

SUICIDES OF GERMAN JEWS GAIN

**Nazi 20 Per Cent Levy On
Fortunes Above \$2,000
Adds To Troubles**

**FOREIGN HEBREWS
GIVEN EXEMPTION**

**Order Allows Insurance
Payments To Be Used
To Settle Fines**

BERLIN, Nov. 23—(AP)—A Nazi levy of 20 per cent on Jewish fortunes above \$2,000 placed a new dilemma before hard-pressed Jews Wednesday while reports of Jewish suicides increased.

Many of the wealthier Jews, lacking cash to pay the fine, realized they would have to let real property go at whatever prices they could get, thus making it financially difficult or impossible for them to emigrate.

Some had to choose whether to remain in Germany until after Aug. 15, 1939, when the last payment of the penalty is due, or to leave immediately and abandon all their property to the Nazis. In that case, they understood, emigration would be impossible without help.

Among the mounting reports of suicides were cases of Jews with Aryan wives who killed themselves to relieve wives of stigma and to enable them to collect life insurance.

The levy is to pay the \$400,000,000 fine imposed on Jews for the assassination of Ernst von Rath, secretary in the German embassy in Paris, by a young Polish Jew.

A decree signed by Finance Minister Count Lutz Schwerin-Kroecigk, provided:

"A contribution of 1,000,000,000 Reichsmarks (\$400,000,000) will be collected from German Jews and those Jews without nationality in the form of a tax levy on their fortune.

"Foreign Jews are exempted from the levy. The levy will not be imposed on the entire fortune, after deduction of all liabilities, does not exceed 5,000 Reichsmarks (\$2,000)."

Payments are to be made to the state treasury in four equal installments due Dec. 15, Feb. 15, 1939, May 15 and Aug. 15, without further notice. Further penalties were provided for non-compliance.

This was considered part of "the last chapter of the Jewish question in Germany," in which Propaganda Minister Paul Joseph Goebbels warned there would be no mercy until the Hebrew is driven from German life.

Nobody in authority could say how Jews were subject to the levy.

In Berlin, 35,000 Jews are listed as owning more than 5,000 marks under the April 26 regulation, which provided Jews must declare their possessions to the government.

One aspect cheered some persons—the provision whereby compensation paid by insurance companies for breakage during the Nov. 10 anti-Semitism might be applied toward the billion-mark penalty. Title to such claims has passed to the government by a decree of Field Marshal Herman Wilhelm Goering Nov. 12, but insurance companies were instructed Wednesday to pay those claims in the billion-mark fund.