

## Bernheim Petition

Petition presented to the League of Nations in May 1933 in an effort to protest Nazi anti-Jewish legislation.

Soon after Hitler's rise to power, Jews outside Germany began looking for ways to protect the civil rights of German Jews. In May, a group of Jews turned to the League of Nations. In their appeal, they cited the German-Polish Geneva Convention of 1922, under which the two countries agreed to protect the civil rights of minorities in Upper Silesia and named the League of Nations as judge if anyone felt the treaty was being violated. The group then presented a petition signed by a Jewish resident of Upper Silesia, Franz Bernheim, in which he complained of the anti-Jewish laws in his region.

The League soon affirmed the complaint's validity, and ruled that Germany should stop discriminating against Jews in Upper Silesia. In September, Germany announced that all anti-Jewish laws in Upper Silesia had been cancelled. The German-Polish treaty expired in May 1937, and until that time the Germans did not even activate the Nuremberg Laws in the Upper Silesia region. However, after the expiration date, Germany and Poland excluded the League of Nations from making any decisions regarding Upper Silesia, and the Germans began to systematically strip the Jews there of their civil rights.