for this specific problem. [[2]](#footnote-2)
   5. http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/3309852?uid=3739560&uid=2&uid=4&uid=3739256&sid=21103507925161
   6. Harrison created this report, by the request of the President. Its purpose was to inform the president on the current conditions of the displaced persons within the places under Allied control that were displaced due to WWII. This report was mainly focused on the Jewish persons who were either stateless or unable to become citizens of the country they used to belong too. It was published to bring awareness to the issue of Displaced Persons (DP’s)
   7. Harrison was accompanied by Dr. Joseph Schwartz, who was the European Director of the American Joint Distribution Committee. Both men interviewed many people including rabbis, prisoners, Jews, chaplains, and rescuers who all gave him evidence of neglect. They traveled throughout Germany and Austria but no particular cities are listed.
   8. Harrison notes the needs that are being met by the UNRRA which was charged with this particular issue but Harrison finds they are overwhelmed and unable to help a majority of the refugees
   9. Because I am citing Library of Congress documents the full text is extremely reliable since it is the actual letter sent by Harrison to Truman, the Wikipedia sources on Harrison however are also reliable due to the extensive cross referencing and quoting done in the article.
   10. Harrisons recommendations are the longest part of the report, he believes that majority of the Jewish refugees should be immediately allowed to populate the British mandate of Palestine. He also recommends that the people should be able to decide where they want to go and it is in the best interest of the majority for immigration certificates to be issued for Palestine.
   11. This was a contributing factor in Truman’s support of Palestine and the use of the British Jewish Agency to create a Jewish population in the land.
   12. On the search of the GHDI website there does not seem to be any other relevant text on the matter. Harrisons Report seems to only show up in reviews of Harrisons legal career and judicial decisions.
   13. Also after searching Google Scholar there seems to be no reference to the report in any search results including the search for Earl G. Harrison brings you to other reports that he made that also involve immigration but no reference is made in those reports to his most famous report because all of the immigration reports were written before the 1945 report, which is why he was picked to write this specific report.
   14. While searching Google Books for Earl G. Harrison, his report seems to be referenced in books on Jews, Zionism, and the creation of the state of Israel. Although it is referenced, it does not seem to play a major role in the books but is only referenced for a page and then the argument of the book moves on.
2. “Nazism, the Jews and American Zionism, 1933-1988” Aaron Berman
   1. The reference and the affect of the Harrison report are on page 159, which gave more insight on the affect that the Report had on Truman and can be found on. [*http://books.google.com/books?id=eLokanqSA0UC&pg=PA159&dq=earl+g+harrison+and+how+it+affected+truman&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1yoaU7WhHO6A2QWBsID4CQ&ved=0CCkQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=earl%20g%20harrison%20and%20how%20it%20affected%20truman&f=false*](http://books.google.com/books?id=eLokanqSA0UC&pg=PA159&dq=earl+g+harrison+and+how+it+affected+truman&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1yoaU7WhHO6A2QWBsID4CQ&ved=0CCkQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=earl%20g%20harrison%20and%20how%20it%20affected%20truman&f=false)
   2. This book is about American Zionism and since the Harrison report supported an idea this movement championed, it is referenced.
   3. Zionists used Harrisons report to demand for, “the immediate settlement of one hundred thousand Jews in Palestine.”
   4. Other than what was already mentioned the Harrison Report was not mentioned in the rest of the book
   5. Harrison threw his support behind the Jewish Agency request in the Report, and in turn so did Truman. This report seems to have persuaded and given Truman enough evidence to support the Jewish Agency, which would later be created by the British to create the Jewish settlements in Israel.

1. Harrison, Earl G., *Report, on a mission to Europe to Inquire into the condition of the Displaced Persons* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Stevens, Lewis M. (March 1956). ["The Life and Character of Earl G. Harrison"](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3309852). *The University of Pennsylvania Law Review* **104** (5): 591–602 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)